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CALL FOR PROPOSALS

PROMOTING THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN GENDER-SENSITIVE SDGs IMPLEMENTATION

Guidelines for Preparation and Submission of Project Proposals

Contracting organization: UNDP

Deadline for submission of project proposals:

12 November 2018, 18:00 (Baku time)

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1. PROMOTING THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN GENDER-SENSITIVE SDGs IMPLEMENTATION

1.1 BACKGROUND

In September 2015, the international community endorsed the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, with 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 accompanying targets.

The underlying principle of the 2030 Agenda – ‘leaving no one behind’ – calls to extend the benefits of sustainable development to the groups of population that are excluded from the development process. In particular, the 2030 Agenda stresses the role of women and girls as accelerators for various aspects of sustainable development. Gender is recognized as a global SDG accelerator, and gender issues are integrated in spheres like employment, education, health, access to resources. 14 out of 17 SDGs have gender-related targets and indicators.

Implementation of the SDGs commitments requires participation and collaborative partnership between governments, private sector, academia, non-governmental actors, international organizations and other stakeholders. All signatory countries have committed to involve civil society in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the country level in accordance with their national policies.

In 2016, the National Coordination Council for Sustainable Development (NCCSD) was established in Azerbaijan, signalling the commitment to promote participatory policy dialogue on longer-term sustainable development of Azerbaijan. In its Voluntary National Review presented to the 2017 High-Level Political Forum in July 2017, the Government of Azerbaijan expressed its willingness to facilitate and support SDG-focused initiatives of civil society institutions, academia, business and professional associations, other stakeholders and partners.

Building on the global framework and principles and the national momentum, the European Union and UNDP have launched a programme aiming to promote greater participation of civil society in the gender-responsive SDGs implementation. The programme has three specific objectives:

1. To facilitate confidence building and dialogue between the civil society and the government around the SDGs issues;
2. To improve understanding and knowledge of CSOs, to apply gender-responsive approach to SDGs implementation;
3. To increase participation of the CSOs in the implementation of gender-sensitive SDG initiatives.

The current Call for Proposals is launched in support of the specific objective 3 above.

1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME

The **global objective** of this Call for Proposals is to strengthen the role and capacities of the CSOs in the implementation and monitoring of the national SDG agenda in a gender-responsive manner.

The **specific objectives** of this Call for Proposals are:

- 1) To promote gender equality and women’s empowerment, as framed in the SDG 5;
- 2) To promote integration of gender issues in various aspects of sustainable development;

- 3) To promote gender perspectives into all aspects of SDG implementation, including work on data and statistics, follow-up and reviews¹.

Implementation of projects under this Call is expected to result in:

- i) tangible and measurable transformation in the lives of the target population groups;
- ii) generation of models, schemes and best practices that can be replicated/scaled-up for the most effective and efficient progress towards SDG goals and targets;
- iii) building multi-stakeholder partnership around SDG agenda;
- iv) greater inclusiveness of vulnerable population, particularly women, in the sustainable development process.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to integrate in their proposals particular added-value elements such as:

- Application of twin-track approach to gender-responsive SDG implementation. For more information, please consult [SDGs and Gender Equality: UN Interagency Guidance Note for the Europe and Central Asia Region](#).
- Targeting the regions outside of Baku;
- Use of innovative approaches including innovative financing.

The inclusion of these elements will be evaluated, as reflected in the Project Proposal evaluation grid presented in Section 2.3.

Sectors or themes

The project should directly support implementation of the **selected targets under SDG 5 and gender-related targets of other SDGs**. The list of gender-related targets eligible for support under this Call for Proposals is attached as [Annex E](#). The project proposal will have to explain how the project will contribute to achieving the specific SDG(s) and target(s).

The project can also support gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation of the SDG implementation including such aspects as sex-disaggregated data collection and statistics, assessments, progress reviews.

Types of projects

A project is composed of a set of activities.

The projects should be based on a prior coordination with local stakeholders and should ensure their involvement during all the stages of the implementation of the project (this element will be evaluated in the context of Section 2.3 of the evaluation grid).

