

Date: 06/03/2025

Evaluation Term of Reference

Project Title: **Market-driven economic empowerment for women and youth**

Project Number: E-PSE-2022-0362

Project country: Palestine

Donor: Brot für die Welt

Evaluation duration: **March – June/2025**

Start Date: **Late March, 2025**

Introduction

Brief about YWCA of Palestine

YWCA of Palestine is a non-governmental association that started in Palestine in 1893 and was officially registered in Jerusalem in the year 1918. It is a union of four local associations in the cities of Jerusalem, Ramallah, Jericho and Bethlehem. It envisions free and democratic Palestinian civil society where women and youth are empowered to exercise and protect their human, social, economic and political rights. It is affiliated with the World YWCA, a global movement that works for -through its members: the national YWCAs in over 100 countries in the world, for the rights of women, young women, and girls. The World YWCA holds a special consultative status at the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

Description of the Subject Matter of the Evaluation

The End-of-project evaluation focuses on YWCA Vocational Training and Economic Empowerment Project implemented between 2023 and 2025. The current project focuses on increasing the living conditions of youth; especially young women, by offering them learning opportunities and entrepreneurial and employment support; mainly through both vocational training centers (VTCs) in Ramallah and other employment initiatives. This goal has been realized by offering learning opportunities for youth through vocational training; including livelihood training, short courses, and diplomas based on the assessment of market needs. YWCA of Palestine capitalizes job-readiness training and on-job training and placement as a tool to integrate youth into the market labor.

Other Stakeholders Relevant to the Evaluation

Key stakeholders include 4 YWCA staff, 3 partner CBOs in different areas across the West Bank, and 15-20 of the targeted youth and their families.

Presentation of the Relevant Environment and Challenge

The project was implemented in a challenging environment shaped by political instability, the COVID-19 pandemic, and economic deterioration. Mobility restrictions and limited access to education centers further hindered implementation. Despite these difficulties, YWCA adopted innovative approaches, including hybrid training modality and formal and non-formal learning opportunities.

Crisis Escalation in the West Bank

In light of the absence of human rights international law and political resolution, the situation in the West Bank has been worsened dramatically due to multifaceted factors such as increased human rights violations, movement restrictions, detentions, settler violence, destruction of property, high levels of debt, use of savings, aid dependency, and negative coping strategies to meet basic needs. Demographics and urbanization are adding factors to the reduction of resilience and the inability to recover.

The West Bank, according to the Oslo Accords, is divided into 3 areas A, B, and C, each under different administrative and security regulations causing further restrictions on Palestinians. This has resulted in fragmenting and isolating Palestinian families from each other, services, economy, and social life affecting directly the well-being of Palestinians especially the youth (OCHA, humanitarian response plan 2023).

Socioeconomic progress is pleading due to soaring unemployment and the bankruptcy of the Palestinian Authority. A total of 306,000 jobs have been lost in the West Bank. The quarterly gross domestic product shrank by 19% and unemployment reached 57% (UNCTAD, 2024).

The agricultural sector is under restrictions causing long-term consequences for nutrition, food security, and poverty. Most Palestinian villages are closed and new checkpoints have been deployed totaling 700 checkpoints by February 2024. Furthermore, public employees in the West Bank receive 60% of wages resulting in a \$102 million governmental debt to employees. On the other hand, "40% of private sector workers in the West Bank experienced a wage reduction of about 20%. The job losses translate into labor income loss, estimated at \$21.7 million per day. Adding the reduction in salaries of public and private sector employees raises the sum to \$25.5 million per day." (UNCTAD, 2024 P.10)

Settlements – in the West Bank - are illegal under international law. They alter the demographic composition in the Palestinian Territory such as fragmenting the Palestinian geography and markets by confiscating land, water, and natural resources. Settler's violence including intimidating, physical assaults, crop destruction, and vandalism has increased to eight incidents per day vs. three incidents in 2023 (OHCHR, 2024) to reach 649 recorded incidents in the first half of 2024 (NRC, 2024).

