

**ÉVALUATION DES INTERVENTIONS EN MATIÈRE D'ÉDUCATION AU DÉVELOPPEMENT ET DE
SENSIBILISATION DE L'OPINION PUBLIQUE LUXEMBOURGEOISE DE L'ONG COMITE POUR UNE PAIX
JUSTE AU PROCHE - ORIENT**

En 2020, la Direction de la coopération au développement et de l'action humanitaire du ministère des Affaires étrangères et européennes a commandé une évaluation indépendante de l'ONG Comité pour une paix juste au Proche - Orient. L'évaluation a été réalisée par le Cota. Le ministère publie ci-après un résumé des principaux résultats de cet exercice.

Les observations, appréciations et recommandations exprimées dans ce document représentent les points de vue des évaluateurs et ne reflètent pas nécessairement celles du ministère.



Évaluation réalisée, pour le COTA Asbl, par :

Thibault SIMONET (Chef de mission)
Elsa KERAUDREN (Consultante associée)
Éric DAVID (Consultant thématique)

Le masculin est utilisé dans ce rapport de manière générique, sans discrimination et dans le seul but d'alléger le texte. Les évaluateurs remercient l'ensemble des contributeurs pour leur disponibilité et la qualité des échanges dans la préparation de ce rapport.



LE GOUVERNEMENT
DU GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG
Ministère des Affaires étrangères et européennes

Direction de la coopération au développement et de
l'action humanitaire

6, rue de la Congrégation
LUXEMBOURG



COTA asbl

Rue de la Révolution 7
1000 Bruxelles

BELGIQUE

Tél. : 0032 02 218 18 96
Fax : 0032 02 223 14 96

Site : www.cota.be

TVA : BE0420280412
Banque : BE91 0680 7773 1076

« *Registre des personnes morales de Bruxelles* »

1. THE PURPOSE OF THE REVIEW

This review has been commissioned by the Directorate of Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Action of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (MAEE) of Luxembourg, according to the terms set out in the General Conditions Governing the Contractual Relations between the MAEE and NGOs.¹ According to the review's terms of reference (TOR), CPJPO is responding to a request from the MAEE to clarify some information, in particular because "*in the context of the execution of its projects, CPJPO's (financial) planning and reporting capabilities could be significantly improved*".²

This review had four objectives. First of all, the aim was to quantitatively and qualitatively assess the implementation of activities, including the efforts of adjustment that were made, as well as the outcomes achieved, in relation to the overall objectives, specific objectives and expected results that were initially formulated. Secondly, this review aimed to assess whether CPJPO's strategic and operational approach is in line with the priorities and strategies of the MAEE and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), using as a basis for this assessment the General Conditions Governing the Contractual Relations between the MAEE and NGOs, the Code of Conduct regarding NGOs' messages and images, and the Charter on Sustainable Development Education. Thirdly, this review aimed to assess CPJPO's ability to plan and implement its projects, by analysing its organisation and financial management capacities, in order to determine, *inter alia*, whether the committee complies with the law pertaining to non-profit associations and foundations, as well as with its own statutes. Finally, the fourth objective of this review assignment was to assess whether CPJPO's selection procedure of partners, who are involved in its annual projects, is objective and balanced, and whether they share common visions and objectives, by evaluating a sample of partnerships.

To achieve these four objectives, this review is organised in two main components: first of all, we have conducted an organizational analysis in order to appraise the different dimensions of CPJPO's management and organisational structure; in order to do this, we analysed the processes of governance, structure and organisation, human resources, partnership, management of funds, project cycle management, monitoring and knowledge management. Second of all, we conducted a thorough review of CPJPO's outreach and development education projects between 2016 and 2019. The projects' activities were assessed on the basis of the review criteria of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD): relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. As with the organizational analysis, all these criteria have been translated into a generic evaluation grid which constitutes the basis of this review report.

2. THE CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW

This review took place in a particular context, marked by the spread of the Covid-19 epidemic in Europe in the first semester of 2020. Following the briefing meeting that was held in Luxembourg on March 12th, 2020, measures were taken by the Belgian (regarding Cota) and Luxembourg authorities (regarding the MAEE and CPJPO), which made it impossible for all parties to organise meetings and interviews in person. This evaluation was therefore conducted exclusively via digital media. While this particular context has not affected the quality of the discussions and the smooth running of the various stages of the review, some limits did emerge which should be stressed. Firstly, we (the evaluators) were unable to observe *in situ* the activities implemented by CPJPO, or the organisation's working meetings and day-to-day operations, and we were not able to have face-to-face meetings with the review's steering committee which could have given more emphasis to the discussions related to the review process and the deliverables.

