Request for Proposals and Terms of Reference

EVALUATION OF THE DIALOGUE AND EXCHANGE PROGRAM (PHASE XI)

Commissioned by the American Friends Service Committee

Background

Implemented by the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) and local partners since 1989 and funded by Bread for the World (BfW), the Dialogue and Exchange Program (DEP) is a unique and flexible mechanism for advancing the objective of peacebuilding in the Global South. The funding mechanism enables AFSC to design and implement, on short notice, dialogue events that facilitate the exchange of knowledge and experience among key people from different perspectives and contexts. AFSC can be responsive to unexpected opportunities or emerging issues that are strategically important yet fall outside regular programming.

The DEP allows AFSC to add value to its programming and presence in the global south by leveraging its relational capital and convening power to bring people together at a key moment or around a key issue, seizing a strategic opportunity or filling a gap in situations where other peace building institutions may be unable to respond. The DEP has created opportunities for community, regional, and national leaders to explore emerging issues, develop knowledge and skills, exchange experiences and approaches to problem solving and coordinate strategies to address problems in their countries and regions.

The last program evaluation in 2018 highlighted the DEP’s relevance in addressing a range of critical global issues in ways that place it at the center of both AFSC’s mission and that of DEP’s long-term donor, BfW. The external evaluation concluded that AFSC has built the DEP into a unique, multi-dimensional program, active across a wide range of geographies and situations of conflict.

The DEP has allowed AFSC to build relationships and connect key people who would not normally meet, including government officials, civil society groups, social movements, and community leaders. The DEP has therefore bridged the efforts of a diverse group of actors with different perspectives promoting solidarity and open exchange of ideas often in safe spaces and through quiet diplomacy. The AFSC Strategic Plan for 2020-2030 highlights the organization’s experience in bridging and convening, citing the DEP as an example, as a key methodology towards reaching the goal to seek, secure, and sustain transformative shifts in systems of power to reduce all forms of violence and advance human dignity and equality.

An end-of-cycle evaluation will begin on January 2022 to measure the effectiveness and impact of the DEP’s phase XI and assess how AFSC responded to recommendations made in 2018. Learnings from the evaluation will help shape the program design for the next three-year phase and will help the DEP committee and management team think of how to strategically utilize the DEP in addressing cross-cutting issues of climate change, gender justice, youth leadership, anti-racism, and anti-oppression.

Normally, each funding phase of the program covers three years but due to circumstances around the COVID-19 global pandemic that did not safely allow for in-person convening, a no-cost one-year extension was granted by the donor. This current evaluation will therefore cover activities carried out during fiscal years 2019-2022 (Phase XI). This evaluation will cover more than 20 DEP events held across multiple countries. Some of the events were held virtually. The events addressed and explored solutions to some of the most pressing situations of conflict in the world today, including migration and displacement in Latin America, militarization of borders, post-electoral violence in Africa, and the repression and restriction of civil liberties under the guise of COVID-19.
Purpose/Objectives and Users of the Evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation is to measure the effectiveness and impact of phase XI of the DEP program (fiscal years 2019-2022), including assessing the impact of COVID-19 pandemic to program activities. The evaluation will provide learnings to AFSC for its planning of the new program cycle for fiscal years 2023 through 2025 and will help the DEP team in revitalizing how the DEP can strengthen organizational capacity for systems thinking and in deliberately building networks and connecting and seeding social movements.

The specific objectives of the evaluation:

• To assess the ability of DEP events to meet their stated objectives.
• To assess the impact of selected individual DEP projects on participants and the programs of their organizations.
• To provide AFSC and its partners with specific recommendations for future DEP planning and programs.
• To assess the effectiveness of the DEP committee in its oversight of this program.
• To assess the capability of DEPs in helping to achieve the overall DEP Development Goal and contribute to the 2020-2030 AFSC Strategic Plan.

