**Social Inclusion Sector**

**Call for Project Proposals (CfP 01-2019)**

**Support to Local Self-governments in Provision of Citizens` Advisory Services**

## Background

The “Enhancing Good Governance and Social Inclusion at Local Level in Serbia” Programme (Swiss PRO) will improve local capacities primarily in **99 local self-governments** in Šumadija and Western Serbia, and South and Eastern Serbia regions*[[1]](#footnote-1)* to apply good governance (GG) principles in local policies and regulations and thus increase social cohesion. The Government of Switzerland has allocated USD 6.9 million for the Programme, with the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) responsible for its implementation, in cooperation with the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities (SCTM).

The Programme has to fulfil **two main goals:**

1. To contribute to the enhancement of organisations and officials’ knowledge and skills

2. To positively change the scope and quality of public services rendered to citizens, especially to those from excluded groups.

Both goals will lead to improved regulations, institutional, technical and human capacities for the enhancement of e-services. In addition, capacity building will be provided to local civil society organisations (CSOs) as well as institutions dealing with social inclusion and gender equality.

Overall, this will contribute to the improved rule of law at the local level, increased accountability, transparency and efficiency and effectiveness of the local governments (LSGs), and ultimately improvement of quality of life of citizens, especially excluded citizens.

The Programme will coordinate its activities with the key line-national-level institutions, while observing the national strategies, laws and relevant development documents, which will contribute to sustainability, ensure national ownership and develop national capacities. The content and the scope of the Programme will significantly complement the European Union Support to Municipal Development – EU PRO Programme.

## Justification of the Intervention

On its way to the EU accession, Serbia has a very important task, and this is contribution to the social inclusion process in its society. In order to fulfil the requirements and to follow the EU trends, Serbia needs further development and improvement of the institutional framework and a methodology for monitoring the social inclusion policies and practices at the local level.

In order to contribute to reduced level of the social exclusion in LSGs, the Programme will provide support in establishment, organisation and delivery free-of-charge Citizens’ Advisory Services (CAS) to local excluded groups in need to resolve any of their standing issues pertained to their access to rights and/or entitlements guaranteed by relevant Laws.

During the visits to LSGs from the Swiss PRO Programme Area of Responsabilitites (AoR), the majority of visited LSGs expressed interest and the need for establishment of CAS with particular need to provide such services to vulnerable citizens, especially in the rural areas. Moreover, very few local governments have a fully developed system of internal procedures for provision of CAS to excluded groups that would facilitate access to their rights and/or entitlements guaranteed by relevant Laws. A few LSGs do not provide any kind of advisory services to citizens while majority sporadically provides some kind of consultancy support to their citizens.

To address this and support the LSGs in significantly improving the local policies and practices pertained to the matter in question, the Programme will provide financial and technical assistance to selected LSGs. This intervention is in line with the recently adopted Draft Law on Free Legal Aid. [[2]](#footnote-2) Moreover, it will be of benefit for LSGs in terms to be timely prepared for their obligation to provide free legal aid and advisory services from October 2019 when the Law will come into the force.

## Objectives of the Intervention

**Overall objective:** Support LSGs in becoming more accountable and transparent in provision of CAS, thus improving the access of local excluded social groups[[3]](#footnote-3) to their rights and/or entitlements guaranteed by relevant Laws.

**Specific Objective:** Develop methodology and practice that will put in place a permanent, systemic and publicly available mechanism for enhanced access to the rights and/or entitlements guaranteed by relevant Laws of at least 5,000 citizens from the excluded groups.

## Scope of the Intervention

The Programme will directly support **up to 12 local LSGs** to develop and implement a methodology and practice for supporting the excluded citizens to attain their rights and entitlements through establishment, organisation and delivery free-of-charge Citizens’ Advisory Services through provision of administrative and/or legal advice/assistance/guidance exept representation in the court.

