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CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Project Title:	Establishment of, and support to, a national CSOs platform for monitoring the implementation of CEDAW Recommendations, Istanbul Convention under the Programme "Ending Violence against Women: Implementing Norms, Changing Minds" in Albania
Location:	Albania
Purpose:	Selection of qualified Responsible Party for the Programme
Duration:	September 2017 – December 2019 (tentatively)
Contract Type:	Project Cooperation Agreement
Deadline for submissions:	17 September 2017

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) is inviting civil society organizations (CSOs) or CSOs networks working on gender equality and ending violence against women to submit proposals to: *establish a network of organizations to support women's voice and agency to monitor, report on and advocate for the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention).*

Terms of Reference

I. Background

The programme “*Implementing norms, changing minds*” (February 2017- January 2020) aims at ending gender-based discrimination and violence against women, with a focus on the most disadvantaged groups of women, in six Western Balkan countries – Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYR Macedonia, Montenegro, Kosovo¹, and Serbia – and Turkey. Funded by the European Commission (EC) within the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) II, the Programme is aligned with the European Union (EU) accession standards to achieve equality between women and men.

“*Implementing norms, changing minds*” is anchored in the normative frameworks of the Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention), and is in alignment with the European Union (EU) accession standards on gender equality. In Albania, the programme will: (i) support the development of an enabling legislative and policy environment on eliminating violence against women and all forms of discrimination; (ii) promote favorable social norms and attitudes to prevent gender discrimination and violence against women; and (iii) pursue empowering women and girls (including those from disadvantaged groups) who have experienced discrimination or violence to advocate for and use available, accessible, and quality services.

International treaties and recommendations of human rights mechanisms play a key role in guiding Albania and other states in their efforts to ensure gender equality and fight all forms of violence against women. In this context, CEDAW is one of the key instruments, which requires all states parties to periodically submit reports on the steps that have taken to implement its provisions - a procedure which promotes compliance with the obligations contained in the Convention. Albania submitted its latest report in 2016 and the Committee issued its Concluding Observations in July 2016. An important part of any periodic report is reporting back to the Committee on concrete measures taken to implement the Concluding Observations of the previous report. While the Concluding Observations of July 2016 have set the due date for the fifth periodic report in 2020, four recommendations were selected by the Committee requiring follow-up information within two years (2018). All these four recommendations relate to ending violence against women and girl and discrimination against women. (13/b, 13/d,23/a, 23/d).

In addition, in 2014, Albania underwent the second cycle of the Universal Periodical Review (UPR) - a process that involves a review, every 4 years, of the human rights records of all UN Member States by the UN Human Rights Council. Many of the UPR recommendations addressed to Albania relate to gender equality and violence against women. In this context, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Albania with the support of UN Women, and UNFPA are developing a Human Rights Action Plan and Tracking Mechanism to facilitate the monitoring process of the implementation of the UPR recommendations by relevant State authorities, including those related to discrimination and violence against women. Albania is expected to undergo its third UPR review cycle in 2019 and a national report will be submitted to the UN Human Rights Council together with submissions/contributions by civil society and national human rights institutions (NHRIs) in February 2019.

The Istanbul Convention, adopted by the Council of Europe, is a very comprehensive instrument requiring States to undertake multiple measures to prevent offences, protect victims, prosecute perpetrators and adopt integrated policies—through criminal and civil law provisions, improved service delivery, resource allocation, and cultural transformation measures—to end violence against women. The Istanbul Convention establishes a two-pronged international monitoring mechanism: the Council of Europe Group of Experts on action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO), and political body of officials (Committee of the Parties). GREVIO recognizes the important role that NGOs play in monitoring implementation and made it clear in its [Rules of Procedure](#) (Rule 35) that NGOs and other members of civil society are vital sources of information and that all information received from NGOs will be treated as confidential by GREVIO. Albania become party to the Istanbul Convention on August 1, 2014.

¹ All reference to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this document shall be understood in full compliance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.

It submitted its first report to GREVIO in January 2017 and the Evaluation Report is expected to be published in November 2017.

