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CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Project Title:	Increased access to services for women from disadvantaged groups in Albania under the Programme "Ending Violence against Women: Implementing Norms, Changing Minds"
Location:	Albania
Purpose:	Selection of qualified Responsible Parties for the Programme
Duration:	September 2017 – December 2019 (tentatively)
Contract Type:	Project Cooperation Agreement
Deadline for submissions:	September 17, 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, as well as community-based organizations working with Roma or other disadvantaged women to submit proposals that aim at: *promoting the right of women to receive information about general and specialist support services available for women that are victims of violence and discrimination as well as their right to access these services, in particular focusing on Roma women and women from other disadvantaged groups.*

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) empower women and girls (including those from disadvantaged groups) who have experienced discrimination or violence to advocate for and use available, accessible and quality services.

This Call for Proposals is related to the third component of the programme and aims at supporting the Government of Albania to fulfill its obligations related to provision of services for women victims of violence under CEDAW, the Istanbul Convention and the national legislation and policies.

As a State Party to CEDAW, Albania has an obligation to both prevent violence against women and provide support and redress for survivors of violence. In terms of regional mechanisms, the Istanbul Convention, to which Albania has been a party since 2014, is the most far reaching international treaty to tackle violence against women and includes multiple obligations with regards to services for women survivors of violence. The Istanbul Convention distinguishes between general and specialist support services. Furthermore, Article 19 of the Convention requires that adequate and timely information on available support services and legal measures should be available to survivors in a language they understand. This requires providing information on where to get what type of help, if necessary in a language other than the national language(s), and in a timely manner, meaning at a time when it is useful for survivors.²

With regards to Albanian legal frameworks and mechanisms, some of the key developments include the Law on Domestic Violence (2006), the Law on Gender Equality (2008) and the coordination mechanism for the treatment of domestic violence cases, established in 2011 (National Referral Mechanism). Criminal legislation was also amended in 2012 and 2013, criminalizing some forms of violence against women within the scope of the Istanbul Convention. In addition, recent amendments to the Code on Criminal Procedures in the context of a broader justice reform, improve the status of victims in criminal proceedings in accordance with international standards and include a specific provision for victims of sexual abuse and human trafficking.³

This framework guarantees a wide range of services for survivors of domestic violence, including short-term (emergency protection, safety, medical assistance, accommodation, transportation to safe accommodation, information on/assistance with obtaining protection orders, referral to further services, etc.) and long-term (support employment, social assistance, accommodation, free legal aid, legal advice and assistance with divorce procedures, counselling and psycho-therapy, help with children, etc.). In practice, these services are provided by public institutions and specialized civil society organizations. The recent amendments of the Code of Criminal Procedures (2017) aim at empowering victims of crime, including women survivors of violence, by recognizing a number of rights

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.

² Istanbul Convention Exploratory Report, para 124

³ Law No.35/2017 “On amendments the law No.7905/21/03.1995 on the Code on Criminal Procedures”.

including, inter alia, their right to access support services, the right to use his/her own language during the proceedings, the right to be informed at all stages of the proceedings (including about the arrest and release of the offender), the right to claim compensations, etc.

At the policy level, from 2011 to 2015, the Government of Albania implemented the “National Strategy on Gender Equality and Reduction of Gender based Violence 2011-2015”, and in 2016, it adopted the new “National Strategy on Gender Equality 2016-2020”, which prioritizes gender-based violence and domestic violence as one of its four strategic objectives. The strategy includes a detailed action plan and a budget for each of the activities. Several activities planned in the strategy relate to the improvement of capacities of various service providers to implement standards and requirements in line with the Istanbul Convention.

Also, the issue of accessibility of services for survivors of domestic violence has been the focus for UN Women, other UN agencies, and other organizations working in the country. In 2015-2016, UN Women, in partnership with the Council of Europe, conducted a multi-country study on the accessibility and availability of support services for women and girls subjected to gender-based violence in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYR Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Turkey to assess the existing services and normative frameworks against the standards set by the Istanbul Convention. This assessment provided a baseline of the situation in Albania in relation to general and specialized services.

Furthermore, UN Women and other UN agencies are implementing the [United Nations Joint Global Program on Essential Services for Women and Girls Subject to Violence](#), which aims at identifying the minimum standards to be provided by the health, social services, police and justice sectors as well as guidelines for the coordination and implementation of essential services and the governance of coordination processes and mechanisms.

II. Objective of UN Women’s Support

The specific project under this proposal contributes to the programme’s Specific Objective 3: *“To empower women and girls, including those from disadvantaged groups, who have experienced violence and discrimination to advocate for, and use available, accessible and good quality services”*.

The planned interventions will focus on promoting the rights of women to receive information about general and specialist support services available for survivors of violence and discrimination. In addition, the project will aim to raise awareness about the barriers that Roma women and women from other disadvantaged groups face to access available services.

CEDAW Committee, in its latest Concluding Observations to Albania, expressed its concerns about the continuous discrimination against women from disadvantaged groups and lack of appropriate legislation or measures for protection of women and girls belonging to disadvantaged and marginalized groups - such as 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 – face in general with regards their access to education, health, employment, housing and participation public and political life as well as lack of appropriate legislation.⁴

The need to improve services for victims of domestic violence in quality, quantity, accessibility and geographical coverage has been also raised by the European Union, as one of the human rights issues that needs to be addressed by the Albanian government.⁵

The report of the Group of Experts on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO) - the independent expert body responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Istanbul Convention will publish its first assessment report for Albania in November 2017. This report is expected to provide recommendations on

⁴ CEDAW Concluding Observations, Albania, 2016

⁵ EU Progress Report, Albania 2016

specific measures to be taken for the provision of services to women victims of violence in Albania in accordance with the convention's standards, including their right to receive information and access these services.

