**Social Inclusion Sector**

**Call for Project Proposals (02-2019)**

**Support to local self-governments (LSGs) in Implementation of Social Innovation Projects in Partnership with Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)**

## 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 the *Assessment of Institutional Capacities, Employability of Vulnerable Groups and Social Protection[[2]](#footnote-2)*, implemented in 2016 on a sample of 34 municipalities, it was concluded that the municipalities are significantly lacking the capacities for strategic planning and achieving development goals, and that the LSGs should work on improving their organisational capacities, development of human resources and financial management. The community based social services (CBSS), as a delivery mechanism, in these 34 municipalities are mainly underdeveloped or are not accessible to users yet. The offer of services is very modest, with relatively small number of users. Additionally, greater number of services is not sustainable, since most LGs spend small budget funds for these services.

In the first phase of this Call for Proposal, the Programme provided technical assistance (TA) to 16 selected LSGs to developed system of internal procedures for proper determination of priorities areas of the public interest as well as funding local CSO projects that would ensure accountability and transparency of the pertained processes along with systemic-based mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of such projects. This intervention was in line with the recently adopted By-Law on Funds for Supporting Local Project of Public Interest Implemented by Local CSOs[[3]](#footnote-3).

In the second phase of the Call for Proposal, in order to contribute to reduced level of the social exclusion in those selected LSGs, the Programme will provide support in social innovative activities implemented in partnership of LSG and CSO with the aim of addressing the recognised needs of local excluded groups as well as improving overall local good governance practices.

The Social Innovation in this Programme is understood in accordance to the Bureau of European Policy Advisors[[4]](#footnote-4) approach and it needs to be considered when applying to this CFP: [Social] “Innovations that are social in both their ends and their means. Specifically, we define social innovations as new ideas (products, services and models) that simultaneously meet social needs (more effectively than alternatives) and create new social relationships or collaborations. In other words, they are innovations that are not only good for society but also enhance society’s capacity to act”.

## Objectives of the Intervention

**Overall objective:** Improve the access of local excluded social groups[[5]](#footnote-5) to their rights and needs through better provision of social inclusion policies and practices.

**Specific Objective:** Enhance access to the rights and fulfilment of the needs of at least 500 citizens from the excluded groups.

## The Scope of Intervention

The Programme will directly support **up to six (6) local projects in partnership of an LSG (as a lead partner) and a CSO** to implement **social innovation projects** that will be addressing the needs of local citizenry from the excluded groups. The projects will be selected, evaluated and approved in a **competitive process**, while the following **key thematic areas** will be addressed**:**

* **Empowering excluded groups** through employment, education and training, with particular focus on vulnerable women, Roma, persons with disabilities, youth and social assistance beneficiaries with the aim of their improved social inclusion;
* Support to improve the employability and skills of those not in work and low-skilled through more intensive, flexible and tailor-made approach i.e. on-the-job training
* Engage with employers to encourage them to commit to reskill, upskill and to recruit from the priority groups
* Formal or non-formal learning through vocationally-orientated training
* **Improve availability of public services** i.e. equal access to and enhance of efficiency, effectiveness and equitable distribution (including health, education and social protection services) to local excluded groups;
* Support to removing any barriers and issues that need to be addressed, notably, illness or regular health checks, child support in education, support in social protection area, etc.

The partnesrship is expected to provide its financial contribution of minimum 10% out of the total value of the project. It will be possible for one LSG to forge partnerships with up to two local CSOs, but the total grant budget for one municipality will remain the same.

## Guidalines for the Applicants

**5.1. General Eligiblity Criteria**

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

1. **Be one of 16 cities and municipalities that were awarded with the technical assistance in the first phase of this Call for Proposals i.e. Babušnica, Bela Palanka, Bosilegrad, Vladičin Han, Vlasotince, Zaječar, Ivanjica, Kragujevac, Novi Pazar, Nova Varoš, Negotin, Raška, Smederevo, Smederevska Palanka, Trgovište and Ćuprija**
2. To have officially **adopted by competent LSG`s body one or both regulations (Rulebook on Determination of Priority Areas of the Public Interest and the Rulebook on Financing of CSOs for Implementation of the Projects of the Public Interest)**  which were **developed within the technical assistance** (this needs to be verified, i.e. to send with the application relevant documentation)
3. **Mandatory partnership between LSG (as a lead partner) and local CSO (as a project partner)**. The partnership must be in a written form (Partnership Agreement or Letter of Intention for Partnership Agreement), signed by relevant signatories from both sides, and with clear division of tasks and responsibilities.
4. One applicant can submit only one project proposal. One applicant can be awarded with only one grant.

***Eligible criteria for CSO partner:***

1. Only CSOs legally registered for a minimum of 1 (one) year with clear and provable track-record from the previous projects involving international donors and organisations.
2. For project proposals involving provision of specific social protection services, such CSOs have to be licensed for provision of the proposed social protection services, with at least two years of experience in provision of such services.

#### 5.2. 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 as well as the partner 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, or is incomplete, or is submitted after the deadline. This decision will be final.

