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1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1. Partner country

Republic of North Macedonia and Kosovo

1.2. Contracting authority

Citizens Association Initiative for European Perspective (IEP)

1.3. Country background

According to the EU Report for 2023, North Macedonia needs to intensify the work to achieve full alignment with the cornerstone Directives on Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment. This negatively impacts all other environmental sectors, infrastructure investments and overall public participation and perception. Quality and healthy living environment are one of the basic preconditions for a quality life of all citizens in the Republic of Macedonia. Unfortunately air pollution is increasing from year to year, the situation is deteriorating and it becomes alarming, and there is lack of air quality monitoring and no legislative developments on air quality. On the other hand, water is one of the key elements for achieving sustainable environmental development. But according to analysis and reports, there is absence of water management planning documents and quality strategy. Waste management is one of the most serious environmental issues in Macedonia and are present in almost all areas of the existing waste management system and in all relations in the society. In the EU Report for 2023, it is highlighted that Kosovo needs to take ownership and all the necessary measures in the environmental sector and to that end, increase the capacities of the environmental authorities at the central and local level, implement structural reforms and ensure interinstitutional cooperation. Air quality, notably pollution, continues to be a major health threat. Kosovo needs to increase capacities and set realistic recycling targets to implement its integrated waste management and circular economy.

1.4. Current situation in the sector

The Strategy for Local Economic Development of Municipality of Gostivar 2021-2025 outlines initiatives like sewerage construction, waste clean-up, and green space expansion to combat environmental degradation. New legal provisions emphasize green urban planning by the local government, aiming to bolster the green economy and environmental protection. Solid waste treatment, managed by PUC "Komunalec," covers urban and suburban areas, with plans for regional waste treatment to enhance collection and rehabilitation efforts, thus improving tourism. Rehabilitated green areas around the river Vardar are not connected in a structured way, and GIZ studies provide effective solutions for three combined pedestrian and cycling bridges, adapted as for persons with disabilities, focus on pedestrian tracks, within the area of city park, or nearby areas. The Program for development of Polog planning region 2021-2026 has observed that one of the sources for pollution of river Vardar is solid waste, therefore, special attention should be paid to the protection of the river from such pollution. In Kosovo, riverbed organization initiatives aim to address illegal landfills threatening local ecosystems, particularly the habitat of the endangered Illyrian Mrena fish. Unfiltered streams flowing into the Morava River compound pollution issues, highlighting the need for riverbed adaptation to prevent waste dumping and transform the area into a recreational space for residents, thereby safeguarding the environment. Additionally, for this project, MOU will be signed with: the municipalities in Kosovo (Gjilan, Vitia, Kllokot, Partesh), on conducting common activities and sharing of responsibilities for the implementation of the project; the ministry of education, for cooperating on school participation; cleaning service providers, including clean-up, collection and transportation/storing of waste; recyclers, including transportation/storing recycling of waste.

1.5. Related programmes and other donor activities

The Project is related with the Strategy for Local Economic Development of Municipality of Gostivar 2021-2025 and the Program for development of Polog planning region 2021-2026. At the policy level, the action will contribute to the improvement of the legislative and policy framework related to waste management and environmental protection, particularly in the cross-border context. This will be achieved through the establishment of cross-border partnerships and joint initiatives between relevant stakeholders, leading to the identification of best practices and the sharing of knowledge and experiences. The action will also contribute to the implementation of the EU Strategy for the Danube Region and the one for the Adriatic and Ionian Region, promoting sustainable development and cross-border cooperation. The action also synergizes with other development initiatives, such as the European Green Deal, the EU's enlargement strategy, and the regional cooperation initiatives in the Western Balkans. The project is in line with key EU policies in the spheres of human rights. The

European Union is founded on a shared determination to promote peace and stability and to build a world founded on respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law. These principles underpin all aspects of the internal and external policies of the European Union (activity - Conference for presentation and discussion of the Environmental protection law). The municipalities and IEP have extensive project management experience with EU and other donors' funding. Furthermore, the action is in line with a several approved projects in both municipalities: in the vicinity of the place of intervention in Vitia, there are several approved projects of enhancing the infrastructure, of several local roads toward the villages. Approved infrastructure projects for local roads leading to villages in Vitia enhance the region's accessibility and attractiveness to tourists, which can potentially lead to future investments. In Gostivar, a park has been established as a trademark of the municipality, and ongoing interventions aim to make it even more appealing to visitors. By completing these interventions, the park's impact will double. The ongoing projects will be complemented, such as: The "Congress of Monastery" where a primary objective of the project is to improve accessibility in the area by upgrading the road surfaces, extending the surface water channel, and expanding the bridge. This project is implementing by Municipality of Vitia and supported by Donation from Helvetas, Performance Grant 2022; Another ongoing project is "Infrastructure improvement project in the center of the city of Vitis", implemented by Municipality of Vitia, and financed by Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation. The project aims to had a positive impact on the quality of life in the city by improving infrastructure, enhancing public spaces, and improving accessibility.

