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INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN KOSOVO (IWRM-K)

Phase 1

May 2020 – April 2024

Grant Scheme for Civil Society Organisations Call for Applications Ref: CA/GS-CSO-03-2022

August 2022



Integrated Water Resources
Management in Kosovo

The IWRM-K is a Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and Government of Kosovo Program, implemented by Skat Consulting Ltd. (Switzerland) in consortium with the Environment Agency Austria (EAA)

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ENVIRONMENT
AGENCY AUSTRIA **umweltbundesamt**^U

Invitation Form

Integrated Water Resources Management in Kosovo (IWRM-K) Program

DATE: August 30, 2022

REFERENCE: Grant Scheme for Civil Society Organisations

Dear Sir / Madam:

The “Integrated Water Resources Management in Kosovo” Program¹ (hereinafter the Program or IWRM-K) kindly invites Kosovo-based CSOs/NGOs to submit applications under this **Grant Scheme for Civil Society Organisations**. The applications must be submitted electronically to:

tender@skat.ch on or before **16.30 CEST on 30 September 2022**

Please use the following e-mail subject: Call for Applications – Grant Scheme for Civil Society Organisations

The Proposal must be submitted in one PDF document.

The maximum size of uploaded files (per document) must not exceed 20 MB.

CSOs/NGOs failing to meet this requirement will be disqualified.

Your Application must be valid for a minimum period of 120 days.

¹The IWRM-K is a Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and Government of Kosovo Program, implemented by Skat Consulting Ltd. (Switzerland) in consortium with the Environment Agency Austria (EAA).

1. Introduction

The “Integrated Water Resources Management in Kosovo” (IWRM-K) Program funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Government of Kosovo, aims to build long-lasting water resources management capacities at national and river basin levels in line with Kosovo’s socio-economic and political priorities, as well as the needs of future sustainable development. An important part of the Program is the Strengthening of the role of **Civil Society Organizations/Non-Governmental Organizations (hereinafter the CSOs/NGOs²) in water resources management.**

By building upon the CSOs’ mobilization and capacity development achievements so far, the Program intends to offer a limited number of grants supporting initiatives aligned with the IWRM principles and approaches. The entire process is envisaged as a learning effort that aims to leave behind considerable capacities among national CSOs. The grant scheme is going to be implemented in parallel to and in correlation with a multitude of Program-backed planning, capacity building, and piloting initiatives. Hence, the CSO projects will be aligned with the IWRM-K objectives and implemented in a way to complement the bigger Kosovo’s IWRM mosaic.

In such context, the Grant Scheme pursues the following main objectives: *i*) help in turning (IWRM) theory into practice by producing tangible results for stakeholders, *ii*) facilitate further capacity development among the most promising CSOs that can influence future IWRM in Kosovo³, *iii*) contribute to finding and prototyping solutions to the identified challenges in different Program-backed documents (e.g., water balance study, river basin management plans), *iv*) helping raise widespread knowledge and awareness of water management challenges and responses, and *v*) facilitate replication and scaling-up of Program’s achievements, and lessons learned.

Conceptualized in such a fashion, the Grant Scheme for CSOs aims to achieve high relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency as key preconditions for the desired impacts and sustainability of results.

2. Key features of the Grant Scheme

2.1. Thematic and geographic priorities & funding opportunities

The Grant Scheme aims to facilitate multiple specific and tangible results within a period of 6 to 14 months. It provides direct financial support to Kosovo-based CSOs/NGOs that will prepare and present the most compelling and innovative ideas aligned with the IWRM principles and best practices.

