

Contracting Authority:
United Nations Office for Project Services - UNOPS

Programme:
**The European Union Support to Social Housing and Active Inclusion
Programme - EU SHAI**

**Open Call for Proposals for Provision of Technical Assistance to LSGs in
Development or Revision of Local Housing Strategies**

Guidelines for Applicants

Reference:
CfP SHAI 02-2021

Deadline for submission of full application: **10 February 2022**

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1. Background

The European Union Support to Social Housing and Active Inclusion Programme (EU SHAI) is designed to enhance implementation of the social inclusion policies in Serbia and provide sustainable housing solutions for the most vulnerable population. The European Union (EU) has allocated 27 million Euros through the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) 2018 for the implementation of the Programme during 48 months. The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) has been selected, after a call for expression of interest, as the implementing partner.

The Programme is based on the National Priorities for International Assistance in the Republic of Serbia 2014-2017, with projections until 2020 (NAD), significant for Serbia's EU accession process and socio-economic development. Implementation of this Programme will contribute to meeting the EU accession criteria under Chapters 19 that relate to social inclusion and Chapter 23 that covers fundamental rights. Consequently, the results of this Programme will bring the Republic of Serbia closer to EU standards and practice.

Its activities are undertaken in partnership with the Government of the Republic of Serbia and in cooperation with national and local institutions, civil society organisations, while respecting the national strategies, relevant legal framework and development documents, in order to ensure national ownership and help develop national capacities. The Programme is implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Construction, Transport and Infrastructure (MCTI) and the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veterans and Social Affairs (MLEVSA), and in coordination with the Ministry of European Integration (MEI).

Particularly targeted groups are vulnerable and at-risk-of-poverty populations, such as Roma, disadvantaged women, in particular women victims of domestic violence, youth in/leaving care, persons with disabilities, and others who live in inadequate housing conditions. The Programme will also benefit national institutions and local self-governments (LSGs), as well as social inclusion service providers from the public and civil society sector.

The Programme will strengthen capacities at the national and local level for the identification, programming, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of sustainable social housing programmes and projects. As a result of the Programme, national and local authorities, as well as other relevant institutions and organisations, will be capacitated to formulate and implement relevant specific programmes, measures and actions.

2. Justification

The Programme is fully in line with the international human rights law and the United Nations (UN) standards of the right to adequate standards of living, as well as with the national strategic documents and the EU membership criteria.

The Programme interventions have been designed to contribute to the objectives of the National Strategy for Social Housing (2012)¹, developed and subsequently adopted for implementation to address the needs of a large number of households in Serbia who are unable to afford housing at market prices and the lack of systematic measures of housing support to such households. Among

¹ Action Plan of the National Strategy for Social Housing 2012-22

other results, the first objective of the Strategy envisages the development of strategic documents, specifically including **support to LSGs in developing/revising local housing strategies**.

The development of a local housing strategy and implementing an action plan adopted by the LSG was set out in the Law on Housing and Building Maintenance.² A local housing strategy is a sector strategy paper adopted for the purpose of fulfilling public interest in the field of housing and implementing goals and measures set out in the National Housing Strategy and its action plan and Housing Support Programme, adopted by the Serbian Government. The Law sets out that the local housing strategy and action plan shall be implemented through housing support programmes used to achieve goals and measures of LSG housing policies. Furthermore, it also stipulates the obligation for LSGs to develop regular annual reports to the Ministry in charge of housing affairs about the results of the implementation of the local housing strategy and other housing programmes and projects the LSGs implement with the aim of fulfilling housing policy objectives. Preparing the report and collecting data for its development are exceptionally important for the formulation of national housing policy and local housing strategies, as well as for the programming of specific measures according to real housing needs and available capacities.³

The last two decades have been characterised by the absence of comprehensive social housing support measures in Serbia. The country has an underdeveloped model of social housing, characterised by a partial set up of the legal and institutional framework, the absence of financial mechanisms, weak human resources and missing mechanisms that would assist the most vulnerable in solving their housing needs. A gap between the laws and their effective implementation, the situation with the multiplicity of short-term donor funded projects also suggests a fragmented approach to housing and social inclusion without a long-term vision addressing the needs of all residents, as it was concluded by the Special Rapporteur for Adequate Housing in her Report⁴, produced after the mission to Serbia in May 2015.

When it comes to the local level, housing legislative, policy framework and existing measures reflect the shortages already recognised at the national level. The UN Special Rapporteur for Adequate Housing recommends that the Government of Serbia should ensure availability of social housing for those who require it; if the existing housing stock is insufficient, short and medium-term strategies should be developed to address the shortage.