The Study on the Accessibility and Availability of Support Services for Women and Girls Subjected to Gender-Based Violence (2015-2016) concluded that service providers in Albania must be supported to fulfill their obligation of informing victims of violence about their rights in general as victims of gender-based violence and their right to access services. Although, in general, service providers are aware of the requirement to provide adequate and timely information regarding their services, not all of them take appropriate measures to fulfill the obligations stemming from the Istanbul Convention. Additionally, some services provide information that is not accessible to Roma women and women from other disadvantaged groups. And it is not available in minority languages.

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 the realization of their human rights. 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 survivors of violence. Furthermore, women's organizations are instrumental in informing women about their rights and empowering them to claim what they are entitled to.

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

In this context, UN Women is issuing a Call for Proposals (CfP) to select a Responsible Party to:

Promote the right of women to receive adequate and timely information on available support services available for women that are victims of violence and discrimination as well as their right to access these services, in particular focusing on Roma women and women from other disadvantaged groups. This project will contribute to result 3.3. of the programme: *"Better access to and improved service provision for women from minorities or disadvantaged groups."*

IV. Deliverables

To achieve this result, the responsible party is expected to:

- Design and implement innovative cutting-edge campaigns to inform Roma women and women from other disadvantaged groups in selected areas of Albania about the rights and services they are entitled to when faced with gender-based violence;
- Involve, and increase capacities of, community-based organizations of Roma women or other disadvantaged groups of women to inform women about the existence, and their right to access, multiple types of services;
- Improve information systems for women survivors of violence including the national referral mechanisms to seize opportunities to access basic services, medical care, legal aid, child- and/or women-friendly spaces;
- Raise awareness and increase capacities of public service providers about their obligations stemming from the Istanbul Convention and the Albanian legislation to:
 - Provide adequate and timely information on available support services and legal measures to women as victims of gender based violence;
 - Ensure access to these services for all women survivors of gender-based violence, focusing on removing any barriers for Roma women and other disadvantaged groups.

V. Guiding Principles in Designing the Project

The design and implementation of the project should be guided by the following principles:

- Human rights-based and gender-responsive approaches that place first priority on promoting, protecting and fulfilling the human rights of women as well as strengthening institutional capacities of service providers to eliminate all forms of discrimination;
- Focus of awareness raising activities/campaigns targeting women and service providers that include all types of general and specialist support services, including in the health, judicial and social services sectors. Particular attention should be placed to raise awareness among law enforcement agencies about the obligations stemming from the recent amendments of the Code on Criminal Procedures (article 58 and 58/b of Law No.35/2017 “On amendments the law No.7905/21/03.1995 on the Code on Criminal Procedures”);
- Awareness raising activities/campaigns that reach out directly to women in the communities where they live and the information provided should be easily accessible for all these groups;
- Activities that bring to the attention of service providers the barriers, including different forms of discrimination, that Roma women and women from other disadvantaged groups face in accessing these services and the relevant measures that need to be taken to remove or mitigate these barriers;
- Focus on all forms of violence against women, as foreseen in the Istanbul Convention (physical, psychological, economic, sexual violence, rape and sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, forced marriages, forced abortion and sterilization, female genital mutilation, crimes in the name of “honour”, and human trafficking.
- Evidence-based programming, building on lessons learned and recommended practices, to ensure optimal results and use of resources;
- Coordination and multi-sectorial partnerships, including among government organizations, nongovernmental organizations, women’s and other civil society groups;
- Commitment to knowledge sharing, by documenting, evaluating and disseminating results, and working with UN Women staff in the process;
- Priority placed on sustainability of results;
- Communication and visibility in line with the programme communication strategy, which will be defined at the stage of project proposal finalization.

V. Duration of project

From September 2017 to December 2019 (tentatively)

VI. Budget Request

All proposals for both components must fall between a minimum indicative amount of EUR 50.000 and a maximum amount of EUR 55.000. 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”.

In all cases, proposals cannot exceed the maximum amount set for this call: EUR 55.000

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.⁶

⁶ 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 working with women from disadvantaged communities as well as increasing capacities of providers of services for women survivors of violence;
- **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 and barriers related to women's access to general and specialist support services;

- Explanation of how your organization is expected to address the lack of information among Roma women and women from other disadvantaged groups about services available for victims of gender-based violence and the discrimination and barriers they face in accessing these services;
- Explanation of how your organization is expected to identify government and non-government service providers that need to become aware about their obligations to inform women that are victims of gender-based violence about their rights to be informed about the services and their right to access these services;
- Explanation of how your organization is expected to follow-up on the issue after the project;
- Media and communication strategy;
- 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 international and national standards of service provision 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 amount of EUR 55.000. 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 service provision for survivors of domestic violence or capacity building support for government and non-government service providers.
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. Proposal Deadline

The deadline for submission of proposals **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: Increased access to services for women from disadvantaged groups in Albania, EVAW

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

VI. Information session

On September 6, 2017, UN Women will organize one 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 EVAW 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	
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.
- Explain how you anticipate working collectively with these networks/stakeholders/groups
- Explain how 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 from 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 an 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 empower women and girls (including those from disadvantaged groups) who have experienced discrimination or violence to advocate for and use available, accessible and quality services.						
Output 1	Roma women and women from other disadvantaged groups in Albania have information about, and better access to, services available for women survivors of violence.					
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						