Grants aim to specific CSO actions addressing earlier identified water-related challenges. While the grants are not provided to support research *per se*, the proposed projects need to be based on solid existing technical knowledge, prior analytical work and/or applicative research. Relevant projects may involve action in one or more of the IWRM-related priority areas of intervention listed in the following table:

Table 1. Possible areas of intervention of the Grant Scheme

Category	Area of intervention
Mainstreaming of IWRM priorities at the local level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mainstreaming of IWRM in local development (municipal) plans • Alignment of plans, programs, strategies with the IWRM principles and/or River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) • Alignment of investment projects with the principles of IWRM and/or RBMPs • Support to water-sensitive policy- and decision-making processes • Support to improving regulations at the local level • Creating instruments for overseeing, monitoring and evaluation of legislation, policies, strategies, plans and projects

² The Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) terms are being used interchangeably in spite of the differences in their formal definitions. Both terms mean a locally registered NGO or CSO working in the context of Kosovo. Locally registered foundations also fall under this broader definition and are considered eligible for this grants scheme.

³ For example, through their role in the stakeholder participation mechanisms, and other advocacy and awareness-raising activities

Category	Area of intervention
Reduction of pressures to water resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction of diffuse sources of pollution (e.g., from agriculture, manure management, organic/other types of waste, stormwater, erosion processes) Improving the efficiency of water use (e.g., irrigation, other water uses) Restoration of hydro-morphological conditions and ecological flows in streams and rivers Protection of water sources
Community mobilization and awareness raising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobilization of communities and other stakeholders on specific water-related challenges and/or developments Educational programs targeting different stakeholders (e.g., schools, youth, women, vulnerable groups, public and private sector) Promotion of citizen science/citizen monitoring Networking activities (nationally and internationally)
Social inclusion & gender mainstreaming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving access to safe water to vulnerable groups Gender mainstreaming in water resource management plans/programs/projects
Innovation in water resources management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of innovative solutions to addressing water-related challenges (e.g., blockchain technology, Internet of Things, Foresight, Gamification) Support to know-how & technology transfer
Support to sustainable development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of sustainable livelihoods, and community-based income generation activities that value water resource protection, depend on (water related) ecosystem services (e.g., alternative tourism development, forest regeneration, ecosystem restoration to improve societal benefits)

This Grant Scheme is open to any Kosovo-based registered CSO/NGO⁴ as long as the proposed projects are at the national level and/or are located in any of the three river basins supported by the IWRM-K: Ibër, Morava e Binçës and Lepenc⁵. Such a geographic scope definition of the Grants Scheme is related to *i)* prior Program-backed support to the creation of stakeholder participation mechanisms for these three basins and at the national level, and *ii)* the need to link the grants with the Programmes of Measures under the respective RBMPs.

Exceptionally, the Grant Scheme may involve activities in the Drini e Bardhe River Basin if they are part of a national level initiative, and/or involve exchanges with one of the other three (primary) river basins. Municipalities to be encompassed by the possible locally focused CSO projects under the Grant Scheme by basins are (Figure 1):

- Ibër River: Graçanicë, Shtime, Prishtinë, Podujevë, Drenas, Lipjan, Fushë Kosovë, Obiliq, North Mitrovica, South Mitrovica, Leposavic, Vushtri, Zubin Potok and Zveçan.
- Morava e Binçës River: Novoberdë, Gjilan, Kamenica, Viti, Ranillugë, Partesh and Kllokot.
- Lepenc River: Ferizaj, Shtërpce, Kaçanik and Hani i Elezit.

The total allocated budget for the Grant Scheme amounts to **EUR 350,000**. Aware of the differences in the capacity of different CSOs, the Grant Scheme foresees **14 small (up to EUR 10,000)** and **7 medium grants (up to EUR 30,000)**. The table below presents the proposed distribution of grants per river basin.

Table 2. Proposed distribution of grants per river basin

River Basin	Size of grant	Estimated number of grants	Maximum grant value (EUR)	Cumulative value per grant type (EUR)

⁴ The Grant Scheme is open to all NGOs and initiatives from all communities directly or indirectly active in three river basins where this Program is focused. Besides Environmental/Water CSOs, women, youth and minorities' organizations are encouraged to apply.

