

SOCIAL INCLUSION PILLAR

Call for Project Proposals (PRO 01/2023)

Support to Civil Society Organisations in Implementation of Social Integrated Services

1. Background

The UN Joint Programme “PRO - Local Governance for People and Nature” contributes to improvement of the well-being and quality of life of citizens through improved local governance, social inclusion and environmental protection in 99 cities and municipalities in Šumadija, Western, Eastern and Southern Serbia¹. With the support of the Government of Switzerland through the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation in the total value of EUR 9 million, the Joint Programme is implemented by the United Nations Serbia agencies - UNOPS, UNICEF, UNFPA and UNEP, in the period from 01 January 2023 to 31 December 2026.

To achieve the Programme’s Objective, the intervention will focus on three key outcomes:

1. Local self-governments (LGs) improve capacities and apply good governance principles in practice (Pillar Good Governance);
2. LGs and other relevant local actors improve capacities and develop evidence-based local social protection policies (Pillar Social Inclusion);
3. LGs improve capacities and apply environmental governance processes in practice (Pillar Environmental Governance).

The key stakeholders, but also direct users of support at the local level, will be local governments (cities and municipalities), including their administrations/staff, organisations, and local institutions (Centres for Social Work – CSWs, Primary Health Centres – PHCs, pre-school institutions and schools), local Civil Society Organisations – CSOs. The final users of support will be the citizens from participating LGs from the Region of Šumadija and Western Serbia, and the Region of Southern and Eastern Serbia.

¹ Programme Area of responsibility: Aleksandrovac, Aleksinac, Arandjelovac, Arilje, Babušnica, Bajina Bašta, Batočina, Bela Palanka, Blace, Bogatić, Bojnik, Boljevac, Bor, Bosilegrad, Brus, Bujanovac, Crna Trava, Čačak, Čajetina, Čičevac, Čuprija, 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, Svrlijig, Šabac, Topola, Trgovište, Trstenik, Tutin, Ub, Užice, Valjevo, Varvarin, Velika Plana, Veliko Gradište, Vladimirci, Vladičin Han, Vlasotince, Vranje, Vrnjačka Banja, Zaječar, Žabari, Žagubica, Žitorađa.

All Programme activities will be undertaken in partnership with the Government of Serbia, especially the Ministry of Public Administration and Local Self-Governments, the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Environmental Protection, and the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities.

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.

2. Justification of the Intervention

Serbia needs strong and sustained support in social inclusion since in the area of social policy and provision of social services Serbia shows stagnation².

Provision of social protection services within LGs is not at satisfactory level in terms of their variety, sustainability, availability, efficiency, and quality.³ The situation in terms of providing adequate care has significantly worsened since the breakout of the COVID 19 pandemic. Over the past several years, absolute poverty in Serbia was hovering at around 7% while many poor households are affected by multi-layered vulnerability, to which the current local systems for providing social services and measures are not prepared, both in capacities to scan the real needs nor in developing and fielding relevant social services.

At the policy level, Serbia needs to develop and adopt a new Social Protection Strategy. However, [the draft Social Protection Strategy](#) (available since 2019) considers integrated services as one of priorities, especially for users from multiple risk groups such as Roma, single-parent families, children with complex developmental disabilities, victims of domestic violence, etc.

The term ‘integration’ should be understood as applying the range of approaches or methods for achieving greater coordination and effectiveness among different services to accomplish improved outcomes for service users. These approaches include: coordination and cooperation in services delivery, partnerships, collaboration and inter-professional or joint working. Therefore, ‘integration’ is conceptualised as a method for tailor-made addressing specific needs, circumstances and possibilities, since there is “no one size fits all” in work of integrating different public services.⁴ An integrated approach should provide more comprehensive protection to those with multilayer vulnerabilities while considering multiple factors, such as education, health, social protection and unemployment.

CSOs remain underused in supporting LGs and other local institutions, with their available capacities and resources for public services delivery. In order to contribute to reduced levels of social exclusion at the local level, the Programme will provide support in integrated social inclusion activities implemented by CSOs, with the aim of addressing the recognised needs of local left behind (LB) groups.

² For more information please see: [EC Report 2020 Serbia](#)

³ For more information please see: [Mapping of Social Protection Services under Jurisdiction of LGs](#), 2020, SIPRU

⁴ [Report Integrated Social Services in Europe](#) published by the Council of Europe

3. Objectives of the Intervention

Overall objective: To contribute to enhancement of local capacities for provision of integrated social inclusion policies and practices.

Specific Objective: To enhance access to the rights and fulfilment of the needs of at least 2,000 citizens from the LB groups.⁵

4. Scope of the Intervention

The Programme will directly support **at least 20 local CSOs** to implement projects in delivery of integrated social policies and practices that will address the needs of local citizenry from the LB groups. The projects will be selected, evaluated and approved in a **competitive process**.

