



Financed by European Union



**Strengthen national and local systems  
to support the effective socio-economic  
integration of returnees in the Western Balkans**

**Strengthen national and local systems to support the effective socio-economic integration of returnees in  
the Western Balkans project**

**CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

**“Socio-economic reintegration of (Roma and Egyptian) Returnees  
in Fier, Berat and Devoll”**

**GUIDELINES FOR APPLICATION**

This Call for Proposals is issued in the framework of the “Strengthen national and local systems to support the effective socio-economic integration of returnees in the Western Balkans”, an EU financed United Nations Development Programme action, to support projects in the field of **“Socio-economic reintegration of (Roma and Egyptian) Returnees in Fier, Berat and Devoll”**, proposed by Civil Society Organizations based and/or operating in the municipalities of Devoll, Berat and Fier, in Albania.

## 1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Since the Western Balkans were declared “safe countries of origin” the region has seen a significant number of returnees from the EU. Still, in 2017, Albania, North Macedonia and Serbia were ranked among the top 20 countries with the highest number of nationals with unregulated residence status in the EU. Limited work opportunities, low-paid jobs, large informal sector and the poor quality of health and education services, among others, due to neglect and disinvestment in social infrastructure, are some of the main drivers of outward migration.

While irregular migration spreads across all demographic, social and ethnic groups, Roma and Egyptian men and women comprise a significant share. The quantitative<sup>1</sup> and qualitative<sup>2</sup> surveys conducted by UNDP and the World Bank in 2017 underscore disproportional social and economic hardship as a main trigger of irregular migration and asylum application of Roma and Egyptian men and women, where Roma and Egyptian women are even more vulnerable.

Although various dimensions of migration and reintegration of returnees are being addressed in national strategic and policy frameworks, their implementation has suffered from the ineffective mechanisms for horizontal (inter-institutional) and vertical (central-local level) coordination, weak institutional capacities and scarce financial resources.

The asylum phenomena has impacted Roma and Egyptian population in all municipalities in Albania. Despite the fact that its intensity differs causes remain the same. Economic conditions – including poverty, unemployment and underemployment, low income from the formal and informal sectors, difficult living conditions, limited social protection and debts – are the main push factors for Albanian asylum-seekers. In addition to these underlying factors, the future of their children is another driver. Equally, there are factors such as (to name but a few) the shortage and poor quality of healthcare services, housing, conflicts and physical security, including the low quality of education, which generate constant psychological stress. Another important factor that distinguishes Roma and Egyptian from majority population is discrimination.

### 1.1 Project Objective

*“Strengthen national and local systems to support the effective socio-economic integration of returnees in the Western Balkans”* project aims to enhance the capabilities of the Western Balkan authorities to implement holistic solutions to economic and social empowerment of returnees. By tackling the root causes and negative drivers of migration of Roma and Egyptian and vulnerable populations, the project is contributing to implementation of the broader social inclusion agenda in the Western Balkans.

While, UNDP will primarily address local level challenges, the ultimate objective of the project is to translate the tested models into national regulation and public policies and programmes for sustainable reintegration of vulnerable returnees. The project is part of the IPA II Multi-Country Action Programme entrusted to UNDP, the WB and the CoE, to support the fundamental rights of Roma and Egyptian community and other vulnerable returnees.

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<sup>1</sup> Regional Roma Survey 2017 -Regional survey on socio-economic situation of marginalized Roma in the Western Balkans, commissioned by UNDP and the World Bank, with the support of the DG NEAR, 2017. Country factsheets (UNDP) More information at: <http://www.eurasia.undp.org/content/rbec/en/home/library/roma/regional-roma-survey-2017-country-fact-sheets.html>

<sup>2</sup> Micro-narratives collected from 1,175 Roma returnees, commissioned by UNDP, with the support of the DG NEAR, 2017

## 1.2 Brief description of UNDP project and rationale

**Output 1-** Local returnee integration strategies are developed with selected municipalities foresees development of local reintegration strategies, aiming to improve the livelihoods and social wellbeing of returnees and the broader community, tackle local governance issues, capacity and institutional bottlenecks and gaps of service providers and business ecosystems, which hinder the effective implementation of reintegration policies.

**Output 2 -** Elements of local returnee integration strategies are implemented in selected municipalities, including innovative activities on livelihoods and skills building, etc. aims to demonstrate new approaches to economic empowerment and social cohesion, which will form the main pillars of local reintegration strategies.

**Output 3-** Significant number of urgent administrative issues faced by returnees are addressed will seek to identify and develop innovative approaches to public service provision, by developing and utilising a number of digitalized tools and laying the ground for introducing integrated case management.

Within this project, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Albania conducted a vulnerability assessment at the individual and community level, as well as of institutional capacities for the reintegration of returnees in Albania. The collected evidence was used as basis to select Devoll, Berat and Fier Municipalities to partner with UNDP in implementing this project in Albania.