⁵ Even when implemented in any of the three priority basins, the supported projects may involve national level interventions

Ibër	1. Small grant	8	10,000	80,000
	2. Medium grant	4	30,000	120,000
Lepenc	1. Small grant	3	10,000	30,000
	2. Medium grant	1	30,000	30,000
Morava e Binçës	1. Small grant	3	10,000	30,000
	2. Medium grant	2	30,000	60,000
Total (EUR)			350,000	

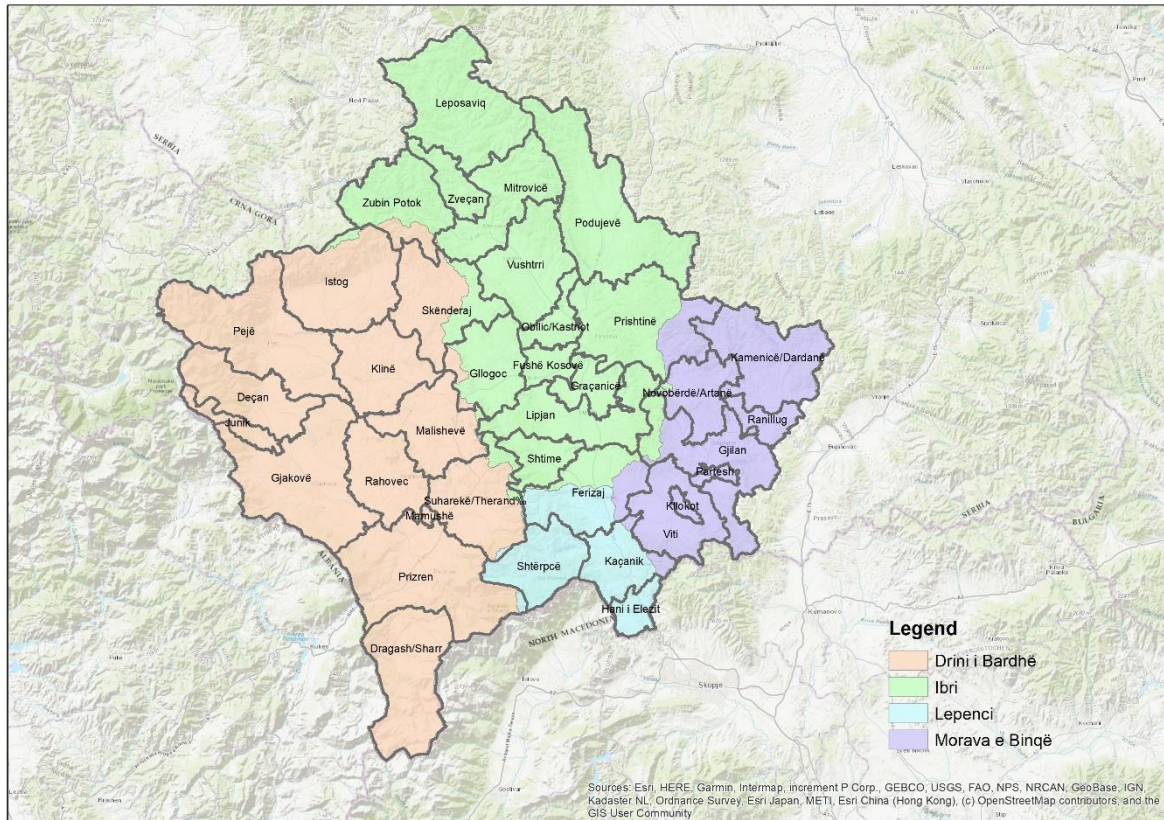


Figure 1. Primary geographical scope of the Grant Scheme – municipalities within Ibër, Morava e Binçës and Lepenc river basins

2.2. Overview of eligible and ineligible activities and corresponding costs

The Grant Scheme would essentially pay for any reasonable cost that is necessary to achieve the objectives and results proposed in the application form and finalized in the grant agreement. Exception to this are the following **ineligible activities**:

- Activities supporting political parties
- Activities supporting any potentially illegal activity
- Major capital investments⁶
- Activities in areas outside of Kosovo⁷
- Generic (business-as-usual) awareness-raising campaigns
- Interventions that have many potentially lengthy permitting requirements with unpredictable duration and/or outcome
- (Re)granting of third parties

⁶ Part of grants can be used to complement existing capital investments and/or small-scale investments.

