

INSIDE UNDEF

UNDEF opens its annual window for project proposals for its Ninth Round of Funding on 15 November 2014, following the green light given by the UNDEF Advisory Board on 20 October (pictured). Project proposals may be submitted on-line between 15 November and 31 December at www.un.org/democracyfund. Only on-line proposals in either English or French will be accepted. Applicants can find guidelines, lessons learned, and examples of previous application forms [here](#). Those who plan to submit a proposal are strongly encouraged to visit this page as soon as possible to familiarize themselves with what is required.

Calling a

Dear civil society organization applicants,

The following is feedback compiled on the basis of applications from UNDEF rounds. It provides useful pointers for you to bear in mind as you prepare for your application.

Presentation

The higher the quality of the presentation, the higher your application will score. You can get an idea of what is required by viewing an [application form](#), and by reading [project proposal guidelines](#). Fill in all the information that is relevant, but do not exceed the character limits in the application form. Ensure that the information is accurate. Write in plain English or French, avoiding jargon where possible. Use correct acronyms and website addresses. Write succinct sentences and avoid repetition.

Clarity

Clarity is the key to a successful application. The applicant must have a clear idea about what they want to achieve and a clear strategy for how to achieve it. You need to spell out the link between your overall vision and your activities and outputs -- how these will translate your vision into reality. Lack of clarity cannot be disguised by the use of "buzz" words or other formulaic constructions; a successful design requires a logic that can be followed step by step. Brainstorm the ideas thoroughly before writing them down, but equally, agree on what specific steps are needed to make them happen, and in what sequence. Play the "devil's advocate" and criticise the initial ideas until you have achieved a logical design.

Scoring and criteria

In UNDEF's initial assessment of applications, each project proposal is scored against 10 criteria. Since only three proposals out of 100 make it to the short-list, you need to score well on all the criteria to advance to the next stage. Make sure you demonstrate that your proposal satisfies each one:

- Does the applicant organization have a strong track record?
- Is the proposal technically sound in conception and presentation?

How would the proposed project:

- Promote the objectives of UNDEF?
- Make use of the UN's and UNDEF's comparative advantage?
- Have significant impact?
- Represent good value for money?
- Have strong prospects for successful implementation?
- Have strong prospects of sustainability beyond the project duration?
- Encourage inclusiveness?
- Enhance gender equality?

Innovation

How can your application stand out from the others? The answer is innovation. That means a new idea, a new method or an original proposal. If the outputs of the project are simply more workshops to raise awareness, then your application is unlikely to distinguish itself. When you think of innovative approaches, ensure that the proposal is action-oriented, with concrete outputs listed in the application.

Democracy

UNDEF was not established simply to fund good causes or good people. Arguing that your cause is just and your people are worthy is not sufficient. UNDEF is a Fund to promote democracy and each application must be able to show how the funding of that project will advance the cause of democracy. UNDEF focuses on supporting the voice of civil society, and so the application must show how that voice will be strengthened, and how that, in turn, will strengthen democratic processes. The more direct the link, the stronger the application.

Budget

Give considerable thought to the budget. Make sure the budget relates to the outputs listed in the narrative part of the application. We understand that the budget is an estimate, so use rounded figures (in the thousands or hundreds is sufficient). Do not ask for a high amount of salary in the budget, as UNDEF looks for an element of volunteering in applications. Do not ask for a high amount in other items as a back door method to obtain more salary. Also be aware that UNDEF rarely funds the purchase of vehicles.

Value for Money

Many applications have scored badly on the criterion "value for money" by asking for far too much in their budget. The maximum grant UNDEF can make is \$500,000; in more than 400 projects implemented to date, only one project has received this amount. The average grant is around \$250,000. An application requesting \$299,000, but delivering the same outputs as a similar application asking for \$150,000, will score low on value for money. That will probably be enough to knock that application out of the running. The more realistic the budget request, the better the score will be under the value for money criterion.

Timing

The activities in the project proposal should not begin until late 2015 or preferably 2016. Please do not leave submission of the proposal until the last few days. Given that the application window is open for six weeks, a well prepared applicant will submit well ahead of the deadline to ensure there is time left if something goes wrong. The later in the application process, the greater the risk that something may go wrong that cannot be remedied. And once the online proposal system is closed for the year, we cannot assist you. We have received dozens of "hard luck" stories about bad internet connections or electricity blackouts to explain why an application was late. The answer is to start in time.

