

Tuzla, 20.11.2025.

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Terms of Reference

for carrying out the evaluation of the project named
"Strengthening civil society and democratic culture in the Tuzla Canton", implemented by the Tuzla
Community Foundation in the period from 01.07.2022 to 30.04.2026.) in the Tuzla Canton

1. Introduction

These Terms of Reference (ToR) serve as a request for proposals from individual consultants or consortiums, who are interested in conducting the external evaluation or for the project "Strengthening Civil Society and Democratic Culture in the Tuzla Canton", implemented by the Tuzla Community Foundation with the support of the Freudenberg Foundation and the Federal Ministry for Economic Development and Cooperation (BMZ).

2. Background and Rationale

In the period from 01.07.2022 to 30.04.2026, Tuzla Community Foundation (TCF), in partnership with the above mentioned funders, has implemented the project named "Strengthening Civil Society and Democratic Culture in the Tuzla Canton". As mentioned in the title, the project is implemented in the area of Tuzla Canton in the north-east part of Bosnia and Herzegovina which is the most populated canton in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) with around 450.000 inhabitants. In this canton, like in other parts of the country, political, social and economic situation is unstable even 30 years after the war in BiH. Negative trends continue to grow in demographics (the number of secondary school students fell by 19% in the last 5 years), unemployment (for youth the rate is 32.39%) and high rates of migration what causes a continuous brain drain. Civil society is vivid as more than 2,500 citizens' associations (CA) are registered in Tuzla Canton but most of them struggle to survive as their funding is insecure and unstable. Although CAs perform important programs in social sector for the most vulnerable groups, but majority is not funded under some regular program scheme by local or cantonal budgets. In such conditions, the development of the civic sector, and particularly youth sector is stagnating, as the civic organizations are dissolving due to insufficient support and also demotivation of their membership. Civic leadership loose interest but also lack in capacities to secure the sustainability of their organizations.

In order to overcome these challenges in civic sector in Tuzla Canton, TCF and its project partner in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Network of Active Communities, has implemented this project in accordance with following **Impact matrix**:

Overall objective is to improve the framework to support active civil society and social innovative practices leading to sustainable, ecological and inclusive development of the Tuzla Canton.

The project goal: Civil society actors, especially young people, use the knowledge gained through the training, practical measures within their organizations and the resources offered by Tuzla Community Foundations's Center for Democracy to become more active, to network and influence together on legal framework of civil society and advocate for social and human rights in Tuzla Canton.

The sub goals of the project are:

1. 400 young people are empowered to form their own organizations, advocate for their interests, and actively participate in youth policy.

2. The members of at least 30 district administrations were empowered to work with citizens in an inclusive and cooperative manner, following the community organizing model of the Tuzla Civic Foundation. They networked through „Mreža aktivnih zajednica-MAZ“
3. Civil society organizations have strengthened their capacities for organizational sustainability
4. The Tuzla Community Foundation has successfully strengthened its capacity to support civil society through a newly trained team of trainers and the establishment of the Center for Democracy and Active Citizenship.

This four-year project involved over 400 young people who strengthen capacity for democratic decision-making and participation through the Youth Bank program and will use their knowledge to strengthen youth organizations. In cooperation with the Network of Active Communities, 300 representatives of local communities have undergone training in the field of democratic culture and communication. In this way, local communities will better organize and cooperate with citizens to develop their neighbourhoods towards sustainable development. At least 40 civic leaders from civil society organizations have been empowered to improve the work within their organizations. Educated civic leaders will implement around 40 community-benefit projects during the project.

3. Purpose and objectives of the evaluation

The main purpose of the evaluation is to determine the degree of success of the set of objectives and the impact of the measures on target groups (especially regarding the sub goals 3 and 4). Therefore, the evaluation should:

- Assess the impact, relevance and effectiveness of the activities implemented in the project.
- Assess the current figures of objectively verifiable indicators as indicated in the impact matrix.
- Assess how project interventions/measures are compatible with other interventions towards same target groups
- Assess project efficiency towards target groups, costs and project timeframe.
- Assess the sustainability of the project (institutional, social, financial, etc.)
- Make recommendations for improving future interventions.