In terms of the national legislation, the first Law on Domestic Violence was approved in 2006 and has been later amended to better align it with the relevant international standards. In 2011, a coordination mechanism for the treatment of domestic violence cases was introduced. In 2008, the Law on Gender Equality came into effect and included the establishment of the national gender machinery. Amendments to the Criminal Code in 2012 and 2013 are initial steps to criminalising some forms of violence against women within the scope of the Istanbul Convention. However, not all forms of violence against women are criminalised. Recent amendments to the Code on Criminal Procedures, in the context of broader justice reform, improve the status of victims in criminal proceedings and include a specific provision for victims of sexual abuse and human trafficking.²

Yet, more effort is needed to implement the existing legislations and bring it in full conformity with international standards. In this contexts, the monitoring role of civil society is crucial in pointing out to the government the areas and issues that need to be improved and strengthened.

II. Objective of UN Women's Support

The specific project under this proposal contributes to the programme Specific Objective 1: *“To create an enabling legislative and policy environment in line with international standards on eliminating violence against women and all forms of discrimination”*.

The planned interventions will focus on increasing the monitoring capacities of civil society organizations (CSOs) to identify areas within the legislation and policy frameworks that need to be revised, improved and implemented in accordance with international human rights obligations and recommendations of human rights bodies. In addition, capacities of these organizations will be strengthened to ensure that shadow reports from Albanian civil society are drafted in accordance with quality standards and guidelines of the relevant human rights bodies and raise the most important issues that need to be brought at the attention of the human rights community about women's rights in Albania.

III. Scope of the Project

The programme builds on the strong links of UN Women and the EU with CSOs in the region, placing the envisioned interventions in a strategic position to assist women in their drive for rights as citizens. Civil society organizations, in particular women's organizations, play a crucial role in the promotion of gender equality and women's rights. They are key advocacy stakeholders in terms of moving governments from commitment to implementation in relation to international normative standards. They are also key stakeholders in the provision of services that are essential in the establishment of multi-sectoral and coordinated mechanisms to adequately respond to the needs of victims of violence. Furthermore, women's organizations are instrumental to bringing to the attention of policy makers the perspective and voices of all women and in particular rural women and disadvantaged groups of women - older women, Roma and Egyptian women, women with disabilities, migrant women, lesbian, bisexual and transgender women, women in detention, secluded women, and asylum-seeking women.³ Finally, women's organizations are very active in terms of their networks, outreach and innovation - to facilitating the required behavioural and attitudinal changes for tackling the structural barriers to gender equality and ending violence against women.

In Albania, women's organizations are active at local and national levels. The degree of organizations' expertise and organizational strengths vary amongst the organizations regarding their capacities in networking, policy development, monitoring, advocacy, outreach and service provision.

² Law No.35/2017 “On amendments the law No.7905/21/03.1995 on the Code on Criminal Procedures”.

³ These are the disadvantaged groups of women in Albania, identified in the CEDAW Concluding Observations addressed to Albania, para 39 (2016)

In this context, UN Women is issuing a Call for Proposals (CfP) for a responsible party to establish (or support an existing) a platform/network of CSOs to monitor, report on and advocate for the implementation CEDAW, UPR mechanism and Istanbul Convention, as well as prepare shadow reports to these mechanisms

IV. Deliverables

Establish (or support an existing) a platform/network of CSOs to: a) monitor, report on and advocate for the implementation CEDAW, Universal Periodical Review and Istanbul Convention; and b) prepare shadow reports to be submitted to these mechanisms.

It is expected that the selected responsible party will, inter alia:

a. Support the establishment of a CSO Platform/Network to monitor, report on and advocate for the implementation CEDAW, UPR mechanism and Istanbul Convention through:

- Conducting a mapping of existing active organizations and networks, both formal or informal, working in the areas of gender equality and violence against women throughout Albania.
- Assessing these organizations/networks' practices and attitudes regarding networking, monitoring and advocacy. The assessment will encompass survey and interviews with representatives and members of women's CSOs.
- Establishing a platform/network of individual women's organizations that—based on the assessment—are considered to have a solid constituency and are willing to engage in networking and monitoring activities. The network should include community-based organizations representing the interests of rural and marginalized women (older women, Roma and Egyptian women, women with disabilities, migrant women, lesbian, bisexual and transgender women, women in detention, secluded women, and asylum-seeking women⁴) *In case such a platform/network exists, the responsible party will be in charge of mobilizing and guiding its members towards the monitoring activities in the context of this programme.*
- Supporting the network/platform to develop a 2-year action plan on monitoring CEDAW, UPR mechanism and Istanbul Convention as well as the Albanian legal and policy frameworks on anti-discrimination and violence against women. The focus of the platform/network should be also in addressing barriers preventing women's civic engagement.