The following types of projects are ineligible:

- projects concerned only or mainly with individual sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences and congresses;
- projects concerned only or mainly with individual scholarships for studies or training courses;
- projects supporting political parties, groups and movements.

Types of activity

¹ The projects pursuing the Objective 3 of the Call for Proposals fall under SDG 17.

The following types of activities may be financed under this Call (this list is not exhaustive):

- training programmes (on site or on line), education activities, awareness raising activities;
- seminars, workshops, conferences, meetings;
- advocacy and lobbying activities;
- business support to vulnerable populations;
- legal aid, trial monitoring or observation, monitoring of places of detention;
- research and documentation, the elaboration of policy papers, elaboration of publications and of written and visual support material;
- activities of coordination and outreach, evaluation, observation
- set up of networks, coalitions of civil society organisations.

Duration

The initial planned duration of a project may **not be lower than 10 months nor exceed 12 months**.

Location

Projects must take place primarily in Azerbaijan. A limited part of the project/limited activities (up to 20%) can take place outside of Azerbaijan, under circumstances that must be justified in the application.

1.3 FINANCIAL ALLOCATION PROVIDED BY THE PROGRAMME

The overall indicative amount made available under this Call for Proposals is EUR 720,000. UNDP reserves the right not to award all available funds.

Size of financial support

Any financial support requested under this Call for Proposals must fall between the following minimum and maximum amounts:

- Minimum amount: EUR 70,000
- Maximum amount: EUR 100,000

The programme funds 100% of total eligible costs of the project (see Section 2.1.2).

2. RULES FOR THIS CALL FOR PROPOSALS

2.1 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

2.1.1 Eligibility of the applicant and its partner(s)

The applicant

(1) In order to be eligible for financial support, the applicant must:

- be a legal person **and**
- be non-profit-making **and**

- be established in² the Republic of Azerbaijan
- be a non-governmental organisation
- be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the project with partner(s), not acting as an intermediary.

The applicant **may act individually or in partnership with partner(s)**. The applications developed in partnership are encouraged.

The applicant is solely responsible for the design and implementation of the project.

Partner(s)

In order to be eligible, the partner must:

- be a legal person **and**
- be non-profit-making **and**
- be a specific type of organisation such as: public entity, non-governmental organisation.

Visibility

The applicants must take all necessary steps to publicise the fact that the European Union and UNDP have financed the Project. Project Proposals must incorporate information and communication activities designed to raise the awareness of specific or general audiences of the reasons for the project and the EU and UNDP support for the project in the country, as well as the results and the impact of this support.

Applicants must comply with the objectives and priorities and guarantee the visibility of the EU and UNDP financing (see the Communication and Visibility Manual for EU external actions specified and published by the European Commission at: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/funding/communication-and-visibility-manual-euexternal-actions_en)

Number of applications and project awards per applicant

The applicant may not submit more than one application under this Call for Proposals.

The applicant may not be awarded more than one project under this Call for Proposals.

2.1.2 Eligibility of costs: costs that can be included

Only ‘eligible costs’ can be covered by financial support provided by the Call. The categories of costs that are eligible and non-eligible are indicated below.

Eligible costs are actual costs incurred by the Lead Applicant which meet all the following criteria:

-
- 2 To be determined on the basis of the organisation’s statutes that should demonstrate that it has been established by an instrument governed by the national law of Azerbaijan and that its head office is located in Azerbaijan. In this respect, any legal entity whose statutes have been established in another country cannot be considered an eligible local organisation, even if the statutes are registered locally or a ‘Memorandum of Understanding’ has been concluded.

- a) they are incurred during the implementation of the Project. In particular:
 - (i) costs relating to services and works shall relate to activities performed during the implementation period. Costs relating to supplies shall relate to delivery and installation of items during the implementation period. Signature of a contract, placing of an order, or entering into any commitment for expenditure within the implementation period for future delivery of services, works or supplies after expiry of the implementation period do not meet this requirement;
 - ii) costs incurred should be paid before the submission of the final reports.
- b) they are indicated in the estimated budget for the Project;
- c) they are necessary for the implementation of the Project;
- d) they are identifiable and verifiable, in particular being recorded in the accounting records of the Applicant and determined according to the accounting standards and the usual cost accounting practices applicable to the Applicant;
- e) they comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation;
- f) they are reasonable, justified and comply with the requirements of sound financial management, in particular best-value-for-money principle.

