

# Terms of Reference: Holding the Line for Women's Rights & Gender Equality in Palestine

- in the Era of Resistance; Shrinking Civic Space and Increased Nationalism

## 1. Background

Kvinna till Kvinna has been operating in Palestine since 2001 supporting women's rights organisations with three comprehensive methods; long-term financial support, capacity development and networking. Since the start up in Palestine Kvinna till Kvinna have had several 3-year programmes. The latest programme 'Turning Promises into Reality: Palestinian Women Human Rights Defenders, Voicing for Change' 2017-2019 is focusing on women, peace and security agenda; GBV, participation and advocating for legal reform. Over 200 000 women have gained support to claim their rights, and some achievements towards women's rights have been made at local and national level. Yet the re-enforcement of traditional values, nationalism and the emerging shrinking civic space have negatively impacted the achievement of women's rights in the Palestinian society in various ways. In a recent study A Violent Network made by 7amleh and supported by Kvinna till Kvinna the impact that both the political (state run) and social (families and local communities) surveillance have on women's freedom of expression, and participation is evident. Subsequently these negative practises reinforce the marginalisation of the societal discourse and position of the women's rights agenda even further away from the epicentre of decision making and prioritise. Changing social norms to the benefit of gender equality take time and entails of changes in power relations. These processes most often produce backlashes and an achievement will in most cases create setbacks. Resistance<sup>1</sup> like these are intricate and hold a cultural social context to it that needs to be unfolded. In the set of this results are to be monitored, measured and communicated. However, many of the methods and tools utilised in today's developing cooperation support conflate or confuse short term change with sustainable change; M&E tools are not designed to track movement building and movement impacts and they are often linear having the measurement of a cause-effect relationship that cannot measure complex social changes; they do not allow to track negative changes, reversals or backlashes; and there is a need to develop a

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<sup>1</sup> Resistance in this assignment entails of the counteraction that emerges when power relations shifts; this might be on an inter-personal level of changes (stereotypical gender roles are threatened) in dynamics on social norms as well as on a national level with ideologies such as nationalism or practises such as shrinking civic space. Both negatively impacting division of political, economic and social resources for the benefits of women's rights and gender equality.

“theory of constraints” to accompany the theory of change to track the way power structures respond to women’s rights interventions<sup>2</sup>.

Kvinna till Kvinna acknowledges these limitations and challenges in reporting and would like in this assignment to dig deeper into how to better develop programme modalities that would address the nexus of resistance vis a vis sustainability in its core deriving from the set current frame of long-term financial support, capacity development and networking. In 2018, Kvinna till Kvinna developed a partnership policy<sup>3</sup> to further frame the support Kvinna till Kvinna gives to the women’s movement through women rights organisations and their WHRDs.

## 2. Overall Objective of the Assignment

The overall objective is to assess and verify a methodological approach to enable programme support on how the women’s rights agenda and gender equality can be sustained in Palestine considering the exposure to multi-level resistance as laid out above.

### 2.1 Objectives and Questions of the Assignment

1. **Resistance:** Map and assess the various forms and levels of resistance in the Palestinian context<sup>4</sup> and the implications it has on realising women’s rights and gender equality; on a) an individual level for claiming and gaining women’s rights and gender equality; b) family and local communities as supporting structures to the realisations of women’s rights and gender equality; c) mobilisation, safe spaces and support within civil society; and, d) institutional level to develop and implement leadership, policies/laws/practises and dialogues with the women’s movement, WHRDs and communities:
  - a. What are the forms of resistance that inflict women’s rights and gender equality in Palestine and on what levels do they exist?
  - b. How does the multiple level of resistance impact the progress of women’s rights and gender equality?
  - c. What successful strategies have the women’s rights movement utilised when adapting and/or mitigating any of the resistance?
  - d. Which are the constraints and backlashes to the advancement of women’s rights and gender equality and how have non-achievements impacted the programme “Turning Promises into Reality: Palestinian Women Human Rights Defenders, Voicing for Change 2017-2019”?
  - e. What PMEL structure and reporting modalities include / exclude learnings would be needed to identify counter strategies of the multiple level resistance and how non-linear social change evolve?

