

## Terms of Reference: Interim and Final External Evaluation of the project “Tackling Security Force Abuses”

### About EHRAC

We are a team of expert lawyers and NGO-management professionals, specialising in international human rights law, focusing primarily on the European Convention on Human Rights. We operate as an independent human rights centre, based within Middlesex University School of Law, London.

We use international legal mechanisms to challenge serious human rights abuses in Russia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia and Ukraine, in partnership with committed local lawyers and NGOs. We aim to secure justice for victims of human rights violations and their families, and bring about lasting systemic change in the region.

We build and strengthen the expertise of human rights lawyers and NGOs operating in challenging circumstances by providing long-term legal mentoring, bespoke training, and ongoing advice and support. Working in close collaboration, we take ground-breaking cases on behalf of marginalised communities. We set new international legal precedents which improve human rights standards, and advocate to ensure that state authorities fulfil their human rights obligations.

### Background to the consultancy

In 2020 we began a new two-year project titled “Tackling Security Force Abuses”. We are searching for a consultant(s) to conduct a mid-term and final project external evaluation of the project. The mid-term evaluation (to be completed by the end of September 2021) should be internally/operationally focused, exploring project delivery, identifying lessons and developing recommendations with our team for year two of the project. The final evaluation should be completed by the project end date (project end date is currently 30 September 2022) and should focus on achievement of objectives, results and identifying any (potential) outcomes.

### Project summary

The project will seek to build the capacity of human rights lawyers in our target region to seek justice and advocate for the resolution of enforced disappearances and other abuses perpetrated (or allegedly perpetrated) by security forces. Working closely with local partners, CSOs and international experts, EHRAC will carry out legal advocacy activities before international human rights fora; deliver a training and mentoring programme to lawyers; organise international workshops to exchange experiences; and develop resources to ensure they can effectively seek redress, challenge impunity and advocate for change.

### Project Evaluation Plan

During the project, EHRAC will use an outcome harvesting inspired approach to identify, monitor and record outcomes achieved on an institutional, organisation or law/policy level as the project progresses. The flexibility of outcomes harvesting will allow the same methodology to be used across all advocacy and litigation activities in order to capture specific instances of change in relation to attitude, behaviours and actions in relation to national authorities; organisational capacity; networks of human rights defenders; and law and policy developments in the context of accountability and security force violations.

EHRAC will also collect relevant self-assessment/self-reported data related to capacity building activities such as mentoring and legal clinics which will be available for independent review for the external evaluator (collected through forms, follow up emails and interviews by EHRAC staff).

The interim and final evaluations must also incorporate an intersectional gender equality analysis<sup>1</sup>. Our detailed evaluation plan will be shared with the successful tenderer. Due to the sensitivity of the project we are unable to share the project logframe or documents at this stage of the tendering process.

## Scope of Work

As EHRAC will be collecting M&E data throughout the project as part of its organisational evaluation strategy, the purpose of the external evaluation is to:

- Add a layer of independence in the analysis and interpretation of data collected
- Conduct additional data collection to help verify/triangulate findings; and fill gaps in areas where independent data collection is more appropriate
- Facilitate reflection and learning from the evaluation data
- Prepare interim and final evaluation reports

The project has involved developing a number of new staff roles, and branching out in to some new types of activities, and new ways of working – we have particular interest in understanding how effective these activities are and whether there are learnings from this project which could have relevance to the wider organisation.

## Interim Evaluation

Key evaluation Questions<sup>2</sup>:

1. To what extent did the project design and methodology reflect the needs of those affected by security force violations? And the priorities of our partner lawyers?
2. What progress have we (EHRAC and its implementing partners) made towards achieving our project objectives and outcomes?
3. Relationships: To what extent are EHRAC and the implementing partners satisfied with the level of communication, coordination and collaboration between them and EHRAC??
4. What internal and external factors have enabled our success/been a barrier to our progress?
5. What (if anything) do we need to prioritise or do differently in year two to help us achieve our intended objectives and outcomes?
6. What improvement should we make to our M&E processes (or other project management approaches) for year two of the project?

Key tasks:

- Document review
- Independent analysis of M&E data collected by EHRAC and partners
- Critical review of our 'outcomes bank' (based on a outcomes harvesting)
- Delivery of stakeholder survey (seeking input from project stakeholders)

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<sup>1</sup> EHRAC is in the process of developing a more detailed plan for incorporating an intersectional gender equality lens to its M&E activities which will be shared with the evaluator.

<sup>2</sup> An intersectional gender equality lens should be incorporated into all of the questions.