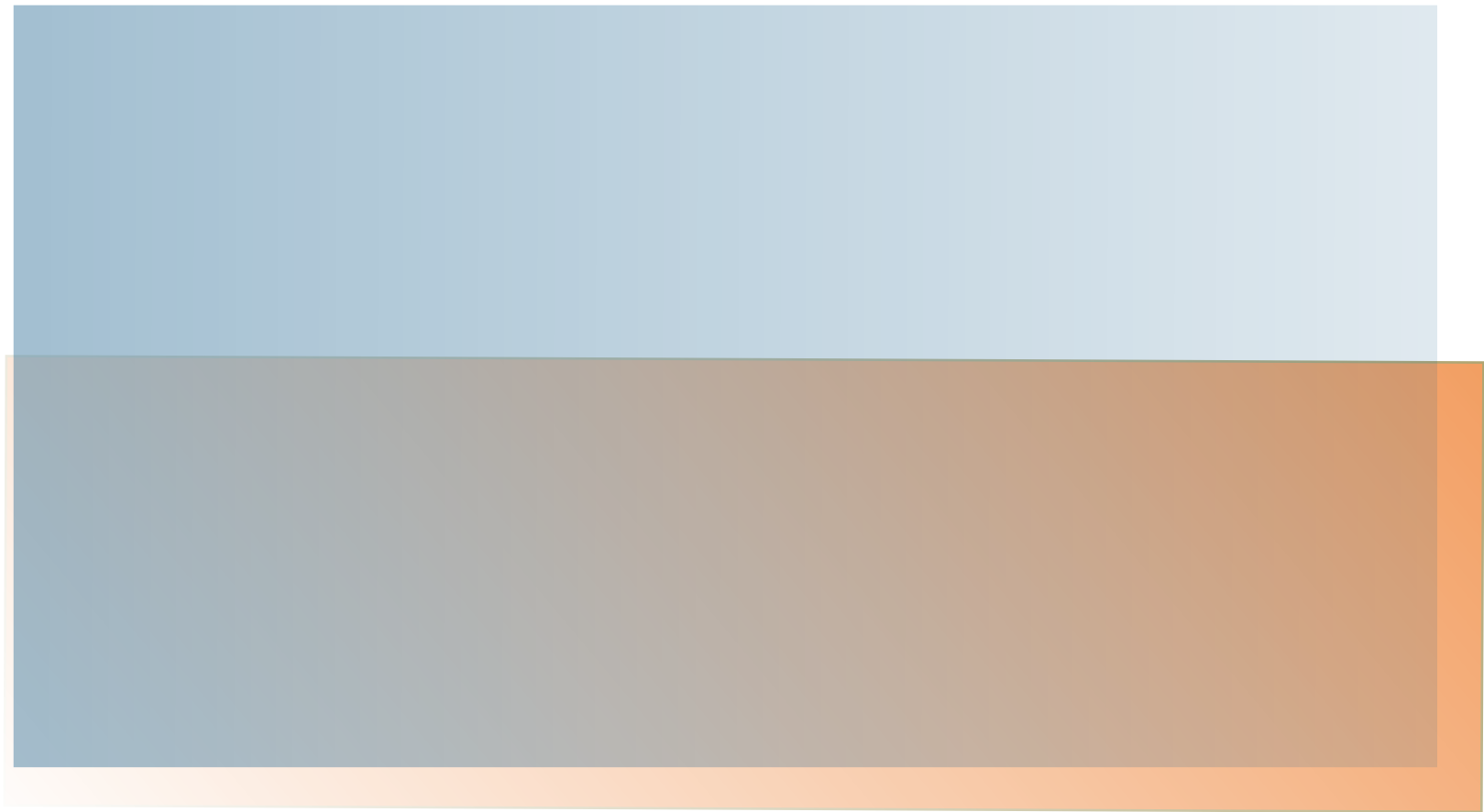
Strengthening local governance accountability in Kosovo*



An UNDEF Kosovo* project engages civil society in monitoring to advance transparency and accountability in local governance. Coordinated by the Kosova Democratic Institute, the project works in 14 municipal assemblies across all seven regions of Kosovo -- Prishtina, Mitrovica, Peja, Gjakova, Prizren, Ferizaj and Gjilan. It trains civil society groups in monitoring local assemblies and in implementing actual monitoring and civic action exercises, including issue identification; holds town hall meetings; and elaborates public issue papers. The civil society groups then conduct advocacy campaigns in their respective municipalities, and work to strengthen the civil society network across Kosovo.

The project groups 11 civil society organizations: Serbian Democratic Youth, Iniciativa për Zhvillim Lokal, Mundësia, Prehja, Shoqata Gazetarëve, Polis, Koha, Shoqata e Intelektualëve te Pavarur, Elita-Viti, Fortesa, and Bashkohu Edhe Ti. UNDEF Deputy Head Mikiko Sawanishi visited the project in October 2014, and is pictured here in Gračanica with project implementers Jetmir Bakija of the Kosova Democratic Institute and Marko Trajković of Serbian Democratic Youth.

Law students compete to support alternatives to prison in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia





Pakistan: 5th National Youth Peace Festival

The Chanan Development Association (CDA) organised a four-day festival in Islamabad.

Somalia: UNDEF Trains 100 Members of Women Organizations

The Centre for Education and Development (CED) trained 100 women from 20 women organizations in Mogadishu in August. The training was on capacity building, women empowerment in politics and women rights. The Minister for Women and Human Rights Hon. Khadija Mohamed Diiriye, congratulated CED and UNDEF on the successful training. She states that such opportunities should be utilized by women and other organizations. She in particular mentioned that such trainings are important for women members of parliament and women in the civil service. The training was featured in [AllAfrica](#).

Gabon: Civil and political rights of youth

A national forum on youth voting and democracy in Gabon will be held on 14 and 15 November at the initiative of the Network of free civil society for good governance in Gabon (ROLBG), supported by the United Nations Democracy Fund and the Embassy of the United States of America in Gabon. The forum is a broad discussion among young people, policy makers, and representatives of political parties around the issue of political participation. The meeting will attempt to fight against civic and political disaffection and encourage and educate youth. Approximately 250 youth leaders will take part in exchanges in a first of its kind event for Gabon stressing the importance of the constitution, the electoral process and voting. The forum gained coverage in [Africetime.com](#)