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<sup>2</sup> Srilatha Batliwala & Alexandra Pittman, Capturing Change in Women’s Realities – A Critical Overview of Current Monitoring and Evaluation Frameworks and Approaches, AWID December 2010

<sup>3</sup> 1) Shared values and goals; 2) local ownership; 3) mutual commitment to learning; 4) predictability and transparency; 5) mutual accountability and anti-corruption; 6) defending safe spaces and networks for WHRDs; 7) conflict sensitivity

<sup>4</sup> This would include engaging programme related actors and non-related ones

2. **Sustainability:** Map and assess how sustainable outcome at multiple levels<sup>5</sup> in this context of resistance have been achieved and maintained by women rights organisations and their networks
  - a. What are the legal, political and social statues of shrinking civic<sup>6</sup> space for the women’s movement and WHRDs in Palestine? How can they be changed to enhance sustainable outcome?
  - b. How can “holding the line<sup>7</sup>” be argued contributing to sustainability? What are the sustainable and enabling factors for civic engagement given the context?
  - c. What is the learning from the women’s movement on how to sustain women’s rights and gender equality, looking both at internal and external factors?
  - d. How can the factors identified by the women’s movement be sustained in the best way?
  - e. What type(s) of programme and partnership support would sustain women’s rights and gender equality in the current context?
  
3. **Networking:** Map and assess how women’s movement and as part of that partner organisations link up to other initiatives (initiatives, movements, programmes) and see if the accumulation of knowledge and experiences is making a moving forward
  - a. What are the modalities/structures of the mapped formal and informal network initiatives?
  - b. How does parts of the women’s movement perceive themselves in supporting each other within the movement(s) itself? What are the non/facilitating factors?
  - c. How does cooperation evolve within and among the women’s movement(s)?
  - d. How is the knowledge and experiences within the movement contributing to the non/advancement of women’s rights agenda and gender equality?
  - e. Do relevant stakeholders recognise the women’s movement at all, and if yes, do they take part in/with it and what do they see any achievement of the movement(s)?
  - f. How could men’s evovement in or around the movements be positive (legitimised, listened to, widen toward “mass-movement”) or negative (part of invisible obstruction and resistance against movements and/or coopeted)?
  
4. **Recommendation:** What are the programme modalities that best respond to the outcome of objectives 1-3?
  - a. Give suggestions on best practises of programme modalities for supporting women’s movement and individual organisations in the advancement of women’s rights considering the constraining nexus of resistance vis a vis sustainability
  - b. How can the PMEL, capacity development support and networking opportunities be improved / altered to better support the progress of women’s rights and gender equality?
  - c. Assess how the partnership policy best could be utilised in enhancing support to the women’s movement and women’s rights organisations
  - d. Map women rights movement, networks and coalitions and recommend organisations and networks that responds well to recommended modalities

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<sup>5</sup> Individual women and men taken part in activities by women rights organisations, and their networks; families and local communities; WRO and their networks; and local and national institutions (both policy makers and implementors)

<sup>6</sup> Including limitations from State institutions and social norms

<sup>7</sup> Holding the Line is a concept describing how women’s movements uphold the achievements made in an increasing hostile environment of shrinking civic space and anti-gender movement, and that this achievement in itself is a result

### 3. Assignment Methodology

#### 3.1 Scope

The scope of work includes reviewing relevant documents and interviewing key positions at Kvinna till Kvinna in its Jerusalem office and programme staff in Stockholm; partner organisations, women human rights defenders and other relevant actors within the women rights movements, supporting institutions of women's movements and other key stakeholders agreed with Kvinna till Kvinna. All key persons should preferably be interviewed face to face. If interviews in the Gaza strip cannot be conducted due to the security situation, they will be done remotely, or by additional consultant located in the Gaza strip, if this has been agreed with Kvinna till Kvinna.