The project proposal must contain a substantial part on designing and conducting an outreach campaign to the local excluded groups, which will inform the target group of the newly available opportunities to meet their needs for accessing their rights and/or entitlements.

As target groups, the CAS could be provided to a wider scope of beneficiaries than the scope envisaged in the Draft Law on Free Legal Aid[[4]](#footnote-4)

## Guidelines for the Applicants

#### 5.1 General eligibility criteria

To be eligible for support, the applicant must fulfil the following criteria:

1. **Be one of 99 cities and municipalities** that can apply for the support from the Swiss PRO Programme that also belongs to underdeveloped categories of municipalities i.e. **II,** **III and IV group according to the level of development[[5]](#footnote-5)**
2. The applicant has **submitted a written, official documents that is willing and ready to work on local governance improvements** pertained to the topic of the Call, with expert and technical assistance in developing methodology and financial support of the Programme. The applicant would just have in-kind contribution in terms of provision of office and office operating costs (utility and other services i.e. land-line phone, electricity, heating and internet). The premises with provided acssesibality for persons with disabilities would have an advantage.
3. **One applicant can submit only one project proposal. One applicant can be awarded with only one grant.**
4. If the project envisages a support for citizens in a near-by municipality as a result of **inter-municipal cooperation which will be proved by inter-municipal agreement**, it will require mandatory partnership between two municipalities and it would be considered as **an advantage in the application process**.
5. Projects proposals that are result of **partnership between the Applicant and CSO/NGO** or between the **Applicant and registered lawyer** are also eligible. The partnership must be in a written form, signed by relevant signatories from both sides, and with clear division of tasks and responsibilities.

**5.1.1. General eligibility criteria for partner civil society organisation**

**In case of partnership between the Applicant and CSO/NGO,** to be eligible as a partner, the CSO must fulfil the following criteria:

1. Legally **registered for a minimum of 2 (two) years**
2. With clear and provable track-record of provision of free advisory services/legal aid from the previous projects involving international donors and organisations

#### The Projects selection

* The projects that will be awarded will be selected through **a competitive process**.
* UNOPS/Swiss PRO Evaluation Commission retains the right to call the applicant (partner if applicable) for an interview before makes the final decision on the application
* Swiss PRO Programme does **not** have an obligation to spend all funds available for this activity and will fund **only** quality projects that meet specific criteria, based on their relevance, expected outcomes/impacts and sustainability of the proposed intervention.
* The project proposal will be dismissed if it was not submitted according to the requirements and criteria of this proposal, or is incomplete, or is submitted after the deadline. This decision will be final.
* Geographical and thematic representation will be taken into account during the selection of the project proposals.

#### 5.3 Duration of the projects

The implementation of activities from the projects will last for **18 (eighteen) months** from the day the grant contract is signed.

The first three months of the project implementation will be mandatory engagement of a qualified person for provision of CAS or establishing the partnership with organisation/registered lawyer, equipping the premises, development of promotional material as well as the technical assistance related to development of methodology and tools for monitoring of number of beneficiaries and provided services.

#### 5.4 The Grants amount

The overall amount available under this Call for Proposals is **USD 226,500 (in RSD).** The Swiss PRO does not have an obligation to spend all fund for this activity, and will fund only projects that meet specific criteria, selected in a transparent and competitive process.

The **minimum value of the grant per project is USD 15,100 (in RSD) while the maximum value of the grant per project is USD 18,875 (in RSD).**

**5.5 Sustainability**

The applicants are expected to demonstrate in the application in a clear and unequivocal way how the project will continue to function after the grant formally closes. The sustainability will weigh decisively during the project proposal evaluation.