The evaluation is primarily intended as a learning tool for future programming and will be made available to all within AFSC. It will be specifically shared with:

• Associate General Secretary, International Programs
• The Dialogue and Exchange Program Committee (four Regional Directors; DEP Program Manager, Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Technical Advisor; and Global Quaker International Affairs Representative)
• International Program Staff developing and working on DEPs including the Quaker International Affairs Representatives (QIAR)
• AFSC Program Support Unit
• AFSC Development Department
• Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO)
• AFSC Office of Public Policy and Advocacy (OPPA)
• AFSC International Programs Executive Committee (IPEC)
• Bread for the World

Evaluation Scope

The evaluation is expected to begin in January 2022. The final report package including all relevant appendices should be completed for submission to the donor on February 25, 2022. The evaluation will involve literature evaluation of DEP reports, internal assessments, meeting minutes, attending a DEP event (in-person or virtual) if timing and budget allows, and external sources. Using virtual connectivity or in-person meetings as allowed under COVID-19 safety protocols, the evaluation team will be able to conduct interviews with partner organizations, program participants, and program staff. The evaluation team may use individual interviews and, where appropriate, focus group discussions.

Context of the Program

The DEP is active across AFSC’s international programs, working at the global, regional, and sometimes also national or local levels. While individual DEPs may be designed to address dire conflict situations that arise around the margins of an AFSC country program, to check a spiral towards violence perceived or anticipated by AFSC staff, or to leverage a sudden opening or opportunity within the context of a particular conflict, DEPs ultimately seek to contribute to the strengthening of shared security more broadly. Thus, when DEPs are implemented at a very local level, the organization seeks to find means of bringing the lessons to global policy spaces, leveraging its network of staff and partners at the local and global levels.
The Development Goal for the DEP is:

Key people and key institutions\(^1\) have enhanced potential to change situations of physical and structural violence and injustice, build critical partnerships and networks, and generate evidence-based knowledge and resources that can effectively support peace practice, advocacy efforts, change narratives, and build shared security at the local, national, regional, and global levels.

The program objectives and indicators are as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Means of verification</th>
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<tr>
<td>Effective and critical linkages and partnerships are built between key people including those most affected by conflict and non-traditional actors that are otherwise not involved in the peace process, including women and members of marginalized communities and key institutions, to strengthen efforts in preventing and transforming conflict and building shared security.</td>
<td>Documentation of at least one strategic collaboration, intervention or courageous action undertaken by DEP participants, directly linked to or resulting from participation in a DEP in at least 65% of all DEPs implemented.</td>
<td>Means of verification include but is not limited to the following: documented cases of successful advocacy with state actors; public calls for policy change in key publications (national or international); participants utilizing DEP knowledge in independent networks; participants mobilizing significant resources towards stated DEP goals and objectives; participants implementing approaches identified through DEPs successfully in the community.</td>
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<td>DEPs are inclusive of all gender groups and identities, with at least 50% of DEPs targeted towards enhancing the involvement or space for participation of underrepresented gender groups in peace processes.</td>
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<td>Attendance list: follow-up reports and media articles that discuss participation of women and individuals representing diverse gender groups and identities after participation in a DEP.</td>
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<td>At least 25% of DEPs successfully bring one or more non-traditional and underrepresented actors into conversations relevant to peace practice or shared security.</td>
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<td>Follow-up reports, media pieces, and other evidence showing these participants continuing their engagement with a new network or undertaking some action to promote peace practice or aspects of shared security in their professional networks.</td>
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<td>Key institutions and key people generate evidence-based knowledge on effective peace practice that promotes and sustains a culture of learning and collaboration at the local, national, regional, and even global levels.</td>
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<td>New research and knowledge resources published and shared, program proposals developed, funding secured from other donors to sustain and scale up DEP results, and other resource mobilization by individuals or organizations because of DEP participation.</td>
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Over the years, AFSC regional staff members have implemented DEP activities in cooperation with partners and key contacts within grassroots and local institutions, as well as with civil society, government, business, academia, media, and multi-lateral agencies. While working with these diverse

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\(^1\) Leaders of communities, civil society organizations, faith-based institutions, governments, regional and multilateral organizations.
groups, ideas emerge for creating a special space that would bring people together across geographic, political, theological, economic, and historic borders. By meeting face-to-face, participants explore and create contextually appropriate solutions to their community, national, or regional issues. The program continues to facilitate the exploration of innovative and controversial ideas as seeds for potential future programs of AFSC and/or its partners.

DEP activities continue to draw on the following programs within AFSC and the broader Quaker community:

**Peacebuilding Programs**: AFSC’s peacebuilding programs are the primary generators of DEP proposals. The Quaker International Affairs Representatives and country program teams usually work “quietly” by bringing together people who are in conflict and linking people between the grassroots, national, regional, and international policy levels.