#### 5.3. Duration of the Projects

The implementation of activities from the projects will last for a **maximum of up to 11 (eleven) months**, and for a **minimum of 8 (eight) months**, from the day the grant contract is signed.

**5.4. The Grants Amount**

**The overall amount available under this Call for Proposals is USD 96,000 (in RSD).**

**The minimum value of the grant per project is USD 11,400 (in RSD) and the maximum is USD 16,000 (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 Non-eligible activities and expenditures**

Following activities and expenditures will not be considered eligible for funding by the Programme:

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. Activities where a substantial part of the budget covers recurrent costs and/or personnel costs
5. Travel, catering and/or conference services costs not founded in project rationale
6. Projects focused on research, or promotional activities with no specific outcomes
7. Extensive hardware/software purchases without true foundation in project rationale
8. Items from the budget, including office costs, fees or salaries, already funded by other sources (other projects, other organisations – public or civic, etc.)
9. Costs of banking commissions
10. All costs originating before the project beginning or accrued after project closure
11. **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 protection services, vulnerable groups, 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 innovative approach will be awarded with five (5) points* | 5 |
| * 1. Did the applicant conduct assessment of needs of excluded groups in local communities and on designing, proposing and implementing required solutions to those needs they would like to introduce?

*Applicants with conducted assessment will be awarded with five (5) points* | 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 (final beneficiaries, target groups)? Have their needs been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?
 | 5 |
| * 1. Did the applicant determine priority areas of the public interest and adress this in the proposed action?
 | 5 |
| * 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 social innovative activities?

*Projects with at least 30 beneficiaries will receive ten (10) points and additional ten (10) will be awarded for projects with more than 30 beneficiaries* | 20 |
| * 1. How many indirect beneficiaries are expected to benefit after implementation of the proposal (family members of direct beneficiaries, other citizens), and whether the applicant provided valid argumentation for assertion?

*From one to three persons – five (5) points; over ten persons – 5 points* | 10 |
| **5 Budget and Cost-effectiveness of the Action** | **15** |
| * 1. Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget?
 | 5 |
| * 1. Is the ration between the estimated costs and the expected results satisfactory?
 | 10 |
| **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[[6]](#footnote-6):**

**The Application Submission Form** **(Annex 1)**

* **The Project Proposal Application Form (Annex 2)**
* The Detailed **project budget proposal** in a 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. The project budget proposal has to be filled in dolar currency.
* **Logical Framework** **(Annex 4)**
* **The Work Plan** **(Annex 5)**
* **CSO Applicant Fact Sheet**, with registration, financial and other relevant documents **(Annex 6)**
* The Partnership Agreement or Letter of Intention for Partnership Agreement between an LSG as the Applicant and a CSO as the project partner must be submitted.
* Additional documentation that may be submitted with the application files: recommendations, relevant support letters, evidence of previously implemented projects, invoices that justifies budget proposal, and similar.
* **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.
* The eligibility costs verification, based on the supporting documents requested by the Programme will only be performed for the applications that have been selected according to their score and within the available funds

#### 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, in Word and Excel files. The 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[[7]](#footnote-7).**
* 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**: rsoc.applications@unops.org **by 8 May 2019 at the latest**

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 02-2019 – Support to Local Self-Governments in Implementation of Social Innovation Projects) including the name of the applicant (LSG).
* **Requests for clarification** should be submitted to the e-mail address: rsoc.cfp.clarifications@unops.org
* The **deadline for the submission of Applications is 13 May 2019.** **Any Applications submitted after the deadline will be rejected.**
* Applications **must be received before midnight-local time** on the closing date of the 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, in Serbian language)
* 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

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| --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Timeframe/ Deadline** |
| **Launching of the Public Call** | 12 April 2019  |
| **Info Sessions for the Call** | 15 – 26 April 2019 |
| **Deadline for Submission of Applications** |  13 May 2019  |
| **Information on the Evaluation Results**  |  June 2019  |
| **Signing of Agreement** | June/July 2019 |

1. **List of Annexes**

**DOCUMENTS TO BE COMPLETED[[8]](#footnote-8):**

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: CSO Partner Fact sheet

**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)

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. The Assessment of 34 municipalities was conducted within the European PROGRES Programme, in cooperation with the Centre for Social Policy [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. http://www.civilnodrustvo.gov.rs/upload/documents/zakoni/ur-o-sredstva-javni-interes-udruzenja055\_cyr.doc [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. BEPA, 2011, p. 33 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. As the main target group, the Programme will consider people with disabilities, rural and other vulnerable women, Roma and any other individual/group with multi-layer vulnerability. Swiss PRO Programme will be considering the following social groups, both from urban and rural areas, as excluded groups that will also be taken into account, where relevant: 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; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) people; and extreme-poverty stricken people in general. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The Applicant may choose to submit all the required documents in English only, if its feasible at this stage of the process [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Please see Important note at the end of the Section 7.1 Application forms and supporting documents [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Section 7.1 of the Call for Proposals [↑](#footnote-ref-8)