

## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### INDEPENDENT REVIEW of the COMMUNITY OUTREACH and ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMME in COLOMBIA

#### 1. Background

As a multi-stakeholder global partnership that promotes the production and uptake of Certified Sustainable Palm Oil, the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO) aims to leverage its impact to make palm oil sustainable.

The RSPO Principles and Criteria for Sustainable Palm Oil Production (P&C) were introduced in 2007, with the latest revision adopted in November 2018. This serves as the basis for certification and global guideline for sustainable palm oil production, constituting a set of environmental, social and economic principles and best management practices. Compliance with these requirements enables palm oil producers to claim that their palm oil is sustainably produced. Among the aims of the P&C is ensuring that the fundamental rights of land owners, local communities, plantation workers, small farmers as well as their families are respected and fully taken into account.

In its pursuit of transforming the oil palm industry to make it sustainable, RSPO faces many challenges, complaints and disputes with varying circumstances that require varying approaches. The RSPO Board of Governors recognises the need for more comprehensive outreach efforts through a network of intermediaries identified from the related or affected communities within producing countries to support and assist RSPO, thus paving the way for a more effective engagement process that will then play a key role in achieving RSPO's mission.

Subsequently, RSPO commissioned an assessment of its capacity to engage with communities impacted by palm oil development through 'Intermediary Organisations' (such as local NGOs), with recommendations regarding how RSPO could enhance such outreach. The conclusions from the assessment were the following :

- The RSPO is a multi-stakeholder process that relies on the active engagement of all concerned parties to function effectively and credibly.
- Lack of resources, knowledge and capacity prevents customary land owners, workers and smallholders from finding a voice in RSPO.
- The main barriers to engagement are lack of knowledge of RSPO, lack of resources, linguistic and educational barriers, and non involvement in the palm oil sector and/or involvement in multiple commodity trades.
- The long-term success of RSPO to provide conflict free palm oil to the global market thus depends on improved engagement with these groups.
- There is a need to enhance RSPO's capacity to reach workers, women, local communities and Indigenous peoples through intermediary organisations at national, regional and local levels and likewise by enhancing the capacity of these intermediary groups to engage with the RSPO.

The assessment was carried out by the Forest Peoples Programme (FPP) in 21 countries between June and October 2014 through reviews. In Latin America this included the following countries: Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Honduras, Peru and Venezuela .

## 2. Context

The RSPO Secretariat initiated the Community Outreach Programme in Colombia as an implementation phase to the abovementioned decision by the Board of Governors. The programme was designed to address the findings and recommendations from the aforementioned assessment conducted in 2014. The programme aimed to secure informed and vigorous engagement of communities in RSPO at all levels, by establishing a strengthened outreach of RSPO through intermediary organisations in Colombia, in order to (re-)build RSPO's credibility with civil society. Instituto de Estudios para el Desarrollo y la Paz (INDEPAZ) was engaged and contracted as the Intermediary Organisation (IMO) to implement the programme for Colombia.

The programme entitled *“Enhancing the Position of Local Communities, Smallholders and Labourers Through Capacity Building for IMOs in Accessing and Using the RSPO System”* was originally planned to be implemented over 30 months (June 2019 until December 2021); however, due to some challenges on the ground, it was extended up to end of February 2023. The programme aimed to:

1. Enable local communities' access and engagement with the RSPO System more easily and effectively;
2. Provide IMOs with enough knowledge to use the RSPO System in facilitating local communities' needs, priorities and rights;
3. Enhance RSPO's ability to engage and facilitate local communities to support their needs and rights.

The Community Outreach Programme for Colombia was completed on 23 February 2023, and the status and progress of all proposed activities were elaborated in the Final Project Report.

## 3. Objectives

The purpose of the independent review is to assess the efficiency, effectiveness and impact of the implementation of the Community Outreach Programme in Colombia by Instituto de Estudios para el Desarrollo y la Paz (INDEPAZ), to draw lessons learned and make recommendations for the improvement of the programme framework. The review will be undertaken by a contracted, neutral, third party that is appointed by the RSPO Secretariat.

The extent of the review covers:

- **Efficiency:** To assess the efficiency of the Programme in terms of the appropriate use of time, human and financial resources to achieve the deliverables:
  - Programme management/coordination by the IMO;
- **Effectiveness:** To assess as to what extent the purposes/objectives and the desired changes have been achieved and identify key factors that have promoted or impeded these achievements.
  - Evaluate the entire role, set-up, activities and achievements of the Programme
  - Determine whether the role carried out by the IMO is in accordance with the objectives and has been able to address the issues outlined in the Intermediary Outreach and Engagement in Producing Countries, Status Assessment and Outreach Plan (*prepared by the Forest People Programme, October 2014*)
  - Identify issues that remain unaddressed, points of contention or conflict, and assess what were the barriers to the effective implementation of the Programme.

