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CALL FOR PROPOSALS

- Project Title:** Support the **establishment and or strengthening of Roma and pro-Roma women's rights civil society networks and platforms** to advocate for the development and implementation of normative frameworks and service provision in line with international and regional commitments on ending gender-based discrimination and violence against women in the **Western Balkans and Turkey**, under the *Programme "Ending Violence against Women: Implementing Norms, Changing Minds"*
- Purpose:** Selection of qualified responsible party for the Programme
- Duration:** June 2018 – June 2019 (tentatively)
- Contract Type:** Project Cooperation Agreement

Deadline for submissions: 6 May 2018

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) is inviting Roma women civil society organizations (CSOs), women CSO networks and platforms, representing and promoting Roma women's rights and working in the area of ending violence against women to submit proposals to strengthen existing networks and platforms, or to establish new ones to strengthen Roma women's voice and agency to monitor, report on and advocate for the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (also known as Istanbul Convention) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in the Western Balkans and Turkey.

Terms of Reference

I. Background

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is central to the realization of women's human rights and gender equality. By ratifying CEDAW, all States parties are obliged to periodically submit reports with an aim to promote compliance with the obligations contained in the Convention. An important part of any periodic report is reporting back to the CEDAW Committee on concrete measures taken to implement the Concluding Observations on the previous report. In 1992, the Committee adopted general recommendation 19 on violence against women, asking State parties to include in their periodic reports to the Committee statistical data on the incidence of violence against women, information on the provision of services for victims, and legislative and other measures taken to protect women against violence in their everyday lives, including against harassment at the workplace, abuse in the family and sexual violence¹. CEDAW obliges state parties to eliminate all forms of discrimination and achieving gender equality so that all women can exercise and enjoy their human rights. This implicitly includes a commitment to understanding and addressing intersectional discrimination. Women experience disadvantage and discrimination based on their sex and gender and that is inextricably linked to other identities, factors, and experiences such as a race, ethnicity, location, and poverty. Under CEDAW, if sex and gender is one of the bases for the discrimination, it is necessary to examine how other identity and factors contributing to the discrimination are central to the realization of women's human rights and gender equality.

The Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (also known as Istanbul Convention) strengthens the implementation of the CEDAW that mirrors the same obligations to prevent violence against women, to punish the perpetrator, to provide adequate services for coordination and implementation of laws and policies, and reparation, including compensation for survivors of violence. Once ratified, the Convention, as international law, overrides contradictory national laws and requests national legislation to be brought into alignment with the aims and measures of the Convention. The Convention requires states parties to address the specific needs of persons made vulnerable by particular circumstances (Article 12, paragraph 3). The Convention recognizes the greater risks faced by groups of women who are subject to intersectional discrimination (e.g. refugee and migrant women, women with disabilities, minority ethnic women, etc.) and calls for effective cooperation of state agencies with civil society organizations. States should provide responses that address the complex dynamics of any form of violence against women, its intersections with other issues, and develop measures targeting multiple, intersecting inequalities and other forms of discrimination.

The European Union (EU) monitors and supports adherence to the Copenhagen criteria for accession to the EU in the field of equal treatment of women and men, and assists candidate countries and potential candidates with the transposition and enforcement of legislation. Complying with the EU gender equality acquis has become one of the central issues for all EU Member States, as well as for those countries that are pursuing EU membership. The EU acknowledges that, due to factors such as ethnicity, women may have specific needs and be more subjected to multiple discrimination, and this entails that they should be granted special protection.

A number of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) include a cross-cutting focus on inequalities and the advancement of marginalized communities that have historically experienced discrimination. In committing

¹ <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations/recomm.htm>

to the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Member States recognized that the dignity of the individual is fundamental and that the Agenda's goals and targets should be met for all nations and people and for all segments of society. Furthermore, they endeavored to reach first those who are furthest behind.

Discrimination and hostility towards vulnerable groups, including on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity, remains a serious concern. Further work is required to ensure equality between women and men, including tackling domestic and gender-based violence. The difficult situation of Roma remains broadly unchanged and Roma, particularly in the Western Balkans, continue to be the victims of discrimination and social exclusion. The policy framework for Roma integration is in place in all enlargement countries, but governments need to enhance their efforts to implement the existing commitments and allocate the necessary resources at central and local level.²

Overall, the capacity of Roma and pro-Roma women rights organizations in the region to hold governments accountable to gender equality and ending violence against women commitments, and to monitor government activities and spendings from a gender equality perspective, needs to be improved through technical support, sustainable funding, by creating networking opportunities and promoting regional solidarity. In particular, it would be most useful to create regional issue-based coalitions of existing national or regional women's organizations in order to maximize resources, develop and implement a common policy and advocacy agenda.

II. Objective of UN Women's support

Through the programme "Ending violence against women and girls: Implementing norms, changing minds" (February 2017- January 2020) funded by the European Commission (Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance II), UN Women aims at ending gender-based discrimination and violence against women, with a particular focus on the most disadvantaged groups of women, in the Western Balkans - Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo (UN Security Council Resolution 1244), FYR Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia - and in Turkey. For this purpose, the programme "Implementing Norms, Changing Minds" seeks to create an enabling normative environment in line with international and regional standards on eliminating violence against women and other forms of discrimination; and empower women and girls who have experienced discrimination or violence to advocate for and use available, accessible, and quality services. Furthermore, women organizations are key stakeholders in ensuring that the perspectives and voices of the most excluded and discriminated against groups of women are heard by policy-makers.