The initial assessment of existing capacities and resources to address social housing needs and active social inclusion measures on national and local level in Serbia, conducted by SeConS Development Initiative Group in 31 LSGs in Serbia in 2019 indicates shortages in regard to the local housing legislative and policy framework. Instead of developing and adopting local housing strategies, as prescribed by the Law on Housing and Maintenance of Buildings, only a small number of LSGs have them. Local housing strategies and action plans are oftentimes developed *ad hoc*, when donor programmes on housing require a certain policy frame. LSGs' capacities to design local housing policy and initiate their own housing support programs are weak due to lack of trained staff both in the housing and social protection sector. Some of the main recommendations for further LSGs' capacity building are related to improving the strategic framework: development and adoption of local housing strategies and action plans, along with the provision of technical assistance for development of the documents.

² [Law on Housing and Building Maintenance](#) "Official Gazette of the RS", No. 104/2016 and 9/2020 - oth. law.

³ UNOPS (2021): [Local Housing Strategy Development Guidelines](#)

⁴ <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=16005&LangID=E> (accessed 25 September 2021)

As a part of the activities aimed at enhancing the capacities of the relevant authorities to implement social housing policy, the Programme published “Local Housing Strategy Development Guidelines”⁵ providing LSGs with a step-by-step practical guidance for development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of local housing strategies.

3. Objectives

Overall objective: To contribute to the establishment or strengthening of policy, institutional, and organisational framework pertained to implementation of social housing at the local level.

Specific objective: To enhance capacities of up to 30 LSGs to develop or revise local housing strategies and action plans in accordance with the Law on housing and maintenance of buildings.

4. Scope of the Intervention

With the aim of contributing to a greater accountability of the LSGs in ensuring adequate housing solutions with the accompanying measures for active inclusion, through this Call for Proposals **technical assistance (TA) will be provided to up to 30 LSGs in the development or revision of local housing strategies and action plans.** The TA will encompass the following steps:

- establishment of the municipal multi-sector working groups
- development or revision of local housing strategies and action plans
- establishment of mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of strategy implementation
- development of procedures on cooperation between local service providers and LSGs, where relevant
- reorganisation of LSGs, in order to ensure clearly designated structure or staff dealing with social housing issues and complementary social inclusion measures, where relevant

The process is designed in a way to enhance LSGs’ capacities to identify and analyse the needs of the local vulnerable people. The Programme will ensure that the strategies are aligned with the national and relevant international human rights law standards of the right to adequate standards of living.

The TA will be provided through a combination of a series of residential trainings/thematic workshops, which will have a strong practical component, and a provision of online support and on-the-job training, during the period of up to one year, which is the time estimated for the development/revision of the documents.

5. Duration of the Intervention

UNOPS will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the selected LSGs. The active provision of TA will last twelve (12) months from the day the MoU is signed.

⁵ UNOPS (2021): [Local Housing Strategy Development Guidelines](#)

6. Guidelines for the Applicants

6.1. General Eligibility Criteria

In order to be eligible for support, the applicant **must be**:

- a local self-government on the territory of Serbia - city or municipality. In cases where LSG has a city status, only the city is the eligible applicant. Departments or authorities within local government are not deemed eligible applicants.

The applicant **must** meet following additional mandatory requirements:

- **Provide a Letter of Commitment** (Annex 1) for its active participation in the process, demonstrating unequivocal readiness to lead the processes of the development/revision of the local housing strategy

- **Prepare and pass official LSG Decision to develop/revise a Local Housing Strategy**

The written LSG decision will ensure the appropriate legitimacy to the process, indicate political readiness and kick off activities to develop/revise the local housing strategy.

The decision should:

- contain **the reason** why a local housing strategy is being developed/revised, i.e. what are the indications of the existence of needs to adopt/revise a strategy paper in the field of housing.
 - designate **the strategy development/revision lead**. If an established housing agency exists, it shall be designated to be the strategy development/revision lead. Considering only several LSGs in Serbia have established Housing agencies, the implementer can also be the local administration department competent for housing.
 - stipulate **the period of time applicable to the strategy**. The LSG should determine the period during which the strategy will be in force in accordance with the context and own needs.
 - contain **a deadline for the development/revision of the housing strategy**. The deadline should be set up for May 2023 the latest.
- **Form the Working Group for Local Housing Strategy development/revision**
The multi-sectoral working group should be formed and its members **appointed by the LSG** by way of decision. Mandatory composition of the Working Group includes a minimum of four professionals:
 - a decision maker within the LSG, i.e. highest office holders in the administration, such as the mayor/president of the municipality, their deputies/assistants and/or LSG Council members and/or heads of administration/units
 - a representative of the finance and budget unit within the LSG
 - a person with the knowledge and experience in strategic planning within the LSG
 - a representative of the center for social welfare

Maximum number of Working Group members is limited to eight.