### Result to date of the RRR project in Albania:

With the Project support, local action plans in municipalities of Fier, Devoll and Berat for returnee reintegration have been designed and adopted with costed budgets. Some funding commitments for strategies and action plans have been made by partner municipalities and these strategies and action plans are now in implementation. These action plans are delivering innovative, context-specific models and solutions for improving the livelihoods and social wellbeing of returnees and the broader community. As part of the returnee-centered empowerment models, mix of technical assistance, strategic advisory, institutional development and small-grants support are being provided through the project. The project is tackling a variety of key hindrances to returnee reintegration, and to date project results in Albania include:

- local action plans (Berat, Fier and Devoll) for the benefit of reintegration of returnees developed;
- local government institutions supported to improve service provision and respond to the reintegration needs of the returnees by establishment of multi-stakeholder platforms and case management protocol ;
- provided personalized support to more than 210 individual's growth, reflective of individual's education, skills, experience, preferences and professional aspirations by equipping returnees with a suite of soft, technical and digital skills to improve their employability in the formal labour market;
- supported 32 returnees with entrepreneurial potential to start their own business;
- supported the implementation of community cohesion programmes through small grants for local NGOs reaching over 850 returnees to date;
- improved access to social and administrative services for over 250 returnees including by use of digital tools (E-Albania);
- strengthened capacities of NGOs and public service providers for effective provision of services including with the application of new digital tools.

### **1.3 Context and sector developments**

Between 2011 and 2019, according to EUROSTAT data for return from EU, on a cumulative basis, there have been 27,535 enforced returns and 7,325 recorded voluntary returns to Albania. In 2021, 9,415 returns of Albanian citizens were reported, compared with 10,190 in 2020. In 2021, the number of return decisions issued was 22,025, while this number in 2020 was 23,150. In 2021, there were 11,300 asylum applications lodged in EU Member States by citizens of Albania, an increase of 63% between 2020 and 2021. The recognition rate rose from 5% in 2020 to 9% in 2021.

Migration trends in Western Balkans and three IPA beneficiaries have been shifting, with regular migration increasing and irregular emigration decreasing (with some caveats as to recent rise in asylum applications from some IPA beneficiaries). Factors contributing to the decrease in irregular emigration include a change of asylum policies in the EU Member States, mainly shortening asylum-seeking procedures and Western Balkans countries' designation as safe countries of origin by the EU Member States. New migration trends for Western Balkans suggest an increase in regular forms of migration, predominantly for employment purposes, and to a lesser extent for family reunification, and education. For example, the 2020 evaluation of the German Institute for Employment Research (IAB) found that between November 2015 and May 2020, around 244,000 preliminary approvals for applications for employment from the Western Balkans in Germany were granted, leading to the arrival and employment of approximately 98,000 Western Balkans citizens, demonstrating a clear demand from both employers and workers. There are important push and pull factors that are operating affecting migration trends. Among the push factors are the relatively high (youth) unemployment rate, low private-sector wages, and inadequate public services, including poor healthcare and education, but also perceptions about political instability and quality of life. On the other hand, pull factors are dynamic, determined by the EU Member States and relate particularly to the demand of foreign workers for labour markets in selected economic sectors.

The assessment findings and reports developed as part of the Action, augmented by empirical findings from continuous engagement with thousands of returnees in the field over the course of the Action implementation, have highlighted the returnees are among the poorest segment of population, ranking at the bottom of the household income ladder, with most of the asylum seekers and returnees belonging to the age group between 30-44 years old with low level of education. While specific challenges faced by returnees vary depending on the individual-returnee circumstances and specific country/locality context of return, below are some common issues returnees may face once they return to Serbia, North Macedonia, and Albania. Each of these areas is being addressed through the Action, except housing.

1. **Lack of Information and Awareness:** Returnees may face difficulties in accessing information about available support programs, services, and resources.
2. **Legal and Documentation Challenges:** Returnees may encounter difficulties in obtaining or renewing personal documentation, while lack of proper documentation can limit their access to essential services, employment opportunities, and social benefits.
3. **Socioeconomic Integration:** Securing stable employment is singled out as the single greatest challenge for returnees. Many returnees may face limited job prospects due to lack of skills or skills mismatch, lack of formal education, and in some instances, overt or covert discrimination. Lack of adequate skills and education is considered main barrier to employability, in many instances outweighing the effects of discrimination.
4. **Access to Education and Vocational Training:** Returnees, especially children and young adults, may encounter obstacles in accessing education or vocational training opportunities. Differences in

education systems, language barriers, or inadequate recognition of previous education can hinder their educational progress and future prospects. Nostrification of diplomas can be a challenge, as in some cases returnees do not have adequate documentation for nostrification, but also when all documents are in place, the procedure can be lengthy, cumbersome and costly for returnees.

5. **Language and Cultural Adjustment:** Language barriers and in some instances also cultural differences can pose significant challenges for young returnees.
6. **Health and Psychosocial Support:** Returnees may have specific healthcare needs, including mental health concerns or in some cases even trauma, accessing appropriate healthcare services and psychosocial support can be challenging, particularly for those without health insurance or limited resources.
7. **Community Support and Networks:** The absence of strong support networks and social connections can contribute to the challenges faced by returnees. Rebuilding relationships, establishing new networks, and reintegrating into communities can take time and effort.
8. **Social Stigma and Discrimination:** Returnees may face social stigma and discrimination based on their migration history or perceived “foreignness” generally but also in their peer communities. Overt and covert discrimination can impact their social inclusion, employment, and overall well-being. Discriminatory attitudes can be barriers to forming social connections and building support networks.
9. **Accessing Adequate Housing:** Returnees usually do not have legal documentation, land tenure and/or house ownership deeds. Houses they live in require renovation or adaptation, and most often they are not legalized or are not even in the process of legalization.

Addressing these multiple challenges and vulnerabilities requires comprehensive support mechanisms and locally customized models that support access to employment opportunities and education, but also include social integration initiatives and efforts to combat discrimination and social stigma. Each of these areas is being addressed through the Project through comprehensive and integrated models deployed in partnership with returnees, municipalities, employment offices and the NGOs that will be selected by this call for proposals.