Specific objectives of the evaluation

Based on an analysis of the results achieved through the project impact matrix, and also the analysis of the social, political and economic context, existing and new local structures (e.g. Centre for Democracy and Active Citizenship), this evaluation should investigate **to what extent the implemented interventions** (especially regarding the sub-goals 3 and 4), **and activities were adequately selected to respond to the needs of the target groups and achieve goals in the given project time-frame.**

The evaluation should and also **identify the strengths and weaknesses of the project, and provide recommendations for improving the approaches towards** the civil society sector and the strengthening of the Centre for Democracy and active citizenship for future joint interventions of the partners, the Freudenberg Foundation and the TCF, **that will be used for new project proposal in the field of**

strengthening democracy and empowering civil society organizations, particularly those that work with the most vulnerable groups (women, people with disabilities, elderly, youth, etc.).

In particular, for project partners it is of great importance to assess the **level of success of the Project Objective 4, related to the establishment of the Centre for Democracy and Active Citizenship (CDAC) as its realization was important** not only for strengthening capacities of Tuzla Community Foundation as the resource centre for all project target groups (civil society organizations, youth, local authority offices, members of NAC) but also as the place for networking and advocating for civic and human rights as well as legal framework for empowerment of civic sector.

The desired result of the evaluation is to:

- Provide commentary on the overall project design, intervention logic and analysis of the strategy and methodology used (especially sub-goals 3 and 4)
- Critically examine the impact matrix and verifiable indicators contained in the original proposal and provide post-project figures, along with a narrative explaining the reasons for achieving lower/higher results. (especially sub-goals 3 and 4)
- Document the impact of the project with special emphasis on the impact the project had on CSOs from the area of TC, particularly in respect to the establishment of the CDAC and its potentials for future
- Consider current political, social and cultural factors that affected project implementation
- Document the community's attitude towards the project.
- During the evaluation, it is particularly important to focus on the segment of the project related to strengthening the capacities of CSOs and the impact that the Centre for Democracy and Active Citizenship of Tuzla Canton will have.
- When it comes to Goal 1, the focus should be on cooperation between youth organizations and government representatives.
- Draw conclusions, make recommendations and outline lessons learned for future strategy and improvements in project implementation, which can be used for the new to be designed project.

4. Scope of work

The evaluation will cover the period from 01.07.2022. to 30.04.2026. for the geographical area of the Tuzla Canton (Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina). Considering that the project has dealt with different target groups and stakeholders, the external evaluation should consult with following key stakeholders:

- Direct target groups (youth, members of the local administration offices, members of the Network of Active Communities, members of the civil society organizations)
- Direct institutional target groups (representatives of government, public institutions, civil society organizations)
- Indirect target groups (those affected by the project)
- Project Management and Project Team

- Capacities, roles and cooperation of the partners (Freudenberg foundation, Tuzla Community Foundation and the Network of Active Communities)

In addition, evaluators should also assess the extent to which gender aspects were considered in planning and implementation of the activities.

The evaluation questions should follow the OECD/DAC criteria: relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, collaboration and governance. Based on the above evaluation criteria, fieldwork instruments/questionnaires should be prepared for the stakeholders. An illustrative set of questions is provided below, which would have to be elaborated further during the external evaluation process.

Evaluation issue	Key guiding questions
Relevance: Assess whether the chosen methodology is suitable for the objectives and target groups, what worked well, which activities are the most effective, and what has no impact on the participants.	• To what extent was the project focused on the intended target group and responded to the needs of the target groups and civic sector? • What were the specific criteria for the selection of participants and to what extent they met them? • Were the chosen methodology relevant to achieve empowerment of the participants and the civil sector? • Did and how did the project activities contribute to changes in the target group and the civic sector? • To what extent have the project adjustments made so far been relevant?
Coherence: How well the intervention fit into existing interventions implemented by other institutions or governments, as well as the consistency of the intervention with relevant international norms and standards.	• To what extent have synergies and connections between the project and other interventions been achieved? • To what extent is the project intervention implemented in coordination with other stakeholders at various levels? • To what extent did the intervention create added value and was duplication avoided? • What new interventions can be recommended for the future to better respond and align with the ever-changing needs and trends of communities?
Effectiveness: Conduct an analysis of planned activities, structures, procedures and their implementation in practice, cooperation and interaction between project partners, interaction with users, the way project participants responded to challenges, etc.	• To what extent have the project strategies, methodologies, tools and processes contributed to the achievement of the planned results? • Is replication or removal of certain approaches required to increase effectiveness? • Where the activities cost-effective?