**Regional Offices**: Regional offices in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East provide programmatic and administrative support for AFSC’s programs in the regions and broaden AFSC’s connection with civil society organizations.

**Quaker United Nations Office**: Staff working at the QUNO offices in New York City and Geneva track and promote activities on selected issues, providing timely information to AFSC peacebuilding staff, as well as the broader Quaker community. They serve as a vital link between those working at the grassroots, national, and international levels.

**Quaker Network**: AFSC works with individual Quaker meetings and yearly (national and regional) meetings affiliated with the Friends World Committee of Consultation (FWCC). AFSC staff are committed to collaborate with other Quaker service agencies working in the same geographical area or on overlapping issues. Periodic gatherings of Quaker leaders and program staff have stimulated creative ideas for inter-regional and global activities appropriate for DEP support.

**AFSC offices in the US**: On occasion, US-based staff provide logistical support for DEP-sponsored participants by scheduling appointments with decision-makers, NGOs, and media. In particular, the Washington, DC staff schedule visits with members of Congress and the Executive branch. All US-based expenses are covered through other AFSC or partner agency budgets.

The DEP is overseen by the DEP Committee which draws upon the breadth of experience of AFSC’s international program staff members including the four regional directors. Their technical expertise and political insights are utilized throughout the process. In the past years, the Committee has identified several ideas for cross-regional learning opportunities.

**Evaluation Questions**
The DEP team prioritized a set of questions related to the implementation of the previous evaluation’s recommendations and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic:

1. **ENHANCED MONITORING**: Provide the resources, training, and other support necessary for the implementation of new monitoring techniques—including real-time monitoring, outcome harvesting and systematic self-monitoring of participants—to increase the volume and richness of data available for AFSC’s internal evaluation of DEP impact and sustainability. **During Phase XI, to what extent has AFSC undertaken steps to enhance capacity to monitor and learn from DEPs?**

2. **DEP CATEGORIZATION**: Formalize and put into practice a categorization of DEP events that allows, over time, the customization of different approaches to different types of DEPs in all spaces of the learning cycle and, especially, makes possible the focused application of monitoring and evaluation resources to a prioritized set of program experiences. **During Phase XI, to what extent has AFSC undertaken steps to formalize the different categories of DEP events and how they can be better monitored per their category?**

3. **LEARNING AS AN AFSC STRATEGIC COMMITMENT**: Engage actively with AFSC’s strategic planning process to stimulate a discussion of the organization’s overall commitment to institutional learning, based on the experience of attempting to build the learning capacity of the
**DEP. During Phase XI, to what extent has program staff involved in managing and/or carrying out DEP events actively contribute to building a learning organization?**

**4. DEP COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY:** Formally consider the strategic importance of external communication in the realization of DEP’s developmental goal and, in collaboration with AFSC’s Communications Unit, develop and implement an external communications strategy for the program that is consistent with that strategic assessment. *During Phase XI, to what extent has the program prioritized developing an external communications strategy?*

**5. COVID-19 INTERRUPTION:** *During Phase XI, in what ways has the COVID-19 pandemic affected DEP implementation and what are the lessons learned that would make programs more resilient to future pandemics or interruptions?*

The other questions shall be based on DAC Criteria (see Annex 1) with a focus on relevance, effectiveness, and impact. The standard questions below are taken from BftW’s “Recommended Guideline for the preparation of Terms of Reference for Evaluations” and are provided as a guide:

**Relevance**
- Did we plan the right thing?
- Did we do the right thing at the right time?
- To what extent are the objectives, planned activities and planned outputs consistent with the intended outcome and impact?
- To what extent are the objectives of the program still valid?

**Effectiveness**
- To what extent were the objectives achieved/are likely to be achieved?
- To what extent have we addressed the DEP indicators (as described above)?
- What are the short or intermediate-term (intended or unintended) outcomes of the program?
- To what extent could the selected target group be reached?
- What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?

**Efficiency**
- Were activities cost-efficient?
- Were objectives achieved on time?
- Was the programme or project implemented in the most efficient way compared to alternatives?

