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CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Project Title:	Building capacities of <i>Kosovo Roma Ashkali and Egyptian Women's Civil Society Organizations and Networks</i> on advocating for the development and implementation of laws and policies in line with CEDAW and the Istanbul Convention and strengthening their voices against early marriages and gender discrimination under the Programme "Ending Violence against Women: Implementing Norms, Changing Minds"
Purpose:	Selection of qualified responsible partner for the Programme
Duration:	September 2017 – December 2019
Contract Type:	Project Cooperation Agreement
Location:	Kosovo ¹
Deadline for submissions:	September 08 2017

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) is inviting Roma Ashkali and Egyptian women's civil society organizations (CSOs), women's rights organizations and networks in Kosovo to submit proposals on building capacities of Roma Ashkali Egyptian women on advocating for the development and implementation of laws and policies in line with CEDAW and the Istanbul Convention and strengthen their voices against early marriages and gender discrimination in Kosovo;

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.

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, Kosovo², and Serbia – and Turkey. The programme is funded by the European Commission within the Instrument for Pre- Accession Assistance (IPA) II.

“*Implementing norms, changing minds*” is anchored in the normative frameworks of the Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination (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 Kosovo, 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.

Civil society in Kosovo, in particular women's organizations and networks play a crucial role in the promotion of gender equality and women's rights in Kosovo. They 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. Additionally, women's organizations are instrumental in terms of their networks, outreach and innovation to facilitating the required behavioral and attitudinal changes for tackling the structural barriers to gender equality and ending violence against women especially related to most disadvantaged groups of women. UN Women Office in Kosovo remains one of the main supporters of Roma Ashkali Egyptian Women Organizations and jointly with Kosovo Gender Study Center have contributed to the capacity development and advancement of the status of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women in Kosovo.

In Kosovo, the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian women are the groups with most risk of marginalization, and are confronted with a range of common socio-economic problems: widespread social inequality and discrimination, exposed to violence, poor living standards with numerous families living in poverty, little or no employment prospective, poor health and housing conditions, and reduced access to public services. In addition the social exclusion of the Roma Ashkali and Egyptian community is greatly reinforced by the discrimination and prejudice of the majority population. Early marriages defined as a formal marriage or informal union before age 18, disproportionately affects girls. According to the legislative framework, would-be spouses must both be at least aged 18, although the minimum age drops to 16 with parental consent.

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As stated in the Report on the Position of Roma Ashkali and Egyptian Women in Kosovo³ conducted by Kosovo Gender Study Center in 2010⁴ “Early and arranged marriages among RAE communities are very common and are usually justified by the fact that they are deeply rooted in their tradition”. Although prohibited by the laws of Kosovo, these marriages are not reported, prevented and are not punished by the Kosovo authorities. This tradition is silently "accepted" by the authorities and the community itself and thus this practice continues to be an “internal: matter of this community. The implications for child marriage includes the fact pregnancy and childbirth are the leading cause of death in young women aged 15–19. There is strong evidence highlighting the correlation between early marriage pregnancy and a failure to complete formal education. Child brides are at risk of violence, abuse and exploitation. According to the Strategy for the inclusion of Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in Kosovo supported by EU⁵, members of these communities continue to face difficult living conditions, social exclusion and frequent discrimination, while child labor and *early marriages* continue to be prevalent.

Gender-based violence refers to a series of harmful habits and behavior against girls and women who include intimate partner violence, domestic violence, and physical injury (punch) against women, child sexual abuse and rape. Generally this happens because of cultural and social norms that give men power and force over women; Marriage at a young age for the girls of this community carries a range of consequences such as disruption of schooling, unemployment as a consequence of insufficient education, endangering health with frequent birth deliveries etc. All the social phases in life occur much earlier for Roma women than for the majority population and other ethnic minorities. Roma Ashkali Egyptian girls are expected to grow up quickly and to take on adult caring roles. Girls who are married at an earlier age are also documented in a 2012 UNFPA study on child marriage in Kosovo to be more prone to contracting sexual diseases and to becoming survivors of domestic and sexual violence, as older husbands attempt to enforce obedience. Many of the child spouses who were interviewed by UNFPA reported suffering domestic violence “several times.”

II. Objective of UN Women’s support

The project will contribute to the achievement of the programme “*Ending violence against women and girls: Implementing norms, changing minds*” (February 2017- January 2020). “Implementing Norms, Changing Minds” aims at ending gender based discrimination and violence against women, with a particular focus on the most disadvantaged groups of women, in six Western Balkans countries and Turkey. The Programme is anchored in the normative frameworks of CEDAW and the Istanbul Convention (IC)⁶, and is also in alignment with EU accession standards.

The ultimate goal of the three-year Programme is that women and girls live a life free of discrimination and violence.

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⁴http://kfos.org/pdf/The%20Position%20of%20RAE%20Communities%20in%20Kosovo%20Baseline%20Survey_ENG.pdf

⁵ http://keen-ks.net/site/assets/files/1345/toward_a_new_policy.pdf

The Programme aims at reducing intersectional discrimination and violence against women and girls in six Western Balkan countries and Turkey, anchored in the normative frameworks of CEDAW and the Istanbul Convention (IC)⁷, and also in alignment with EU accession standards. The programme is funded by the European Commission within the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) II.