Crisis Impact on YWCA of Palestine

The factors outlined below significantly impact the functionality, sustainability, and strategic priorities of YWCA of Palestine:

1. The service delivery and outreach are restricted due to checkpoints, settlers' violence, and territorial divisions.
2. Long-term sustainability and innovation are limited due to reliance on external restricted aids.
3. Isolation of youth and women to fully participate and engage in empowerment and advocacy programs due to fragmentation
4. Economic hardships and violence increase the psychosocial demand
5. Agricultural restrictions, land confiscation, and water alleviate poverty, limit adaptations to livelihoods, and harm food security
6. Staff safety is threatened due to increased settlers' violence
7. Economic hardships shift focus from development to relief

The ongoing crisis in the West Bank impacts women intensifying their vulnerabilities due to political instability, economic hardship, and social discrimination:

1. Economic hardship with increased poverty, wage cuts, and unpaid care burdens.
2. Restricted mobility limiting access to education, healthcare, and employment.
3. Escalated GBV and limited access to reproductive healthcare, exacerbate mental health challenges.
4. Educational disruptions and rising early marriages are driven by financial instability.
5. Increased rate of depression and suicide as signs of mental health crises.
6. Shrinking safe spaces and limited funding for inclusive programs

Funding Source

The project is funded by Brot für die Welt (BFTW) with contributions from other donors e.g. UNFPA, World YWCA, AWDF.

When Did the Last Evaluation Take Place?

The last evaluation for a similar project was conducted in 2021, and it provided recommendations for developing VTC intervention.

Project Background

The current project focuses on increasing the living conditions of youth; especially young women, by offering them learning opportunities and entrepreneurial and employment support; mainly through both vocational training centers (VTCs) in Ramallah and other employment initiatives. This goal has been realized by offering learning opportunities for youth through vocational training; including livelihood training, short courses, and diplomas based on the assessment of market needs. YWCA of Palestine capitalizes on job-readiness training and on-the-job training and placement as a tool to integrate youth into the labor market.

YWCA of Palestine capitalizes on job-readiness training and on-the-job training and placement as a tool to integrate youth into the labor market. Despite challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic, political

instability, and economic hardships, the project sustained its operations by adopting innovative solutions, including virtual learning. Lessons learned during the pandemic, such as blended approaches for training and meetings, continue to shape the YWCA's practices.

Looking ahead, the project planned to target 2,530 youth through economic empowerment activities, including 515 VTC students, 150 women in rural areas, and 45 young entrepreneurs. The project also involves raising awareness about Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) among 1,820 students, parents, and teachers. By fostering partnerships with local organizations and adapting strategies based on participatory assessments, YWCA remains committed to addressing barriers to youth and women's economic participation and driving sustainable development in Palestine.

Specific project outcomes and output are as follows:

Outcome 1: Skills Development This outcome focuses on equipping youth, particularly young women, with market-driven technical and vocational knowledge and skills that empower them to improve their livelihoods. By providing education through the Vocational Training Centers (VTCs), the project aims to reduce the mismatch between labor market needs and the skills of new entrants or the unemployed.

Outcome 2: Labour Market Transition This outcome seeks to facilitate the transition of youth from technical and vocational education (TVET) to the labor market. The project adopts two key strategies: establishing connections between VTC students and potential employers from CBOs and the private sector and supporting young entrepreneurs through an entrepreneurship incubator.

Outcome 3: Enabling Environment This outcome aims to strengthen the YWCA's institutional capacity to implement its economic empowerment strategy and promote a supportive environment for high-quality TVET. Enhanced capacities in sustainability, resource mobilization, and MEL will enable YWCA to achieve better results and advocate for the importance of TVET among influential community stakeholders, thereby empowering youth and women economically.