**5.6. Eligible expenditures**

Following activities and expenditures will be exclusively considered eligible:

1. Salary (gross amount) for person (Bachelor of Laws) engaged in the project for provision of CAS for total of 15 months or fee for engaged organisation/registered lawyer in accordance with valid partnership agreement for total of 15 months (maximum of 55% of the total budget)
2. Office equipping and consumables - office supplies including IT equipment i.e. computer and all-in-one printer scanner (maximum of 15% of the total budget)
3. Expenses for mandatory outreach campaign. The outreach campaign could also include costs of transportation and promotional costs. (maximum of 30% of the total budget)

**5.7 Non-eligible activities and expenditures**

Following activities and expenditures will not be considered eligible:

1. Projects that do not explicitly tackle the topics listed above
2. Projects aimed at filling up any funding gaps from on-going activities
3. Activities that can be more appropriately funded from other funding sources
4. Travel, catering and/or conference services costs not founded in project rationale
5. Projects focused on research, or promotional activities with no specific outcomes
6. Extensive hardware/software purchases without true foundation in project rationale
7. Items from the budget, including office costs, fees or salaries, already funded by other sources (other projects, other organisations – public or civic, etc.)
8. Costs of renting the premises/office including office operating costs i.e. utility and other services (this should be provided by LSG or engaged organisation/registered lawyer as service provider)
9. All costs originating before the project beginning or accrued after project closure

## The Selection Criteria

Technical evaluation of the received proposals will be conducted in line with the following selection criteria:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **CRITERIA** | **MAX POINTS** |
| **1 Operational Capacity** | **15** |
| * 1. Does the applicant have experience in project management?

*Applicants with references on successful implementation of three or more projects (e.g. projects involving social inclusion topic, international donors, etc.) will be awarded with five (5) points* | 5 |
| * 1. Does the applicant have knowledge of the issues to be addressed?

*Applicants with references for three or more activities or projects related to social inclusion approach towards vulnerable groups will be awarded with five (5) points* | 5 |
| * 1. Inter-municipal cooperation
 | 5 |
| **2 Relevance of the Action** | **25** |
| * 1. How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the Call for Proposals?
 | 10 |
| * 1. How clearly defined and strategically chosen are those involved in the outreach campaign (final beneficiaries, target groups)? Have their needs been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?
 | 10 |
| * 1. Does the proposal contain specific added-value elements, such as promotion of gender equality and equal opportunities, or addressing of multi-layered vulnerability (such as education, health, housing, social engagements, inter-ethnic/-cultural interaction) or innovation and best practices?
 | 5 |
| **3 Effectiveness and Feasibility of the Action** | **15** |
| * 1. Are the proposed activities appropriate, practical, and consistent with the objectives and expected results?
 | 5 |
| * 1. Is the action plan clear and feasible?
 | 5 |
| * 1. Does the proposal contain objectively verifiable indicators for the outputs and outcomes of the action?
 | 5 |
| **4 Impact of the Action** | **30** |
| * 1. What is the number of people that is expected to benefit from Citizens` Advisory Services (justified on previous assessment or experience)?

*Projects with at least 350 beneficiaries will receive twenty (20) points and additional ten (10) will be awarded for projects with more than 500 beneficiaries* | 30 |
| **5 Incentives for underdeveloped categories of municipalities** | **5** |
| 5.1 The applicant is either from III and IV group according to the level of development[[6]](#footnote-6)  | 5 |
| **6 Budget and Cost-effectiveness of the Action** | **10** |
| * 1. Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget?
 | 5 |
| * 1. Is the ration between the estimated costs and the expected results satisfactory?
 | 5 |
| **TOTAL POINTS** | **100** |

Only the applications that have been given a minimum total score of 60 points will be considered for selection.