The projects are expected to address better social inclusion of LB groups through improved availability of social integrated services which enhance efficiency, effectiveness and equitable distribution to local LB groups. **The integrated (inter-sectoral) approach should be applied to at least two from the following three thematic areas: social protection, education and health.**

5. Guidelines for the Applicants

5.1 Eligibility criteria

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

- Be a registered citizen's non-for-profit organisation or association (CSOs) **with the seat in one of 99 municipalities** within the PRO Programme Area of Responsibility (AoR). Organisations with a seat outside of the PRO Programme AoR are not eligible for this Call.
- Only CSOs legally **registered for at least 2 (two) years**.
- For project proposals involving **provision of social protection services for which licence is required**, such a **CSO must be licensed** for provision of the proposed social protection services **or to have at least two years of experience** in provision of such services.
- **The partnership, formalised through a legally binding agreement, between applicant CSO and local institution** i.e. LG, CSW, school, hospital, etc. **is mandatory** for the application to this Call
- **One applicant can submit only one project proposal. One applicant can be awarded with only one grant.**

⁵ As the target groups, the Programme will consider Roma (especially from sub-standard settlements), persons with disabilities (including children and youth with developmental difficulties) and people eligible for support in line with the Law on Social Protection.

This Call encourages Roma-led CSOs or other CSO with provable track-record from the previous projects addressing improvement of Roma status to apply.

5.2 The Projects selection

- The projects that will be awarded will be selected through a **competitive process**.
- PRO Programme does **not** have an obligation to spend all funds 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 considered during the selection of the project proposals in order to contribute to more equal representation of projects from two target regions as well as to diverse proposals regarding thematic aspects. Namely, in the case of several equally scored projects the priority will have a project from the region with fewer selected projects or a project with a unique thematic proposal.

5.3 Duration of the projects

The implementation of activities from the projects will last for a **maximum of 12 (twelve) months**, and for **at least 10 (ten) months**, from the day the grant contract is signed. However, the active provision of social integrated services must last **at least 8 (eight) months**.

5.4 The Grants amount

The overall amount available under this Call for Proposals is **EUR 273,000 (in RSD)**. The PRO Programme does not have an obligation to spend all funds 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 EUR 10,000 and the maximum is EUR 13,650.**⁶

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:

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.

⁶ Payment will be made in RSD in accordance with the UNORE exchange rate

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. All costs originating before the project beginning or accrued after project closure.
10. Interventions that relate solely or mainly to capital investments, such as renovation/construction of facilities.
11. Procurement of the equipment that is not grounded in the objectives of the Call and without specific outcome.
12. Procurement of the used/old equipment while procurement of the equipment cannot exceed 30% of the total project costs.
13. Costs incurred prior to the signing of Grant Support Agreement.
14. Human resources costs for the project team cannot exceed 30% of the total project costs unless it is justified for the realisation of project activities.
15. Bank account costs (bank fees, opening and servicing bank account, etc.).
16. Loans and debts.
17. Auditing costs.
18. Unforeseen expenses.

5.7. Other important requirements and considerations

- All planned project costs must be presented in USD
- All expenses (except costs of land-line/mobile telephone, electricity and public heating – if envisaged) planned to be funded from PRO' contribution presented in the budget must NOT include VAT
- In-kind contribution cannot be displayed in the project budget
- In line with UNOPS policy that no funds shall be paid as profit to a Grantee or any sub-Grantee, awarding of service contracts by Lead applicant to Partner organisation will not be allowed. Partner organisations cannot submit an invoice to the Lead applicant for the service fulfilment or request funds for the performed services. It is expected that all project eligible costs should be disbursed through the bank sub-account dedicated for the project implementation.
- The selected applicants will be obliged to carry on appropriate procurement procedures during project implementation (will apply PRO Procurement Manual). In case of the planned service costs incurred by the co-applicant (formal project partner), such costs MUST be budgeted under budget heading 1 Human Resources and the partnership agreement must be clearly aligned with the project budget
- Any major inconsistency in the application (e.g. the amounts mentioned in the budget are inconsistent with those mentioned in the application form, etc.) may lead to the rejection of the application

6. 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 |
| 1.1 Does the applicant have project management expertise and experience? <i>Applicant that demonstrates that the proposed project team has relevant project management expertise and experience, and provides references on successful implementation of three or more projects, including at least one funded by international donor, will be awarded with five (5) points</i> | 5 |
| 1.2 Does the applicant have specialised expertise to address the issues tackled by the project proposal? <i>Applicants that demonstrates that the proposed project team has necessary specialised knowledge, and provides references for three or more activities or projects related to social integrated approach will be awarded with five (5) points</i> | 5 |
| 1.3 Did the applicant assess needs of vulnerable groups in local communities and on designing, proposing and implementing required solutions to those needs they would like to introduce? <i>Applicants with conducted assessment will be awarded with five (5) points</i> | 5 |
| 2 Relevance of the Action | 25 |
| 2.1 How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the Call for Proposals? | 10 |
| 2.2 How defined and strategically chosen are those involved (final beneficiaries and partnership actors)? Have the interventions and obligations of involved partners been defined and relevant for the proposed action? | 10 |
| 2.3 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 best practices? | 5 |
| 3 Design and Feasibility of the Action | 15 |
| 3.1 Are the proposed activities appropriate, practical, and consistent with the objectives and expected results? | 5 |
| 3.2 Is the action plan clear and feasible? | 5 |
| 3.3 Does the proposal contain objectively verifiable indicators for the outputs and outcomes ? | 5 |