2. OBJECTIVES & EXPECTED OUTPUTS

2.1. Overall objective

The overall objective (Impact) to which this action contributes is: to contribute on reducing the environmental pollution and increasing the quality of life of the citizens in the border region of Kosovo and North Macedonia.

The specific objective no.1 of the action is to reduce river pollution through common actions for preventing illegal waste dump and; The specific objective no.2 of the action is to create preconditions for green transport for citizens.

2.2. Specific objective(s)

The contract's specific objective is to engage two coaches to provide fifteen days coaching sessions (in total) for stakeholders in the Gostivar region.

2.3. Expected outputs to be achieved by the contractor

The expected output from this Contract is: Two coaches provided fifteen days (in total) of coaching sessions for stakeholders in the Gostivar region.

3. ASSUMPTIONS & RISKS

3.1. Assumptions underlying the project

The project is based on the assumptions that:

SO1: There is a willingness and cooperation from the local communities to participate in preventing illegal waste dumping in the targeted areas.

SO2: There is a demand for green transport among citizens and that they will utilize the preconditions created by the project.

Result 1: The ground made available by clearing illegal dumpsites will be used for recreational purposes by the local community.

Result 2: The constructed infrastructure will be used effectively and maintained properly by the relevant stakeholders.

Result 3: The urban equipment provided will be used and maintained by the local community.

Result 4: The awareness raising activities will be effective in promoting sustainable urban development among the targeted population.

Result 5: The capacity building activities will effectively enhance the local institutions' and youth's abilities to address environment protection issues.

3.2. Risks

Identified risks within the project application, are:

- Physical risks: Natural disasters such as floods, landslides, and earthquakes can damage the infrastructure created and negatively impact the progress of the project. Mitigation: The

project team should conduct a thorough risk assessment and ensure that the infrastructure created is robust enough to withstand such disasters. The team should also work with local authorities to identify safe locations and construction methods that are resistant to natural disasters.

- **Environmental risks:** The project may face resistance from local communities who rely on waste collection and sorting for their livelihoods. Mitigation: The project team should work closely with local authorities and communities to understand their needs and involve them in the project planning process. The team should also conduct a detailed study of the socio-economic conditions of the target areas to ensure that the project does not negatively impact the local communities.
- **Political risks:** Political instability and conflict in the region may negatively affect the implementation of the project. Mitigation: The project team should keep a close eye on the political situation in the region and work with local authorities to ensure that the project is not affected by any political instability. The team should also work with stakeholders to identify alternative plans in case of unforeseen political events.
- **Economic risks:** Fluctuations in exchange rates or changes in economic conditions could impact the project's budget and funding. Mitigation: The project team should conduct a thorough financial risk assessment and identify potential sources of funding and revenue streams. The team should also explore the possibility of obtaining insurance to cover potential financial losses.
- **Social risks:** Social tensions and conflicts between different ethnic or cultural groups in the region may negatively impact the implementation of the project. Mitigation: The project team should work closely with local authorities and stakeholders to identify potential social risks and develop strategies to mitigate them. The team should also prioritize social inclusion and work to engage and involve all members of the local community in the project.

4. SCOPE OF THE WORK

4.1. General

Description of the assignment

Within the Bridging Regions project, a Holistic Campaign for Environmental Protection in the Vitia and Gostivar Region is being implemented (Activity 4.3). In order to achieve its objectives, as part of A.4.3 *fifteen days of coaching sessions for stakeholders will be provided for Gostivar region, in order to promote the urban living that will include **Community engagement coaching, Smart city coaching: Health and well-being coaching.*** Overall, coaching activities related to urban living should aim to promote sustainable, inclusive, and healthy communities in urban environments. Therefore, the selected two coaches will have the assignment to **provide** fifteen days (in total) of **coaching sessions for stakeholders in the Gostivar region** on the following topics: **Community engagement coaching, Smart city coaching and Health and well-being coaching.** However, each of the coaches will have to develop and deliver 7,5 days coaching sessions (in total 15 days for both coaches) on the above mention topics. The coaching session could be conducted online and/or on physical location. The Contractors should prepare and provide materials such as presentation/educational materials/agenda/attendance lists/photo documentation/report etc. The materials will be translated into ALB/MKD/SRB/ENG. The needed documentation/information for the selected coaches will be provided/ensured by the Initiative for European Perspective and the Municipality of Gostivar.