1 Terms and conditions governing contractual relations between MAEE and NGOs, June 2018, p. 54.

2 Terms of reference, p.6.

In addition, this review is taking place during a key phase for CPJPO, in two ways: on the one hand, both the project coordinator and the chair have initiated a withdrawal from the committee during this review process. The chair is still in office but wants to leave this position; the project coordinator has left her position, but she remains a member of the committee's board. Two people were jointly recruited to replace her, on a 10 hour/week contract. On the other hand, CPJPO wishes to apply for a Development Education Framework Agreement for the period 2022 -2024 (which corresponds to the new planning schedule, following the Ministry's decision to extend the currently running Development Education Framework Agreements for another year, in light of the exceptional circumstances related to the Covid-19 pandemic). As such, this review represents an opportunity for CPJPO to identify key learnings and to fully execute them.

3. THE APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY IMPLEMENTED

To conduct this review, Cota proposed an approach based on cross-evaluative perspectives (accountability, learning, analysis of relationships between actors, analysis of perceptions, impact analysis). The aim of this approach was to identify lessons learnt related to the CPJPO's structure and working processes, as well as to its last four annual projects on outreach and development education. It is a process which aims to capitalize on achievements and "best practices", while also identifying gaps in order to suggest tailored adjustments. The active participation of the various stakeholders in this review process has greatly facilitated the appropriation of the findings, conclusions and recommendations made. The analysis of the relational dynamics between actors which operate within the projects and at their margins, and the possibility of cross-checking the points of views of the different actors, have enabled the evaluators to appreciate the projects' relevance and the diversity of impacts that the projects' activities have been able to generate.

Three successive phases have structured the review process. The introduction and literature review phase took place in March and April 2020; there was an initial literature review, which was followed by 20 semi-direct individual interviews with CPJPO members and representatives of the MAEE, two participatory observations (CPJPO "presidency" meeting and an ordinary general meeting), and a preliminary analysis of CPJPO's statements and stance according to international law.

The field mission phase allowed for the literature review to be continued. While drafting the findings from this phase³, the possibility to go back to the documents and analyse them in parallel allowed, amongst other things, to triangulate the data with the individual perceptions of the interviewees, and to disprove or confirm certain hypotheses. In total, 276 documents were consulted and divided into 17 categories. In addition, 27 additional semi-direct individual interviews were conducted, with external actors to CPJPO, who have collaborated and/or been in contact with the committee before and over the course of the time period under review. We also conducted an online survey, which enabled us to strengthen our analysis of the effects and impact of CPJPO's outreach and development education projects on its target audiences. Comprising 12 closed-ended questions, this survey was sent by CPJPO (in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations - GDPR) to 1,143 people, attaining a total of 136 responses. During this working phase, CPJPO's public statements were analysed a second time according to international law standards, rules and regulations. This analysis was conducted by an expert in international law, Emeritus Professor of Public International Law, whose role and position in the review team was that of thematic consultant. He analysed more than 70 documents produced by CPJPO, used for communication purposes, the press (articles, press), as educational material or to address questions to the Luxembourg parliament between 2016 and 2019. Further participatory observations of CPJPO's internal meetings and working procedures provided us with a better understanding of how the committee works, allowing us to observe the committee's collective dynamics and interpersonal configurations, and to gather factual information about the organization's life (participation to a board meeting and a CPJPO meeting open to its members).

Continuous interactions with CPJPO were crucial during these first two review phases. Indeed, it allowed us to gather and discuss factual information which was essential for the proper conduct of the review and for clarifying certain aspects of the analysis. By giving us access to its internal planning and monitoring tool (Redbooth), the communication was eased, and it allowed the reviewers to have a facilitated access into the daily working and management processes of the organisation.

The third and final phase of the evaluation, which consisted in synthesizing and disseminating the findings of the review process, enabled the review team to analyse and triangulate all the data collected, to write the review report and to discuss it with the parties involved in the review steering committee.

³ See deliverable entitled "Field Mission Report"

4. THE RESULTS OF THE REVIEW

The review validated the achievement of the desired results against the initial objectives. The sum and variety of data collected provided a comprehensive and in-depth analysis of the review's two components, namely the assessment of the organisation and the assessment of the four annual development education projects implemented by CPJPO between 2016 and 2019. The evaluability of the topic was satisfying, meaning that all the different aspects that were planned to be reviewed were evaluated without any exception. The 28 review questions are thus all addressed in this report.