The selected organization is expected to guide the established network/platform to:

- Develop a practical legal education guide/toolkit for CSOs and National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) on CEDAW's Concluding Observations, 2016; UPR recommendations on gender equality and violence against women, 2014; and GREVIO's Report for Albania, expected to be published in November 2017.
- Organize informative sessions with members of the network/platform and other civil society organizations on the specific role of each of these international human rights mechanisms as well as the implementation and reporting obligations they create for the Government of Albania;
- Organize a training for the network on the role of, and methodologies to be used by, CSOs for monitoring the fulfilment of obligations under these human rights mechanisms. The training should encompass at least: 3-day training workshops including a training curricula, a set agenda, and input/presentations; one Training of Trainers for 25% of the participants to ensure proper follow-up and replicability; and mentoring scheme to deliver on-the-job training;
- Assess to what extent the obligations under CEDAW, Istanbul Convention and UPR on violence against women have been implemented in the Albanian legislation and policy frameworks, including the "National Strategy and Action Plan on gender Equality (2016-2020)" and identify the remaining gaps;

⁴Ibid.

- Prepare joint monitoring reports and statements on steps undertaken by Albania to implement:
 - Recommendations contained in CEDAW Concluding Observations pertaining to discrimination and violence against women taking also into consideration that by July 2018, the Government of Albania should report to CEDAW on measures taken on Concluding Observations 13/b, 13/d,23/a, 23/d;
 - Recommendations of GREVIO’s Report on Albania expected in November 2017;
 - Measures included in the Governments of Albania forthcoming Action Plan to implement UPR recommendations to Albania on discrimination and violence against women.
- Organize meetings/events with government representatives—including both members of the Albanian parliament and representatives of local government—community and religious leaders, academia and media to present the findings of the monitoring reports;
- Follow up with state agencies to ensure the findings and recommendations of monitoring processes are being taken into consideration;

b. Hold/conduct in-country CSO trainings for the preparation of UPR, CEDAW and Istanbul Convention shadow reports/submissions in coordination with the national platform through:

- Identifying COSs, which are willing to engage in the preparation of shadow reports/ submissions to human rights bodies on gender equality and women’s rights (UPR, CEDAW, and Istanbul Convention); These organizations could be members of the previously mentioned network/platform (for monitoring of CEDAW, Istanbul Convention, UPR and national policies) or others.
- Preparing an outline/timetable of the upcoming reports that need to be submitted by the Government of Albania under the CEDAW, Istanbul Convention and UPR;
- Conduct a desk review with the relevant requirements and guidelines of the respective mechanisms (CEDAW Committee, GREVIO, UPR) and adopt a practical guide for CSOs in Albania on shadow report drafting process (data collection, analysis and report writing).
- Organizing a training program on the reporting process, based on the guide. The program should encompass at least: 3-day training workshops including a training curricula, a set agenda, and input/presentations; one Training of Trainers for 25% of the participants, to ensure proper follow-up and replicability; and mentoring scheme to deliver on-the-job training;
- Develop a workplan to identify thematic areas to be reported under each mechanism and ensure coordination among organizations and avoid overlapping, in collaboration with participating CSOs.
- Provide technical support and coaching to organizations that will prepare shadow reports within the timeframe of this project.

V. Duration of project

From September 2017 to December 2019 (tentatively)

VI. Budget Request

All proposals must fall between a minimum indicative amount of EUR 55.000 and a maximum amount of EUR 60.000. Applicants are invited to submit the budget proposal in Albanian Lek (ALL). All currency exchanges will be calculated using the UN Operational Exchange Rate as per the date of submission of proposal.

Only one grant will be awarded per organization. A single CSO cannot receive more than one grant during the lifetime of the programme “Implementing Minds, Changing Norms”, meaning that if a CSO applies separately for both components it could only be selected for implementing one of them.

In all cases, proposals cannot exceed the maximum amount set for the first components of this call: EUR 60.000.

VII. Institutional Arrangement

The selected organization(s) will sign a Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) with UN Women. A competitive selection process will take place to identify the potential Responsible Party. The NGO will be selected only if it has proven capacity to deliver the proposed activity. The NGO's capacity will be assessed by UN Women as per UN Women's manuals.

VIII. Reporting

The selected partner will be the principal Responsible Party but will work closely with UN Women during programme implementation. The partner will provide regular narrative and financial reports in line with UN Women guidelines and requirements.