⁷ This does not apply to study visits and international networking activities which may be needed and accepted if reasonably contributing to the objectives/results. Cross-border cooperation projects are also not foreseen under this Grant Scheme.

- Scholarships
- Grants consisting entirely or mainly of preparatory work and/or studies

Furthermore, the CSOs Grant Scheme will not provide funding to any of the following **ineligible costs**:

- Debt or loss payments
- Loan and interest payments
- Currency exchange fluctuations
- Depreciation costs of equipment
- Purchase of land or real estate
- Purchase of vehicles
- Payment of expenses covered by other donors (avoiding double funding)

To be considered **eligible, costs** must meet the following criteria:

- Are necessary for the successful implementation and achievement of the objectives/results of the intervention
- Expenses are reasonable, justified, and comply with the requirements of proper financial management, including fair and market-based calculations and cost-effectiveness
- Comply with the requirements of applicable tax legislation in Kosovo
- Will occur during grant implementation
- Are presented in the proposed budget
- Are identifiable and verifiable.

When it comes to **eligible cost categories**, the grant funds can be used for such costs as consultancies, equipment, software, limited civil works, events (trainings, seminars), limited/targeted study visits⁸, printing, consumables, costs for field activities, implementation costs (e.g., staff, limited office costs).

3. Application and Evaluation Processes

3.1. Basic principles

General principles and procedures that apply to the Grant Scheme for CSOs:

1. Avoiding conflict of interest⁹
2. Financial sustainability of applicants
3. Avoiding Swiss double funding
4. Not funding political activities and/or projects submitted by/associated with Politically Exposed Persons (PEP)
5. Grants are awarded competitively
6. Grants support measures and activities that address different water-related challenges in line with the broader IWRM principles
7. The implementation of grants complies with the communication and visibility requirements of the Program

3.2. Eligibility criteria

To be eligible to apply, each Applicant must meet the following criteria:

- To be an active Kosovo-based registered NGO/CSO
- To be directly responsible for the management of the awarded project
- To have project management capacity including access to expertise, professional and administrative staff

⁸ Prior approval of IWRM-K will need to be obtained for every proposed study visit outside of Kosovo.

⁹ This means that no person or organization that has been involved in the design of the Grant Scheme, IWRM-K staff, representatives of the IWRM-K institutional partners/beneficiaries, IWRM-K steering structure(s), and their family members and/or business partners will be allowed to apply for grant through any CSO.

- To have a record of accomplishment from other projects/initiatives in the areas of environment, water and/or other socio-economic, and social inclusion aspects in relation to environmental protection, natural resources management and/or water resources management.

3.3. Application procedure

3.3.1 Mandatory documents

Applicants must also submit the mandatory documents as well as an elaboration of the project idea as specified under Appendix A. All documents relevant to the public call for applications are downloadable from <https://iwrk-k.com/home>.

3.3.2 Submission of applications

Completed applications can only be submitted via email to tender@skat.ch. The e-mail must contain the complete application form and all the mandatory documents outlined in the call for application. All documents must be provided in PDF format. Applicants will be required to verify the completeness of their application by using the checklist at the beginning of Appendix A. IWRM-K will confirm the receipt of the application by replying to the Applicant with a confirmation email. Applications that do not comply with these guidelines will not be considered.

3.4. Evaluation and Notification

The evaluation of grant applications will be done in two stages:

- 1) Administrative control (verification of formal criteria and documentation requirements) and
- 2) Content evaluation (based on evaluation categories and criteria, Appendix B).

3.4.1 Administrative control

All applications are evaluated during this phase to see if the following criteria have been met/submitted:

- 1) All administrative and technical requirements as presented in the application form
- 2) Mandatory documents, including the eligibility of organizations
- 3) Budget required, and
- 4) Grant duration.

