**Public Call (07-2018)**

**Provision of Technical Assistance to LSGs in Improving Internal Procedures for Funding Local CSOs’ Projects**

## 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.

Moreover, very few local governments have a fully developed system of internal procedures for funding local CSO projects that would ensure accountability and transparency of the pertained processes, as well as systemic-based mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of such projects. To this is closely linked the lack of a proper policy on how local governments are deciding upon what a public interest is - the one that could be addressed with the projects developed and implemented by local CSOs[[3]](#footnote-3).

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 technical assistance (TA) to selected LSGs. This intervention is in line with the recently adopted By-Law on Funds for Supporting Local Project of Public Interest Implemented by Local CSOs[[4]](#footnote-4).

## Objectives of the Intervention

**Overall objective:** Support LSGs in becoming more accountable and transparent in identifying, funding and addressing public interests through projects developed and implemented by local CSOs.

**Specific Objective:** Develop internal policies, procedures and regulations, in participation with other local stakeholders that will put in place a permanent, systemic and publicly available mechanism, comprised of rules and regulations for funding, monitoring and evaluating local CSOs’ projects in an accountable and transparent manner.

## The Scope of Intervention

This Public Call is a part of a broader Programme intervention, that wil have **two main phases**:

**The First Phase** is this Public Call, where the Programme will provide technical assistance (TA) to up to 10 (ten) local governments to reassess its current status in regards to the requirements to become more in line with the good governace principles[[5]](#footnote-5) in their policy-making and practices, and develop or amend the necessary processes, procedures and regulations in funding local CSO projects. This will make those municipalities also in line with the requirements with the above mentioned By-Law, and especially with its Article 5[[6]](#footnote-6). This phase is to last up to 7 (seven) months from the day the selected LSG is informed it has been selected for provision of the TA. All costs of this Phase and the TA will be borne by the Programme.

**The Second Phase**, will start after the technical assistance (TA) has ended and its results were verified by the Programme, i.e. specific new or updated existing regulations were adopted and encated that will provide for more accountable and transparent process of funding local CSO projects. The Second Phase will have a separate public Call for Project Proposals, to be announced in due time. This Phase will however **have a grant** part, i.e. the Programme will award up to five partnerships of an LSG (as a lead partner) and a CSO for their jointly developed projects (criteria and other pertained information will be publicly announced after the TA results were verified), with **up to EUR 14,000 per project**.

The projects’ topics that will be supported through this grant scheme are:

* social innovation projects[[7]](#footnote-7), focussing on identification of social needs and on designing, proposing and implementing required solutions to those needs;
* social inclusion activities addressing the specific needs of excluded groups in local communities;
* policy advocacy at local level on needed social inclusion measures, leading to an actual change of the policy in question, ratified at the end of the process by a competent LG body.

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. The implementation of these projects will last up to 11 (eleven) months and LSGs will be monitored by the Programme in regards to their adhering to and implementation of the results from the TA.

## 4.1 The Process

1. ***Submission of application documents:***
* Submission Form
* Intervention Application Form
* Written expressed willingness and acceptance of the Programme’s technical assistance for revision/upgrade of the exisitng or for establishement of new local policies and regulations for awarding local CSOs with the funds for specific projects

*Application document templates are attached to this Public Call[[8]](#footnote-8).*

1. ***Provision of technical assistance (TA)***

The Programme will provide **up to seven months of technical assistance, to up to ten (10) selected LSGs,** consisting of the following:

* Development or improvement of internal regulations and procedures regarding the allocation of funds to CSOs for projects of public interest which will be in line with newly adopted Decree related to financing of programmes of public interest implemented by CSOs that will be mandatory to apply as of January 2019.[[9]](#footnote-9)
* Development or improvement of local policy that defines the public interest in the interaction of the LSG and civil sector, based on which the themes for Call for Proposals, that LSGs will be announcing, will be defined
* Development or improvement of a procedure for periodical reassessment of the public interest’s topics for future Calls for proposals to local CSOs that LSGs will be conducting
* Development or improvement of mechanisms and tools for monitoring of projects implemented by CSOs and evaluation of their results which will be used by the LSG in the years to come.

The TA will be considered as completed upon verification from the Programme. Upon verification, the LSG in question will be eligible to apply for grants from the Second Phase (as described above). For this, a separate Call for Project Proposals will be developed and publicly announced in due time.

## 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 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. **III and IV group according to the level of development[[10]](#footnote-10)**
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 and support of the Programme, which would have no financial costs for the applicant

#### 5.2. The Selection of LSGs

* The LSGs that will be provided with technical assistance and awarded will be selected through **a competitive process, based on needs for immediate technical assistance, which will be described in the Application form.**
* Swiss PRO Programme does **not** have an obligation to spend all funds available for this activity and will select for the Phase 1 only those LSGs that meet specific criteria, which will give **specific advantage to municipalities with less developed regulations pertained to topic of this Call in order to enable their further development and provision of adequate services to citizens in exercising their needs and rights**.
* The application 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.
* Geographical position of the applicants will be taken into account during the selection of the LSGs.

#### 5.3. Duration of the Intervention

The implementation of this **intervention up to 7 (seven) months,** from the day when LSG applicant is informed by the Programme that it has been selected for technical assistance.