The consultant(s) shall develop and propose a methodology for the assignment, which should include a desk review and field visits, a combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques. The methodology should as much as possible be participatory aiming for the involvement of the partner organisations and women human rights defenders. When conducting interviews with members of target groups, the consultant(s) should be provided with a list by the partners' organisation and select the interviewees in consultation with Kvinna till Kvinna, to ensure none interference in the responses. Any limitations realised by the consultants shall be made explicit, and their consequences discussed with Kvinna till Kvinna as soon as possible including any ethical considerations taken.

The consultant(s) are responsible for booking appointments for interviews and to conduct all logistic arrangements for the assignment. Kvinna till Kvinna will provide contact details and relevant documentation.

#### 3.2 Assignment Approach

The assignment will be carried out following OECD/DAC evaluation principles and guidelines. Further, Kvinna till Kvinna has set a minimum standard making an assignment on gender equality and women's rights, touching upon and strengthening some of the OECD/DAC principles. These principles are; 1) **participation**; the assignment seeks to ensure that the narratives and experiences of women in evaluations are valued equally to men. Participation should be inclusive, meaning that multiple voices of women from different social and political contexts / movements, especially women from marginalised groups, should get time and space to be heard. Co-ownership of the process, and findings should be the aim and participants should benefit from the assignment in one way or another, by increased knowledge, strengthened agency or other assets; 2) women experience oppression differently, according to their **intersecting identities** based on race, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, age etcetera. Assignments designed on the basis of gender transformative evaluation theory acknowledge and value these differences, not considering "women" to be a homogeneous category and recognise that what works for one group of women does not necessarily work for another; 3) consultant has experiences, emotions, awareness, and perspectives that lead to a particular standpoint and affects the evaluation process, and findings. In other words, consultant recognise that they bring who they are into the assignment process; therefore, **reflexivity** - or an consultant's ability to understand **her or his own position** - is another critical component; 4) **knowledge is power**; the assignment recognises and gives voice to multiple ways of knowing, including reason, emotion and experience, considers and value different ways of knowing and regards knowledge as a powerful resource which *can* be used to serve an explicit or implicit purpose. Consequently, the research process can lead to negative or positive effects on the people involved in it. Knowledge should be a resource

of and for the people who create, hold, and share it; 5) **research is political**, and the assignment is in a sense a political activity. The contexts in which evaluation operates are politicised and the ambition of the women's rights and gender transformative assignment is to transform and address social injustice. The assignment process, and findings should be conflict sensitive and attempt to bring about change, not only describe the world as it is. The assignment contextualises the research socially and politically with an emphasis on how gender and other influential discourses influence each person's experience.

### 3.3 Key Documents

Programme related documents:

- **Partner organisations**; project documents for 2017-2019; proposal and results framework and annual reporting 2017 and 2018; capacity development assessment and action plan
- **Kvinna till Kvinna**; application documents 2017-2019; baseline study; risk matrix; annual report 2017 and 2018; strategies (advocacy, country and MENA); policies (partnership, movement building); position papers (GBV); programme handbook (selected chapters);

Context, method and research related documents:

- Women's movement, networking, gender transformation and gender justice
- Institutional and legal framework
- Feministic PMEL such as "Capturing Change in Women's Realities – A Critical Overview of Current Monitoring and Evaluation Frameworks and Approaches", AWID
- Sustainable programme modalities for women's movement; such as "Making Achievements Last", Kvinna till Kvinna; and "Gender and Social Movements", BRIDGE

### 3.4 Key Actors

- Kvinna till Kvinna
- Current partner organisations
- Women rights movement its partners, networks and coalitions
- Women human rights defenders
- Gender research institutes in Palestine and elsewhere
- International institutions supporting women's movements in Palestine
- Duty bearers related to women's rights and gender equality

## 4. Deliverables and Time Frame

**Inception report:** The penultimate inception report shall be presented to Kvinna till Kvinna within ten work days after the signature of the contract and a start-up meeting has been held with Kvinna till Kvinna. The report shall include a description of the methodology, method of ensuring the quality of implementation of the assignment including ethical considerations and a work plan/timeline for the assignment. Kvinna till Kvinna shall provide their comments within one week of the submission of the inception report. A finalised inception report is to be submitted to Kvinna till Kvinna within one week of sending the comments on the inception report.