Moreover, the production of intermediate deliverables (briefing note, field mission report, interim report) enabled us to maintain a constant dialogue with the review's stakeholders on the progress of the review process, on the findings and on the formulation of conclusions and recommendations. CPJPO has showed a satisfactory level of ownership of the review process, which will have to be confirmed once this review is over, with the production of a managerial response.

As shown by the conclusions and recommendations summarized below, four main areas of lessons learnt have been identified. The first one relates to CPJPO's structure and organisation, which are on the whole clear and governed by functional mechanisms, but that are also characterized by some visible shortcomings in its reporting and budget monitoring processes. Secondly, we have identified lessons learnt regarding CPJPO's positioning, related to its public statements and its position within Luxembourg's civil society. On this point, CPJPO does not present significant deficiencies, and demonstrates a strong legitimacy and anchorage within the national NGO sector. Thirdly, we have identified lessons learnt regarding the planning, implementing and monitoring of activities; overall, this is CPJPO's main weakness to date. While the organisation is highly efficient and effective in implementing its activities, it has significant planning and reporting deficiencies. This area of work will therefore need to be quickly addressed, in order to enable the committee to establish project management mechanisms that match its current status within Luxembourg's society and its ambition to contribute to social change. Finally, the fourth cluster of lessons learnt concerns CPJPO's relationship with its audiences and partners. These relationships are generally very good, and generate observable positive effects, which should be better documented by the committee so that they can highlight them better.

5. FINDINGS AND BEST PRACTICES

Herein, we present a synthesis of the conclusions and good practices which were identified, according to the four learning clusters mentioned above.

Firstly, we observed that the structure and organisation of CPJPO is clear and adapted to its mission. In particular, the organisation relies on an up-to-date internal rules of procedure document that clarifies the nature, composition and role of each entity that composes the organisation, as well as the relationships between them. The provisions are well understood by members and allow the organisation to operate and develop internal and external relations of quality. CPJPO operates seamlessly, both internally and with its partners. Nevertheless, it is an organisation that is in the process of professionalizing itself – mainly counting on volunteers – which, at the present moment, lacks the means, methods, tools and sometimes rigor to ensure a fully satisfactory level of communication (reporting in particular) around its outreach and development education projects.

Even before the end of this review process, organisational and technical developments have been put in place to address these shortcomings, which will need to be overcome to allow for a fully satisfactory level of dialogue with the Ministry on co-funded projects. CPJPO also faces difficulties in implementing and monitoring its budget. These difficulties are the result of personal mistakes and a lack of control on the part of the governing body, despite the existence of rules and procedures to govern the budget's management and monitoring. The organisational and technical developments mentioned above represent a rapid and adapted response on the part of CPJPO; the viability of these developments will have to be analysed in hindsight.

In terms of the organisation's positioning, we found that the statements conveyed by CPJPO are consistent with international law and respect for human rights. The stakeholders involved in the development education and outreach activities organised by the committee present profiles that respect and fit to the general orientation of the organisation's discourse. The CPJPO's communication material and public statements cannot be equated with propaganda and seem therefore legitimate to be co-financed by the Luxembourg government. In addition, the projects proposed by CPJPO respect the rules and regulations outlined in the reference documents that concern them, such as the Charter on Sustainable Development Education, General Conditions Governing the Contractual Relations between the MAEE and NGOs, or the government's Development Cooperation strategy.

Today, CPJPO is an important actor within Luxembourg's civil society, and it seems to contribute significantly to the highlighting of the consequences of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict among Luxembourg citizens. This position exposes the organisation to disputes and controversies, some of which may have taken up some of its time, energy and resources, without it being detrimental to the proper implementation of its annual outreach and development education projects. More broadly, some contextual elements have slightly influenced the activities implemented by CPJPO in Luxembourg, without any major interference on its projects, however. Furthermore, some factors (e.g. development of partnerships) represent opportunities for the further development of the organisation, while other factors (e.g. the development of the Arab-Palestinian conflict, or the evolution of the public opinion in Luxembourg), do not sit within CPJPO's sphere of influence, but can be anticipated or accompanied to limit their negative impact.