Purpose of the evaluation

Conduct end-of-project evaluation that aims to assess the outcomes of the project in terms of its impact on livelihoods, particularly for women, through market-driven technical, and vocational education, as well as YWCA economic empowerment strategy. The evaluation will specifically focus on:

- Assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, coherence and sustainability of the project.
- Identify key lessons learned and best practices: identifying factors that positively or negatively affect progress. Where necessary, suggest adjustments to the expected achievement levels of objectives and propose corrective actions to enable systemic change.
- Analyze the project's implementation strategies in terms of their potential effectiveness in reaching outcomes and impacts, including the anticipated results outlined in the project.

Strategic recommendations to enhance project implementation and achieve objectives. The consultant must facilitate increased learning opportunities and program decision-making for the next project. The consultant is

expected to collaborate, participate, and respond to the needs of YWCA staff. The evaluation is scheduled to be implemented from March to June 2025 to inform the design of future interventions. The evaluation results will be utilized by YWCA of Palestine to improve future project design, implementation, and resource allocation.

Evaluation Key Questions

The evaluation should be conducted according to the OEDC/DAC criteria for evaluations and should provide information about the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the project in concrete as well as in a broader context.

Relevance:

- To what extent do the project's objectives align with the needs of youth, especially young women, in the West Bank?
- How well does the project address the current job market demands and skills gaps?
- How aligned is YWCA's organizational strategy with its current and future goals for economic empowerment?

Effectiveness:

- To what extent has the project improved the livelihoods of youth, particularly young women, through market-driven technical and vocational education?
- What were the main factors contributing to or hindering success (SWOT Analysis)?
- To what extent are the project objectives and indicators likely to be achieved?
- Are the project objectives and indicators realistic, considering the social and economic context of the target area?
- Was the project effective in addressing the needs of beneficiaries?

Efficiency:

- Were resources utilized efficiently and effectively to achieve the desired organizational results?
- How cost-effective was the project managed in terms of timelines, budget management, and resource utilization?
- What potential improvements can be identified to enhance the efficiency of the project?
- Is there a results-oriented monitoring system in place?

Impact:

- What measurable impact has the project contributed to livelihoods and socio-economic status for youth, especially women, in the West Bank?
- Did the project contribute to increasing awareness about vocational education? What additional outcomes and impacts (both intended and unintended, positive and negative) have been achieved?

Sustainability:

- Are the positive changes likely to continue beyond the project period?

- How effective were the capacity-building efforts for YWCA staff and partners?
- What opportunities exist to strengthen sustainability at the target group level, and what are the implications for future project implementation?

Coherence

- How well does the project align with the overall mission, strategies, and priorities of the YWCA of Palestine?
- How well did the project align with international commitments, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Evaluation Design

1. Review project data
2. Conduct key informant interviews with stakeholders (YWCA staff, CBO partners)
3. Conduct Focus group discussions with beneficiaries
4. Qualitative data collection
5. Develop surveys to assess outcomes related to skills acquisition and employment
6. Evidence-based findings and provision of recommendations for future projects.

The evaluator will be expected to provide a detailed methodology for data collection and analysis based on the Key Evaluation Questions above. This can be negotiated and refined between YWCA staff and the evaluator.

Deliverables

1. Inception Report: The report is prepared by the evaluator to ensure a full understanding of the assignment and it includes a presentation of the assignment concept, evaluation methods, a timeframe, and potential restrictions. This task should not take longer than 2-3 weeks after accepting the offer. (10 pages, in English)
2. Draft evaluation report
3. Final evaluation report (including an Executive Summary (3-pages), Main Report (25-pages, without annex), and a 1-page brief) which includes recommendations for future programming
4. Presentation of findings and solid recommendations for future projects.