#### **1.4. THE GRANTS SCHEME FOR “Socio-economic reintegration of (Roma and Egyptian) Returnees in Fier, Berat and Devoll”**

This Call for Proposals (CfP) is part of the Strengthen National and Local Systems to Support the Effective Socio-Economic Integration of Returnees in the Western Balkans project.

With the purpose of implementing “Socio-economic reintegration of (Roma and Egyptian) Returnees in Fier, Berat and Devoll” UNDP in Albania is launching this Call for Proposals, for civil society organizations working with and for returnees with focus to those from Roma and Egyptian minority.

Under this Call for Proposals, it is important that all applications foresee close consultation and collaboration with National Agency for Employment and Skills, Local Employment Offices, Municipalities and Roma and Egyptian returnee’s community, from the project design stage and throughout their implementation. This ensures that the interventions, implemented through these grants, will contribute to implementation of the Local Action Plan (LAP) activities in each Municipality.

#### **2.1 Aim and priorities**

This Call for Proposals (CfP) is part of the Strengthen National and Local Systems to Support the Effective Socio-Economic Integration of Returnees in the Western Balkans project.

With the purpose to implement “Socio-economic reintegration of (Roma and Egyptian) Returnees in Fier, Berat and Devoll”, UNDP in Albania is launching this Call for Proposals, for civil society organizations working with and for returnees with focus to those from Roma and Egyptian minority.

The selected Applicants are expected to implement **social care, skills and employment services** in partnership with respective municipalities, Local Employment Offices and business community any of the governmental employment promotion programmes (through official partnership with NAESs, e.g. the Wage Subsidy programme; the On-the job Training; the Internship Programme; the Self-employment programme, the Community Works programme). The main focus of the organization will be to empower the individuals and create the enabling environment so that the vulnerable returnees get involved successfully into integrated employment. The NGOs can apply for Lot 1; Lot 2 or Lot 3 or for the three lots together.

### Objectives:

#### **Lot 1. Social Care Case Management for returnees**

- In partnership with municipalities offer social care case management for minimum 50-100 returnees in line with law no.121/2016 (each applicant to target around 50-100 individuals).

#### **Lot 2. Integrated Employment**

- Offer employment and social services, through an integrated case management model to minimum 10 (returnees) unemployed jobseekers (each applicant to target around 10 individuals).

#### **Lot 3. Soft skills, Digital skills and Technical Vocational Trainings for (Roma and Egyptian) returnees in Fier, Berat and Devoll**

- Offer Soft skills, Digital skills and Technical Vocational Trainings to minimum 20 (Roma and Egyptian) returnees (each applicant to target at least 20 individuals).

### 2.2 Beneficiary group

Target groups, i.e., beneficiaries under this Call for Proposal shall be persons that meet the following requirements:

- Vulnerable Roma and Egyptian returnees (but not exclusively) to Albania, returned from emigration or asylum, which are in need for reintegration assistance.
- Unemployed Returnees.
- Variety of returnee’ age groups (children, youth and all working age segments).
- Gender balance and inclusiveness should be considered as very important principles in the selection the targeted beneficiaries.

### 2.3 Type of services and activities funded

This CfP aims to emphasize the importance of addressing the issues regarding (re)integration of returnees, particularly those that belong to the Roma and Egyptian national minority, in local communities that accept

high numbers of returnees. It is hugely important to emphasise that, while focus is on Roma and Egyptian returnees, project proposals should take highly in account to conduct activities of an all-inclusive character.

The applicants shall be expected to propose interventions in social care, integrated employment and social engagement of returnees by providing a holistic approach to activity implementation and interlink more than one issue faced by the returnees. Applicants are encouraged to involve returnees as much as possible in their activities in order to promote peer to peer learning and knowledge transfer.

The proposed activities should encourage the participation of returnees and their families in local social cohesion initiatives, and where possible in sharing experiences, acquired knowledge and skills during their stay abroad.

The impact of the pandemic on the implementation of proposed activities must be considered.

### **Lot 1. Social Care Case Management for returnees**

#### ***Local NGOs are encouraged to provide their proposals based on the following approach:***

- NGOs play an essential role in the outreach and in the delivery of social care services to vulnerable returnees, thus NGOs will act as effective partners of public service providers and local businesses.
- Based on the analysis of the vulnerabilities of returnees, the service gaps and administrative bottlenecks at local level, the NGOs' activity aims to provide direct support to returnees in overcoming the immediate distress upon the return and in improving the access to required public services and social assistance.
- This will be achieved by: i) developing content for accurate and easy to access information by the returnees regarding the available assistance, which can be provided by public sector providers and NGOs; ii) engagement of local NGOs and civil society organizations to reach out to the most vulnerable returnees and their families and provide direct support in obtaining personal IDs, access to health care, social care services and free legal aid, school enrolment and nostrification of school diplomas and recognition of informal education; and iii) support the municipality during case management through approved methodology, guidelines, standard forms and protocols for the assessment of multi-dimensional vulnerabilities and case management for returnees.
- Models for engagement of NGOs in the service delivery will be developed and proposed for institutionalization by the policy makers.

### **Lot 2. Integrated Employment**

#### ***Local NGOs are encouraged to provide their proposals based on the following approach:***

- The NGOs will be responsible to establish intense communication with the returnees, to be able to identify and harness the experience, knowledge and life-skills acquired by returnees during their stay abroad.
- The main focus of the organizations that will work on the application of the integrated employment will be to empower the individual and create an enabling environment for him/her to joining the labour market, including by addressing social inclusion issues on one hand and by matching the skills

and experiences of the individual with the needs of the labour market. It aims to improve the social, personal and professional competences of the individual.

