

SOCIAL INCLUSION PILLAR

Call for Expression of Interest

Provision of Technical Assistance to CSOs for Licensing

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, Aranđelovac, 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 (MPALSG), the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs (MLEVSA), the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MEP), and the Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities (SCTM).

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.

On its way to the EU accession, Serbia has an important task, and this is contribution to the social inclusion process in its society. 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. At the legislative and policy levels, Serbia needs to adopt a new Law on Social Protection (current is from 2011), and to develop and adopt a new Social Protection Strategy (the draft is available since 2019).

According to the assessment on the [Mapping of Social Protection Services under jurisdiction of LGs](#) the provision of social protection services within LGs is not at satisfactory level in terms of their variety, sustainability, availability, efficiency, and quality. The situation in terms of providing adequate care has significantly worsened since the breakout of the COVID 19 pandemic.

2. Justification of the Intervention

The main challenges in the social protection are lack of pluralism of service providers, lack of pluralism of coverage of beneficiary groups i.e. introduced services for three or less beneficiary groups, lack of innovative and integrated services, lack of inter-sector cooperation in the needs assessment process or in provision of services and lack of institutional mechanisms for implementing social protection policy such as Social Policy/Protection Council, Council for Improvement Roma Status and Council for Improvement Status of Persons with Disabilities.

Overall, the offer of services is modest, with a relatively small number of users while a greater number of services is not sustainable, since most LGs spend small budget funds for these services. Public sector service providers covered 54% of the beneficiaries while 80% of the total were served by providers holding licences valid for six years and limited licences.

To address this and support the CSOs in significantly improving the capacities pertained to the matter in question, the Programme will provide technical assistance (TA) to selected CSOs. This intervention is in line with objectives and measures envisaged in the [Poverty Reduction Strategy](#) related to social protection i.e. inclusion of different actors in service provision, primarily from the non-governmental sector and development of social protection services that support life in the community - day care centres for persons with disabilities (PWDs), home care and assistance.

3. Objectives of the Intervention

Overall objective: Support diversification and pluralism of social service providers at the local level.

Specific Objective: Strengthening capacities of the participating CSOs for their licensing as service providers for provision of social protection services.

4. The Scope of Intervention

This intervention provides **technical assistance (TA) for up to 15 CSOs** from those LGs without licensed local service providers, or which do not have limited (temporary) licences. The priority will be given to those from undeveloped or less developed municipalities with lack of pluralism of service providers.

The TA will mainly cover a normative framework for the licensing process, minimum structural and functional standards of services pertained to TA including specification, target group and programme activities, conditions which should be improved to meet the criteria for licensing, procedural steps of licensing process and needed documentation for issuing a licence, type of licence and its duration.

The TA will be exclusively focused on licensing processes related to four services from two categories of services: a) daily care centre, home care and personal companion of child with disabilities from category daily community services, and b) personal assistance of child with disabilities from category support services for independent living.

The TA will be developed and implemented in close coordination with the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs (MLEVSA), the Republic Institute for Social Protection (RISP) and other relevant key stakeholders.

The TA will last twelve (12) months from the day the selected CSO is informed it has been selected for provision of the TA. All costs of this intervention and the TA will be borne by the Programme.

4.1. The Process

a) Submission of application documents:

- Submission Form
- Intervention Application Form
- Written expressed willingness and acceptance of the Programme's TA for licensing process (Letter of Intent)

Application document templates are attached to this Call².

² For more information please see Section 7. Application Procedure of this Call

b) Provision of TA

The Programme will provide **twelve (12) months of TA, to up to fifteen (15) selected CSOs**, consisting of the following:

- Workshop which should cover: normative framework for licensing process, minimum structural and functional standards of services pertaining to technical assistance including specification, target group and programme activities, procedural steps of licensing process and needed documentation for issuing a licence, type of licence and its duration.
- Mentorship support, along with a tailor-made plan for capacity development to develop new or enhancing the existing CSO capacities for licensing. The tailor-made plans will be based on current capacities, common local needs, type of social protection services for issuing of licence and conditions which should be improved to meet the criteria for licensing. Support in preparing relevant templates for the licensing process.
- Simulation of the practical part of submitting a request for licensing along with consideration of individual cases in more detail.

The TA will be completed upon verification from the Programme.