**Desk review** on 1) the context for women's movements in Palestine, and 2) methods and approaches supporting reporting and supporting the advancement of women's rights through women's movement and individual women's rights organisations. The desk review is to be submitted to Kvinna till Kvinna no later than 15 September 2019. Deadline for Kvinna till Kvinna's feedback is one week. Thereafter it will be finalised and submitted to Kvinna till Kvinna within five working days.

The **field visits** are expected to take place in mid-September to mid-October, including taking part in workshop planned for 23-26 September. The exact period of fieldwork shall be settled in dialogue with Kvinna till Kvinna and decided upon during the inception phase.

**Penultimate report** must be shared with Kvinna till Kvinna for comments. The deadline for the penultimate reports will be mid-October. The final reports are to be submitted to Kvinna till Kvinna mid-November 2019.

The **finalised report** should be written in English and should not exceed 60 pages, excluding annexes and shall include an executive summary of findings including lessons learned and recommendations. Any limitations shall be made explicit and their consequences discussed as soon as realised by the consultant(s) including any ethics considerations taken. The consultant(s) shall adhere in the reporting to the terminological conventions of the OECD/DAC Glossary on Evaluation and Results-Based Management as far as possible.

The report should include:

- Executive summary (not more than three pages)
- Introduction (one page)
- Operational environment, including challenges (not more than two pages)
- Description of the assignment methodology including limitations (not more than three pages)
- Analyses and findings of the resistance, sustainability and networks
- Extensive focus on possible programme structure as laid out in recommendations (a-d)
- Appendixes; charts, terms of reference, field visits, people interviewed, documents reviewed

The report will be used for strategic planning and will be shared with Sida and Kvinna till Kvinna partner organisations in Palestine. Parts of the report, such as quotes, specific outcomes or stories/cases, might also be used in the Kvinna till Kvinna's communication work or in other reports or documents produced by Kvinna till Kvinna.

The final report shall be submitted in two hard copies and a soft copy to Kvinna till Kvinna's head office in Stockholm. The final reports will be presented by the consultant in a meeting together with representatives from Kvinna till Kvinna; location to be decided.

## 5. Cost frame

The tender needs to state the number of work days that the consultant intends to spend in the country (at least two weeks is recommended) and the total budget, including expenses such as travel and communication costs. Consultant fees shall be specified as fees per day including taxes, social security contributions and VAT and the number of work days for the assignment divided per consultant.

In cases where the tender includes a team of consultants, their division of work shall be presented. A contracted consultant cannot further subcontract the assignment.

## 6. Requirements

### 6.1 Required Qualifications

The following criteria will be applied in the selection of the evaluation consultant(s):

- Master's degree in gender studies in social sciences or another relevant field addressing critical thinking / feministic methodology
- Extensive experience in feminist PMEL and partnership in relation to international development cooperation and civil society in the Palestinian context
- Expertise in gender and civil society; women's movements, holding the line, resistance
- Extensive knowledge in gender equality/women's rights
- Knowledge in DAC developing cooperation guidelines
- Proven experience of evaluating projects or programmes built on cohesive strategies a rights-based approach and theory of change
- Fluent in English and preferably in the Arabic language

## 6.2 Required information

All tenders must include:

- CV(s) of the consultant(s) involved in the assignment
- A methodological approach and work plan that demonstrates an understanding of the assignment and context including demarcations (indicative 4-5 pages)
- A timeframe of the assignment following the points specified in this "terms of reference"
- A proposed budget that corresponds with the selected approach and work plan
- Assignment budget with fees incl. VAT with all expenses in accordance with notes under cost frame
- Previously completed studies like the assignment presented in this "terms of reference" with an explicit focus on women's movement, feministic PMEL and/or sustainability in a context with multiple resistance

The tender is to be sent to Kvinna till Kvinna **no later than 18 August 2019** to the following e-mail address: [maria.johansson@kvinnaatillkvinna.se](mailto:maria.johansson@kvinnaatillkvinna.se)

Send any questions and requests for clarifications to Maria Johansson; answers will be provided after 12 August due to summer leave [maria.johansson@kvinnaatillkvinna.se](mailto:maria.johansson@kvinnaatillkvinna.se)