- **Impact:** To assess as to what extent has the Programme created impacts (positive or negative, intended or unintended) on the targeted grassroots stakeholders. And, to identify lessons learned from the implementation of the Programme and make recommendations for improving the programme framework.
- **Relevance and Impact to the RSPO Theory of Change (ToC):** To assess as to what extent the Programme has contributed to the achievement of RSPO's vision and Theory of Change.
- **Sustainability:** To assess to what extent the programme's elements to sustain results and impacts in a longer term have been established.

Key elements to take into account when conducting the review:

- Evaluation of the Programme management/coordination by the IMO: to assess whether the role carried out by IMO is in accordance with the objectives outlined and has been able to address the issues outlined in the Intermediary Outreach and Engagement in Producing Countries, Status Assessment and Outreach Plan (*prepared by the Forest People Programme, October 2014*)
- Evaluation of the entire role, set-up, activities, achievements and impacts of the Programme that have been implemented; including how this programme has contributed to the achievement of the RSPO's mission and vision and Theory of Change
- To identify issues that remain unaddressed, points of contention or conflict, and to assess what the barriers were to effectively implement the Programme.

The results and recommendations of this evaluation will be used to improve the framework of community outreach within RSPO, and to be reported to the Board of Governors.

#### 4. Scope of work

The reviewer will be expected to undertake a comprehensive evaluation of the implementation of the programme, to cover all activities carried out by INDEPAZ, starting from 1 June 2019 up to 28 February 2023, and be able to provide a conclusion on whether the programme has met the fundamental objectives of the RSPO Community Outreach and Engagement plan.

#### 5. Timeframe

The review is expected to take place between December 2023 and January 2024.

*On a specific occasion and taking into account regional context considerations, the review can be carried out in a customised time frame agreed upon by both parties.*

#### 6. Deliverables

The review anticipates the following deliverables:

A final report which includes:

- i. Results of the assessment of the programme management/coordination by the IMO;
- ii. Results of the assessment of the entire role, set-up, activities, achievements and impacts of the programme that has been implemented (including contribution to RSPO's mission based on the RSPO Theory of Change);
- iii. A summary of issues that remain unaddressed, points of contention or conflict, and assessment of what have been the barriers to effective implementation of the community outreach programme; and
- iv. Conclusions and recommendations.

## 7. Requirements

RSPO requires the services of an independent organisation or professional with a proven track record in programme evaluation to carry out the review as per the objective above. The applicant is required to meet the following eligibility requirements as detailed below:

- Experience in engaging grassroots stakeholders;
- In-depth knowledge on RSPO and other voluntary sustainability standards;
- Familiarity with the palm oil industry and issues related to land use based commodities will be an advantage;
- Proficient to excellent writing skills in British English;
- The Applicant must avoid and disclose to RSPO any real, perceived or potential conflict of interest that they may have with RSPO or any entities in the review. An apparent or actual conflict of interest may exist where an individual or entity has different, and potentially conflicting, duties or relationships with respect to other individuals or entities within the programme and RSPO; and
- The Applicant will commit to an open and transparent engagement with all relevant parties.

## 8. Performance Criteria

The performance of the reviewer will be assessed based on:

- Timeline of deliverables;
- Capacity and understanding of, as well as the ability to meet the objectives;
- Responsiveness to the question from the RSPO Secretariat during the assignment; and
- The quality of deliverables.

## 9. Submission of an expression of interest

Interested parties are invited to submit a proposal that must include the following information in your expression of interest.

- A brief personal statement addressing your rationale for application based on criteria and skills set required;
- An outline of the proposed approach, including suggestions to the Terms of Reference to improve delivery;
- An overall work plan with timeframe;
- A breakdown of expenditure and justification;
- Curriculum Vitae;

- Examples of similar or previous projects demonstrating your ability to undertake work of similar nature; and
- All documents submitted in response to this Terms of Reference must be written in British English.

Any inquiries in connection with this Terms of Reference shall be submitted to Francisco Naranjo, RSPO Technical Director at the following email address: [francisco.naranjo@rspo.org](mailto:francisco.naranjo@rspo.org).

Programme proposals are to be submitted on or before 25 November 2023.

## ANNEX 1

### Evaluation Scoring Table

The reviewers are required to assign a score to assess the programme against the key evaluation criteria and the associated evaluation objective.

### Scoring grade

5: *Excellent*

4: *Very Good*

3: *Good*

2: *Fair*

1: *Poor*

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Objective	Evaluator Score	Brief Justification
Efficiency	To assess the efficiency of the Programme in terms of the appropriate use of time and financial resources to achieve the deliverables.		
Effectiveness	To assess to what extent have the purposes/objectives and the desired changes been achieved.		
Impact	To assess to what extent has the Programme created impacts (positive or negative, intended or unintended) on the targeted grassroots stakeholders.		
Impact & Relevance	To assess to what extent has the Programme contributed to the achievement of the RSPO's vision and Theory of Change.		
Sustainability	To assess to what extent have the programme's elements to sustain results and impacts in a longer-term have been established.		
Lessons Learned & Recommendation	To identify lessons learned from the implementation of the Programme and make recommendations for the improvement of the programme framework.		