More specifically the project will contribute to the Programme Result 1.1: Women's voice and agency strengthened to advocate for the development and implementation of laws and policies in line with CEDAW and the Istanbul Convention.

III. Scope of the project

Strengthening women's organizations' voices is crucial to inform legislation and policy reform in line with international human rights standards and the European framework. In this context the capacity development programme is expected to significantly improve the nature and quality of the support provided to Roma Ashkali and Egyptian Women and support the development and implementation of the advocacy initiatives to address disadvantaged group-based inequalities in the community related to the early marriages and gender discrimination; In terms of building the capacity of Roma Women Network, it is critical to respond to the exact needs and demands of Roma Ashkali and Egyptian Civil Society Organizations.

This CfP is framed within the Programme *Ending Violence against Women and Girls in six Western Balkan countries and Turkey: Implementing Norms, Changing Minds*.

More specifically the CfP falls under the Programme Specific Objective: *1. Creating an enabling legislative and policy environment in line with international standards on eliminating violence against women and all forms of discrimination*. The Programme (February 2017- January 2020) aims at ending gender based discrimination and violence against women, with a particular focus on the most disadvantaged groups of women, in six Western Balkans countries and Turkey. Funded by the European Commission (EC) within the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) II, the Programme is anchored in the normative frameworks of CEDAW, Istanbul Convention, and in alignment with the European Union (EU) accession standards.

Within this context, UN Women is issuing a Call for Proposals (CfP) to select a responsible party to provide:

- Capacity development of Kosovo Roma Ashkali and Egyptian Women's Civil Society Organizations and Networks on implementation of the legislation (the National Strategy for Protections Against Domestic Violence in line with CEDAW and Istanbul Convention;) and organization of the advocacy campaigns on women's human rights , against early marriages and gender discrimination;
- Improve women's Civil society Organizations , women's organizations and Networks on the overall capacities and accountability of women's CSOs/CSO networks in policy-making, advocacy and lobbying, networking, information sharing, and communications;

It is expected that the project(s) to be implemented under this Call for Proposals contribute to the following results:

- **Result 1.1:** Women's voice and agency strengthened to advocate for the development and implementation of laws and policies in line with CEDAW and the Istanbul Convention

Indicator 1.1.a: Number of supported national networks of women's civil society organizations, including those representing women from disadvantaged groups, that monitor and report on the implementation of CEDAW and IC in Kosovo

Activity 1.1.2 Capacity development of Kosovo Roma Ashkaly and Egyptian Women's Network and CSOs on advocacy campaigns against early marriages, gender discrimination and women's human rights;

IV. Deliverables

It is expected that through the support the targeted women's CSOs will be able to jointly produce, inter alia:

- Undertake capacity assessment of Roma Ashkali and Egyptian Civil Society organizations, women's organization and networks to assess their overall knowledge and capacities in the areas of legislation and assessment of their skills to influence legislative and policy changes in line with CEDAW and Istanbul Convention. In addition part of the assessment will be focused on the assessment of advocacy and lobby skills;
- With the support of the local or international expertise to provide capacity development training of Roma Ashkali and Egyptian Civil Society Organization, women's organization and networks on gender related local and international legislation framework with a special focus on the implementation of the National Strategy and Action Plan for Protection against Domestic Violence, CEDAW and Istanbul Convention;
- Organize awareness raising sessions to improve the understanding of the national and international legislation framework with the special focus on CEDAW and IC;
- Develop the advocacy campaign with a focus on supporting awareness raising and public information to prevent and address negative stereotypes and prejudices against Roma Ashkali Egyptian women and girls including open debates on early marriages and gender discrimination;
- At least one advocacy initiative implemented annually including concrete and effective steps to advocate on implementation of policies and laws in line with CEDAW and Istanbul Convention, against early marriage and all forms of gender discrimination.
- Draft recommendations and address to the Government especially to the the Office of Good Governance and the Office of National Coordinator; Organize meetings/events with government representatives—including both local and central level stakeholders involved on the issue to present the findings and recommendations;
- Follow up with central government to ensure the recommendations are being taken into consideration;
- Documentation of lessons learned including suggestions for the way forward;

Communications activity

Communication and visibility action plan including at least 1 public events and use of social media for dissemination of the capacity development programme achievements: 1) to inform and raise awareness among women, especially women from minorities and disadvantaged groups, and among communities at a large; 2) to inform and raise awareness among relevant decision makers and key stakeholders at national level;

All knowledge products and communications materials that would be produced under this project 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;

Note: UN Women, in the framework of this programme will conduct a baseline and end-line programme data collection on gender stereotypes and public perceptions on gender roles and attitudes towards violence against women. The data from the baseline will be used to inform the activities proposed under this component;

V. Duration of project

From: **September 2017 - December 2019**

VI. Budget Request

The proposed intervention size and budget request must fall between a minimum indicative amount of **EUR 50.000** and a **maximum amount of 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 CSO will be selected only if it has proven capacity to deliver the proposed activity. The CSO'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.