## Application Procedure

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#### 7.1. Application forms and supporting documents

The applicant has to submit the following application forms **in Serbian language[[7]](#footnote-7):**

* **Submission Form** **(Annex 1)**
* **Project Proposal Application Form (Annex 2)**
* Detailed **project budget proposal** in table format **(Annex 3).** *Please note*, that all purchases that are to be made by Swiss PRO must be budgeted **without** VAT, i.e. – please list the amounts in the budget accordingly. Please list what you expect Swiss PRO to purchase and what would be your contribution (e.g. raw materials, etc.). Please note that your contributions to the project realisation must include VAT.
* **Logical Framework** **(Annex 4)**
* **The Work Plan**, including human and other resources breakdown **(Annex 5)**
* In case of partnership with another LSG, CSO or registered lawyer, the Partnership Agreement or Letter of Intention for Partnership Agreement should be submitted along with Partner Factsheet **(Annex 6)**
* **Important note:** If and when the application is approved by UNOPS Evaluation Commission, the applicant will be notified on it and **requested** **to translate** the Project proposal and the accompanied documents **into English**, since **only the English version** of the documents can become integral parts of the Grant Support Agreement (i.e. the Contract) with UNOPS.

#### 7.2 Where and how to send the application

* The Application Form must be **submitted via e-mail in PDF format (signed, stamped and scanned)** and in original editable format, while using Word and Excel. Signed, stamped and scanned versions must contain exactly the same application documents as the electronic versions in original editable format. In case of discrepancies, signed, stamped and scanned version will prevail.
* The applicant must submit application forms **in Serbian language[[8]](#footnote-8).**
* The total email size of the application should **not exceed 20 MB**, as that is the maximum allowed email message size by the UNOPS server. If the application is larger than 20 MB, documents should be sent in series of e-mails, with each e-mail not exceeding 20 MB size thresholds. Each part of the application should be numbered in the e-mail subject field (e-mail subject/number).
* **Applications must be submitted to an e-mail address** below:

rsoc.applications@unops.org

Automatic notification of the delivery would follow upon successful submission of email application.

* The email application must be sent with the **e-mail subject** consist of the reference number and the title of the call for proposals (e.g. CFP 01-2019 – Support to LSGs in Implementation of Citizens` Advisory services) including the name of the applicant (LSG).
* **Requests for clarification** should be submitted to the e-mail address below:

rsoc.cfp.clarifications@unops.org

* The **deadline for the submission of Applications is 16 April 2019.** **Any Applications submitted after the deadline will be rejected.**
* Applications **must be received before midnight-local time** on the closing date of Call for Proposal. Applicants are kindly advised to timely submit the application as late deliveries due to slow internet connection or other network/hardware/software related problems may lead to disqualification of application. Only application received by UNOPS mail server before the deadline would be accepted.
* Applicants must verify that their Application is complete using the Checklist. **Incomplete applications may be rejected.**
* Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by post or by hand delivery) or delivered to other e-mails different from the stated in CfP will be rejected. **Hand-written applications will not be accepted.**
* UNOPS reserves the right to inquire original versions of submitted documents from applicants where/when original documentation is required or any specific document required by Evaluation team.
1. **Branding and Visibility**

The grantee will be expected to comply with communications and visibility requirements as set by Swiss PRO. The Programme will provide the grantees with adequate guidelines and other information prior to beginning of the project implementation.

These requirements cover the written and visual identity of Swiss PRO, the donors and the implementing agency, and they apply to print, electronic and any other material, presentation, banner, invitation, sign, plaque or goods purchased with the funds provided by the donors and managed by Swiss PRO.

1. **Monitoring, reporting and evaluation**

The grantees must monitor their own projects and prepare relevant records, including photos, which must be included in all reports.

The following reports will be expected from the grantee:

* Monthly progress reports (after the first month and on every 5th of the next month, produced in Serbian)
* The milestone report after 80% of the first tranche spent, including financial aspect, and must be produced in English
* The final report assessing and analysing implemented project, its outputs and outcomes, submitted 30 days after finalisation of the project. The Final report include narrative and financial aspects, including photos, and must be produced in English. These reports will be considered public information.

Swiss PRO will monitor implementation and will audit grantees. The grantee can be evaluated at any time during the project implementation and subsequent actions may be taken according to the assessment’s findings. The payment schedule will be linked to the project milestones and findings from the Programme’s verifications visits.