Applications that do not meet the minimum requirements will be rejected. The results of compliance with the administrative criteria will be communicated to each Applicant in writing.

3.4.2 Evaluation of applications

The Grant Scheme evaluation committee (EC) will be composed of professionals with relevant expertise and knowledge.

The EC will evaluate the applications based on the following general criteria (for detailed breakdown is provided in Appendix B):

- Capacity of Applicant (15%)
- Quality of application/project proposal (10%)
- Impact of the project (25%)
- Sustainability (20%)
- Innovation, replicability & scaling-up potential (20%)
- Partnerships (10%)

The maximum obtainable score is 100 points. To be considered for funding, applicants must receive at least 71 points.

3.4.3 Notification of grants award and right to appeals

Each Applicant who has participated in the application process will receive a response regarding the evaluation process and the outcome of their application, including the overall score. Unsuccessful applicants may request clarification. The draft clarifications will be provided by the EC.

Information on selected grant beneficiaries will be published on the Program's website and in media as part of the communication activities.

3.4.4 Indicative timeline of the Grant Scheme

The following table provides the indicative timeline for the implementation of the Grant Scheme¹⁰.

Table 3. Indicative timeline for implementation of the Grant Scheme

Stage	Indicative timeline
Call for application	30 August 2022
Deadline for application	30 September 2022
Application evaluation & decision	30 September – 31 October 2022
Notification of grantees	31 October – 07 November 2022
Signing of grant agreements	November 2022
Implementation period ¹¹	November 2022 – January 2024

4. Grants implementation

The implementation of the grants will be governed by the respective grant agreements signed with the selected grant recipients. All agreements will abide to certain set of general principles, terms, and conditions.

4.1. Monitoring, evaluation, and reporting requirements

The grantees will have to agree to detailed implementation plans that will specify monitoring and reporting requirements. The monitoring plans for each grantee will be tailor-made based on the type of the project, the implementation approaches and its duration. The monitoring process will comprise the following:

- Narrative and financial reports submitted and approved by the IWRM-K prior to release of the subsequent instalments.
- Monitoring & verifications missions by assigned IWRM-K staff and/or external experts. The findings of these missions will be summarized in monitoring & verification reports.

The following documentation must be prepared and submitted as part of the overall evaluation of grants implementation:

- Narrative and financial reports to be submitted by the grantees
- Final Monitoring Reports prepared by the assigned IWRM-K staff and/or external experts
- Financial statements to be accepted by the Program following a detailed review of the Program's Finance and Administration Manager.

Disbursements: agreed amounts will be paid in instalments linked to specific deliverables and a corresponding timetable specified in the grant agreements.

Financial control: grant accounts must be open to inspection by external auditors at any given time without prior information.

4.2. Sustainability considerations

The sustainability dimension is integrated into the Grant Scheme design. The implementation of the Grant Scheme for CSOs is based on the stepwise approach that envisages support to the maturation of the capacity of applicants, by combining technical capacity building with continued knowledge and skills development. The Grant Scheme will prioritize initiatives with considerable scaling-up and replication potential. Lessons learned and best practices will be generated and systematized to support

¹⁰ To be adjusted based if required.

¹¹ Awarded projects can flexibly start at different times within this timespan depending on their maturity level and other contextual considerations.

the maturation of the Grant Scheme for CSOs itself, but also to feed into similar activities implemented by the Program's partners and other implementers.

5. Appendix A: Grant Application Form

When submitting the application, the Applicant must ensure that the following criteria are met:

- The application form is completed in electronic format
- All questions are answered, and they remain in the given order and no question is deleted
- All documents the following mandatory documents are attached:

Documents	YES/NO
• Certificate of registration issued by the Department for NGOs	
• Certificate of Fiscal Number	
• In case of co-financing for this project, proof of co-financing (e.g., contract, MoU, letter of commitment, etc.)	
• Proof that there are no unpaid debts from TAK (Tax certification)	
• Evidence for implemented projects of the last 5 years	
• Partnership statement (if applicable)	
• Evidence of professional and administrative staff (CV, references, etc.)	