The main feature of the programme is its partnership with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), as drivers of citizenship, acknowledging their role in strengthening democracy, providing services to those in need and reaching and mobilizing communities to end discrimination and violence against women. Since the African-American feminist jurist Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the concept of intersectionality in the late 1990s, this approach has been gaining importance in the field of anti-discrimination, especially in the context of ethnic and sexual minorities. Among the situations of discrimination that they are usually detected towards Roma women, many of the cases happen in a particular situation that place them in a special situation of vulnerability. This type of discrimination is known as "intersectional discrimination". Acknowledging the structural inequalities that lie at the intersection of gender with factors such as ethnicity, the programme on '*Implementing Norms, Changing Minds*' places a strong focus on tackling multiple discriminations where

² Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. 2016 Communication on EU Enlargement Policy. {COM(2016) 715

gender aspects are involved, with a view to stop isolating gendered issues and take an intersectional approach to addressing violence against women and girls.

The support to the expanding of Roma and pro-Roma women rights regional platforms/networks of civil society organizations to advocate for the development and implementation of normative frameworks and service provision in line with international and regional commitments on ending gender-based discrimination and violence against women will contribute to strengthening Roma women's voice and agency, and in turn to creating an enabling normative framework and ensuring improved service provision in line with CEDAW, Istanbul Convention and EU agenda for accession countries. Support for regional coalitions and networks has been proven of great value in terms of creating a regional dynamic for change, exchange of good practice, encouraging synergies and cooperation and creating common tools that could then be applied at the regional, national and local level.

III. Scope of the call for proposals

Enhancement of civil society and the critical importance of integration of Roma is key as part of the enlargement process in the Western Balkans and Turkey.

The implementation of the Istanbul Convention is seen as an opportunity and a necessity in the region. Sustainable support to women's regional coalitions, networks and platforms, including those providing services on ending violence against women and representing disadvantaged women is crucial to exchange good practice, devise actions plans and produce common tools that can ensure both enhanced impact and the maximization of resources.

Through the programme *'Implementing Norms, Changing Minds'*, UN Women is currently supporting a number of women's rights organizations "led by and for" Roma women: a) to create an enabling legislative and policy environment in line with international standards on eliminating violence against women and all forms of discrimination, namely: Kosovo Network of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Women Organizations of Kosovo (NRAWEOK), NGO Women Space, Roma Women Network and SOS Network of Vojvodina in Serbia; b) to promote favorable social norms and attitudes and prevent discrimination and violence against women with the Center for Roma in Montenegro; and c) to empower women and girls who have experienced discrimination or violence to advocate for and use available, accessible and quality services with the Center on the Rights of Roma Women and LGBTI Alliance in Albania.

In addition, the programme is conducting an intersectional analysis of services on violence against women for minoritized women in the Western Balkans and Turkey to take stock on the conceptual understandings of intersectionality and violence against women, the value of 'by and for' organizations and the challenges to intersectional responses to VAW with a view to address the challenges of women who suffer from multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and lack access to services, full enjoyment of rights, networking, etc.

The overall goal of this Call for Proposals is to strengthen women's voice and agency, including women's organizations working with and or representing Roma women at the regional level (Western Balkans and Turkey).

The expected result of the project is **strengthened capacities of women CSO platforms and or networks as a vehicle to support Roma women's civic engagement in CEDAW and Istanbul Convention monitoring and reporting, and the use of available tools at both national and regional levels to advocate for better services in line with the provisions and standards of Istanbul Convention.**

IV. Deliverables

It is expected that through the proposed project Roma and pro-Roma women's rights coalitions/networks will be able to, inter alia:

- advocate for gender equality and ending violence against women for Roma women's organizations at regional level (Western Balkans and Turkey), in line with respective provisions of organizations such as the European Union, the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE).
- strengthen the Roma women's movement in the region by providing training and support to its member organizations and other Roma groups on advocacy, monitoring of commitments on EVAW, fundraising, organizational development and strategic communications.

The beneficiaries' organizations will be able to jointly produce, inter alia:

- Mapping of exiting leading Roma organizations and/or networks in the covered countries/region
- Two (2) year Action Plan for the supported existing or to-be established regional network/platform drawn from a participatory consultation thought-out the region;
- At least two joint statements on the implementation of Istanbul Convention at regional level as a result of project interventions by supported network(s)/platforms(s);
- Systematic documentation and structured information sharing mechanisms for advocacy in place;
- Preparation of a paper of intersectional approaches to gender-based discrimination and ending violence against women within on monitoring and reporting mechanisms in the region;
- A policy advocacy agenda for Roma and Roma women's right organizations working in the region on the topics of this Call for Proposals.
- Conduct regional advocacy initiatives with participation of Roma women's rights experts and activists;
- Report on participation in at least one event related to gender equality and ending violence against women in the region organized by a regional institution;
- A case study to be produced and published that can be used as a tool for learning best practices as well as in mobilizing resources for the supported platform/organizations.

V. Duration of project

From June 2018 to June 2019 (tentatively)

VI. Budget Request

The proposed intervention size and budget request will have to fall between a minimum indicative amount of USD 55,000 and a maximum amount of USD 67,000.

Organizations that have already received financial support within the programme "Implementing Minds, Changing Norms" cannot apply. A single CSO cannot receive more than one grant during the lifetime of the programme "Implementing Minds, Changing Norms".

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.