- **Appoint a coordinator within the Working Group**

The working group coordinator should be **appointed by the LSG** by way of decision. The

working group coordinator is expected to be dedicated to the strategy development/revision process and to regularly communicate and cooperate with decision makers and other relevant stakeholders. The working group coordinator is also tasked with the final shaping of the local housing strategy and action plan documents into a coherent whole.

- **Formalise the engagement of the Working Group members**

The engagement of the Working Group members must be formalised through an official document, signed and stamped by all parties, containing information concerning the roles and responsibilities of each member.

6.2. Additional Considerations and Recommendations

The good governance principles are embedded in all aspects of the Programme, thus also including the activities aimed to strengthen capacities of LSGs to prepare policies and effectively implement national and local housing policy measures along with social inclusion measures for the most vulnerable groups. In that regard, the received applications will also be evaluated taking into account:

6.2.1. Gender equality, non-discrimination and participation

The non-discriminatory, participatory and gender balanced approach should be reflected throughout the process of development/revision of local housing strategies. Thus, the applicants are strongly encouraged to include the following members in the Working Group:

- private sector representatives
- civil sector representatives
- public utility companies representatives
- local institutions representatives
- representatives of vulnerable groups
- individuals who can contribute with the information and experience relevant to the development/revision of the local housing strategy
- female members

6.2.2. Accountability and efficiency

All costs of the Technical Assistance will be borne by the Programme, namely:

- provision of in-person and online expert support
- provision of on-the-job training
- costs of five residential trainings for the members of the working groups (accommodation, meals, refreshments, travel costs, working materials, as well as other relevant logistics costs)

In order to ensure accountability of the LSG, as well as the efficiency of the process, it is desirable that the LSG allocates certain funds in the budget for the development/revision of the local housing strategy, which are needed e.g. to conduct specific analyses; for the consultation process with relevant stakeholders; for per diems for the members of the working group; for public hearing with the local community; for other relevant activities related to the development/revision of the local housing strategy.

7. Selection Criteria

Technical evaluation of the received proposals will be conducted in line with the following selection criteria:

Section criteria	Maximum score
1. LSG readiness for cooperation and active participation in the Programme	25
<p>1.1.* Has the LSG passed the Decision to develop/revise a local housing strategy?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Decision to develop/revise a local housing strategy has been passed by the LSG and contains all four recommended aspects: the reason for development/revision of the strategy; designated strategy development/revision lead; the period of time applicable to the strategy; a deadline for the development/revision of the strategy (15) The Decision to develop/revise a local housing strategy has been passed by the LSG, but misses up to one recommended aspect (10) The Decision to develop/revise a local housing strategy has been passed by the LSGy, but misses more than one recommended aspect (5) The Decision to develop/revise a local housing strategy has not been passed by the LSG (0) 	15
<p>1.2. Has the LSG allocated funds in the budget for the activities related to the development/revision of the local housing strategy?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant submitted a proof of funds available - Copy of the extract from municipal budget with marked exact budget line which will be used (10) The applicant did not submit a proof of funds available in the budget for the activities related to the development/revision of the local housing strategy (0) 	10
Operational Capacities	30
<p>2.1.* Has the Working Group (WG) for development/revision of the local housing strategy been established by the LSG? Does the WG consist of a minimum of four professionals (a decision maker within the LSG, a representative of the finance and budget service within the LSG, a person with the knowledge and experience in strategic planning within the LSG, a representative of the Center for Social Welfare)? Has an official document been signed with all members of the WG?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The WG has been established by the LSG and is composed of up to 8 members. In addition to the mandatory four professionals, it also includes other relevant external members with whom the official document has been signed (10) The WG has been established by the LSG. Its composition meets only 	10