Eligible direct costs

The following direct costs are eligible:

- a) cost of staff and local consultants assigned to the Project, corresponding to actual gross salaries including social security charges and other remuneration-related costs; salaries and costs shall not exceed those normally borne by the Applicant, unless it is justified by showing that it is essential to carry out the Project;
- b) cost of international consultants assigned to the Project, with daily fees not exceeding Euro 500;
- c) running operational costs of the applicant (e.g. office rent, routine office maintenance and operational costs, utilities etc.)
- d) travel and daily subsistence allowances for staff and other persons taking part in the Project, provided they do not exceed UN rates (77 EUR);
- e) purchase costs for equipment (new or used) and supplies specifically for the purposes of the Project, provided that ownership is transferred to the project beneficiary(ies) at the end of the Project;
- f) costs of materials and goods specifically for the purposes of the Project;
- g) costs of consumables;
- h) costs entailed by sub-contracts awarded for the purposes of the Project such as production of audio-visual materials, dissemination of information, translation, other media costs.
- i) cost of rent and catering for project events.
- j) duties, taxes and charges paid and not recoverable by the Applicant.

The estimated costs should be expressed in the budget (see Annex B. Project Budget) as:

- unit costs: covering all or certain specific categories of eligible costs which are clearly identified in advance by reference to an amount per unit.
- lump sums: covering in global terms all or certain specific categories of eligible costs which are clearly identified in advance.

The amounts or rates should be based on estimates using objective data such as statistical data or any other objective means or with reference to historical data of the applicants or market research.

The applicant should also provide justification of the estimated costs in in Annex B, in the second column of worksheet no.2, per each budget item. The justification should include:

- description of the information and methods used to establish the amounts of unit costs and lump sums;
- explanation of the formulas for calculation of the final eligible amount.

At contracting phase, UNDP decides whether to accept the proposed amounts or rates on the basis of the provisional budget submitted by the applicant, by analysing factual data of similar projects, historic records, prevailing market rates. In case UNDP reveals problems requiring budget adjustment (such as arithmetical errors, inaccuracies, unrealistic and/or ineligible costs), it may seek clarification from the applicant and request the applicant to address such inconsistencies.

It is therefore in the applicant's interest to provide a realistic and cost-effective budget.

Non-eligible costs

The following costs shall not be considered eligible:

- a) indirect costs expressed as a fixed percentage of the total amount of direct eligible costs of the Project (indirect costs);
- b) debts and debt service charges (interest);
- c) cost of evaluation or audit;
- d) provisions for losses or potential future liabilities;
- e) costs declared by the Applicant and financed by another action or work programme receiving the financial support from the European Union or UNDP;
- f) purchases of land or buildings;
- g) currency exchange losses;
- h) credits to third parties;
- i) salary costs of the personnel of national administrations.

2.2 HOW TO APPLY AND THE PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW

2.2.1 Application forms

Applications must be submitted in accordance with the instructions on the Project Proposal template that forms Annex A "Project Proposal Template" to these Guidelines.

Applications must be prepared in English.

Any error or major discrepancy related to the points listed in the instructions on the Project Proposal form or any major inconsistency in the application form (e.g. if the amounts in the budget worksheets are inconsistent) may lead to the rejection of the application.

UNDP reserves the rights to seek clarifications and additional information from the applicant.

Hand-written applications will not be accepted.

Please note that only the application form and the published annexes which have to be filled in (Budget, Declaration by the Applicant, Partnership Statement) will be evaluated. It is therefore of utmost importance that these documents contain **ALL** the relevant information concerning the project. No additional annexes should be sent.