The CPJPO's main weakness is its planning and monitoring capacities. Here the organisation can still make significant progress. First of all, while the committee's outreach and development education projects have been designed based on real and identified issues, they have not been formulated on the basis of a baseline study.

This has an impact on CPJPO's capacity to monitor the resolution of the issues identified upstream (at the level of expected results and outcomes), because the absence of a baseline and measurable objectively verifiable indicators (OVIs) hampers the possibility of accurately monitoring and evaluating the outputs and outcomes of the implemented activities. CPJPO, however, is very effective in implementing its activities, both autonomously and with its partners, and overall manages to reach its target audiences as expected. It is also important to note that this effectiveness is achieved with few resources, especially when taking into consideration the high number of activities implemented and the quality of observable effects.

CPJPO demonstrates a good use of its human and financial resources, and it is considered that it could not achieve the same results and impact with fewer resources. The invited guest speakers, and the media and content that is used by the organisation, are compatible with the projects' objectives and contribute to their achievement. The projects' objectives have on the whole been achieved within the prescribed time limits, despite the fact that some activities were postponed, and changes were made to the initial project planning, which were more or less well anticipated, justified and communicated.

Furthermore, the intervention logics of CPJPO's annual outreach and development education projects are viable and relevant, even though there are some visible methodological shortcomings. For instance, the projects' overall objective was reformulated between 2016 and 2019 without a satisfactory strategic justification; some objectives and expected results are not properly formulated, and most of the formulated indicators are neither objectively verifiable nor SMART⁴, which does not allow for an accurate monitoring of the implemented activities.

Beyond the indicators, the monitoring and evaluation tools currently used by CPJPO do not allow for a precise and regular monitoring of the project activities' effects and impact. While the committee is able to gather qualitative information at the end of its projects, particularly from the school audience, it is not able to provide a regular assessment of the evolution of its target audiences' perceptions and representations with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the role played by its projects in these evolutions. CPJPO also struggles to demonstrate in a tangible way the contribution of its outreach and development education projects to the overall formulated objective, which is in essence ambitious, as it aims to improve the living conditions of the Palestinian people.

In addition, with regard to CPJPO's relationship with its target audiences and partners, it can first be noted that the people involved in the committee appreciate the quality of the proposed activities and reap identifiable benefits from them. The review was indeed able to observe the tangible positive effects of CPJPO's activities in Luxembourg, as it is contributing for instance to the consolidation of the targeted audience's critical thinking on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The changes in perception and representation that CPJPO is able to instil in its target audiences in Luxembourg is also an indication of the sustainability of its projects.

⁴ SMART means: specific, measurable, accessible, realistic and temporal.

Finally, CPJPO has a political influence in Luxembourg, which does not necessarily translate into the evolution of legislative texts and norms, but which is quite noticeable. The organization is known in the national political and decision-making sphere and is carefully listened to by some elected officials and political representatives. The collective spaces in which the committee is represented, such as the "Initiative pour un devoir de vigilance", the Political Forum (FOPO) of the development NGOs' Circle⁵, or the board of the development NGOs' Circle, can be considered interesting catalysts to strengthen its political influence. Within these spaces and outside of them, we have been able to observe that CPJPO's partners have similar visions with its own, and the pooling of their resources allows them to contribute to their respective goals. Operational ties are good, and CPJPO offers its partners the opportunity to broaden the themes covered in outreach activities (access to water, colonization, violations of free movement, etc.) by offering several concrete and widely documented examples from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The main recommendations of this review are presented below following the same four learning clusters in which the conclusions and best practices were organised.

With regard to the structure and organisation of CPJPO, in order to address the weaknesses in reporting, **it is firstly suggested that CPJPO establishes a formal working process dedicated to the production of this document.** More broadly, **CPJPO should ensure that all its key working processes are documented in a written manner, by establishing a procedures' manual.** This exercise would allow the committee to give a more formal and rigorous dimension to its working methods. Although CPJPO has limited human resources, we believe that it would be detrimental to the CPJPO not to invest in this effort, because the legitimacy of its discourse and actions also depends on the viability of its work processes.