5. Guidelines for the Applicants

5.1. General Eligibility Criteria

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

- a) **Be a registered CSOs with the seat in one of 99 municipalities within the PRO Programme Area of Responsibility (AoR)** that also belongs to less developed categories of municipalities i.e. **II, III and IV group according to the level of development.**³ Organisations with a seat outside of the PRO Programme AoR are not eligible for this Call.
- b) **Only CSOs legally registered for at least 1 (one) year with experience in social protection topics of minimum 6 (six) months**
- c) The applicant has **submitted a written, official documents that is willing and ready to work on capacity improvements** pertained to the topic of the Call, with expert and TA and support of the Programme, which would have no financial costs for the applicant

5.2. The Selection of CSOs

- The CSOs that will be provided with TA and awarded will be selected through a **competitive process, based on needs for immediate TA, which will be described in the Application form i.e. the type(s) of social protection services planned to be set up, current capacity and conditions as well as experience in provision of services.**

³ Please see Article 11, item 3 and 4 of [Law on Regional Development](#)

- PRO Programme does **not** have an obligation to spend all funds for this activity and will select only those CSOs that meet specific criteria, which will give **specific advantage to CSOs from undeveloped or less developed municipalities with lack of pluralism of service providers 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 representation will be considered during the selection of the CSOs in order to contribute to more equal representation of CSOs from two target regions. Namely, in the case of several equally scored CSOs the priority will have a CSO from the region with fewer selected applicants.

5.3. Duration of the Intervention

The implementation of this **intervention is 12 (twelve) months**, from when a CSO applicant is informed by the Programme it has been selected for technical assistance.

5.4. Sustainability

The sustainability of social protection services will be enhanced through support of licensing processes for CSOs for service provision which will increase the number of services providers at the local level.

6. The Selection Criteria

Applications will be selected based on assessment of their various aspects, including:

1. Operational capacity
2. Relevance to the objectives of the Call
3. Consideration of the local context

Technical evaluation of the received applications for this Call will be conducted in line with the following selection criteria which will **give specific advantage to CSOs from undeveloped or less developed municipalities with lack of pluralism of service providers to enable their further development and provision of adequate services to citizens in exercising their needs and rights.**

CRITERIA	MAX POINTS
1 Operational Capacity	10
1.1 Does the applicant have experience in providing social protection services? <i>Applicants with references involving provision of social protection services of at least two (2) years will be awarded with three (3) points; Less than two years – additional 2 points (maximum 5 points)</i>	5

1.2. Does the applicant have accredited personnel for service that want to be licensed? <i>Applicant with one accredited professional - 1 point; Applicant with more than one accredited professionals - 5 points</i>	5
2 Relevance of the Intervention	65
2.1. Did the applicant assess needs of particular left-behind (LB) groups in local communities and on solutions to those needs they would like to introduce? <i>Applicants with assessed needs of one particular LB groups will be awarded with three (3) points; Conducted assessment of needs of more than one particular LB groups – additional 2 points (maximum 5 points)</i>	5
2.2. Is there a need for <u>development/upgrading of human resources capacity that enables full service provision?</u> <i>(No – 1 point; Yes, for upgrading – 10 points; Yes, for development – 15 points)</i>	15
2.3. Is there a need for <u>development/upgrading capacity for service standards in terms of space, equipment, organisation?</u> <i>(No – 1 point; Yes, for upgrading – 10 points; Yes, for development – 20 points)</i>	20
2.4. Does the applicant have <u>experience in applying for a licence?</u> <i>(Yes – 5 points; No – 10 points)</i>	10
2.5. Is there a need for <u>development/upgrading of the Service Provision Programme document?</u> <i>(No – 1 point; Yes, for upgrading – 5 points; Yes, for development – 15 points)</i>	15
3. Local context	25
3.1. The number of local service providers in the local community <i>(Over three - 1 point; Three or less than three - 5 points; None - 10 points)</i>	10
3.2. The number of functioning social protection services in the local community <i>(Over three - 1 point; Three or less than three - 5 points; None - 10 points)</i>	10
3.3. Applicant with the seat in less developed municipalities <i>(From LG from II group of development - 1 point; from LGs from III and IV groups of development - 5 points)</i>	5
TOTAL POINTS	100

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

The PRO Programme reserves the right to request clarifications related to application before the finalisation of the selection process.

7. Application Procedure

7.1 Application forms and supporting documents

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

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

Only the above listed documents will be evaluated. Therefore, these documents must contain all relevant information concerning the action.

Additional documentation that may be submitted with the application files: copy of current valid regulations 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 and scanned)** and in original editable format, while using Word and Excel. Signed, stamped and scanned versions must contain 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** consisting of the reference number and the title of the Call (e.g. Call for Expression of Interest – Provision of Technical Assistance to CSOs for Licensing) including the name of the applicant.
- **Requests for clarification** should be submitted to the email 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/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 applications 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 emails different from the ones 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 the Evaluation team.

8. Monitoring, reporting and evaluation

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

9. List of Annexes

DOCUMENTS TO BE COMPLETED⁴:

- Annex 1: Submission Form (Word format)
- Annex 2: Intervention Application Form (Word format)
- Annex 3: Letter of Interest (Word format)

⁴ Section 7.1 of the Call