- As such, the organization will need to apply various experiences and expertise gathered throughout the years of working with vulnerable communities. They may choose to apply the Coaching for Employment and Entrepreneurship employment counseling cycle to individuals from marginalized groups, as they need intensive intervention and supportive employment, or other models and approaches.
- Organizations will work in depth with the individual and his/her family through the provision of or referral to the necessary social services. Although the main goal is employment, organizations will provide intensive counselling for jobseekers to address their social issues. Social problems can be of a wide range, including problems of violence, abuse, divorce, alcohol and drugs, early school dropout, illiteracy, housing, food, health, registration problems and other legal problems, etc. Undoubtedly, the problems listed above can hinder the path of an individual towards further qualifications and employment and only through dedicated and quality services can these complex needs be met and allow active participation and maximum benefit for sustainable employment.
- A crucial success factor for organizations is to provide a supportive, structured employment and social services through the application of various models of counselling and service provision, which should be a process that empowers and guides unemployed jobseekers at risk of exclusion from the labor market to increase employability and access to employment opportunities.
- Social protection services can be provided: (i) by the organization itself through the projects it implements; (ii) by partner organizations operating in the same region; (iii) by local government institutions. The implementation of the plan will be followed by the counselor until the objectives of the Individual Development Plan are achieved.
- Activities implemented by NGOs will address some of the community needs which involve the returnees and the local population. In line with identified priorities, activities will promote community cohesion, improve the interaction and collaboration between returnees and resident population, or help to fill in the gaps of locally available services.
- The organization may include the role of employment mediator within the proposal to ensure beneficiaries get motivation, guidance, support on the workplace, until sustainability is achieved.
- Through group and individual counseling, the necessary information will be gathered that will support the drafting of the Individual Development Plan for each participant in the program. The Individual Development Plan will contain all the steps that will be taken for each participant in the program until his / her employment, including the interventions that will be carried out in the field of providing social protection services.
- The organization may remunerate monthly social bonuses (financed by the grant) to beneficiaries upon successful compliance with the conditions set in the employment scheme financed by the government. It may purchase equipment and tools provided for the implementation of the employment programme in a working state, perform all restoration services, and at the end of the programme handover them to beneficiaries.



- Ensures that 100% of children of Roma and Egyptian returnees beneficiaries regularly attend the obligatory public education school; Ensure they are issued an ID card and a health card, as well as assist the individuals in these processes.

### **Lot 3. Soft skills, Digital skills and Technical Vocational Trainings for (Roma and Egyptian) returnees in Fier, Berat and Devoll**

#### **Local NGOs are encouraged to provide their proposals based on the following approach:**

- Based on the available public and private training offer, including curricula for soft skills, basic digital skills, and technical vocational trainings, the NGO will offer specialized and individualized support to beneficiaries (Roma and Egyptian returnees) to successfully follow and complete Soft skills, Digital skills and Technical Vocational Trainings for (Roma and Egyptian) returnees in Fier, Berat and Devoll. The NGO can offer dedicated professionals (mentors or facilitators) who help them access and successfully participate in tailored training or programmes, coupled with subsidized (transportation, daily allowances etc.) which facilitate integration to the current trainings.
- Under the project, returnees will be equipped with a set of soft, technical and digital skills to improve their employability in the formal labour market. Based on identified skills gaps and local demand, which is identified in the local assessments conducted by the project, a total number of 20 returnees in Fier, Berat and Devoll will be coached and supported to attend and successfully complete Soft skills, Digital skills and Technical Vocational Trainings.
- Soft, digital and technical skills' programmes will be provided in a form of individual and group training. Considering the multi-dimensional vulnerabilities experienced by returnees, participants in this programme will be offered a professional coaching and mentoring during the learning process, including a psycho-social and confidence building support.
- The selected NGOs need to ensure that trainings and certification for participants (as part of this Call) are recognized by National Agency for Employment and Skills (NAES), in support of enhanced employability. Also, the contractor needs to ensure close cooperation with NAES as part of the recommendations related to determination of type of VET training offered – i.e. selection of type of training to take into account the skill profiles demanded in the labour market.
- The NGO shall identify the beneficiaries by cooperating with UNDP project staff, three Municipalities and the respective Local Employment Offices. The NGO shall provide training in close partnership with public and private VET service providers, Local Employment Offices and local businesses to ensure enrolment of beneficiaries in different soft skills, digital skills and Technical Vocational Trainings. The NGO is expected to provide its services to returnees in one of the three Municipalities of Devoll, Berat and Fier, between the period of November 2023 – April 2024 (6 months).

Applying organization are invited to propose:

- The typology of services which will be offered counselling, coaching in the communication and referral to national/local institutions and service providers, training center, job mediation, preparation for job application and interviews etc. )
- The duration of each counselling session and the total number of counselling sessions

- The staff/client needed for the provision of the services
- The maximum number of beneficiaries that can be treated
- During the implementation, beneficiaries will also be provided with services that will facilitate their participation in the process, mentioned here: transportation costs, reimbursement of vocational training fees, a monthly fee to facilitate the costs of daily living, telephone refund, etc.

Also, during the application of the integrated assistance and based on the needs foreseen in the individual plans, interventions need to be coordinated with the employment promotion programs supported by the National Agency for Employment and Skills such as: 1. Wage Subsidy programme; the 2. On-the job Training; the 3. Internship Programme; the 4. Self-employment programme, the 5. Community Works programme.