Furthermore, we recommend CPJPO to be more vigilant in the enforcement, monitoring and control of its expenditures. The corrective measures adopted in the spring of 2020 are a positive sign, but they will need to be consolidated and sustained in order to be effective. **The oversight of the budget and its implementation by the governing bodies, especially from the board, will necessarily have to be narrower.**

The organisation's positioning is generally satisfactory and should simply be consolidated and strengthened. **CPJPO should thus continue its efforts to develop its partnerships and continue to invest collective spaces with high added value,** such as the "Initiative pour un devoir de vigilance". **It is also recommended to the committee to move closer to European organisations that advocate on the same topic,** as the committee has done so in the recent years⁶, in order to **exchange approaches, methods and tools.** **We also recommend CPJPO to benchmark innovative educational practices.**

Planning and monitoring of activities will need to be significantly improved by CPJPO in the short term; this represents the most important area of progress for the committee. First of all, **in order to refine the articulation between its overall objective and its intervention logic, CPJPO could use methodologies derived from change-oriented approaches.** This exercise would allow the committee to clarify its long-term vision, and then to link the project's intervention logic to this vision of change.

⁵ Cercle des ONGD.

⁶ In recent years, CPJPO initiated the creation of a "cross-border collective for Palestine." It lasted 4 years and organized several joint actions. Several active members of the partner associations gradually joined local politics in their localities. The Collective was therefore unable to pursue its work but was only able to occasionally organize events. It is also important to mention that one of CPJPO's administrator is currently the president of the European Coordination of Committees and Associations for Palestine (ECCP), and that the committee maintains regular links with Belgian, French and German organizations engaged on the same topic.

In parallel, **the committee should further document the baseline that justifies the implementation of its projects and propose a more detailed analysis of the gaps and problems identified upstream of its outreach and development education projects.** To do this, **CPJPO should consider conducting baseline studies, aimed at the various target groups it has identified.** This would enable CPJPO to gather useful information for its project planning, to adapt its project activities to the specific expectations and needs of its various targets, and to establish qualitative and quantitative indicators based on a viable and robust baseline. **The indicators proposed in the 2016-2019 projects are overall not functional and will need to be reviewed in order to comply with the SMART methodology.** At each level of the intervention logic (goals, results, activities), CPJPO should formulate objectively verifiable indicators (OVIs) that would accurately monitor and evaluate the planned implementation of activities, as well as the achievement of expected results and contribution to the initially defined objectives. **Quality indicators should be defined to support quantitative indicators,** in order to highlight CPJPO's contribution to tangible changes among its target audiences.

More broadly, in order to improve its monitoring capacities and to optimize the use of the few monitoring and evaluation tools that it has at its disposal today, **we recommend that CPJPO put in place an integrated monitoring and evaluation system.** This will allow the committee to **have a monitoring and evaluation dashboard, to question the relevance of the tools it currently has to collect the expected information, and to develop new monitoring and evaluation tools if necessary.** In order to translate the increased attention it must give to monitoring and evaluation practices into its organisational framework, we recommend **CPJPO to create a working group dedicated to this issue.**

Regarding its relationships with its target audiences and partners, significant improvements could also be made. For instance, **CPJPO could promote recurring activities that take place at regular intervals,** in order to increase the impact of its projects with certain segments of Luxembourg's population, including so-called "captive" audiences (e.g. high-school students). In general, it would be interesting for the committee to think about **andragogical and pedagogical modalities that would engage the public and promote joint production of knowledge and materials, which would have the benefit of increasing the investment of certain target groups, and would thus strengthen the impact of its projects.** More broadly, **CPJPO would benefit from refreshing the tools it uses for its outreach and development education activities;** few of its animation materials appear to be innovative compared to the practices of other development education actors in Luxembourg.

Finally, in order to further improve the quality of its relationship with its various target audiences, and to make the impact of its projects on its ultimate audience (the Palestinian population) and its direct audience (Luxembourg citizens) more widely visible and noticeable, **CPJPO would benefit from improving its capacities in qualitative monitoring and evaluation, by collecting for example positive "stories of change" induced by its action, and by highlighting them in its communication.**

*

In the end, it seems that CPJPO has the "defects of its qualities." Being a small organisation made up of volunteers, the committee has gradually found its place within Luxembourg's civil society. In order to consolidate its status as a recognized NGO and to give itself the means to fully achieve its objectives, CPJPO must now undergo a necessary phase of organizational and methodological consolidation. The approach of strengthening its internal working processes is currently the preferred option to bring coherence between its positioning and its organisational capacities, with the aim of not "doing more" but of always seeking to "do better". The necessary professionalisation of the organisation's practices raises, in the short-term, the question regarding the availability of paid human resources; considering the limitations inherent to volunteer-based projects (availability, skills, accountability, etc.), this consolidation will be difficult to achieve with the current unchanged salaried workforce.