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**Call for concepts
for implementation of Local Grant Program in the field of
Citizens' Empowerment in the Republic of Moldova**

Is your organization experienced in awarding and monitoring the implementation of grants for local initiatives?

Do you have a strong network in one of the development regions of Moldova (North, Centre, South and ATU Gagauzia)?

Do you have experience in providing coaching and trainings to local organizations, men and women, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities and other social groups for engagement in decision-making and local development?

Are you familiar with sustainable local development, including water supply and sanitation, solid waste management, energy efficiency or other related environmental or socio-economic aspects in your raion/region?

Are you ready to empower the women and men in your region and engage them in solving these issues?

Then:

We invite your organization to submit a project proposal for the implementation of the EU Local Grant Programme to empower citizens through active participation of CSOs in local, regional and national decision-making processes. The EU Local Grant Programme is made available by the single Support Framework of the European Union (EU) in support to the Republic of Moldova (2017-2020) under European Neighbourhood Instrument, through the EU-funded project "Citizens' Empowerment in the Republic of Moldova" (2019-2021, ENI/2018/402-674), implemented by the German Development Cooperation through GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH).

This Grant Programme covers the four regions of Republic of Moldova – North, Centre, South and ATU Gagauzia. The purpose is to support local initiatives in water supply and sanitation (WSS), solid waste management (SWM), energy efficiency (EE) and other relevant environmental and socio-economic areas. Target beneficiaries are, but not limited to citizens from communities that are beneficiaries of EU investment projects, civil society organizations (CSO) and local citizen's committees (LCCs) from these communities.

We are looking for non-governmental/non-profit organisations with substantial experience in implementation of grants and sub-granting schemes, with experience in development and implementation of training programs, technical assistance for citizens and citizens' formal and

non-formal organizations, and capacity to network and/or cooperate with other civil society organizations at the regional and national level.

Roles and tasks of selected CSO

The selected organizations will be granted to ensure the following in their respective region:

- provide specific and periodic capacity development assistance to local CSOs, related to improving citizens engagement in decision-making processes including monitoring of public procurement, public construction works and delivery of local public services;
- desk review of existing training material and toolkits on civil society's engagement on decision-making processes, and apply them using good practices and lessons learned;
- support awareness raising campaigns for improving public service delivery, including preparation of associated materials and training delivery for local CSOs to run these campaigns;
- sub-grant to local CSOs, based on open call for concepts, for the implementation of small-scale projects to support socio-economic and sustainable local development based on citizen's needs;
- conduct studies on citizen satisfaction of local decision-making and public service delivery;
- foster creation of CSOs networks at regional level to exchange experiences and good practices on cooperation with local and regional authorities and to demand citizen-oriented service delivery;
- ensure the consistent and proactive application of EU visibility rules at all levels.

Activities implemented should target women and men equally, as well as vulnerable groups. The activities should also contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The organizations should promote respect for human rights and gender equality, and respect applicable environmental legislation.

Indicative fields of intervention

The overall objective of the EU funded project "Citizens' Empowerment in the Republic of Moldova" is to empower citizens through constructive participation of CSOs in local, regional and national decision-making processes. In order to achieve the overall objective, the selected CSOs will apply a holistic capacity building approach to support the development of:

- a) the necessary capacities of citizens with respect to participatory planning and decision-making;
- b) the necessary institutional capacity of local CSOs to ensure they can effectively apply their knowledge within the respective decision-making processes; and
- c) the adequate networking conditions and functional mechanisms for coordination and communication between CSOs and different actors across different institutional levels.

The selected CSOs will identify the capacity building needs and systematically consolidate civic engagement mechanisms in the implementation of activities related to citizens participation in decision-making.

The Local Grant Programme foresees to cover main activities that will facilitate the participation of citizens in integrated planning and programming at local levels, increasing the demand for inter-municipal cooperation to benefit local citizens, facilitating the participation of citizens through local CSOs and local citizen committees in monitoring the procurement and construction of local public infrastructure, and cross-cutting initiatives to raise the awareness of citizens, including children, of environmental, socio-economic and financial issues related to local public service delivery in the areas of WSS, SWM, EE and other relevant environmental and socio-economic aspects.

The activities proposed for implementation shall not reflect political views or be part of electoral campaigns.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

Currently numerous investments projects in local public infrastructure financed by EU and other EU member states are under implementation in Moldova. To assure that the necessary investments respond to the real needs of the citizens, it is important to ensure they all (*men and women equally, vulnerable population such as youth, older persons, poor persons, persons with disabilities, ethnic and religious minorities*) participate meaningfully in decision-making processes on socio-economic development and public infrastructure development.

The engagement of citizens during the planning, design, and delivery of public services shall empower them to hold public authorities accountable and curb corruption. A strong organized civil society that has the capacities to check public institutions and demand accountability and integrity from governments and public administrations is an integral part of establishing good governance. Furthermore, a strong civil society could help public authorities in identifying the need of people and communities, setting priorities and implementing the necessary actions towards development.

Moreover, citizens must be aware of related health, environmental and socio-economic issues to demand action from public authorities while fulfilling their obligations as clients of local public services. Additionally, building trust in public institutions ability to solve these issues is important in order for citizens to constructively participate in policy and decision-making. This also strengthens (local) democracy and the country as a whole.