During the implementation process, the NGO will document the process to gain insights on the procedures, tools utilized and impact of the approach. The success of the implementation will be measured through the following indicators:

- Number of beneficiaries in the programme vs the cost (cost-efficiency);
- Number of beneficiaries who finalize the programme;
- Number of beneficiaries employed at the end of the programme;
- Number of beneficiaries and their families who receive social services;
- Number of beneficiaries who have benefited from governmental financed programmes (EPPs, Vocational courses etc.);
- Number of partner employers.

## **2.4 Duration of the project proposal**

The duration of a Project should be **6 months**.

## **2.5 Budget proposal**

The project should include a budget proposal from **a minimum of 1,000,000 ALL to a maximum of 3,000,000 ALL**

Cost sharing with in-kind contributions or up to 10% of budget covered by the applicants are encouraged. Applicants shall indicate the entire budget in Albanian LEK by detailing all costs including those financed from the Applicant's or partners' own resources (e.g. wages, social security charges, rent and any other recurrent and capital costs) and specifying sources of finance.

The funds will be disbursed to the CSO (hereinafter the applicant) in compliance with their proposed project budget. Although each applicant may submit more than one proposal, each recipient cannot be granted more than one project. The project teams are expected to have measures in place to guarantee and demonstrate that the end beneficiaries targeted are those described in Section 2.2.

The final allocation decisions will be endorsed by the Grants Management Committee. More information concerning specific parties' roles and responsibilities and regarding the rules and regulations of disbursement are found in other sections of these Guidelines.

## 2.6 Eligibility criteria

### The applicant shall be:

- A non-profit organisation established in Albania.
- An applicant that exercises its activity in the Municipality of Berat, Devoll, Fier.

### The applicant shall possess:

- A court decision certifying the registration of the organisation.
- A Tax ID Certificate.
- A bank account in ALL in the name of the Applicant. *(Note: In case of a successful application, the applicant should open a separate bank account in ALL for all transactions under this CfP).*

Applicants from working in the same Municipality are encouraged to synergise their interventions and avoid overlapping in terms of persons/families targeted to work, type of service provided to each returnee' family or individual, and (whenever applicable) the geographic locations of their projects. The Grants Management Committee will consider these as an advantage, while scoring the applications.

Applicants shall not be able to participate in this CfP, nor will they be awarded funds, under the following circumstances:

- (a) if they are under insolvency or bankruptcy/liquidation proceedings, if they have entered the procedure of negotiating an agreement with creditors, if they have suspended their business activities;
- (b) if they have been convicted of unprofessional conduct and if they have been the subject of a final court decision (*res judicata*), i.e., decision they cannot appeal;
- (c) if they are guilty of unprofessional conduct that can be proven;
- (d) if they have not settled their debt related to social insurance contribution or tax payments, pursuant to legal provisions in the Republic of Albania;
- (e) if they have been issued a final decision equal to *res judicata* for fraud, corruption, involvement with criminal organisations or any other illegal activity.

Applicants shall also not be able to participate in the CfP and they shall not be awarded funds if during the CfP it is established that:

- (g) the applicant is in conflict of interest (for the purpose of this document, conflict of interest shall mean the existence of a private interest of the applicant that affects or may affect his/her function in the project, as well as if the applicant has a public function that affects or can affect his/her function in the project, the application itself, or the project);
- (h) the applicant is guilty of misinterpretation or giving false information required as eligibility criteria for the CfP; or has not submitted the requested information;
- (i) the applicant has attempted to reach confidential information or influence the evaluation panel during the process of evaluation of projects within this CfP.

Applicants shall submit, alongside their application, a hand-signed statement of not falling under any of the above-mentioned categories (a) to (i).

Projects must be implemented ONLY in the three targeted municipalities of Berat, Devoll, and Fier. Applicant may apply individually or in partnership. Anyhow, the Applicants should be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the Project with their partners, not acting as intermediary, in the one of the targeted municipalities: Berat, Devoll, and Fier.

## **2.7. How to apply**

Proposals must be submitted using the **Grant Application Form (Annex A)**. Clarifications will only be requested by the “Strengthen national and local systems to support the effective socio-economic integration of returnees in the Western Balkans” project staff and/or Grants Management Committee, when the information provided is unclear.

Please fill in the application forms clearly and precisely, so your applications can be evaluated in the best possible way.

Documents to submit alongside the application package:

- a) Applicant Statute.
- b) Memorandum of Understanding, signed and authorised by the applicant and partner institutions (municipality or any other partner institution selected from the applicant), specifying the roles and responsibilities of cooperating partners.
- c) Court Registration of the applicant;
- d) Financial statements of the two last years (accounts receivables and payables, and balance sheet for the previous financial year).

Other desirable documents may include consents, recommendations, letter of support or recommendation from local level institutions in the quality of former partners, as well as any other documents that can help the evaluation of your project proposal. These documents are not required, but desirable.

## **2.8. How and where to send the Proposals**

Full Proposals must be submitted signed and scanned electronically. The submitted Project Proposals should be in both English or Albanian language. However, it is obligatory that they also contain a one-page summary in English language comprising objectives, main expected results and key activities.

Electronic address: [registry.al@undp.org](mailto:registry.al@undp.org)

United Nations Development Programme  
Strengthening the Social Protection Response after the Earthquake in Albania  
Rruga Skenderbej,  
Gurten Building, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor,  
Tirana, Albania

(Re “Strengthen national and local systems to support the effective socio-economic integration of returnees in the Western Balkans” Project)

**The deadline for the receipt of complete proposals is 31 October 2023.**

**Incomplete Proposals will be rejected.**

### **3 EVALUATION AND SELECTION OF THE PROPOSALS**

The evaluation and selection of proposals will be carried out by a Grants Management Committee. The composition of the Grants Management Committee is as follows:

Chair of the Grants Management Committee: UNDP specialist.

