

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE: STUDY ON PALME INTERNATIONAL CENTER'S DIGITAL ADAPTATION**

### **Purpose of the study**

The overall purpose of the study is to examine how the Olof Palme International Center (Palme Center), our Member Organisations (MOs) and our Partner Organisations (POs) have adapted to working with digital means as a response to the situation during the Covid-19 pandemic and how this adaptation have impacted different aspects of the operations, such as transparency and participation. In addition to giving us a clearer picture of how Palme Center, our MOs and POs have adapted to the new digital era, the evaluation is intended to provide lessons-learned and recommendations on how to improve our digital working methods, our practice to combine digital and traditional working methods and better assess when digital methods are useful and effective and when it's not.

The results of the evaluation are expected to provide the Palme Center with an overview of what this digital leap forward looks like, and how it has affected the operations. The study will also provide us with suggestions on how to utilise the benefits of digital working methods.

The study is intended to be used as a basis for the Palme Center's planning and implementation of both working methods in relation to POs, and capacity building activities to support partner organisations.

### **Background**

The Palme Center, with its 27 member organisations, constitutes an active hub of the Swedish labour movement's international work articulated through trade unions, political party and civil society organisations. These organisations represent more than one hundred years' experience of promoting political and civic engagement, democratisation and poverty reduction. Through our development partnerships, we seek to empower people to change their own lives. The Palme Center has its main office in Stockholm and several local offices.

The Palme Center is the Swedish labour movement's umbrella organisation for international development cooperation and advocacy. We work together with our 27 Swedish member organisations and 170 local and international partner organisations in 30 countries.

Just before the pandemic outbreak, Palme Center introduced new internal digital working tools. Because of the sudden requirement to work remotely, the implementation of these digital tools was required to happen quickly. These new working methods also needed to be used in the external work within our programmes and more and new tools needed to be introduced. We experience that many partner organisations have adapted their working methods, as well as the operations, to become more digital.

The first issue we are grappling with is how our partner organisations have been affected by us moving much of the capacity building efforts to a digital space, how POs have moved their operations to a digital space and in what way their target groups (the rights holders) have been affect by this change. For example if any change can be traced in relation to level of

engagement, outreach pattern, and the social added value of the operations. Secondly, we want to utilise the new knowledge and experiences from the covid period to improve our working methods and communications. Furthermore, we seek to understand how we can meet our POs' needs regarding their digital adaptation and ensuring of the rightsholders' perspective.

## **Participants**

The outline of the work shall be planned in consultation with the Methods Adviser, Education and Key Account Manager CSO, and the Head of Methods support. Each region will have a contact person to facilitate data collection. The data collection will include contact with programme staff, partner and member organisations, and a sample of rights holders.

Two to five partner organisations, and member organisations when applicable, from each region will be involved as informants. In some cases, representatives from rights holders may be involved. From Palme Center's side, one to two programme managers per region and a few individuals from other staff groups will be involved.

## **The assignment, Scope and Methodology**

The purpose of this study is twofold. Firstly, we want to evaluate how both Palme Center and its partner organisations have adapted to digital working methods since the pandemic outbreak, and what consequences these adaptations have had for the operations and rights holders. Secondly, we wish to get qualified and initiated recommendations and technical advice on how to optimise the benefits of our digital working methods as well as mitigating potential drawbacks.

Draft evaluation questions (to be further elaborated in dialogue with the consultant):

- How has Olof Palme International Center (Palme Center), its Member Organisations (MOs) and Partner Organisations (POs) adapted to working with digital means as a response to the situation during the Covid-19 pandemic?
- Has the adaptation affected Palme Center's intention to work participatory, responsibly, non-discriminatory, and transparently? If so, how?
- How does the digital adaptation affect our work in surveillant, repressive and volatile environment? How can risks be avoided and are there any benefits or possibilities to further explore?
- How should Palme Center make use of the digital methods onwards and combine them with traditional working methods, both in terms of monitoring and in relation to our support to partner organisations' capacity development?

The time frame for this study is December 2021 to March 2022. If the procurement is completed earlier, it is possible to start before December.

The scope of the study is limited to the International Department at Olof Palme International Center. All regions will be covered (Asia, Latin America, Europe, MENA and South Africa). The sample for data collection will be a number of partner organisations per region, and their Swedish partners when applicable, as well as one to two Palme Center staff per region. Besides this, other staff such as Methods advisors and IT-advisors, will be included as informants.

Regarding methodology, Palme Center welcomes creative suggestions from the bidders. The evaluation will begin with a dialogue between the Palme Center and the consultant, where the concrete methods of evaluation, number of interviewees and timeframe will be defined and agreed more in detail.