The assignment to be undertaken is defined as follows: BL.5.7.8 Coaches for coaching sessions for stakeholders (two coaches per region x 15 days coaching).

The Contractor will have the responsibility in 1 month to carry out specific tasks. The maximum budget for this service contract is EUR 1,875 (global price) per coach for 7,5 days coaching sessions, in total for 2 coaches, 15 days coaching sessions, EUR 3, 750 (Gross amount) as outlined in Budget Line 5.7.8.

The payments will be made in MKD at the exchange rate determined for the given accounting period, according to the guidelines from the donor and the partnership agreement between the Contracting Authority and the Contractor. Payment will be distributed into one instalment: Instalment 1 – 100% upon completion of the assignment and delivery of the reports.

All experts must be independent and free from conflicts of interest in the responsibilities they take on.

Geographical area to be covered

Municipality of Gostivar, North Macedonia.

Target groups

Target groups within the project “Bridging regions” are local inhabitants of Municipality of Vitia (47,370 inhabitants) and Municipality of Gostivar (81,042 inhabitants); active citizens of both municipalities: students from Vitia and Gostivar; teachers from Vitia and Gostivar; environmental maintenance workers from public utilities of Vitia and Gostivar; women entrepreneurs; people with disabilities; youth; local CSOs in both regions: long term unemployed; ethnic minorities (Roma community, informal waste collectors of plastic, metal and glass). Final beneficiaries are: local inhabitants of Gostivar Municipality and Vitia Municipality (in total 128,412), indirect beneficiaries are the population that lives along the course of the Vardar and Morava River, potential tourists within the Vitia and Gostivar region.

4.2. Specific work

Within this ToR, the specific work of the Contractors is: Each of the Contractors must provide 7,5 days of coaching sessions for stakeholders in the Gostivar region, on the topics as follows:

1st coaching session: **Community engagement coaching;**

2nd coaching session: **Smart city coaching;**

3rd coaching session: **Health and well-being coaching.**

Note: Within these sessions, it could be included other similar/relevant topics (depending on the needs of the participants and/or based on the report of the trainer from both 3-day training) with prior notice (if applicable).

The coaching session could be conducted online and/or in a physical location. The Contractors should prepare and provide materials such as presentation/educational materials/agenda/attendance lists/photo documentation/report, etc. The materials will be translated into ALB/MKD/SRB/ENG. The coaches will provide the **coaching sessions for stakeholders in the Gostivar region** according to the instructions from the Contracting Authority and in line with the Communication and visibility strategy and action plan of the project. The contractor must also comply with the latest Communication and Visibility Requirements for EU-funded external action, laid down and published by the European Commission (if applicable).

4.3. Project management

4.4. Responsible body

The Citizens Association Initiative for European Perspective (IEP), acting as co-applicant 2 is responsible for developing the Terms of Reference (ToR) and documentation for the required service and as a Contracting Authority as well as for publishing public call and selecting bidders, in accordance to this ToR and documentation. Additionally, IEP will be responsible for selecting the best candidate. The Municipality of Vitia as lead applicant and Municipality of Gostivar as co-applicant 1 will be responsible for providing proposals for the visibility and transparency of the Action (if applicable). However, the published and visibility materials should be approved by the EU before any print (if applicable). The Municipality of Gostivar as co-applicant 2 (in CC project officer from IEP) and IEP will be responsible for providing documents/information to the Contractors needed to provide **coaching sessions for stakeholders in the Gostivar region.**

Management structure

The project “Bridging regions” is implemented by the Municipality of Vitia, Kosovo, as lead applicant in partnership with the Municipality of Gostivar, as co-applicant 1, and the Initiative for European Perspective, as co-applicant 2. Project management is organized with a Steering Committee (one representative from each partner) and a project team (persons receiving salaries from the project). The main responsibility for this ToR will have IEPs project officer, supported by the lead applicant and co-applicant 1. The Steering Committee has the responsibility to monitor the overall project progress (including fulfillment of objectives, schedule, milestones, etc.), to discuss and agree on actions in case of deviations from the project plan, to approve project deliverables, to consider legal issues and to resolve management differences.