<p>the minimum mandatory requirements and the official document has been signed with the Center for Social Welfare (5)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The WG has not been established / The WG has been established by the LSG but does not meet the mandatory minimum requirements (0) 	
<p>2.2.* Has the Coordinator of the WG been appointed by the LSG? Does the Coordinator have sufficient expertise to cooperate the development/revision of the local housing strategy and shape the final document into a coherent whole?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The in-house Coordinator has been appointed among the WG members and has a sufficient expertise required (10) • The Coordinator has been appointed among the WG members, has a sufficient expertise required, but is outsourced (5) • The Coordinator has not been appointed among the WG members / The Coordinator has been appointed, but does not have a sufficient expertise (0) 	10
<p>2.3. Does the composition of the WG reflect the non-discriminatory, participatory and/or gender balanced approach?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female members represent at least 60% of the WG (2) • Female members represent 50-59% of the WG (1) • Female members represent less than 50% of the WG (0) • Two or more vulnerable groups are represented within the WG (2) • One vulnerable group is represented within the WG (1) • No vulnerable groups are represented within the WG (0) • Two or more relevant CSOs are represented within the WG (2) • One relevant CSO is represented within the WG (1) • There are no relevant CSOs represented within the WG (0) • Two or more relevant private sector/public utility company/local institutions (other than Mandatory CSW) representatives within the WG (2) • One relevant private sector/public utility company/local institutions (other than Mandatory CSW) within the WG (1) • There are no relevant private sector/public utility company/local institutions (other than Mandatory CSW) within the WG (0) • Two or more additional external experts who can contribute with the information and experience relevant to the development/revision of the local housing strategy within the WG (2) • One additional external expert who can contribute with the information and experience relevant to the development/revision of the local housing strategy within the WG (1) 	10

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No additional external experts within the WG (0) 	
3. Institutional and strategic framework for housing support	25
<p>3.1.* Is the TA required for the development or revision of the local housing strategy?⁶</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The strategy does not exist or it expired more than three years ago. TA is required for the development of the local housing strategy (10) The strategy exists but needs a revision / The strategy has expired in the past three years. TA is required for the revision of the local housing strategy (5) Required TA is not in line with the aim of this CFP (0) 	10
<p>3.2. Has the LSG adopted any other local strategic documents relevant for the field of housing and/or support to local vulnerable populations (eg. Strategic Development Plan, Strategy of Sustainable Development, Strategy of Local Economic Development, Strategy of social protection, Relevant Action plans and alike)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five or more relevant local strategic documents adopted (5) Four relevant local strategic documents adopted (4) Three relevant local strategic documents adopted (3) Two relevant local strategic documents adopted (2) One relevant local strategic document adopted (1) No relevant local strategic documents adopted (0) 	5
<p>3.3 Does the applicant have an institutionalised agency/department/legal entity that is primarily responsible for housing support?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LSG has set up a Housing Agency with at least three full time employees / There is no Housing Agency set up by the LSG, but there is another registered legal entity at the territory of the LSG in the capacity of a non-profit housing organisation with at least three full time employees (10) There is a Housing Agency or a non-profit housing organisation with at least one full time employee / There is neither a Housing Agency or a non-profit housing organization, but there is at least one employee within the LSG administration that is primarily responsible for housing support (5) There is neither a Housing Agency, nor a non-profit housing organisation, nor an employee within the LSG administration primarily responsible for the housing support (0) 	10
4. Housing support programmes/projects	20

⁶ In order to set the basis for provision of adequate housing support for its citizens, this criterion gives a specific advantage to LSGs applying for development of local housing strategy compared to those applying for the revision of local housing strategy.

<p>4.1. Are there any ongoing programmes/projects implemented by the LSG directly related to housing support?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two or more ongoing programmes/projects (10) • One ongoing programme/project (5) • No ongoing programmes/projects (0) 	10
<p>4.2. Has there been any previous programmes/projects implemented by the LSG in the past two years that are directly related to housing support?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one programme/project implemented (5) • No implemented programmes/projects (0) 	5
<p>4.3. Is any of the above mentioned ongoing/past programmes/projects directly focused on the social housing of vulnerable groups?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes (5) • No (0) 	5
Total	100

*eliminary criterion - due to the overall significance of the criterion, scoring zero points will result in rejection of the application

The evaluation grid provides insight into the key areas that will be considered during the assessment as well as details on scoring.

Following the evaluation, a table listing the applications ranked according to their score will be established, as well as a reserve list in accordance with the same criteria.

The eligibility of the applicant will be verified according to the criteria set out in Section 6.1.

