



REPUBLIC OF SERBIA
Ministry of Construction,
Transport and Infrastructure
Ministry for Labour, Employment,
Veteran and Social Affairs

Project funded by the
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ЗА ТЕБЕ

THE EUROPEAN UNION SUPPORT TO SOCIAL HOUSING AND ACTIVE INCLUSION

3rd Programme Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

25 January 2021



I Agenda

1. Introduction and the information about the Programme Steering Committee (PSC) composition changes
2. Presentation of:
 - a. Programme Annual (2020) Report and Activity Plan for 2021
 - b. Info Sessions Report
 - c. Course of the Call for Proposals for Social Housing and Active Inclusion Projects
 - d. Publication "Local Housing Strategy Guidelines"
3. Endorsement of the Programme Annual (2020) Report and Activity Plan for 2021
4. Any Other Business



II Minutes

1. Introduction

Dragana Milošević, Project Manager of the European Support to Social Housing and Active Inclusion Programme (EU SHAI), greeted the participants and thanked them for attending the meeting. She introduced the newly appointed members, participating representatives of the institutions and the UNOPS team.

Đorđe Milić, the Assistant Minister in the Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure (MCTI) and the newly appointed Chairperson of the PSC, greeted the participants and briefed them on the forthcoming changes in the legislation prepared by the Ministry. He presented the meeting Agenda which was adopted by the members.

Igor Perić, the Assistant Minister in the Ministry of Labor, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs (MLEVSA) confirmed the commitment of the Ministry to continue with successful participation in the work of the PSC. He pointed out that they will remain open for consultations and any assistance required.

Mirjana Maksimović, PM in the Delegation of the European Union to Serbia (DEU) welcomed new members and stressed the importance of the Programme and its results to the Delegation. She expressed her gratitude to the partners, especially UNOPS and national institutions for their cooperation so far and in the future.

2a. Programme Annual (2020) Report and Activity Plan for 2021

Dragana Milošević, presented the Programme Annual Report for the period between 1 December 2019 and 31 December 2020 and the overall results. This period was marked with challenges that influenced the implementation and required adjustments to be made. The activities on the Call for Proposals for social housing and active inclusion projects (CfP) were intensified since July, resulting in the launch of the CfP on 23 November. The round table on “Impact of Covid 19 on Social Inclusion of the Most Vulnerable Groups” was organised in October with 139 participants. Two publications on local housing strategies and social housing models were developed in this period.

During 2020, significant part of the Programme activities was directed to support the national health system in battling with Covid 19 crisis, in terms of procurement of medical equipment and supplies. 2,000 food and sanitary packages were delivered to Roma families in Subotica, Valjevo, Belgrade and Niš. In September and October 198 medical and non-medical staff were employed in 25 public health institutions throughout Serbia. All of these parallel activities not initially planned by the Programme had impact on the regular activities. Thanks to the support from the Programme team and UNOPS, a sound basis was established in order to move forward with the Programme activities.



The plan for 2021 includes evaluation and selection of project proposals, which will be the main activity starting in February. Signing of grant agreements is expected in May and June 2021 and the Programme will be providing support to awarded LSGs. Activities of building capacities of national institutions, LSGs and service providers, postponed due to the current health crisis and political changes, will be in focus in the coming period. Support to the national health system will continue and the procurements of cold chain freezers for vaccines and vehicles for the Ministry of Health are currently in progress. 3,600 food packages were provided for the most vulnerable groups and will be distributed in the areas of Subotica, Valjevo, Belgrade and Niš, including the homeless persons in the Belgrade area supported through CSO Adra.

The Programme faced various challenges and risks in the previous period, one of them being slowed down implementation of the Programme that required adjustment to new circumstances. We are also facing a fact of seriously diminished financial and human resources capacities of LSGs, with a significant number of people being affected by the crisis. Worsening of the socio-economic situation of the target groups is also evident. Given the current situation the Programme component involving employment of the beneficiaries will certainly present the biggest challenge but with mutual efforts it will hopefully be overcome.