2.2.2 Where and how to send Applications

An electronic version of the application must be submitted via e-mail to the following address:

procurement.aze@undp.org

The ‘**Subject**’ heading of the email must bear the title of the **Call for Proposals**, the signature block should contain full name and address of the applicant. The electronic format of the files should be as following:

Project Proposal – Word

Project Budget - Excel

Declaration of the Applicant and Partnership Statement should be signed, scanned and submitted in .pdf

Total size of the email should not exceed 35 MB.

Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax) or sent to other e-mail addresses will be rejected.

Incomplete applications may be rejected.

2.2.3 Deadline for submission of Applications

The deadline for the submission of Applications is **12 November 2018 at 18:00 Baku time**. Any application submitted after the deadline will be rejected.

2.2.4 Further information about Applications

An information session on this Call for Proposals will be held on **22 October 2018** in the UN Office, United Nations Office. Address: 3, Istiglaliyyat Street Baku AZ1001, Azerbaijan

The applicants interested to participate in the information session should **register** at: az.procurement@undp.org

Prior to the meeting, please verify the exact location on the following website: <http://az.undp.org>

Questions regarding this Call for Proposals may be sent by e-mail no later than **2 November 2018** by 18:00 to az.procurement@undp.org indicating clearly the reference of the Call for Proposals.

UNDP has no obligation to provide clarifications to questions received after this date.

Replies will be given no later than 6 November 2018.

To ensure equal treatment of applicants, UNDP cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of applicants, a project or specific activities.

Questions that may be relevant to other applicants, together with answers and other important notices in the course of the evaluation procedure, will be published on UNDP Azerbaijan website: undp.org

It is therefore advisable to consult the abovementioned websites regularly in order to be informed of the questions and answers published.

2.3 EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF APPLICATIONS

Applications will be examined and evaluated by an Evaluation Committee comprising representatives of UNDP and EU, with the possible external assistance. All project proposals submitted by applicants will be assessed according to the following steps and criteria.

If the examination of the application reveals that the proposed project does not meet the eligibility criteria stated in paragraph 2.1, the application will be rejected on this sole basis.

STEP 1: OPENING & ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKS AND PROJECT EVALUATION

The following will be assessed:

- Compliance with the submission deadline. If the deadline has not been met, the application will automatically be rejected.
- Completeness of the Application Form. If any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that sole basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

The criteria for evaluation of the proposals and selection of the recipients of the financial support will cover the following dimensions:

- Financial and operational capacity of the applicants
- Relevance of the project to the objectives and results of the Call for Proposals, needs of the target groups
- Effectiveness and feasibility of the project
- Sustainability of the project
- Budget and cost-effectiveness of the project

Each dimension will be scored as per the evaluation grid below.

Evaluation Grid

Section	Maximum score
1. Financial and operational capacity of the applicants	15
1.1 Do the applicants have experience of project management?	5

1.2 Do the applicants have sufficient technical expertise? (especially knowledge of the issues to be addressed)	5
1.3 Do the applicants have sufficient management capacity? (Including staff, equipment and ability to handle the budget for the project)?	5
2. Relevance of the project to the objectives and results of the Call and needs of the target groups	30
2.1 How relevant is the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the Call for Proposals?	10
2.2 How relevant to the particular needs and context of the target country is the proposal (including synergy with other EU and UNDP initiatives and avoidance of duplication)?	5
2.3 How clearly defined and strategically chosen are those involved (final beneficiaries, target groups)? Have their needs been clearly defined and does the proposal address them appropriately?	5
2.4 Does the proposal contain specific added-value elements, such as application of twin-track approach to gender-responsive SDG implementation, targeting the regions outside of Baku; use of innovative approaches including innovative financing indicated under Section 1.2 of these Guidelines?	10
3. Effectiveness and feasibility of the project	25
3.1 Are the project strategy and Problem Analysis and Solution Matrix clear and logical? Are the activities proposed appropriate, practical, and consistent with the project strategy?	10
3.2 Is the project's implementation plan clear and feasible?	5
3.3 Does the proposal contain objectively verifiable indicators for the outcome of the project? Are the project results directly contributing to one or more selected SDG targets and indicators listed in the Annex E?	5
3.4 Is there a sufficient level of involvement and participation of concerned stakeholders?	5
4. Sustainability of the project	15
4.1 Is the project likely to have a tangible and lasting impact on its target groups?	5
4.2 Is the proposal likely to have multiplier effects? (Including scope for replication, upscaling and information sharing.)	5
4.3 Are the expected results of the proposed project sustainable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - financially (how will the activities be financed after the project ends?) - institutionally (will structures allowing the activities to continue be in place at the end of the project? Will there be local 'ownership' of the results of the project?) - at policy level (where applicable) (what will be the structural impact of the project — e.g. will it lead to improved legislation, policies, codes of conduct, methods, etc.?) - environmentally (if applicable) (will the project have a negative/positive environmental impact?) 	5
5. Budget and cost-effectiveness of the project	15
5.1 Are the activities appropriately reflected in the budget?	5
5.2 Is the ratio between the estimated costs and the expected results satisfactory?	10
Maximum total score	100