	• Are the roles and responsibilities of project activity leaders clearly defined? • Assess the organization's competencies and how the project team responded to the emergence of various risks that were foreseen in the project application and were there any unforeseen risks?
Efficiency: Assess to what extent the project has contributed to the set objectives; define the most visible areas of change and success, as well as challenges.	• How did the project participants use their knowledge and skills to actively participate in the project and manage the project activities? • To what extent did the project activities contribute to increasing the interest and capacities of the target groups in a way that they can participate and take responsibility for the development of the local community? • Was the chosen methodological approach appropriate and sufficient to achieve the project objectives, especially sub-objectives 3 and 4? • Are there possible alternatives to strengthen the Civil Society and the vulnerable groups organized in the associations?
Impact: Assess the positive and negative changes produced by project interventions, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. This includes the main impacts and effects resulting from the activities on social, economic, environmental and other indicators of development at the local level.	• What was the direct benefit for the participants of the project? • To what extent did the project have an impact on strengthening youth sector and organizations in Tuzla Canton? • Did the project impact the capacity building of the civil society organizations that went through the one-year FTZ capacity building program (mentoring program)? • What are the benefits for the authorities, partners and the members of the strengthened associations • To what extent has the project-built structures, set examples and had a broad impact? Did some norms or structures change? • Has the construction of the Centre for Democracy and Active Citizenship of Tuzla Canton impact the change the climate when it comes to the development of civil society in the area of Tuzla and the Tuzla Canton? • What approaches and methods could have an impact in the future?
Sustainability Assess the likelihood that the results achieved by the project will continue to	• Are the results and impacts within the project structurally, economically, socially and environmentally sustainable? (with a special focus on sub-objectives 3 and 4)

impact project beneficiaries beyond the project.	• What long-term capacities have the target groups adopted to enable them to continue implementing the activities independently? • What public sector obligations (in relation to their duties) have been achieved and defined? • What positive changes (role behaviour, mechanisms, networks, etc.) will be of long-term benefit to civil society? • What personal risks/behaviours affected implementation of the project, or institutional or contextual risks, have negatively affected the sustainability of the project?
Collaboration Assess the extent to which existing project management practices have contributed to the development of successful partnerships within the project. Examine the level of collaboration among team members and partner organizations. Assess the effectiveness of joint activities and tasks, including shared responsibilities and workload distribution.	• How was feedback used to adjust project strategies and improve collaboration? • Assess any long-term benefits or changes in partnerships that have resulted from the project. • Are there any practical recommendations for improving future partnerships in terms of improving communication and collaboration, more effective alignment of goals between different partners, improved stakeholder engagement and resource sharing?
Gender mainstreaming Extent to which gender was considered in planning and implementation of the activities	• Is the project responsive to gender needs, social and cultural values, conditions and practises? • Has gender been considered in the implementation of relevant project activities?

5. Methodology and Approach

The external evaluation should be based on a participatory approach involving and engaging a wide and diverse range of stakeholders. Stakeholders' participation is necessary for accountability, promoting ownership and sustainability, facilitating buy in, and further use of the evaluation recommendations.

The evaluation should imply the inclusion of various 'rights holders' who benefit from the project, as well as the 'duty bearers' or those responsible and accountable for providing services. This is necessary to assess whether benefits and contributions are fairly distributed by the interventions being evaluated.

The evaluation approach should be results-oriented to provide evidence of both quantitative and qualitative achievements as per planned project results. Hence, both primary and secondary data should be used in the evaluation and be collected from a wide and diverse range of primary and secondary sources.

Methods and tools may include, but are not limited to:

- Desk research (analysis of internal key reference documents and of external data sources)
- Interviews (structured and/or semi-structured; in person)

- Focus groups
- Quantitative data collection (e.g. through surveys)
- Case study of randomly selected beneficiaries (present and those who exited the project)
- Other methods relevant to evaluation objectives and scope

The external evaluation expert(s) is/are expected to come up with a suitable methodology by developing all required data collection instruments, sampling and data analysis methods as per requirement to answer relevant evaluation questions.