Members of the Grants Management Committee: Representatives from UNDP. The Grants Management Committee may also include in its composition representatives from Ministry of Health and Social Protection.

All members of the Grants Management Committee are requested to sign a declaration of impartiality and commit to preserve the confidentiality of the data and results during and after the evaluation process, as well as any conflict of interest with the applicant.

The results of all submitted Proposals will be assessed by the Grants Management according to the following steps and criteria:

#### **Step 1: Administrative Verification**

In carrying out the Administrative Verification the following will be assessed:

- Missing or incorrect documentation and/or information. If any of the requested documents (including annexes) or information is missing the proposal may be rejected.

#### **Step 2: Evaluation of Eligibility and Evaluation of Proposals/Scoring Criteria**

##### **Projects not eligible**

The following types of Projects are ineligible:

- Projects concerned only or mainly with sponsorships for participation in workshops, seminars, conferences, congresses;
- Projects concerned only or mainly with scholarships for studies, part of long-term study programmes;
- Projects which consist entirely or in most part of preparatory works or studies;
- Projects supporting political parties;
- Purchase of land, building and offices;
- Projects consisting only of reconstruction and rehabilitation works;
- Retroactive financing for projects that are already in implementation or completed.

##### **Scoring criteria**

The following criteria will be used in the evaluation of the project proposals:

**(a) The Project Proposal quality**

a.1 Relevance – the proposal is in line with the Strengthen national and local systems to support the effective socio-economic integration of returnees in the Western Balkans” Project activities under which this CfP is launched. The proposal should seek to address needs for socio-economic integration of Roma and Egyptian (not exclusively) returnees in three selected municipalities and address the issues of access to local services, by targeting women, men, girls and boys.

a.2 Innovation and replicability

This criterion requires that the proposed projects and its activities are both innovative and with the potential to be replicated or upscaled. Innovation is defined as the process of introducing methods or ideas of work that are new to a territory. Replicability of good practices identified and tested elsewhere is supposed to produce similar results and is anticipated by the expressed support of relevant authorities within the benefiting municipality.

a.3 Effectiveness

According to this criterion, it will be assessed to what extent: a) the activities included in the Project Proposal are appropriate, practical, and consistent with the objectives and expected results, and b) the identified results are measurable through objectively verifiable indicators.

a.4 Sustainability

Sustainability is concerned with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after external funding has been withdrawn. The results of the Project need to be institutionally, socially as well as financially sustainable. Therefore, the application must contain detail regarding the institutional arrangements in place that guarantee sustainability beyond the lifetime of the project, and, finally, discuss how the final beneficiaries will be involved in execution, monitoring, and evaluation of the final project results.<sup>3</sup>

**(b) Applicants’ capacities**

b.1 Demonstrated experience in managing or coordinating employment and social care interventions

This criterion serves to assess the degree of the applicant’s commitment/engagement to manage employment and social care projects and activism by itself, with little or no support from external partners. The discussion on engagement should comprise those technical, human and financial. The applicant brings convincing evidence (including data and relevant information, e.g. organigrams, CVs, etc.) of being led by or involving human resources expertise of Roma and Egyptian minority individuals.

b.2 Commitment for co-financing the proposed project

The Applicants are encouraged for cost-sharing and direct contribution of financial nature or in kind consisting in project inputs and/or activities. Each applicant is encouraged to commit their own resources up to 10% of the total budget value of the proposal in order to match those requested from the grant scheme. Clearly stated and trackable commitments will receive higher scores. Direct contributions of financial nature or in kind for the staff assigned to the Project may also be considered as co-financing in the budget for the Project when paid by the Applicant or its partners. The in-kind contributions should be clearly identifiable in the project proposal and its budget.

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<sup>3</sup> For more details please refer to Annex D: Scoring Matrix

#### b.3 Degree of direct management and implementation responsibility

The applicant that keeps management and implementation responsibility regardless the implementation modality – by the Applicant alone or in partnership with a third party and that keeps the main responsibility for the delivery of the services, will receive higher scores.

### **Step 3. Short-listing and final selection**

The project proposals that will be short-listed for the final selection will be ranked according to the highest scores received. The best rated proposals will be proposed for funding. A report with full details on all proposals received and proposals proposed for grant funding will be submitted to the UNDP hierarchy for endorsement.

### **Step 4. Notification of the Grants Management Committee's decision**

Upon endorsement of the proposals that will receive grant funding, all applicants will be informed in writing by the Project team.

Standard Low Value Grant Agreement will be signed between UNDP and Applicant regarding the realization of the activities foreseen in the proposal.

#### **Assessment scale**

The total maximum score that a project proposal can get is 100. The assessment scale is provided in this CfP, at Annex D.

#### **Important Deadlines**

- Date of Launching the call: **10 October 2023**
- Deadline for receipt of questions: **18 October 2023**
- Deadline for receipt of Applications: **31 October 2023**

#### **Further information**

Questions may be sent only by e-mail to this address [registry.al@undp.org](mailto:registry.al@undp.org) indicating clearly the reference of the call for proposals. Replies will be given to questions submitted no later than 10 days before the deadline of the receipt of applications.