All knowledge products and communications materials that would be produced under this agreement must acknowledge the support and seek approval of UN Women. Furthermore, they should be in line with the EU Communication and Visibility tools and the EU-UN joint visibility guidelines.⁵

⁵ https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/guidelines-joint-visibility-eu-un_en.pdf - <https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/node/17974>

Annex I. Guidelines for the Submission of Proposals

I. Who can apply:

- **Women's CSOs/women's CSOs networks and platforms** that have specialized knowledge, expertise, and track record of working in women's human rights and ending violence against women
- **Women's CSOs/women's networks** and platforms with track record in monitoring international human rights treaties and conventions, and more specifically the CEADW and Istanbul Convention
- **Civil society organizations** working on gender equality and women's empowerment with track record of working on ending discrimination and violence against women

Gender equality focus: Applicant must demonstrate experience in implementing programmes on gender equality and ending violence against women and girls through an organizational resume or CV of past implementing experience and areas of expertise. **(Documents required)**

Women's network/platforms are encouraged to apply, but for the purpose of this application, they should be represented by only one organization, which will take the lead during the implementation of the project and shall be responsible for the project's deliverables as defined in this CFP.

Important notes:

- Each application can only be submitted by a single organization.
- The applicant must be legally registered in Albania as a non-profit organization.
- Proposals from more than one organization or entity must clearly indicate which organization will take lead responsibility for project management and contractual obligations.
- Transfer of funds by the Applicant Organization to UN Agencies, private sector entities, International NGOs and International Organizations will not be allowed.
- UN Women will sign contracts with and disburse funds to the applicant organization only.
- Eligible organizations currently partnering with UN Women may apply under this CFP.

Non-eligible applicant organizations

The following are **NOT eligible** to apply to this call for proposal:

- Government agencies or institutions
- UN agencies
- Bilateral or multilateral organizations, financial institutions, development agencies
- Private sector entities
- Private individuals
- CSOs not focused on gender equality and women's empowerment
- CSOs with lack of gender balance in their staff, board membership and leadership positions

II. What to submit

Eligible applicants are expected to submit the following in English:

1. General Information including contact person and contact details (use Application Cover Sheet in Annex II)

2. Project proposal consisting of:

- Context and problem analysis, providing a summary of existing gaps, barriers and challenges related to CSOs' capacities in establishing networks and collaborating on the monitoring of implementation of CEDAW, UPR, Istanbul Convention, and drafting of shadow reports/submissions;

- Explanation of how your organization is expected to engage community-based and organizations representing the interests of older women, Roma and Egyptian women, women with disabilities, migrant women, lesbian, bisexual and transgender women, women in detention, secluded women, and asylum-seeking women);
- Explanation of how your organization is expected to engage CSOs operating in areas outside the capital;
- Explanation of how your organization is expected to follow-up on the issue after the project;
- Media and communication strategy: Is communications an integral part of your project?
- Explanation of what makes your organization the most qualified to implement this project, including relevant expertise and experience of your organization;
- Workplan;
- Partnerships: a description of the partners needed to successfully implement the project and their roles, including information on how your organization will work with other non-state partners (including formal/informal networks and community-based organizations) to implement activities; information on your partner(s) such as their specialized areas and experience with the Istanbul Convention, CEDAW and rights-based policy advocacy; and information on the relationship between your organization and your partner(s);
- An output-based budget, i.e. budget showing how much is required for each activity to achieve each output. The administrative/indirect cost should not exceed 7% of the total budget. Maximum budget of any budget proposal should not exceed the amount of EUR 60.000. Applicants are invited to submit the budget proposal in Albanian Lek (ALL). All currency exchanges will be calculated using the UN Operational Exchange Rate as per the date of submission of proposal.

3. A copy of the organization's **legal registration document**

4. **Supporting documents** such as your organizational brochures, previous annual reports and audit reports from the past three years.

III. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals passing the eligibility criteria (see above) will be scored against the following:

1. **Relevance of the proposal (25 points):** quality of the context analysis and pertinence of the proposed activities against expected results
2. **Implementation strategies (30 points):** linking local implementation to national, regional and international commitments; using a rights-based approach; engaging in strategic partnerships; and engaging excluded/marginalized groups
3. **Added value elements (25 points):** previous work on CEDAW and Istanbul Convention monitoring and reporting as well as past and ongoing engagement with groups working with or representing women from disadvantaged groups
4. **Budget Proposal (20 points)**

Minimum score to be eligible is 70 points.