The evaluation is expected to follow ethical norms toward all groups involved in the evaluation. A gender-sensitive approach to evaluation process is also expected. A participative approach should be ensured at any stage.

A prerequisite for contracting the external consultant(s) is acceptance of the key strategic policies, approaches and values of the Freudenberg Foundation and the FTZ, in those relating to the Code of Conduct, data protection, child and vulnerable groups protection policy, gender equality policy, anti-corruption policy, etc. In addition, the engaged consultant(s) are expected to adequately and correctly represent the interests and approaches of the TCF and the Freudenberg Foundation to better understand the project by third parties.

The contractors are expected to accept the opinions, suggestions and recommendations of the TCF and the Freudenberg Foundation contact persons that will not compromise the objectivity and independence of the evaluation.

6. Work plan and time frame

Evaluators are expected to have a total of 18 working days to complete the following tasks:

	Phases	Tasks	Dates	Key persons
1	Preparation			
	Signing the Contract	Contract clarifications through emails	05.-12.01.2026.	CONSULTANTS/TCF
	On-line Briefing meeting with TCF and FS staff	Online meeting to discuss project implementation and compare expectations and possible results of the evaluation prior to the inception report	12.-16.01.2026. (0.5 days)	CONSULTANTS/FREUDENBERG/TCF
	Inception report	Send the Inception report and get feedback to the report by TCF	30.01.2026. (3 days)	CONSULTANTS
2	Desk analysis and field work			
	Introduction workshop with TCF	Online meeting to discuss presented methodology, communication, stakeholders' roles,	02.-05.02.2026. (0.5 days)	CONSULTANTS/FREUDENBERG/TCF

		interest, influence, etc. in the Inception report		
1	Field visits and data collection	Interviews with stakeholders, project site visits, consultations and field visits to target groups	Until February 28th (4 days)	CONSULTANTS/STAKEHOLDERS
3	Reporting			
1	Draft evaluation report	Submitting a draft evaluation report in English for feedback, comments and remarks.	15.03.2026. (3 days)	CONSULTANTS
	Final evaluation report in English	Writing the final Evaluation Report/Online meeting and live feedback on the report for fine tuning	20.03.- 10.04.2026 (English version) (4 days)	CONSULTANTS+ FREUDENBERG/TCF
	Bosnian translation of the report	Negotiable with TCF depending on the offer	29. April 2026.	Consultants/TCF

1. Reporting, deliverables and copyrights

The conclusions of the evaluation should be presented in the form of an evaluation report in the format presented in **Appendix 1**.

The final evaluation report should be submitted **in English no later than April 10th 2026**, and translated version **to Bosnian no later than April 29th 2026**.

In addition, the final evaluation report should:

- Have a maximum of 30 pages (version in English);
- Be accompanied by working material created during the evaluation process that is considered an integral part of the report (questionnaires, survey results, list of interviewed persons, minutes, etc.).

All materials interviews, reports, recommendations, and all other data compiled by or received by the contracted bidder under the Contract shall be treated as confidential and shall be delivered only to Tuzla Community Foundation after the completion of the Contract.

2. Required qualifications and expertise

The persons conducting the evaluation should understand the political and socio-economic situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as an understanding of the work and role of civil society organizations in such an environment in the democratic development of local communities.

The hired evaluation consultant(s) should also have the following qualifications:

- Formal university degree in social sciences;

- Knowledge of DAC evaluation standards;
- Mandatory knowledge of the English language;
- Experience in managing and implementing at least 3 evaluations previously;
- Cooperation and good communication skills, and willingness to work in a team;

3. Evaluation management

TCF will assure regular communication with selected evaluator/s and provide all important information about the project, such as project proposal, quarterly and annual reports, monitoring information and statistics about beneficiaries, etc. Whenever relevant, TCF will assure names and contacts for people that were involved in the project, including partner organizations and institutions as well as project participants/beneficiaries. The person who will prepare the documentation and logistics during the field visits to the beneficiaries and partners is program coordinator Nerma Sakić (nerma@fondacijatz.org).

4. Evaluation costs

Adequate compensation is provided for services performed to prepare the evaluation, which will be implemented through FTZ in accordance with the signed contract prior to the start of the engagement.