8. Application Procedure

8.1. Application forms and supporting documents

Applications must be submitted in accordance with the instructions set out in Section 8.2. Applications must be in English, unless specified otherwise, and must contain following documentation:

- Letter of Commitment (Annex 1)
- Application Form (Annex 2)
- Eligibility Declaration (Annex 3)
- Application Checklist (Annex 4)
- LSG decision on development/revision of local housing strategy
- LSG decision on establishment of the Working Group, including the coordinator's appointment
- Coordinator's CV (*max. 2 pages*)

- Official document through which the engagement of Working Group members has been formalised
- Copy of the extract from municipal budget with marked exact budget line which will be used for local housing strategy development/revision - in Serbian language (*applicable to the applicant LSGs that allocated funds in the budget for the activities related to the development/revision of the local housing strategy*)
- Valid or expired local housing strategy - in Serbian language (*if it had been developed and adopted by the applicant LSG*)

Please note that only the above listed documents will be evaluated. It is therefore of the utmost importance that these documents contain all relevant information concerning the intervention. No additional annexes should be sent. Hand-written applications will not be accepted.

NOTE: ALL supporting documents must be submitted together with the Application.

8.2. Where and how to send the application

- Applications must be **submitted via e-mail in PDF format (signed, stamped and scanned)** and in original editable format, in Word files. The signed, stamped and scanned versions must contain exactly the same application documents as the electronic versions in the original editable format. In case of discrepancies, signed, stamped and scanned versions will prevail.
- The applicant must submit application forms **in the English language**.
- The total e-mail size of the application should **not exceed 15 MB**, as that is the maximum allowed e-mail message size by the UNOPS server. If the application is larger than 15 MB, documents should be sent in a series of e-mails, with each e-mail not exceeding 15 MB size thresholds. Each part of the application should be numbered in the e-mail subject field (e-mail subject/number).
- **Applications must be submitted to an e-mail address rsoc.applications@unops.org.**
Automatic notification of the delivery would follow upon the successful submission of the email application.
The email application must be sent with the **e-mail subject** consisting of the reference number and the title of the Call for Proposals including the name of the applicant (e.g. CfP SHAI 02-2021 – TA to LSGs for Local Housing Strategies - *Name of the applicant*).
- **The deadline for the submission of applications is 10 February 2022.** Applications **must be received before midnight-local time** on the closing date of the Call for Proposal. Applicants are kindly advised to timely submit the application as late deliveries due to slow internet connection or other networks/hardware/software related problems may lead to disqualification of the application. **Applications submitted after the deadline will be rejected.**
- Applicants must verify that their Application is complete using the checklist. **Incomplete applications will be rejected.**
- Applications sent by any other means (e.g. by fax or by post or by hand delivery) or delivered to other e-mails different from the stated in Call for Proposals will be rejected. **Hand-written applications will not be accepted.**

- The application will be dismissed if it was not submitted according to the requirements, or is incomplete, or is submitted after the deadline. This decision will be final.

9. Visibility and Communications

The selected LSGs will be expected to comply with communications and visibility requirements as set by the Programme. The Programme will provide LSGs with adequate guidelines and other information prior to the beginning of the provision of TA.

10. Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

The Programme will monitor development/revision of the local housing strategy and provide technical and programmatic advice as necessary and available. The LSGs progress in regard to the development/revision of the local housing strategy can be evaluated at any time during the TA provision.

11. Data Protection

UNOPS shall ensure an appropriate protection of received data subject provided by the Applicant in accordance with the applicable UNOPS Key Privacy Principles (ref. UNOPS Executive Office Directive Ref. EOD.ED.2019.01). Data subject shall therefore be managed carefully by UNOPS and in a coherent manner across the organisation, particularly ensuring respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms of individuals, in particular the right to privacy.

12. Indicative Timeframe

The indicative timetable for the application and evaluation process is as follows:

Activity	Timeframe / Deadline
Launching of the Call for Proposals	10 December 2021
Deadline for Submission of Applications	10 February 2022
Programme Steering Committee (PSC) recommendation for selection of LSGs	March 2022
Information on the Evaluation Results	April 2022
Signing of Memorandum of Understanding	April 2022

13. Further Information

Questions may be sent by e-mail no later than ten days before the deadline for the submission of applications to rsoc.cfp.clarifications@unops.org, indicating clearly the reference of the call for proposals.

The contracting authority has no obligation to provide further clarifications after this date.

Replies will be given no later than seven days before the deadline for the submission of applications. In the interest of equal treatment of applicants, the contracting authority cannot give a prior opinion on the eligibility of an applicant.

14. List of Annexes

Annex 1: Letter of Commitment

Annex 2: Application Form

Annex 3: Eligibility Declaration

Annex 4: Application Checklist

Annex 5: Memorandum of Understanding (*template - not to be filled*)