| | |
|---|------------|
| 4 Sustainability and Impact of the Action | 30 |
| 4.1 What is the number of people that are expected to benefit from socially integrated activities? <i>Projects with at least 20 beneficiaries will receive ten (10) points and additional ten (10) will be awarded for projects with over 20 beneficiaries</i> | 20 |
| 4.2. To which extent the Project benefits will continue or are likely to continue after the end of the implementation? <i>The proposals that comprehensively consider sustainability and establish sound basis for sustained flow of benefits over time will be awarded up to ten (10) points.</i> | 10 |
| 5 Budget and Cost-effectiveness of the Action | 15 |
| 5.1 Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget? | 5 |
| 5.2. Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results satisfactory? | 7 |
| 5.3. Co-funding of local institution partner | 3 |
| TOTAL POINTS | 100 |

Only applications with a score of minimum 60 points and over will be considered for selection.

The PRO Programme reserves the right to request clarifications related to project application and budget before the finalisation of the award process.

7. Application Procedure

7.1. Application forms and supporting documents

The applicant must submit the following application forms **in English language**:

- **Submission Form (Annex 1).**
- **Project Proposal Application Form (Annex 2).**
- Detailed **project budget proposal** in table format (**Annex 3**). *Please note*, that all purchases to be made by PRO Programme funds must be budgeted **without** VAT, i.e. – please list the amounts in the budget accordingly. Please list what you expect to be purchased by the PRO Programme funds. If there is co-financing from your organisation or partner institution, state the exact amount, items, and VAT to be included for that part.
- **CSO Applicant Fact Sheet**, with registration, financial and other relevant documents (**Annex 4**).
- **The Partnership Agreement or Letter of Intention for Partnership Agreement** should be submitted.
- **Signed Eligibility Declaration by the Applicant and Partner organisation (Annex 5 and Annex 6).**

Additional documentation that may be submitted with the application files: recommendations, relevant support letters, evidence of implemented projects, and similar.

7.2 Where and how to send the application

- The Application Form must be **submitted via e-mail in PDF format (signed and scanned)** and in original editable format, while using Word and Excel. Signed and scanned versions must contain exactly the same application documents as the electronic versions in original editable format. In case of discrepancies, signed and scanned versions will prevail.
- The applicant must submit application forms **in the 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 a series of emails, with each email not exceeding 20 MB size thresholds. Each part of the application should be numbered in the email subject field (email 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 the 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 PRO 01/2023 – Support to Civil Society Organisations in Implementation of Social Integrated Projects) including the name of the applicant (CSO as per Serbian Business Registers Agency registration).
- **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 extended until 16 June 2023. 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 applications 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 emails different from the ones 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 the Evaluation team.

8. Branding and Visibility

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

These requirements cover the written and visual identity of PRO Programme, 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 PRO Programme.

9. Monitoring, reporting and evaluation

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

These reports will be expected from the grantee:

- Monthly progress reports (after the first month and on every 5th of the next month)
- The milestone report after at least 70% of the first tranche spent, including financial aspect, and must be produced in English
- The final report assessing and analysing the implemented project, its outputs and outcomes, submitted 30 days after finalisation of the project. The Final report includes narrative and financial aspects, including photos, and must be produced in English. These reports will be considered public information.

PRO Programme 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.

10. Data Protection

UNOPS shall ensure an appropriate protection of received data subject provided by the Applicant in accordance with the applicable UNOPS Key Privacy Principles (ref. UNOPS Executive Office Directive Ref. EOD.ED.2019.01). Data subjects shall therefore be managed carefully by UNOPS and in a coherent manner across the organisation, particularly ensuring respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms of individuals, in particular the right to privacy.

11. Additional consideration

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

12. Indicative timeframe

| Activity | Timeframe/ Deadline |
|---|---------------------|
| Launching of the Public Call | 26 April 2023 |
| Info Sessions for the Call | 16 - 23 May 2023 |
| Deadline for Submission of Applications | 16 June 2023 |
| Information on the Evaluation Results | August 2023 |
| Signing of Agreement | September 2023 |

13. List of Annexes

DOCUMENTS TO BE COMPLETED⁷:

- Annex 1: Submission Form (Word format)
- Annex 2: Project Proposal Application Form (Word format)
- Annex 3: Budget (Excel format)
- Annex 4: CSO Applicant Fact sheet
- Annex 5: Eligibility Declaration by the Applicant
- Annex 6: Eligibility Declaration by the Partner Organisation

DOCUMENTS FOR INFORMATION:

- Annex 7: Application Checklist
- Annex 8: UNOPS Grant Support Agreement with General Conditions (template)
- Annex 9: PRO Grant Narrative Report (template)
- Annex 10: PRO Grant Financial Report (template)
- Annex 11: PRO Grant Financial Card (template)

⁷ Section 7.1 of the Call for Proposals