- Small interview programme/workshops/group meetings with relevant project stakeholders (EHRAC staff, partners and project participants/people supported) (structure and format to be agreed with external evaluator)

## Final Evaluation

Key evaluation questions:

1. To what extent did we achieve our project objectives and intended outcomes (as defined in our project proposal)?
2. Did EHRAC deliver on its promises and commitments to project partners under the project? In what other ways could we have met our commitments or improved the ways we collaborate with our project partners?
3. In which ways did our our legal resource and international roundtable programme contribute to the legal, research and advocacy work of those reached/engaged? Should EHRAC consider replicating these types of activities in the future for projects with similar objectives?
4. What changes have the lawyers/HRDs engaged in our project made to: their litigation and advocacy plans and strategies, and/or specific cases and submissions, as a result of this project? and how has this contributed to the wider litigation and advocacy work they are involved in?
5. What were the most significant outcomes and (potential) impacts for the project stakeholders in relation to accountability which the project has contributed to?
6. What have been the main learnings for EHRAC: What did we learn from our partners?; What worked well and what didn't in relation to the way we implemented and coordinated the project? What could we do differently in the future to maximise the efficiency, effectiveness or impact of similar projects?

Key tasks:

- Document review (key project documents, resources/research products generated by the project, advocacy submissions, donor reports, partner reports).
- Independent analysis of M&E data collected by EHRAC and partners
- Critical review of our 'outcomes bank' (based on a outcomes harvesting)
- Design and delivery of a stakeholder survey (seeking input from project stakeholders)
- Interview programme/workshops/group meetings with relevant project stakeholders (EHRAC staff, partners and project participants/people supported) (structure and format to be agreed with external evaluator)

All evaluation questions are draft, and should be iterated and agreed with the evaluator and steering group.

## Steering Group

An evaluation steering group will oversee the evaluation, consisting of EHRAC's Evaluation Advisor, SFV Project Officer, SFV Project Lawyer, Litigation Director, and representation from our partner organisations.

## Experience required

- Experience (at least 3 years) of conducting interim and end project evaluations for institutional donor/government funded projects (EU, DFID, USAID, USDRL or similar).
- Experience of conducting evaluations for human rights projects, (desirable: experience in conducting evaluations with capacity building and/or litigation/advocacy components).

- Experience of (or demonstrable interest in) incorporating a intersectional equality lens into evaluations.
- Experience with (or sufficient understanding of the principles of) outcomes harvesting.
- Experience of conducting evaluations in our target region, or prior knowledge of the region and its challenges would be a significant advantage (but not strictly essential).

All applicants should be fully independent from the project, and not have had any significant prior relationship with the project design or implementation.

## Timing

	<b>Key event/deliverable</b>	<b>Date</b>
Set-up	Application Deadline	24 May 2021
	Consultant Selection	24/May – 31 May 2021
	Contracting	31 May - 8 June 2021
	Inception Report	30 June 2021
	Inception Report Signed off by EHRAC	12 July 2021
Interim Evaluation	Interim evaluation: Data review/collection	12 July
	Interim Findings and Recommendations Workshop	No later than September 1 <sup>st</sup> 2021
	Interim Evaluation Report Submitted	20 September 2021
	Feedback and iteration of report	20-30 September
	Interim Evaluation Report Sign-off by EHRAC	30 September 2022
Final Evaluation*	Updated workplan/inception report for end of project evaluation	1 Feb 2022
	Updated workplan agreed	15 Feb 2022
	Data collection/analysis	1 Jun – 30 August 2022 (TBA)
	Interim Findings and Recommendations Workshop	No later than 10 September 2022 (TBA)
	Final Evaluation Report submitted	20 September 2022
	Feedback and iteration of report	1 October – 15 October 2022
	Interim Evaluation Report Sign-off by EHRAC	30 October 2022

## Budget

We are offering a maximum of £11,000 for this consultancy, which must include all relevant taxes, or costs required to conduct the evaluation, including travel (if proposed by the evaluator<sup>3</sup>).

## Application & Selection

To apply, please send the following to the SFV Project Officer, Charlotta Blomqvist ([C.blomqvist@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:C.blomqvist@mdx.ac.uk)) by the 24 May 2021:

- CV
- Cover letter outlining relevant experience and proposed approach and detailed/itemized budget (including day rate) - no more than 2 pages

<sup>3</sup> We are currently working on the assumption that no travel will be possible or required at the interim evaluation stage. If the evaluator feels travel would be required for the end of project evaluation, this should be included in their budget and detailed in their proposal – however travel is not a requirement and we welcome remote methodologies.

- Writing sample from a similar evaluation
- Details of at least one referee

As we already have an agreed methodology for the evaluation, we are most interested in hearing how you would plan to work with our team, facilitate learning, engage with project stakeholders (including mitigating challenges concerning access and security) etc.

Our preferred applicant(s) will be asked to prepare a more detailed proposal/outline which will include a more detailed plan, consideration of risks/ethics, data limitations etc.