Provisional selection

After the evaluation, a table will be drawn up listing the applications ranked according to their score.

STEP 2: VERIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY OF THE APPLICANTS

The eligibility verification, based on the supporting documents requested by UNDP, (see Section 2.4) will only be performed for the applications that have been provisionally selected according to their score and within the available financial envelope.

- The Declaration by the Applicant (Annex C) will be crosschecked with the supporting documents provided by the applicant. Any missing supporting document or any incoherence between the Declaration by the applicant and the supporting documents may lead to the rejection of the application on that sole basis.
- The Partnership Statement and Profile of Partner(s) (Annex D)
- The eligibility of applicants, the partner(s) and the project will be verified according to the criteria set out in Sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.2.

Any rejected application will be replaced by the next best rated application that falls within the available financial envelope.

The Evaluation Committee will short-list between 7-10 best proposals. Provisionally selected applicants may also be requested by UNDP to address comments from the Evaluation Committee. If needed, consultancy support will be provided to the provisionally selected applicants to further improve their projects.

2.4 SUBMISSION OF SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR PROVISIONALLY SELECTED APPLICATIONS

An applicant that has been provisionally selected will be informed in writing by UNDP. It will be requested to supply the statute, registration certificate or articles of associations in order to allow UNDP to verify the eligibility of the applicant, (if any) of the partners.

The supporting documents must be supplied in the form of photocopies or scanned versions (i.e. showing legible stamps, signatures and dates) of the said originals.

The requested documents must be provided in the Azerbaijani and/or English languages.

If the abovementioned supporting documents are not provided before the deadline indicated in the request for supporting documents sent to the applicant by UNDP, the application may be rejected.

After verifying the supporting documents, the Evaluation Committee will make a final recommendation to UNDP, which will decide on the allocation of financial support.

2.5 NOTIFICATION OF THE UNDP'S DECISION

The applicants will be informed in writing of UNDP's decision concerning their application.

2.5.1 Indicative timetable

	DATE	TIME³
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³ All times are in the time zone of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Information meeting	22 October	16.00
Deadline for requesting any clarifications from UNDP	2 November	18.00
Last date on which clarifications are issued by UNDP	6 November	18.00
Deadline for submission of the Application Form	12 November	17.00
Notification of final decision (after the eligibility check)	3 December	18.00
Contract signature	14 December	18.00

Any updates to this indicative timetable will be published on the UNDP Azerbaijan website:
<http://www.az.undp.org/content/azerbaijan/en/home/projects/promoting-the-role-of-the-civil-society-in-gender-sensitive-impl.html>

3. LIST OF ANNEXES

Forms to be completed:

- Annex A: Project Proposal Template (Word Format)
- Annex B: Budget (Excel Format)
- Annex C: Declaration by Applicant
- Annex D: Partnership Statement and Profile of Partner(s)

Documents for information and reference:

- Annex E: List of gender-responsive targets and indicators in the SDGs

ATTACHMENTS:

- Annex A: Project Proposal Template
- Annex B: Project Budget
- Annex C: Applicant Declaration
- Annex D: Partnership Statement and Profile
- Annex E: List of gender-responsive targets and indicators in the SDGs