Citizens should have access to quality services and contribute for the sustainable delivery of these services. This requires understanding the purpose of cost-covering tariffs as well as discouragement of activities such as illegal connections, manipulation of meters, or water and waste dumping. Similarly, citizens need to understand the health and environmental impact of illegal waste sites and to agree to pay for waste removal in their communities. They should ideally understand the impacts of energy inefficiency on climate change and environmental degradation.

In order to address all these issues, the EU-funded project “Citizens' Empowerment in the Republic of Moldova” implemented by GIZ will award grants to four CSOs to empower citizens to

participate in decision-making processes of EU-funded Investments, some of which also directly implemented by GIZ.

Deadline for application: 25 March 2019

Number of awards: Four grants (one grant per region – North, Centre, South and ATU Gagauzia)

Expected award date: April/May 2019

Expected project duration: Up to June 2021

Award amounts: North development region – up to 1 million Euro
Centre development region – up to 1 million Euro
South development region – up to 800,000 Euro
ATU Gagauzia - up to 400,000 Euro

Funding instrument type: Grant Agreement

The projects proposed are to be fully implemented in the regions of the Republic of Moldova. Overall, each project should be finalized not later than June 2021.

The final amount of the grant awarded to the selected CSO will be determined based on review of the proposed results and activities, and the number of population and active local CSOs in each development region.

ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION

General requirements

Non-governmental/non-profit organizations that are based and legally registered in Republic of Moldova are eligible to apply for implementation and management of this Local Grant Programme. Preference will be given to the CSO registered and actively working in the selected regions (North, Centre, South and ATU Gagauzia).

The potential applicants must also:

- be able to act, according to their statutes/regulations, in the fields addressed by the project;
- be independent of government and other public authorities as well as political parties, and
- be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the project with their partners, not acting as an intermediary.

Applications from consortiums/partnerships between two or more organizations are accepted, if they do strengthen the cooperation and networking of Moldovan CSOs and therefore contribute to the strengthening of the civil society in Moldova. In this case, preference will be given to consortiums/partnerships where the lead applicant is the organization registered and actively

working in the region applied for. All consortium/partnership organisations will have the same characteristics as listed above.

The partnership agreement(s) has to be signed between all organizations involved in the implementation of the proposed project, showing a clear distribution of tasks and responsibilities of each party. The applicant shall act as the lead organization for implementing the project and, if selected, will represent all partners and will sign the Grant Agreement for awarding the grant amount, with the GIZ representatives.

Selection process

The selection of organizations to be awarded with grants will be done through a two-stage process – (i) shortlisting of organizations based on minimum eligibility criteria, and (ii) evaluation of the project proposals.

The applicants will be shortlisted based on the following minimum eligibility criteria:

#	Criteria	Criteria met	
		Yes	No
1.	At least three (3) years of experience in implementation of grants and sub-granting schemes in the last five (5) years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Proven experience in stimulating citizen engagement/citizen participation for better local public services (fields of WSS; SWM, EE and other relevant environmental aspects, will be an advantage)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Proven experience in development and implementation of training programs and/or technical assistance for citizens and citizens' formal and non-formal organizations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Demonstrated relations with networks of CSOs or coordination capacity with other civil society organizations at the regional and national level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Registration and/or functioning office in one of the localities from the region applied for, as advantage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Only those applications that fulfil all formal requirements and eligibility criteria specified above will be evaluated based on the award criteria. The other proposals will be excluded from the further procedure.

The organizations to be awarded with a grant will be selected from the shortlisted applicants as result of evaluation of the project proposals based on the following award criteria:

#	Description	%
1.	Understanding of the mandate and general approach - the proposal is relevant to the objectives of the Local Grant Programme	35
2.	Approach and proposed strategy for contributing to the empowerment of citizens for constructive participation in decision-making	20

3.	Project's activities and methodology (including proposed sub-granting scheme) are likely to deliver the expected results in the region	15
4.	Project contributes to strengthening the networking and coordination of CSOs at the regional and national levels	10
5.	Project provides for a systemic, sustainable impact	10
6.	The project budget is realistic, logically related to the project objectives, narrative description and justification	10

APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Successful applications should include:

- Project proposal (annex 1),
- Cost estimation for the implementation of the project proposal (annex 2),
- Profile of the organization, and its annexes (annex 3),
- In case of consortium/partnerships: Partnership agreement(s) signed with all organizations involved in the implementation of the project.

The Project proposal (annex 1) shall not exceed 10 pages.

For the cost estimation, the maximum budget will not exceed the amounts listed above per each region. The proposed budget will have to consider the set limits for the following budget lines:

- sub-grants for local CSOs – at least 75% of the budget;
- communication and visibility activities – at least 5% of the budget;
- capacity development activities – at least 10% of the total budget
- administrative costs – at most 7% of total budget.

Costs for procurement of equipment are only eligible if these are directly contributing to citizens' empowerment for participation in decision-making and are of sustainable nature.

In case of applications submitted by two or more organizations in partnership, annex 3 "Profile of the organization" will be filled in by all organizations.

Applications should be submitted in English language.

Interested organizations may submit only one application.

Application are to be submitted via e-mail to the project "Citizens' Empowerment in the Republic of Moldova", irina.sirbu@giz.de, not later than March 25, 2019, 4pm, with note "EU CSO Citizens empowerment project".