Svetlana Ristić, Senior Advisor in MCTI informed about the status of the Draft National Housing Strategy and its delay due to parallel adoption of the Action Plan. She emphasized the importance of the Programme as it is the only one in Serbia at the moment with a combination of housing support and inclusion measures. Programme activities and results will serve as realistic inputs for the Action Plan. She also reminded about the dire situation in the housing sector in Serbia and issues of low affordability rate in purchase and rental of apartments, illegal construction, poor maintenance of housing stock and low capacities of LSGs. As the key issues, she stated the necessity of lifting the poverty threshold to a relative value in order to meet the housing standards of the EU and incorporating housing in the strategy for the reduction of poverty.

Dragana Milošević, noted that the Programme support activities include on-the-job training and mentoring for the purpose of strengthening the capacities of 30 LSGs. In reference to the establishment of a database of realistic local housing needs, she commented that a questionnaire from the Law on Housing and Maintenance of Buildings could be used as a basis and further developed and improved. She stressed the importance of networking between local key stakeholders and service providers both for housing and complementary social inclusion measures.

Đorđe Višić, Advisor in the MCTI, stressed the importance of the Programme and its connection to the IPA 2014 programme implemented by KPMG, which has a component of assisting LSGs with applications. He praised the cooperation and coordination activities between the two programmes.

Since there were no further comments, the Programme Annual (2020) Report and the Activity Plan for 2021 were unanimously endorsed by the PSC (Item #3 on the Agenda).



2b. Info Sessions Report

Nevenka Gril Timotijević, UNOPS EU SHAI Engineer, reported on the Info Campaign conducted two weeks after the launch of the CfP. She reminded about the first round of info sessions held in September when LSGs were informed about the Programme and the coming CfP. More than half of the LSGs (74) responded and participated in those sessions.

The agenda for this second round of info sessions included all relevant information about the CfP and the Q&A session. 122 participants from 54 LSGs and 16 CSOs attended the sessions. Representation of all regions showed equal territorial distribution of participants.

71 questions from five info sessions (total of 137 including those sent via official mail) were all addressed and answers posted on the Programme website. The main issues included applicant and co-applicant eligibility, eligible costs, co-financing and local budgets, target groups, housing support models, scope of inclusion measures, evaluation criteria and result indicators.

2c. Course of the Call for Proposals for Social Housing and Active Inclusion Projects

Mirjana Dimitrijević, UNOPS EU SHAI Social Inclusion Officer, followed up on the previous topic and informed the participants about the launch of the CfP. It was published on the official website followed by a press release and support message by the Head of the DEU, Ambassador Sam Fabrizi. All LSGs were informed via direct email about the Call. She further described the indicative timeline and reported on the course of the Call so far. 53 letters of intent by LSGs were submitted by 23 December. The deadline for submission of applications is 1 February 2021. The upcoming activities include evaluation of proposals until the end of March, notifications on awards in April and signing of grant agreements by 15 June. She explained in more detail about the territorial distribution of LSGs who submitted Letters of Intent and confirmed that all regions and development categories were equally represented.

Dragana Milošević added that the Programme team is optimistic having in mind the indicators of a number of LSGs participating in info sessions, number and type of questions on CfP, number of submitted Lols. This shows the level of interest and preparedness of LSGs for the Call. Given the current health crisis and state of emergency that was declared in 20 LSGs, she proposed extension of the deadline to 12 February 2021. This should give more time to LSGs to better prepare and complete the proposals. The timeline of planned activities will not be compromised and it will be adjusted accordingly.

Igor Miščević, Advisor in SKGO seconded the proposal and added to the argument that besides the health crisis, there is a state of emergency in a number of municipalities due to recent flooding.

The proposal for the deadline extension for the CfP was unanimously adopted by the members.



2d. Publication “Local Housing Strategy Guidelines”

Zlata Vuksanović-Macura, UNOPS EU SHAI Senior Analyst, pointed out that the publication was developed with contribution from the Programme team and in consultation with LSGs, the ministry and SKGO. She described the scope and the contents of the Guidelines and focused on six steps of development of local housing strategies which contain practical instructions for the process. These steps include the process preparation, design and organizing phase, gathering of data and analysis, formulation of vision and defining of goals and indicators, action plan development, implementation mechanisms, public discussion and adoption of the strategy. The duration of the whole process is 6-7 months. She emphasized the importance of implementation and monitoring of the local housing strategy, specifically the establishment of sustainable institutional mechanisms.

