



Supporting a project is like focusing on one particular fruit. Core support is looking at the whole tree and making it stronger.

Project support or core support

Conventionally, the Olof Palme International Center – in exactly the same way as many other organisations that focus on international development work – has primarily worked with **project support**, i.e. support for a limited part of a partner organisation’s operation, where there are clearly defined project goals and sub-goals, as well as clear start and end points. Organisations often run multiple projects and programmes which, together, contribute to the overarching goals and vision of the respective organisation. In providing project support, the Palme Center supports just one of the partner organisation’s projects. A project can therefore be said to be a way of limiting the working relationship.

The distinguishing features of a project are:

- It is limited in time
- It has a separate budget
- It is governed on the basis of a goal, i.e. there is a given result to achieve
- It is managed by a working group that plans and executes activities with a view to achieving the goal
- It is evaluated on completion to establish whether the goal was achieved.

In recent years, partly as a response to developments in the field of international collaboration, the Palme Center has started to shift focus from projects to organisations. Through what is known as **core support** – or **organisation support** – the Center provides support to a partner organisation because we believe in the overarching goals and visions of the organisation in question.

The term “core support” reflects the fact that the funds are paid directly to the partner organisation’s core budget, which means that the organisation can use the funds in the

way that best suits all the operations the organisation runs, i.e. in a way that encompasses all the organisation's projects and programmes.

The benefit of core support is that it contributes to increased local ownership, makes the organisation more flexible and enables it to adapt to changing contexts. Another advantage of core support is that it becomes more natural to hold discussions about organisational development – internal democracy, for example – and to place the emphasis there rather than on individual activities. The focus of core support is therefore on the results of all the operations that the organisation conducts, rather than on a limited number of activities within a given project. The Palme Center believes that democratic development is dependent on free, democratic organisations deployed among the people, and it is therefore a part of our strategy to focus more on organisations and partnerships than on individual projects.

For the Olof Palme International Center to provide core support, the Palme Center must have in-depth understanding and knowledge of the partner organisation. Values are particularly important, as is ensuring that they permeate all operations the organisation conducts. The Palme Center therefore has a number of criteria that apply if an organisation is to be considered eligible to receive core support.

[Contact the relevant programme manager for additional information](#)