POLICY ON ANTI-CORRUPTION

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This policy forms the basis of Olof Palme International Center's (Palme Center) anti-corruption work and describes how this issue is aligned to our goals and work. Furthermore, the policy outlines the imperatives regarding anti-corruption work and how it will be integrated in our operations. The policy applies to all operations – domestic and international – and must be applied by employees, interns, elected representatives, member organisations and partners in subsequent stages. The implementation is embodied in the action plan for anti-corruption.

The Palme Center defines corruption as an abuse of trust or power that results in improper gain, often financial, for a person, organisation or political party. Corruption includes bribery, embezzlement and fraud as well as bias, nepotism and cronyism.

BACKGROUND

Corruption occurs all over the world, but is more prevalent in countries with a weak government and weak institutions, where the population has little opportunity for influence and where there are major shortcomings in terms of civil participation, transparency and separation of powers[1]. There is a consensus within the research world and the global community that corruption is one of the main obstacles to economic and social development. Calculations show that the cost of corruption is equivalent to more than five per cent of the world's gross national product and over one billion US dollars is paid in bribes every year. Corruption increases the cost of living and restricts or prevents access to basic community services. This results in reduced efficiency and greater inequality, and governments and their key institutions losing legitimacy and public trust. From a social perspective, corruption is inefficient and unjust; it strikes right at the heart of legal certainty and democracy. Fighting corruption and bribery is a global priority and forms part of Goal 16 in Agenda 2030.

In countries with a high general level of corruption, it is likely that corruption will be more common within civil society organisations and political parties. Corruption within organisations can be both financial and non-financial in nature and it hinders the organisations' democratic development while also eroding confidence in them as lobbyists. Fighting corruption is a vital part of the work to improve living conditions, reduce inequality and guarantee equal opportunities. In many ways, fighting corruption is synonymous with working to strengthen democracy. It involves striving for participation, insight and transparency.

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[1] For a description of the situation in a specific country, see Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index.

PALME CENTER'S ANTI-CORRUPTION WORK

The Palme Center's vision is a world of peaceful societies founded on democratic principles and the equality of all people. Therefore, our work is to promote three things: democracy, human rights and peace. Our theory of change is based on the idea that fundamental change is best achieved through organised communities. That means people organising themselves and claiming their rights as a collective.

The Palme Center actively works against corruption in all its forms. Anti-corruption work forms an integral part of our operations. The Palme Center identifies two levels of corruption work within operations; corruption at society level and corruption within organisations.

Anti-corruption work at general society level focuses on support for actors within civil society and political parties who work for human rights, democracy, freedom of the press and of expression, a properly functioning legal system, greater transparency and reduced poverty. This work focuses on highlighting corruption as a social problem and so increasing the public's awareness of the negative impact of corruption on development. In our work against corruption in our operations, we are aware of the risk that our cooperation and partnership can attract corruption. This risk is greater when the value of the funding available within our operations is high in relation to the local economy, if there is a lack of control and if confidence and partnership are weak. Our work is based on trust and partnership and we make it a priority to inspect partners ourselves and to establish local partnerships. We focus on preventive education and on aiding the development of democratically run organisations with clear accountability. The risk of corruption is small in an organisation with well-developed internal democracy.

By establishing, supporting and contributing to changed, more transparent and democratic organisational structures and behavioural patterns, the Palme Center helps in the fight against corruption. The labour movement and civil society have a central role to play as role models, democratic schools and agents of change in the work against corruption.

OPERATIONAL PERIOD PRIORITIES

The Palme Center will, through the broad popular support of partner organisations in the various programme countries, create platforms to work jointly and collaborate with partners around the world to draft a clear role for the labour movement in anti-corruption work.

The Palme Center does not tolerate corruption and it must not occur in our operations. All employees have a responsibility to actively prevent corruption by identifying, highlighting and considering corruption risks in all operations and by reporting suspected irregularities and corruption. During our operational period 2015 – 2019, the Palme Center prioritises to further develop and strengthen our work in this focal area by:

- Developing effective and coherent steering documents and tools to tackle anti-corruption issues.

- Strengthening the integration of anti-corruption work within the partnerships and programmes/projects.

- Increasing awareness and knowledge about the causes and effects of corruption and, in collaboration with member organisations and partners, analysing how it relates to the Palme Center's operations (its staff, active projects, and partners).

WORKING METHODS

To work with the above-mentioned priorities during the operational period 2015 – 2019, the Palme Center will:

- Appoint a person at the secretariat responsible for coordinating and monitoring anti-corruption work. The work should be done in close collaboration and in dialogue with all parties involved.

- Use the steering documents in collaboration with member organisations and partners and integrate these in the projects with member organisations and partners.

- Continue to work with member organisations and partners in its preventive work in order to continually assess corruption risks in all projects, programmes and activities and strengthen good administration and internal governance and control.

- Training of staff of the Palme Center on current methodological material on anti-corruption as well as an induction programme for new employees. This ensures both the training of staff and relevant feedback on existing methods for further development and updating.

- Include training focused on the risks of corruption, organisational development and establishing good administrative systems in the Palme Center's regular training activities for member organisations and partners.

- The Palme Center's website has a function for submitting comments, which also provides the opportunity to make an anonymous report. All cases of suspected irregularities reported in line with this policy will be investigated. The reporting of suspected corruption is encouraged; nobody should feel uncomfortable reporting something suspicious and we protect those providing information.

OWNERSHIP AND MONITORING

This policy is reviewed annually by the board of the Palme Center. The Secretary General is responsible for the compliance with the policy and related documents and ensuring it is updated and relevant. The policy is monitored and followed up annually.