The offer from should include:

- A letter of interest stating eligibility for the assignment
- Information and relevant references about the bidder (proof of experiences of at least 3 multi-year projects' evaluations)
- CVs/Biographies of evaluation expert(s) with proven references who will conduct the evaluation
- A technical proposal, which should include information about the evaluation team, a description of the proposed methodology, a schedule of planned activities, proposal how the project team will be involved in the study, description of main deliverables (further harmonization of evaluation methodology will be carried out with the selected evaluation expert/s and aligned with BMZ guidelines)
- Financial proposal statement of the requested amount per consultant/day and the overall gross amount for execution of the contract (taxes included and all other expenses like communication, transportation, and accommodation of the may occur during the field visits)

5. Deadline for submitting proposals

Offers should be submitted via e-mail address fondtz@fondacijatz.org, at the latest by December 22th 2025.

For any additional questions, please feel free to contact Jasna Jašarević, FTZ Director and Project Manager (jasna@fondacijatz.org) or/and Kleck Dr. Monika, an advisor from the partner Freudenberg Foundation (monivito@arcor.de). Late and incomplete bids will not be considered.

6. Evaluation of the proposals

The evaluation of the proposals will be based on the following criteria:

- Compliance with the requirements set in the Request for Proposal.
- Competence and experience of proposed consultant(s).
- Proposed work plan's quality, coherence, and responsiveness (including timeliness) to the ToR
- Requested gross daily rate and the overall gross amount for execution of the assignment

The offer with the best overall value, technical and financial, will be proposed for approval.

All bidders will be notified, **no later than January 7th 2026** on the results of the selection process.

APPENDIX 1

STRUCTURE OF THE EVALUATION REPORT

The evaluation report should be structured in the following way:

COVER PAGE

- Title of evaluation report
- Countries, project, date of evaluation
- Name of consultant (s)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Table of contents
- Figures and tables
- Acronyms
- Annexes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Background and project context
- Evaluation objectives and methodology (incl. limitations and challenges)
- Main conclusions
- Recommendations and lessons learned

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. SCOPE OF EVALUATION

- Brief project description

1.2. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

- Reason and justification for evaluation
- Aim and purpose of evaluation
- Key guiding questions

1.3. EVALUATION MISSION

- Time span and process of evaluation
- Profile, composition and independence (non-bias) of evaluation team
- Participation of partners and target group in evaluation
- External factors influencing the evaluation process and respective consequences

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

- Methodology and instruments
- Measures ensuring the protection of the stakeholders involved

2.2 CRITICAL ASSESSMENT

- Suitability and limits of the methodical approach

3. CONDITIONS FOR EVALUATION

- Local context, problem statement, project's initial potential and potential changes throughout the project period, through e.g. political / social / environmental developments
- Presence and actions of other stakeholders
- Risk factors for achieving project objectives

4. DEVELOPMENTAL EFFECTIVENESS

4.1. RELEVANCE

- Consistency of project objectives with the needs of the target group and the objectives of the donor (BMZ), the German partner and the implementing partners
- Adequate developmental approach and conceptualization

4.2 COHERENCE

- Internal and external coherence

4.3 EFFECTIVENESS

- Achievement of project objectives
- Motivation, ownership and legitimacy of partners
- Quality of project planning
- Quality of project implementation
- Quality of system of indicators and objectives
- Quality of project management
- Other effects on output and outcome level (incl. negative, if any)

4.4 EFFICIENCY

- Cost effectiveness of the project

4.5 IMPACT

- Achievement of overall objective
- Model character, establishment of structures and broad impact
- Other effects of overall, developmental impact (incl. negative, if any)

4.6 SUSTAINABILITY

- Durability of positive impact (after project completion); also considering potential changes in the project context
- Risks for and potential of sustainable impact on the level of the organization and the target group

5. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

- Cross-cutting topics of development cooperation (e.g. gender equality, human rights, inclusion, and environmental sustainability)
- Contribution to organizational goals

6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 CONCLUSIONS

6.2 LESSONS LEARNED

7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

ANNEXES

- Terms of Reference
- Composition and independence (non-bias) of evaluation team
- Evaluation matrix
- Evaluation plan and time diagram
- List of stakeholders consulted
- Bibliography/reference
- Questionnaires/other data collection instruments
- Debriefing Protocol
- System of objectives and indicators
- Other technical appendixes