1. **Additional consideration**

Successful project proposals **must** **demonstrate** awareness of good governance requirements and sensitivity to gender through its internal criteria for the beneficiaries as well as reporting a gender dissagregated data. The applicant **must** clearly indicate how vulnerable and marginalised groups will be involved in and/or benefit from the project.

####  Indicative timeframe

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Timeframe/ Deadline** |
| **Launching of the Public Call** | 18 March 2019 |
| **Info Sessions for the Call** | 18 – 29 March 2019 |
| **Deadline for Submission of Applications** |  16 April 2019 |
| **Information on the Evaluation Results**  |  End of May 2019  |
| **Signing of Agreement** | June 2019 |

1. **List of Annexes**

**DOCUMENTS TO BE COMPLETED[[9]](#footnote-9):**

Annex 1: Submission Form (Word format)

Annex 2: Project Proposal Application Form (Word format)

Annex 3: Budget (Excel format)

Annex 4: Logical Framework (Excel format)

Annex 5: Work Plan

Annex 6: Partner Factsheet (Word format)

**DOCUMENTS FOR INFORMATION:**

Annex 7: Application Checklist

Annex 8: UNOPS Grant Support Agreement with General Conditions (template)

Annex 9: Swiss PRO Grant Narrative Report (template)

Annex 10: Swiss PRO Grant Financial Report (template)

Annex 11: The list of LSGs in the Programme Area

1. Programme Area of responsibility: Aleksandrovac, Aleksinac, Aranđelovac, Arilje, Babušnica, Bajina Bašta, Batočina, Bela Palanka, Blace, Bogatić, Bojnik, Boljevac, Bor, Bosilegrad, Brus, Bujanovac, Crna Trava, Čačak, Čajetina, Ćićevac, Ćuprija, Despotovac, Dimitrovgrad, Doljevac, Gadžin Han, Golubac, Gornji Milanovac, Ivanjica, Jagodina, Kladovo, Knić, Knjaževac, Koceljeva, Kosjerić, Kragujevac, Kraljevo, Krupanj, Kruševac, Kučevo, Kuršumlija, Lajkovac, Lapovo, Lebane, Leskovac, Loznica, Lučani, Ljig, Ljubovija, Majdanpek, Mali Zvornik, Malo Crniće, Medveđa, Merošina, Mionica, Negotin, Niš, Nova Varoš, Novi Pazar, Osečina, Paraćin, Petrovac na Mlavi, Pirot, Požarevac, Požega, Preševo, Priboj, Prijepolje, Prokuplje, Rača, Raška, Ražanj, Rekovac, Sjenica, Smederevo, Smederevska Palanka, Sokobanja, Surdulica, Svilajnac, Svrljig, Šabac, Topola, Trgovište, Trstenik, Tutin, Ub, Užice, Valjevo, Varvarin, Velika Plana, Veliko Gradište, Vladimirci, Vladičin Han, Vlasotince, Vranje, Vrnjačka Banja, Zaječar, Žabari, Žagubica, Žitorađa. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <https://www.paragraf.rs/dnevne-vesti/180117/180117-vest15.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Swiss PRO Programme will be considering the following social groups, both from urban and rural areas, as excluded groups: Roma, elderly (especially those over 65 years of age); people with disabilities; women; children and youth (15 to 24 years of age); one-parent families; long-term unemployed; ethnic and religious minorities; refugees, Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and returnees; extreme-poverty stricken people in general and any other individual/group with multi-layer vulnerability. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Please see Article 4 of Draft Law on Free Legal Aid <https://www.paragraf.rs/dnevne-vesti/180117/180117-vest15.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Please see Article 11, item 3 and 4 of Law on Regional Development <https://www.paragraf.rs/propisi/zakon_o_regionalnom_razvoju.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Please see footnote number 5 within Section 5.1 General eligibility criteria [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The Applicant may choose to submit all the required documents in English only, if its feasible at this stage of the process [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Please see Important note at the end of the Section 7.1 Application forms and supporting documents [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Section 7.1 of the Call for Proposals [↑](#footnote-ref-9)