

MINUTES OF INFO SESSION MEETING

Project Name: HOUSING AND EMPOWERMENT FOR ROMA (HERO) PILOT PROJECT

Project Reference: 2021-09/CEB/TAM/P/LD

1. Time and place of info session meeting

The info session meeting was held on 21/09/2021, starting at 15h00 (Paris time), via ZOOM video conference.

2. Attendees:

Representatives of the Council of Europe Development Bank: Julianna HYJEK, Constantino LONGARES BARRIO, Majda SKRIJELJ and Svetlana CVOROVIC.

Representatives of the applicant that applied for the info session meeting in line with the Guidelines for grant application, point 2.2.4.

3. Introduction

Mr. LONGARES BARRIO, opened the meeting and welcomed all attendees on behalf of the CEB. He explained that the purpose of this meeting is to help applicants fully understand the requirements in this Call for Proposals so that they can prepare acceptable applications.

4. General

Ms. HYJEK gave a brief description of the project. She explained that in the previous period the CEB had worked in close cooperation with European Commission and European Parliament on formulating the HERO project. This Call for Proposals was launched with the purpose of selecting 3 partners: one for each country (Slovakia, Romania & Bulgaria) to implement the program on the local /country level. Three concurrent projects will be running under HERO and they will benefit from the transfer of experience from each other. Another purpose of this pilot project is that it will generate learning on social inclusion of vulnerable populations in general, but especially of marginalized Roma, which can be later implemented in the policies at the European and national levels.

5. Q&A

No.	Question	Answers
1	<p>Question on Annex C - HERO PILOT PROJECT INDICATIVE LOGICAL FRAMEWORK; Indicator: % Roma population at risk of poverty:</p> <p>Do you expect that the partners will do the surveys and manage it or CEB will provide the necessary input for it?</p>	<p>The Indicative logframe provided in Annex C comes from the Grant Agreement signed between the CEB and the European Commission. It is an important document that explains the logic of the HERO Pilot Project and its expected impact.</p> <p>The values are given indicatively and can be subject to modification once the partners for the HERO project are selected to better reflect the local situation.</p> <p>As regards to measuring the outcomes, it will indeed be up to the local implementing organization to measure it and provide in the monitoring reports this information to CEB.</p> <p>Baselines provided in Annex C are high-level data, but the logframe that would be developed for each country by the local implementing partner will have to adjust to the local situation.</p>
2	<p>Annex C - HERO PILOT PROJECT INDICATIVE LOGICAL FRAMEWORK; Outcome No. 2 Improved paid employment and self-employment rate of marginalized Roma:</p> <p>Improved stable income stream – how it is interpreted and how it is measured? Does it mean that it has to be measured before and after the project? Will some proof of the improvement of this indicator will be requested? Should it be confirmed by the social insurance company which will declare that the beneficiaries are fully employed?</p>	<p>The column in the logframe “Sources and mean of verification” for this category is empty precisely because it will depend on the available means to do so. There are no fixed specifications on the sources and means of verification.</p> <p>One way of verification is providing questionnaires to the beneficiaries at the beginning and the end of the project. Methods mentioned in the question might also be used as a mean of verification.</p>
3	<p>Annex D - List of suggested municipalities:</p> <p>According to the preliminary research, there are approximately 60 municipalities showed interest to be part of the project but in the later phases of the project it might turn out that only a few of them could be involved in the project. The municipalities with the best prospects for the project implementation will be</p>	<p>The list of municipalities in Annex D is meant for guidance and suggestion only. The final choice of the municipalities to implement the action belongs to the applicants after their consultations with local stakeholders. Applicants may propose municipalities other than those listed in Annex D with a due explanation.</p> <p>As for the question of the possibility of adding or deleting municipalities during</p>

	<p>included in the proposal, but during the duration of the project, changes are possible.</p> <p>Is it possible to change municipalities proposed in the application during the implementation of the project and inform CEB of this amendment in advance?</p>	<p>implementation and how to account for this in the proposal – CEB will provide an answer on this in writing.</p>
4	<p>The implementation of the project might not be successful in some areas or communities? Please confirm if the CEB will be interested in results from those untuneful cases?</p>	<p>Yes, this is a European Commission funded Pilot Project. As a Pilot, CEB will be interested to find out also what did not go well.</p> <p>There will be social experts working alongside the selected projects that will be looking for all lessons learned, both positive and negative. Those experts will be hired by CEB and funded separately from this Call for Proposals. It is expected that local organizations would collaborate with them during the implementation of the project.</p>
5	<p>The interested party is NGO (foundation) that is doing a similar activity as requested in the Call for proposals – providing loans for vulnerable categories, but they don't have the official status of the microfinance organisation and therefore are not eligible as a lead partner. They are trying to find microfinance partner in their country but without success. What could be an alternative if there are no applicants in one of the countries?</p>	<p>This Call for distribution of grants is done as a competitive procedure. In case no applications are submitted for one of the countries or the applications are not of satisfactory quality, a decision will be made not to award the grant for the HERO project in that country.</p> <p>Interested parties that decide not to apply because they do not meet the conditions of the Call for Proposals are invited to submit to CEB in writing the reasons for withdrawal from participation in the procedure.</p> <p>This information will be forwarded to the European Commission financing this program that might decide to change the approach in case of an unsuccessful competitive Call for Proposals.</p>
6	<p>Is it possible to have 2 NGO as co-applicants in the process or is it limited to one organisation?</p>	<p>As per Guidelines for grant application, point 2.1.1, the application must be submitted by the lead applicant and AT LEAST one co-applicant meaning that there can be more than one co-applicant.</p>
7	<p>The problem when downloading Annex B Budget of the HERO dossier is encountered.</p>	<p>Please try emptying the browser cache and/or adding the CEB webpage to trusted sites in your browser. If you still fail to access this file, please request this file by sending send email to procurement@coebank.org</p>

8	How long does it take to evaluate the applications, when could we expect to sign the contract?	After the expiry of the application deadline, the Evaluation Committee will evaluate the applications received against the evaluation grid provided in the Guidelines and make a recommendation to award the grant that has to be internally approved. It will take approximately 2 months after the expiry of the application submission deadline for contract signature.
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The attendees were reminded of the calendar for this Call for Proposals:

- Deadline for requesting any clarifications expires on 24 September 2021
- Last date on which clarifications are issued by the CEB is 28 September 2021
- Deadline for submission of applications is 14 October 2021

The meeting was closed at 4.00 P.M.