**Impact**
- What has happened because of the program? (Intended and unintended impacts, equal opportunities for women and men, improvement of social and economic infrastructure, poverty reduction, cross sectoral impact, or other relevant cross-cutting issues).
- What real difference has the activity brought about for the beneficiaries? (What would have happened without the activity?)
- How many people have been affected?
- How has the DEP impact or influence the direction of other existing AFSC programs in the region?

**Sustainability**
DEPs are primarily one-off events that often compliment but fall outside of ongoing programming within AFSC. Because of this unique nature of DEPs, it is not expected that this evaluation will examine in-depth the question of sustainability; however, the evaluator may provide any observations in relation to the sustainability of the program.

- To what extent will the positive impacts or changes of the program (are likely to) continue?
- Which measures are implemented to support sustainability?
- To what extent did the benefits of a program persist after donor funding ceased?
- What were the major factors which influenced the achievement or non-achievement of sustainability of the program?
Implementation of the Phase XI Evaluation

The evaluator or evaluation team will work with AFSC staff, particularly Marianne Elias (International Programs Director of Administration) and Joan Marshall-Missiye (MEL Technical Advisor), to complete the evaluation. AFSC staff and partners will use the report as a basis for learning, planning, and prioritization of activities, approaches, and strategies of the next DEP cycle. The evaluation will involve literature review of pertinent program reports and external sources.

The evaluator will also be able to connect with the following individuals or groups for focus group discussions or individual interviews:

- Philadelphia-based staff (past and present)
- Regional Directors and staff in the regions
- Participants in DEPs in the various regions
- Partner organizations familiar with the DEPs in the field, including other Quaker bodies

The evaluator will try to ensure that the process provides learning opportunities for AFSC staff and partners. Focus group and individual discussions with partners will use a guided open question format designed to allow maximum opportunity for discussion of different viewpoints. The evaluator will meet with AFSC staff to present the review design, an outline and timeline of how the program will be evaluated; the evaluation/review matrix and finalize a timeline for completion of the review. A final evaluation report, which includes an executive summary and pertinent annexes, and which considers AFSC staff and partner feedback, must be completed by February 25, 2022.

Evaluation Design and Methodology

The primary driver of this evaluation is gathering important lessons learned from past DEP experiences to continue to develop and strengthen DEPs in the next strategic planning period. The evaluator will try to ensure that the process provides learning opportunities for AFSC staff and partners.

Focus group and individual interviews with participants will use a guided open question format designed to allow maximum opportunity for discussion of different viewpoints. The evaluator will receive a list of suggested persons to interview who have been involved in Phase X DEP either as participants, facilitators, or organizers. The evaluator may choose not to interview some suggested persons, or to interview additional persons.

Process, Reporting, and Timetable of Evaluation

Timetable

The timetable will be negotiated with the evaluator, but it is anticipated that the level of effort will be about 15-20 working days over a period of approximately two months (January-February 2022). If time, budget, and COVID-19 safety protocols allow, attending a DEP event would be desirable and would take up to an additional five days with travel.

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<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th># Of days</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Analysis of relevant documents, development of evaluation design</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Initial meeting with Philadelphia team</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Finalize inception report</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Semi-structured interviews</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Compilation and Preparation of preliminary findings</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Feedback on preliminary findings</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Preparation of draft report and submit for feedback</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Finalize report taking into consideration AFSC and Bread for the World feedback</td>
<td>2</td>
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Evaluation design/inception report

The evaluation will prepare an inception report (approx. 3-5 pages) defining how the objectives, questions and reports as described in the TOR can be achieved within the evaluation. The inception report shall be agreed and approved by AFSC before the beginning of the evaluation process. The evaluator is
Final evaluation report
The final report shall be written in English (max 30 pages) and must include the following contents:

- Key data of the evaluation: see above “inception report”
- Executive summary: a tightly drafted, to-the-point, free-standing document (about 3 pages), including the key issues of the evaluation, main analytical points, conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations.
- Introduction: purpose of the evaluation, evaluation scope and key questions. Short description of the program and relevant frame conditions.
- Evaluation design/methodology
- Key results/findings*: Regarding the questions pointed out in the TOR and/or inception report (including program and context analysis), assessment of the extent to which issues of equity and gender are incorporated in the project/programme.
- Conclusions* based on evidence and analysis
- Recommendations* regarding future steps/activities/follow-up – carefully targeted to the appropriate audiences at all levels, relevant and feasible (if possible, for each conclusion a recommendation).
- Lessons learned* (generalizations of conclusions applicable for wider use).
- Annexes (TOR, list of persons/organisations consulted, literature and documentation consulted etc.).