Only applicants passing the minimum score will be contacted to proceed with shortlisting and a capacity assessment review. During the capacity assessment review, the applicant will be requested to submit documents demonstrating the organization's technical capacity, governance and management structure, financial and administrative management.

IV. When is the proposal due

The deadline for submission of proposals is **September 17, 2017**. Proposals received after the deadline will not be considered.

V. To whom should the proposal be sent

Please send all required application documents in one email to unwomen.albania@unwomen.org, indicating in the e-mail subject: EAW Albania- capacity building of CSOs for monitoring of Istanbul Convention, CEDAW Concluding Observations

UN Women will acknowledge receipt of the applications through a confirmation e-mail. Only those shortlisted shall be considered and further contacted.

VI. Information session

On September 6th, 2017, UN Women will organize an informative session, in which additional clarifications on the application process will be provided. Potential applicants are invited to express their interest to participate in the informative session by September 1st, 2017 by sending an email to unwomen.albania@unwomen.org. (Subject line: Interest to participate in the information session EAW Albania).

This Call for Proposals does not entail any commitment on the part of UN-Women, financial or otherwise. UN-Women reserves the right to accept or reject any or all Call for Proposal without incurring any obligation to inform the affected applicant/s of the reasons.

Annex II. Application Cover Sheet

1. General Information

Name of Organisation	
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Contact Person	
Contact Information	Address:
	Tel:
	Email:
Organisation Type	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-government organisation <input type="checkbox"/> Others (specify):
Are you legally registered in Albania?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If you have responded yes, please attach a copy of your registration document to the application
Institutional profile	A brief description of the organization, including its registration details and relevant experience working on the thematic issues proposed; familiarity with international commitments on ending violence against women, experience on women's rights, gender equality and women's empowerment both at the local and national levels
Total requested budget	Applicants are invited to submit the budget proposal in Albanian Lek (ALL). All currency exchanges will be calculated using the UN Operational Exchange Rate as per the date of submission of proposal.

Annex III. Project Proposal Template

The project proposal should cover minimum the following:

I. Context and Problem Analysis

II. Project Description

III. Project detailed activities and implementation strategies

Describe how your proposal is planning to achieve the results mentioned above

IV. Project Partnerships

- Describe the key networks/stakeholders/groups/communities with which you will partner/ engage with for the implementation of your proposed project and explain why.
- How do you anticipate working collectively with these networks/stakeholders/groups?
- How do these partnerships complement or build upon previous efforts/initiatives?

V. Technical Expertise

Describe why the Applicant Organization is qualified to implement the proposed project. Include mention of the expertise and added value the implementing partners will bring.

- What past programme experience **handling project and initiatives of similar nature as the one in this Call for Proposals** can support the Applicant's likelihood of delivering results?
- What evidence can you provide on the Applicant's substantive thematic expertise in ending discrimination and violence against women?
- What evidence can you provide about the networks and relations the Applicant has established with the stakeholders necessary to the success of the project?
- What evidence you can provide on engagement with women form disadvantaged groups and minorities in the region?
- What evidence you can provide on engagement and cooperation with national programme participating countries governments and regional institutions?

VI. Detailed Budget (see Annex IV)

Please detail budget in the narrative and attach it in and excel sheet.

Also, add a narrative of the budget.

PLEASE DO NOT FORGET TO ATTACH THE DOCUMENTS REQUIRED IN ANNEX I

Annex IV. Workplan and Budget

Workplan & Budget						
Outcome: To reduce violence against women and girls an all forms of discrimination and discrimination in Albania						
Objective: To create an enabling legislative and policy environment in line with international standards on eliminating violence against women and all forms of discrimination						
Output 1	Platform/network of CSOs established and fully operational to monitor, report on and advocate for the implementation CEDAW, UPR mechanism and Istanbul Convention,					
Output 2	CSOs able to prepare shadow reports/submissions to CEDAW, GREVIO and UPR					
Activities						
Indicators						
Targets						
Means of verification						
Planned Activities (List all activities to be undertaken during the years towards stated results)	Timeframe (September 2017- Decemver 2019)				Budget	
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Budget Description (means required E.g. travel, consultant, conference)	Amount

Support costs						