#### 4 ANNEXES

##### ANNEX A: Grant Application Form

<b>Name of applicant:</b>	
<b>Official postal address:</b>	
<b>Official e-mail address of the Applicant:</b>	
<b>Website of the Applicant:</b>	
<b>Contact person for this project:</b>	
<b>Contact person's telephone number and email address:</b>	
<b>Targeted municipality</b>	
<b>Name of Partners<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>Partner (s)</b>
Full legal name	
Legal status	
Official postal address	
Contact person	
Telephone number	
E-mail address	

#### I. PROJECT NARRATIVE

1. Title .....

2. Location .....

#### 3. Cost of the project and amount requested from the UNDP grants scheme

Total cost of the Project	Amount requested from the UNDP grants scheme	% of requested grant
..... Albanian LEK	..... Albanian LEK	... %

#### 4. Summary (in English language)

Maximum 1 page. Please fill in the table below.

<sup>4</sup> This section must be completed for each partner organisation, if any.



Project Goal	
Duration of the Project	... months
Partner(s), if any	
Target group(s)	
Beneficiaries	
Key expected results	
Main activities ( <i>bullet points</i> )	

**From here and onwards, the proposal will be in Albanian language**

**5. Brief description:** Maximum one page

- What is this project about?

**6. Situation Analysis and Justification:** Maximum 1 Page

- Why is the project being undertaken?
- Describe an opportunity or problem that the project is to address and the relevance of the Project to the Objectives of this grants scheme;
- Key information on the context (economic, social, environmental) relevant for the project and linked with the intended changes of the intervention

**7. Objectives:** Maximum 1 page

- specific & measurable objective 1
- specific & measurable objective 2
- specific & measurable objective 3 (include as many objectives as relevant for your project)

**8. Expected Results:** Maximum 1 page.

- For each project objective, include a detailed description of the expected impact on target groups/beneficiaries. Be specific and quantify results as much as possible.

9. **Direct and indirect beneficiaries:** Maximum 1 paragraph

- Who will benefit from the implementation of the project - direct and indirect. Be specific and quantify as much as possible.
- How will the project ensure, or intends to ensure, gender equality, inclusiveness, equal ease of access to resources and opportunities for both men and women or different age groups, as well as plan to ensure they can have the opportunity to benefit from all activities.

10. **Description of Activities:** Maximum 2 pages

- For each project objective include a detailed description of activities to be undertaken to produce the results.

11. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Maximum half page

- Describe how progress will be evaluated throughout and at the end of the project. For each objective formulate clear indicators for measuring results.

12. **Organization and Management:** Maximum half page

- Explain the organizational structure and the roles and responsibilities within the applicant structure and its partners (if any) and of the key project personnel involved in the project.

13. **Work Plan:**

- Use the table format (below in the following page)

14. **Sustainability:** Maximum half page

- How will the activities proceed after the end of the project?

15. **Detailed budget:** Annex C

16. **Experience in managing or coordinating social cohesion programs or programs for returnees:**

Maximum 1 page.

Provide a short description of similar projects managed by your institution over the past three (3) years in the field covered by this Grants scheme



## **ANNEX B: Supporting Documents for the Applicant and Partners**

### **I. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR THE APPLICANT**

#### **1. MANDATORY SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR THE APPLICANT**

- *A court decision certifying the registration of the organisation*
- *A Tax ID Certificate*
- *A bank account in ALL in the name of the Applicant. (Note: The applicant should open a separate bank account in ALL for all transactions under this CfP).*
- *Applicant Statute.*
- *Memorandum of Understanding, signed and authorised by the applicant and partner institutions (municipality or any other partner institution selected from the applicant), specifying the roles and responsibilities of cooperating partners.*
- *Court Registration of the applicant;*
- *Financial statements of the two last years (accounts receivables and payables, and balance sheet for the previous financial year).*

#### **2. OPTIONAL SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR THE APPLICANT**

- a. *Any other documents containing data or information, concisely pointing out the applicant's capacities relevant to the implementation of the proposed project and its established partnership with local institutions as service providers*

### **II. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR THE PARTNERS (IF APPLICABLE)**

#### **3. MANDATORY SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR THE PARTNERS**

*These documents are additional to the Partnership statement(s) requested in and submitted as part of Annex A (section 17) which is also mandatory.*

- a. *A copy of the official document attesting to the establishment of the partner Entity by the National Authorities (the Court registration if the partner Entity is a NGO)*
- b. *An official document indicating the NIPT of the partner Entity*

## ANNEX C: Budget (Excel Format)



Annex%20C%20-%20  
0Budget%20Form\_EN

**Detailed Budget:****Project title:****Project duration:****Applicant:****Municipality:**

Please give the necessary details to show how you arrived at the stated sums. Please delete lines and zeros not needed and then calculate the sums.

No.	Cost Items	Unit (e.g. piece, working hour/day, person month, month, year, sum up to)	Quantity	Costs per unit in ALL <sup>2</sup>	Total costs in ALL	Contribution requested from UNDP	Own contribution (if)	Budget justification
1.	<b>Human resources (up to 20% of overall total project budget)</b>							<i>Please explain the character of each cost involved, for what will be used and how calculations are made</i>
1.1	Salaries and related costs (please list and specify all positions, e.g project coordinator, project finance assistant. Indicate the % of time working in this project) <sup>1</sup>		0	0.0	0.0			<i>Project coordinator 100% Project finance assistant 30-50% other staff needed and % of time dedicated in this project</i>
	<i>please enter additional lines and list each position</i>		0	0.0	0.0			
	<b>Sub total</b>				<b>0.0</b>			
2.	<b>Equipment and supplies (only if they are purchased for activities with beneficiaries)</b>							
2.1	Furntiures & equipment purchase/rent ( <i>please specify</i> )		0	0.0	0.0			
	<i>please enter additional lines and list each item/group of items</i>		0	0.0	0.0			
2.3	Maintenance (include if relevant and please specify type of maintanance)		0	0.0	0.0			