* The interlinkages between key results/findings, conclusions and recommendations / lessons learned must be logical, clear, and transparent. This might be done by completing the recommendations table (Annex 2) and/or by references in the text.

Draft implementation plan
The draft implementation plan is intended to assist AFSC implement recommendation by the evaluator. The format is in Annex 3 (implementation plan). The evaluator may choose to fill in the key data of the evaluation and the recommendations in Annex 3.

Responsibilities and duties
This is an independent evaluation commissioned by the AFSC and approved by Bread for the World. The DEP Committee is responsible for approving the Inception Report and providing comments on the draft Evaluation Report. Bread for the World will also provide comments on the inception report and draft final report. AFSC central and regional offices will be responsible for making all arrangements necessary for the implementation the evaluation, subject to the evaluator terms of the contract. This includes providing access to relevant documents, contact information for interviewees, and potential travel arrangements when necessary.

Dissemination of evaluation results and feedback loop
The first draft report will be shared with the DEP committee mid-way through the evaluation process. The committee will provide feedback to strengthen the evaluation process. The final report will be shared with Bread for the World, across AFSC (staff, governance, and volunteers), and with partners. Reflection sessions will be arranged within AFSC and with partners as needed to ensure feedback loop.

Literature
The evaluator will have access to the following documents:
- Phase XI DEP BftW proposal
- 2018 DEP evaluation report and past reports as needed
- Six-month reports
- Individual DEP proposals, final reports, and supporting documents
- Internal DEP newsletters
- DEP committee meeting minutes
• Other DEP products
• AFSC 2020-2030 Strategic Plan

Request for Proposal Requirements

Evaluator Qualifications
The evaluator should be fluent in English, spoken and written, have strong analytical skills, good listening and discernment skills, and proven experience in evaluating peace programs and/or alternative education programs.

Other requirements:
• Strong knowledge of international peacebuilding and development work.
• Strong analytic skills and sensibility to different cultures.
• Proven planning, monitoring and evaluation skills.
• Knowledge of the current international socio-economic and political situation.
• Knowledge of one or more languages used in the implementation of DEPs including Spanish, French, Arabic, Swahili, Burmese, Chinese, Indonesian, etc. desirable.

Proposal Submission Requirements
All proposals must be received by 5 p.m. U.S. Eastern Time, Jan. 3, 2021. Proposals received after this time will not be given primary consideration. A cover letter and proposal with budget and timeline should be emailed to jmarshall-missiye@afsc.org as an Adobe PDF file. All other formats will not be considered. Proposals should be no more than five pages in length and should include the complete scope of work and deliverables including the following sections:

1. Organization/Evaluator Background
Include the organization and/or individual’s name. Describe the general nature of work and the name of the reviewer that will be conducting the work. Describe any International peacebuilding and development experience, education, skills, and languages. Proposals must include three examples of related work completed and contact information for the organizations served.

2. Statement of Proposed Work
State in succinct terms an understanding of the work to be completed. Describe the methodologies proposed to complete the evaluation and a final report including a timetable for completion of specific tasks, the personnel needed to complete tasks, and expectations for support and assistance from AFSC. Describe the work plan for the review. Proposal may also include other activities deemed necessary by the evaluators and specified within the work plan.

While the evaluators are expected to work independently, AFSC staff will assist in facilitating access to evaluation participants, documents, and solving problems and concerns that may develop throughout the course of the review. AFSC staff could help arrange transport and accommodation as needed and with prior approval of the IP Director of Administration.

3. Budget and Deliverables
Provide a detailed budget as well as a description of the specific deliverables that will be submitted and expected schedule of compensation. Total cost should not exceed USD 25,000.

4. Evaluation Schedule
The proposal should include a set of dates available to the evaluator and a preferred timetable taking into consideration the suggested timeline provide in the previous section and that the final report must be completed by February 25, 2022.

5. Additional Information and Comments
Include any other information deemed important, but not specifically required elsewhere.

Inquiries: Questions that help clarify the work to be completed may be submitted to Joan Marshall-Missiye at jmarshall-missiye@afsc.org. Inquiries by email are preferred; telephone calls can be arranged as necessary.