Facilities to be provided by the contracting authority and/or other parties

The Contracting Authority and with the support of the Municipality of Gostivar as co-applicant 1 will provide a venue for the execution of the coaching sessions for stakeholders in the Gostivar region (if applicable).

5. LOGISTICS AND TIMING

5.1. Location

The communication between the Contracting Authority and the Contractor will take place offline at physical locations or online through digital platforms, specifically via the following emails: contact@iep.mk; or k.sibinovska@iep.mk; or telephone: 071 348 537.

5.2. Start date & period of implementation of tasks

The intended start date is 31st October and the period of implementation of the contract will be 1 month from this date. Please see Articles 19.1 and 19.2 of the special conditions for the actual start date and period of implementation.

6. REQUIREMENTS

6.1. Staff

Note that civil servants and other staff of the public administration of the partner country, or of international/regional organisations based in the country, shall only be approved to work as experts if well justified. The justification should be submitted with the tender and shall include information on the added value the expert will bring as well as proof that the expert is seconded or on personal leave.

Key experts: Two coaches for Coaching Sessions for Stakeholders (Gostivar Region) Essential minimum qualifications and skills required

Required Skills:

- Strong facilitation and coaching skills, with the ability to engage diverse groups of stakeholders.
- Excellent communication and presentation skills.
- Ability to design and deliver interactive and participatory coaching sessions.
- Strong understanding of sustainable urban development principles.
- Ability to adapt coaching content to different target audiences (public sector, NGOs, community representatives, etc.).
- Good organizational, analytical, and report-writing skills.
- Fluency in English (both written and spoken) is an advantage.

Educational qualifications:

- University degree (minimum Bachelor's level) in one or more of the following fields: Urban Development, Environmental Studies, Sustainable Development, Public Administration, Social Sciences, Public Health, Education, or other relevant disciplines.
- A postgraduate degree or professional certification in coaching/communication/community development/waste management/environment or other relevant disciplines will be considered as an advantage.

Experience

- Minimum 2 years of relevant professional experience in the areas of coaching, training, or facilitation with multi-stakeholder groups, preferable to: community engagement and participatory approaches/ smart city and sustainable urban initiatives/health, well-being, and social inclusion/environment protection/waste management or other similar.

Proven experience in capacity building and knowledge transfer activities.

- Experience in developing coaching materials (modules/presentations/agendas/reports, etc.) and conducting sessions in both online and in-person formats is an asset.
- Experience working with municipalities, civil society organizations, or development projects will be considered an asset.

Other experts, support staff & backstopping

CVs for experts other than the key experts should not be submitted in the tender but the tenderer will have to demonstrate in their offer that they have access to experts with the required profiles. The contractor shall select and hire other experts as required according to the needs. The selection procedures used by the contractor to select these other experts shall be transparent, and shall be based on pre-defined criteria, including professional qualifications, language skills and work experience. The costs for backstopping and support staff, as needed, are considered to be included in the tenderer's financial offer.

6.2. Office accommodation

N/A.

6.3. Facilities to be provided by the contractor

The contractor shall ensure that experts are adequately supported and equipped. In particular, it must ensure that there are sufficient administrative, secretarial, and interpreting provisions to enable experts to concentrate on their primary responsibilities. It must also transfer funds as necessary to support its work under the contract and to ensure that its employees are paid regularly and in a timely fashion.

6.4. Equipment

No equipment is to be purchased on behalf of the contracting authority/partner country as part of this service contract or transferred to the contracting authority/partner country at the end of this contract. Any equipment related to this contract which is to be acquired by the partner country must be purchased by means of a separate supply tender procedure.

7. REPORTS

7.1. Reporting requirements

The contractor will submit the following reports in English in one original and one copy:

- Each of the contractors will submit 1 final report after execution of the coaching sessions.

7.2. Submission and approval of reports

The report referred to above must be submitted to the Project Officer identified in the contract. The Project Officer is responsible for approving the reports.

8. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

8.1. Definition of indicators

To ensure the successful completion and impact of the coaching sessions, the preparation timeline and completion rate of the task will be monitored against the agreed-upon schedule. Additionally, it will be ensured that the tasks is produced according to specifications and complies with the latest Communication and Visibility Requirements for EU-funded external actions (if applicable).

8.2. Special requirements

The applicants should submit the following:

- CV
- Financial offer (in attachment)
- Declaration on honour on exclusion criteria and selection criteria (in attachment)

The deadline for submitting proposals is October 29, 16:30 (local time) via the following email: contact@iep.mk (in CC k.sibinovska@iep.mk), with the subject line: Application for Coaches for Coaching Sessions for Stakeholders.