	<i>please enter additional lines and list each item/group of items</i>		0	0.0	0.0			
	<b>Sub total</b>				<b>0.0</b>			
<b>3.</b>	<b><i>Costs for activities (according to the workplan)</i></b>							
<b>3.1</b>	Please specify according to the workplan matrix (include all costs involved under each activity, e.g. expertise, travel, training, workshops, materials and stationaries etc.		0	0.0	0.0			
	<i>please enter additional lines and list each item/group of items</i>		0	0.0	0.0			
<b>3.2</b>	Please specify according to the workplan matrix		0	0.0	0.0			
	<i>please enter additional lines and list each item/group of items</i>		0	0.0	0.0			
<b>3.3</b>	Please specify according to the workplan matrix		0	0.0	0.0			
	<i>please enter additional lines and list each item/group of items</i>		0	0.0	0.0			
	<b>Sub total</b>				<b>0.0</b>			
<b>4.</b>	<b><i>Visibility, publications, translation, etc.</i></b>							
	Please specify		0	0.0	0.0			
	<b>Sub total</b>				<b>0.0</b>			
	<b>TOTAL (No. 1.-4.)</b>							

1. Gross salaries including social insurance and other taxes.
2. The budget should be established in Albanian Lek.
3. Overhead costs should be charged only when the project is fully implemented.

**Financing:**

**Detailed Budget:**

**Project title:**

**Project duration:**

**Municipality:**

	<b>in ALL</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Total costs</b>	0.00	
Contribution requested from UNDP	0.00	
Own contribution (if)	0.00	
Contribution from other partners - <i>please specify</i>	0.00	



## ANNEX D: Scoring Matrix

SCORING CRITERIA	Points available	Points awarded
<b>A. Quality criteria of the project proposals:</b>		
<p><b>a.1. Relevance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Supports the returnees issues as described in Section 2.3 Type of services and activities funded</i></li> <li>• <i>The project proposal focuses in social care and integrated employment and is in line with the proposed approach under Section 2.3.</i></li> <li>• <i>Ensures participation of returnees in planing and implementation of the activities.</i></li> <li>• <i>Proposed project is consulted with Municipality and is in accordance with the Municipal Local Action Plan for returnees.</i></li> <li>• <i>The proposed project will be implemented in close coordination and cooperation with local level institutions, particularly with Local Employment Offices and the Municipality.</i></li> <li>• <i>The proposed project builds on the previous experience of the applicant' NGO with returnees and/or Roma and Egyptian communities.</i></li> <li>• <i>The proposed project ensures inclusiveness and is gender sensitive in selection of project beneficiaries and in conduction of its activities.</i></li> </ul>	<b>40</b>	
<p><b>a.2. Innovation and replicability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The proposed project introduces methods or ideas of work that are new to the benefit of returnees with a special focus to Roma and Egyptian returnees</i></li> <li>• <i>The good practices proposed can be replicated in the of returnees with a special focus to Roma and Egyptian returnees</i></li> <li>• <i>The benefiting municipality expresses written support to the proposed innovative services or ideas</i></li> </ul>	<b>10</b>	
<p><b>a.3. Effectiveness</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The activities included in the project proposal are largely appropriate, practical, and consistent with objectives and expected results,</i></li> <li>• <i>The identified outcomes are measurable through objectively verifiable indicators.</i></li> </ul>	<b>10</b>	
<b>a.4. Sustainability</b>	<b>10</b>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The project proposal puts forth convincing rationale that the proposed practices will continue after funding from this scheme has been withdrawn</i></li> <li>• <i>The project proposal puts forth convincing rationale that the proposed practices will become part of target institution(s) daily work</i></li> <li>• <i>The project proposal puts forth convincing rationale that the proposed practices will be reflected in the institutional policies and procedures at beneficiary level</i></li> </ul>		
<p><b>B. Capacities of the applicant to manage and deliver the proposal pursuant to the following criteria:</b></p>		
<p><b>b.1. Demonstrated experience in managing and coordinating employment and social care interventions for Roma and Egyptian returnees</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The applicant brings convincing evidence (final evaluation reports of similar projects, etc.) of having delivered supporting programs for Roma and Egyptian minorities and/or for returnees, with little or no support from external partners</i></li> <li>• <i>The applicant brings convincing evidence (including data and relevant information, e.g. organigrams, CVs, etc.) of being led by or involving human resources expertise of Roma and Egyptian minority individuals.</i></li> <li>• <i>The applicant brings convincing evidence (including data and relevant information, e.g. organigrams, approved and funded budgets, etc.) of having the technical, human and financial capacities in place to manage the proposed action</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>10</b></p>	
<p><b>b.2. Commitment for co-financing the proposed project</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Share (in %) of the total budget value from the applicant's own resources or in-kind contribution</i></li> <li>• <i>Clearly stated and trackable commitments of the applicant in the project proposal and budget</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>10</b></p>	
<p><b>b.3. Degree of direct management and implementation responsibility</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The extent to which the applicant is directly involved in the management of the proposed activities and services to deliver, regardless the project implementation modality – e.g. in partnership with the Municipality or in partnership with a third party</i></li> <li>• <i>The extent to which the applicant is directly involved in the implementation of the activities and in facilitating the access to the social care services proposed by the project</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>10</b></p>	

<b>MAXIMUM NUMBER OF POINTS:</b>	<b>100</b>	
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