Igor Mišćević commented on the perfect timing of this publication given the dynamics of the adoption of the national strategy and action plan and the Manual on Housing Support Measures, recently published by SKGO. He suggested that intervention logic should be emphasized and more focus put on prioritizing and concentration/reduction of activities, in order to make this strategic document more efficient. He also recommended that viability of local housing agencies should be probed through cost benefit analysis and stressed their importance. He requested clarification on the selection of 30 LSGs for mentoring and on-the-job training support by the Programme.

Svetlana Ristić said that non-profit housing organisations are crucial to the implementation of projects and that at least larger LSGs should be persuaded to establish local housing agencies. She reported that in spite of a very simple licensing procedure at MCTI, only two Public and one private housing agencies in Serbia were licensed.

Zlata Vuksanović-Macura explained that the working groups mentioned in the Guidelines were actually suggested by the consulted LSGs as the response to their inability to establish local housing agencies. She also confirmed the difficulties in functioning of existing housing agencies in the previous period. She stressed the importance of defining a clear institutional mechanism for implementation in the strategy, regardless of its form.

Đorđe Milić agreed that strategic documents such as this one are very important and provide a basis for concrete projects and construction and expressed hope that the Guidelines will be useful for LSGs.

4. Any other business

Marko Vujačić, UNOPS Head of Programme said that his expectations are fully met and stressed the importance of the continuous dialogue and suggestions from PSC, which will definitely help make our work better.



Slavica Denić, Coordinator at SIPRU reminded about the mapping of 702 Roma settlements conducted by SIPRU and UN OHCHR last year and stated that all gathered data is at disposal for the Programme.

Since there were no other comments and suggestions from the participants, the meeting was concluded with closing remarks by **Dragana Milošević**. She thanked the participants for their participation and cooperation. The minutes of the meeting will be distributed to the PSC members during next week.

Belgrade, 25 January 2021

Prepared by the EU SHAI Programme team



III List of Participants

| No | Name and Surname | Institution | Function |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|--|
| STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS | | | |
| 1 | Đorđe Milić | Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure | Assistant Minister, Sector for Spatial and Urban Planning |
| 2 | Igor Perić | Ministry of Labor, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs | Assistant Minister, Sector for International Cooperation and European Integration |
| 3 | Milica Dumonjić Radovanović | Ministry of European Integration | Senior Advisor |
| 4 | Mirjana Maksimović | Delegation of the European Union to Serbia | Programme Manager |
| 5 | Igor Miščević | Standing Conference of Towns and Municipalities | Advisor, Department for Spatial and Urban Planning and Housing |
| 6 | Slavica Denić | Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit Team | Coordinator for Social Inclusion of Roma |
| 7 | Olga Radosavljević | Ministry of human and minority rights and civil dialog | Advisor for Project Implementation and Monitoring |
| JOINING PARTICIPANTS | | | |
| 1 | Svetlana Ristić | Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure | Senior Advisor, Department for Housing and Architectural Policy, Communal Activities and Energy Efficiency |
| 2 | Đorđe Višić | Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure | Advisor, Department for International Cooperation and European Integration |
| 3 | Ivana Milovanović | Ministry of Labor, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs | Associate in the Sector for International Cooperation and European Integration |
| 4 | Anđelija Todić | Delegation of the European | Intern |



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|--------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | | Union to Serbia | |
| UNOPS RSPO | | | |
| 1 | Marko Vujačić | UNOPS | Head of Programme |
| 2 | Daliborka Kolar | UNOPS | Head of Supporting Services |
| 3 | Marija Glišić | UNOPS | Financial Analyst |
| SECRETARIAT | | | |
| 1 | Dragana Milošević | UNOPS | Project Manager |
| 2 | Nevenka Gril Timotijević | UNOPS | Engineer |
| 3 | Milica Joksić | UNOPS | Infrastructure Officer |
| 4 | Marea Grinvald | UNOPS | Capacity Building Officer |
| 5 | Mirjana Dimitrijević | UNOPS | Social Inclusion Officer |
| 6 | Zlata Vuksanović-Macura | UNOPS Programme Management Support | Senior Analyst |