Interviews and questionnaires will most likely be the main source for data collection, focus groups might be relevant. However, the assignment will start by a review of working methods and technical tools that frequently have been used since February 2020.

The informants from Palme Center should be interviewed while the representants from POs and MOs could be interview or/and asked to fill in a questionnaire. However, it is important to be aware of that not all PO-informants are appropriate to reach through digital means. For that reason, travels may be relevant to one or two of the regions.

The study can be performed from any place of the world, but it may be relevant to travel to either South Africa or Zimbabwe and possibly to an additional region. This will be decided in dialogue with programme staff. So will involvement of rights holders.

The consultant winning the assignment shall present an inception report, where the methodology and work plan is developed in more detail, no later than 15 December.

### **Timeframe and duration**

The evaluations should preferably start no later than December 2021. If the procurement is completed earlier, it is possible to start before December. An inception report should be presented to Palme December by mid-December. The Palme Center will approve the inception report 23 December at the latest. When the inception report is approved, the consultant may continue with the data collection. The consultant is advised to start the data collection in Europe, Asia, MENA or Latin America, since January means holiday season in South Africa.

A first draft of the report should be presented the first week of March and Palme Center will comment the draft within one week. The final report should be submitted 31 March as latest. Beginning of April the consultant will present the results and recommendations in an internal seminar with the Palme Center.

### **Deliverables and reporting**

In the start-up of the assignment a work plan. An inception report will be presented three weeks into the assignment and should include preliminary findings and, based on this, conclusions regarding sample of partner organisations, member organisations, right holders and possible other relevant actors, and a description of how the chosen methods relates to the assignment in practice shall be prepared.

The findings, conclusion and recommendations should be presented in a report, not exceeding 40 pages. The report should be addressed to Palme International Center. The report should describe facts, draw conclusions and provide qualified and initiated recommendations and technical advice on how to optimise the benefits of Palme Center's digital working methods and avoiding drawbacks of them. The evaluation report shall at least contain;

- Index
- Summery
- Background
- The purpose of the evaluation
- The scope of the evaluation, work carried out within the assignment, methodology and limitations
- Observations, analysis, assessment, and conclusions
- Recommendations
- Attachments (ToR, reference list, list of people interviewed and in which location, interview questions, etc.)

The final report shall be presented in (at least) one oral presentation in seminar with Palme Center staff. A meeting some time after the assignment has been completed, to further discuss and follow up on recommendations.

Palme Center expect continuous reconciliations with the consultant throughout the assignment. Palme Center will be the sole owner of the results of the assignment.

## Requirements

The Palme Center expects the consultant/s to have the following qualifications:

1. Experience and knowledge of digital transformation and ability to analyse the human, collaboration, and organisational aspects of digitalisation.
2. Insights and knowledge of international development cooperation.
3. A documented knowledge in in-depth analysis based on interviews and other types of qualitative data collection, as well as a good capacity of reporting results and conclusions.
3. Documented theoretical and practical experiences with monitoring and evaluation.
4. Theoretical knowledge of the human rights-based approach.

Meriting:

1. Documented theoretical and practical experiences with evaluations of international development cooperation, and practical experience of the human rights-based approach.
2. Knowledge about the contexts of the programme countries.
3. Have relevant theoretical knowledge/have worked practically with the areas of work of the Palme Center and its partner organisations.
4. A cost effective and affordable tender.

## Compensation

The budget and remuneration for the assignment will be according to the winning bid but cannot exceed 500 000 SEK.

- First payment: 10% at the start of the assignment after the agreement has been signed and upon receiving an invoice from the consultant.
- Second payment: 40% of the budget after the approval of the inception report and upon receiving an invoice from the consultant.
- 50% of the budget after the approval of the evaluation report and upon receiving an invoice from the consultant.

## Tenders

Tenders shall be submitted via email to [linnea.halvarsson@palmecenter.se](mailto:linnea.halvarsson@palmecenter.se) no later than 18 November

The bid must include suggested outline, methodology proposal and time plan, curriculum vitae for members of the evaluation team and their respective roles in the assignment, details of previous experience in the field, references (names and contact information) procedures for quality assurance and budget.

The budget should include all costs related to the evaluation such as interpretation and possible field visits, including VAT.

We reserve the right not to accept any of the bids received.

For questions, contact Linnea Halvarsson, Head of Methods support, via email [linnea.halvarsson@palmecenter.se](mailto:linnea.halvarsson@palmecenter.se).