The project idea needs to be elaborated in line with the following draft form¹²:

Project proposal form

Basic instructions * All applicants must submit their proposals/applications according to this general template. Please follow the instructions and try to give the information required clear, short and to the point. *Please read the guiding text carefully before preparing the concept note.	
Name of the applicant(s)	
Contact Person, Title	
Contact details	
Proposed budget for financing by IWRM-K (EUR)	
Proposed contribution (EUR)	

Organizational Profile

[A brief introduction of the lead applying entity and the potential partners. The introduction must include information on its establishment, legal status, offices, no. of employees by gender and core business of the organization, ownership, and governance (explain the internal organization of the CSO). List of Applicant’s past relevant projects along with a description of how the Applicant’s experience relates to the key objectives of the IWRM-K, the Grants Scheme, and the proposed project. This part should also include the names and CVs of people who are planned to be involved in the implementation of the project (*Maximum 500 words*).

Outline of the project idea/proposal

a. Describe the proposed project idea.

[This part should include an outline of the proposed idea with an elaboration of how it will respond to the areas of intervention listed in Table 1 above. It should describe the basis for the project idea, its relevance/intervention logic, and expected results in addressing the identified challenges] (*Maximum 300 words*).

b. Rationale of the proposed concept. Justify the reasons behind the concept focusing on:

- What is the main objective of the intervention?

¹² The proposed form provides the general aspects that need to be covered in the project application. It may be further upgraded and supported by more detailed application forms prior to opening of the call for application.

- How will it solve the identified water-related challenge? What specific results will contribute to addressing the challenge?
 - How will it benefit the environment and society (*Maximum 300 words*)
- c. What innovation does the idea or project brings?
- Explain your understanding of how the idea help will address the identified challenges/issues (*Maximum 200 words*)
- d. Please explain why external financial support is needed to implement the project. What will happen if financial support is not available? (*Maximum 150 words*)

Continuity & expansion viability of the proposed concept

- a. Is the concept scalable? Please explain if the project has the potential to be implemented at a wider scale] (*Maximum 300 words*)
- b. How sustainable is the projected impact from addressing the issue? (*Maximum 300 words*)

Major Activities

- a. List the major key activities (interventions) which need to be implemented (*Maximum 300 words*)

Summary of benefits

[Please provide information on the effects of the implemented measures] (*Maximum 150 words*)

- a. Summary of positive impacts
- b. Summary of social benefits (who will be positive affected)

Funds requirement

What amount of the total project value (in Euro or percentage) is expected from the CGS for the successful implementation of the project?

Costs (EUR)	Applicant's Contribution	Requested CGS contribution	Total
Staff time			
Technical Assistance			
Infrastructure			
Equipment			
Other *			
Total cost of the Project			
Percentage %			

**Use additional budget lines in accordance with the proposal needs*

6. Appendix B: Evaluation/Assessment of the Project Proposal

Evaluation Category	Maximum Points
Capacity of the applicant (s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall capacity of CSO to complete the project and maintain the positive effects • Qualification of proposed staff • Relevant trainings/certification (e.g., IWRM) • Risk magnitude and probability 	15
Quality of application/project proposal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity of elaboration of the project idea • Presentation of intervention logic and implementation approach • Measurement of success 	10
Impact of the project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likelihood of for the project to be successfully completed • Magnitude of positive effects • Number of people to benefit • Link to decision-making and policy-making • Contribution to overall IWRM in Kosovo • Generation of data relevant to IWRM/the Program 	25
Sustainability: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Likelihood of positive impacts to extend over a longer period 	20
Innovation, replicability & scaling-up potential: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the proposed project idea innovative for the country? • Is the idea potentially interesting for others to replicate (will it serve as a best practice)? 	20
Partnerships: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership with other national and/or international organizations • Partnerships to be created as a result of the project (e.g., with state institutions, other stakeholders) 	10
Total:	100

NOTE: The maximum obtainable score is 100 points. To be considered for funding, applicants must receive at least 71 points.