**5.4. Sustainability**

The further application of newly adopted local policies and procedures and adherence to it will be monitored in the Second Phase, as described above.

1. **The Selection Criteria**

Proposals will be selected based on assessment of their various aspects, including the following:

1. Relevance of the proposal to the objectives of the Call
2. Sustainability of the proposed assistance
3. Planned outcomes and envisaged impacts of the assistance

Technical evaluation of the received applications for this Public Call will be conducted in line with the following selection criteria which will ***give*** ***specific advantage to municipalities with less developed regulations pertained to topic of this Call in order to enable their further development and provision of adequate services to citizens in exercising their needs and rights.***

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| --- | --- |
| **CRITERIA FOR THE FIRST PHASE** | **MAX POINTS** |
| **1 Operational Capacity** | **10** |
| * 1. Does the applicant have experience in project management?

*Applicants with references on successful implementation of at least three projects in partnership with CSOs (e.g. projects involving social protection services, international donors, etc.) will be awarded with three (3) points; More than three projects – additional 2 points (maximum 5 points)* | 5 |
| * 1. Did the applicant conduct assessment of needs of particular 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 of needs of one particular excluded groups will be awarded with three (3) points; Conducted assessment of needs of more than one particular excluded groups – additional 2 points (maximum 5 points)* | 5 |
| **2 Relevance of the Intervention** | **70** |
| * 1. Is there a need for development/upgrading of procedures for impartial and transparent support of the project of public interest implemented by local CSOs in line with newely adopted Decree related to financing of programmes of public interest implemented by CSOs?

(*No – 1 point; Yes, for upgrading – 10 points; Yes, for development – 25 points)*  | 25 |
| * 1. Is there a need for development/upgrading of local policy that defines the public interest in the interaction of the LSG and civil sector, based on which the themes for Call for Proposals (target groups, their needs) will be clearly defined?
	2. *(No – 1 point; Yes, for upgrading – 10 points; Yes, for development – 20 points)*
 | 20 |
| * 1. Is there a need for development/upgrading of procedure for reassessment of the public interest?

*(No – 1 point; Yes, for upgrading – 5 points; Yes, for development – 10 points)* | 10 |
| * 1. Is there a need for development/upgrading of mechanisms for monitoring of projects implemented by CSOs and evaluation of their results?

*(No – 1 point; Yes, for upgrading – 5 points; Yes, for development – 15 points)* | 15 |
| **3 Annual Budget Allocation (financial capacity of LSG)** | **20** |
| * 1. Annual budget allocation for awarding CSOs in 2018 has not exceed RSD 3,000,000?

*Annual budget allocation that exceeds RSD 3,000,000 – 5 points, budget allocation that ranges from 1,500,000 to 3,000,000 RSD – 10 points and budget allocation less than 1,500,000 – 20 points* | 20 |
| **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 English language:**

* Submission form **(Annex 1)**
* Intervention Application Form **(Annex 2)**
* A letter expressing readiness to work on local governance improvement pertained to the topic of the Call (template of the Letter **in Annex 3)**

Please note that only the above listed documents will be evaluated. It is therefore of the utmost importance that these documents contain all relevant information concerning the action.

Additional documentation that may be submitted with the application files: copy of current valid regulations, evidence of previously implemented projects, and similar.

Failing to submit either of these documents will mean **immediate** disqualification of the application.

**7.2 Where and how to send 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 English language**.
* 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 Public Call (e.g. Public Call 07-2018 – Provision of Technical Assistance to LSGs in Improving Internal Procedures for Funding Local CSOs’ Projects) including the name of the applicant.
* **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 3 August 2018. Any Applications submitted after the deadline will be rejected.**
* Applications/proposals **must be received before midnight-local time** on the closing date of the Public Call. 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.
* **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 the Public Call 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. **Monitoring, reporting and evaluation**

The Programme will monitor activities implemented by selected and awarded LSGs, and will require from LSGs to prepare relevant records.

1. **List of Annexes**

**DOCUMENTS TO BE COMPLETED[[11]](#footnote-11):**

Annex 1: Submission Form (Word format)

Annex 2: Intervention Application Form (Word format)

Annex 3: Letter of Interest (Word format)

**DOCUMENTS FOR INFORMATION:**

Annex 4: Application Checklist

Annex 5: 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. The Assessment of 34 municipalities was conducted within the European PROGRES Programme, in cooperation with the Centre for Social Policy [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. As indicated during the Programme’s consultations with representatives of approx. 90 LSGs, this “process” is usually composed of arbitrary decsions of local officials and aimed at funding most of the projects the CSOs are coming upo with, rather than an LSG setting these policies and goals beforehand. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. http://www.civilnodrustvo.gov.rs/upload/documents/zakoni/ur-o-sredstva-javni-interes-udruzenja055\_cyr.doc [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Accountability/Rule of Law, transparency, participation, non-discrimination and equality, and efficiency & effectiveness [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Please, see the Footnote No 4 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The Social Innovation in this Programme is understood in accordance to the Bureau of European Policy Advisors 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”. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. For more information please see Section 7. Application Procedure of this Public Call [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. For more details please see at <http://demo.paragraf.rs/WebParagrafDemo/?did=424823> [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. 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-10)
11. Section 7.1 of the Public Call [↑](#footnote-ref-11)