The evaluation report should be structured as the following:

1. Cover sheet with
 - project title
 - project number
 - implementing organization
 - evaluator – author
 - report date
 - region/country
 - possibly project period
2. Table of contents

3. List of Abbreviation

4. Summary

- short presentation of the subject matter of the evaluation, possibly including key framework conditions,
- brief information on the evaluation: Cause and objective, assessment period,
- key findings and
- key recommendations;

5. Short description of the subject matter of the evaluation

- project/program/instrument (idea, target group, formulated objectives),
- implementing organization, term, donors;

6. Framework conditions (only as far as relevant to the subject matter of the evaluation)

- Political, economic, ecological, societal and socio-cultural factors,
- Risks to project success, assumptions/prerequisites,
- Relevant activities of other organizations/private-sector companies,
- Role of government actors;

7. Description of the evaluation and the methodology used

- Timing of the evaluation within the course of the project
- Composition/expertise of the evaluation team
- Methodology
- Groups of people involved, number of participants
- Potential difficulties in conducting the evaluation and how to deal with them

8. Results

- Relevance
- Coherence
- Effectiveness
- Efficiency
- Impact
- Sustainability

9. Recommendations (based on findings, realistic, specific and addressed)

10. General conclusions (lessons learned)

- for the project type (including exemplary nature)
- regarding the procedures and instruments

11. Appendix

- Terms of Reference,
- Sources (discussion partners, documents, specialist literature, field research etc)
- Composition evaluation team (names, nationality, expertise, current occupation, task in the evaluation)

The report must be written in English, ensuring clarity and accessibility for all readers. References to sources used, such as interviews, literature, reports, etc., must be given.

Schedule

Phase	Deliverable	2025			
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
End of Project Evaluation	Inception report				
	Data collection				
	Final Report				
	Presentation of Findings				

Evaluation Team and Qualifications

YWCA of Palestine seeks to engage the services of an independent consultant/firms, who have the following experience and expertise in project/program evaluation:

Qualifications of Evaluation Team Leader

- Master's Degree Education in a related area e.g. Social Science, Development, Business administration
- 7-10 years of experience in evaluation in the education, and development sector, preferably related to the TVET sector in Palestine, and experience assessing the vocational services.
- Knowledge and understanding of the vocational education context in Palestine.
- Experience using participatory methods of evaluation
- Vocational education improvement projects, with the ability to understand from a program and/or project manager's perspective what would be useful information and recommendations from this evaluation.
- Ability to analyze quantitative and qualitative data.
- Demonstrated track record of producing high-quality evaluations.
- The person/team can move freely across the West Bank and have a work permit in the area of work.

Application Procedures

Interested applicants are requested to submit the technical and financial proposal information as part of the initial screening. The following documents should be submitted via email to YWCA of Palestine's Procurement Department procurement@ywca.ps no later than **Wednesday, March 19, 2025**. The proposal shall include:

1. Cover Letter, signed by a duly authorized representative of the Applicant's organization, mentioning the total bid amount.
2. Profile (CV, authorized certificate and registrations, past experiences, and 3 references letters)
3. Technical Proposal outlining the methods to be used, along with a brief explanation and justification for the approach.
4. Financial Proposal, kindly provide your proposal in Euro including VAT/Makassa: This should cover expert fees as well as any ancillary expenses (transportation, accommodation, taxes, fees, workshops, and other related costs).
5. Profile of consultancy firm, CVs of lead and team member(s), and only CVs of persons in case of individuals to carry out assignment.
6. An example of a recent/relevant assignment report

Confidentiality

The evaluator/s agrees to not divulge confidential information to any person for any reason during or after completion of this contract with YWCA of Palestine. Upon completion or termination of this contract, the evaluator/s undertake to return to YWCA of Palestine any materials, files, or property in their possession that relate to the business affairs of YWCA. The consultant is responsible for the safety, security, and administration of primary and secondary data collection.

Intellectual Property

All intellectual property and/or copyright material produced by the evaluator/s whilst under contract to YWCA of Palestine remain the property of YWCA of Palestine and will not be shared with third parties without the express permission of YWCA. The evaluator/s are required to surrender any copyrighted material created during the term of the contract to YWCA upon completion or termination of the contract.

Ethical and other considerations

The evaluator and evaluation team are expected to maintain high professional and ethical standards and comply with YWCA of Palestine's internal policies. YWCA is committed to ensuring a safe environment and culture for all people, and with whom we come in contact during our work. All members of the evaluation team will be required to comply with YWCA Safeguarding Policy and sign the Safeguarding Code of Conduct.