We will assess proposals based on:

- The applicant's understanding of the scope of work and our specific needs
- The applicant's experience of delivering similar projects
- Quality of the proposal
- Value for money

## **Annex 1: EHRAC Evaluation Guidelines**

### **EHRAC Evaluation Quality Guidelines<sup>4</sup>**

These guidelines are designed to help ensure any project, programme or organisational level evaluations meet the quality standards expected by EHRAC. These guidelines should be shared with any external evaluation consultants conducting an evaluation, and referred to in the terms of reference and relevant contracts to ensure all parties have a mutual understanding of what to expect.

Ensuring these quality standards are followed/met will help to ensure the evaluation report, findings and recommendations are trusted, meaningful and usable by the EHRAC team and to help ensure the evaluation process runs smoothly.

We have used the OECD Evaluation Criteria to structure these guidelines and harmonise them with the evaluation process.

#### **Relevance & Coherence**

1. Data collection and findings should be related to the key evaluation questions agreed between the evaluator and EHRAC. Priority should be given to collecting and analysing information which directly responds to these questions. If any additional information is gathered which the evaluator thinks may be of use to EHRAC, but does not relate to the key evaluation questions, these should be included in a separate annex.
2. Findings, analysis and recommendations should be specific enough for EHRAC to meaningfully use them (where this would not affect the confidentiality of anyone involved in the evaluation). Evaluator's should avoid using broad and over-arching terms wherever possible, and be specific as to what the finding/conclusions relates to. In the context of interviews, this might require the evaluator to ensure they have fully comprehended and understood the detail and context of what has been shared with them (see next point).

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<sup>4</sup> Please note these guidelines are in the process of review as part of our ongoing work to consider a gender+ lens in our evaluation, and an updated version will be provided at contracting stage.

3. EHRAC's work is focused on litigation and engagement with international human rights bodies - whilst we do not expect external evaluators to necessarily have a background in law, it is imperative that they have a good understanding of the context and proactively seek clarity and advice on any areas which they are uncertain of or unclear on to ensure that any findings reported are coherent.
4. There should be a logical (and often explicit) connection between any conclusions or opinions detailed and the evidence collected. Only those findings with a reliable/significant evidence base should be included. If there is a potential finding of interest, but there is only limited data to support it, this should either be included in a separate annex, or the limitation detailed in the report.

### Effectiveness

1. Limitations of the data used and/or the findings should be detailed in the report. As all data and methodologies have limitations, articulating these helps to ensure that findings are interpreted proportionally, and with the appropriate degree of confidence and caution. This should include, amongst others things, any limitations arising due to the absence of certain individuals/perspectives from the evaluation.
2. Findings reported should be proportional to the quality and quantity of data collected, and to their significance within the wider body of data collected.
3. The evaluator should make clear in the report which recommendations are their own, and which recommendations/suggestions come from any stakeholders interviewed.
4. Copies of the data collection tools used should be submitted to EHRAC.
5. Data collected from stakeholders should be treated ethically and with integrity i.e. ensuring compliance with relevant data protection standards, ensuring anonymity/confidentiality where promised, ensuring participants fully understand and consent to their involvement and how the information they share will be used.

### Efficiency

1. The design of the evaluation should be considerate of the use of key stakeholders' time – this includes EHRAC staff, lawyers, partners, court officials, applicants etc. Many of EHRAC's staff and partners are time-short. Careful planning should be conducted to ensure their time is used to provide new and or meaningful information that could not be accessed elsewhere.
2. The evaluation should make use of existing data, documents or information already collected by EHRAC where appropriate to do and where this would not limit the quality of the information used. Priority should be given to generating data which EHRAC has not yet been able to collect and/or requires an independent/impartial person to collect/analyse.
3. The report should be concise and direct and include an executive summary.

### Impact & Sustainability

1. Recommendations provided should be clear and realistic of EHRAC's operating contexts and resources so that EHRAC can best respond to and/or implement them. You may wish to involve EHRAC in the process of developing recommendations or asking them to respond to preliminary recommendations to help guide this process.
2. Where appropriate to do so, timelines or suggested timelines should be included for recommendations which require implementation by a certain date or deadline. e.g. for an interim evaluation it may be required for EHRAC to respond to/address a problem before a certain phase of the project commences/finishes.
3. Wherever possible, findings should be presented in a variety of ways to engage staff and increase the potential for them to make use of the findings. Use of graphs, charts, tables etc. will help to make the report more accessible; or organising a meeting/oral presentation of the findings.

4. Unless otherwise stipulated in the terms of reference, evaluations should have a forward-looking component, to ensure EHRAC can meaningfully learn from and adapt future projects and programmes in light of these findings. Presenting recommendations with reference to EHRAC's wider programming and strategy will help to ensure the evaluation is meaningfully engaged with and used to help inform future projects and programmes.