Open Call for Proposals

**Supporting Social Cohesion and Integration of the Most Vulnerable Groups of Ukrainian Refugees in Czechia by Strengthening the Sustainability of Community MHPSS Services Provision in the Regions**

**Background**

The World Health Organization (WHO) was established in 1948 as a specialized agency of the United Nations. The objective of WHO (www.who.int) is the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health. “Health,” as defined in the WHO Constitution, is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. WHO's main function is to act as the directing and coordinating authority on international health work.

Through its country office in the Czech Republic, WHO provides various forms of support to improve the national health system and address public health challenges. This includes technical assistance, capacity building, policy development, health system strengthening, disease prevention and control, emergency response and preparedness, health data, and research.

**Context**

The Ukrainian refugee crisis has placed significant strain on the Czech Republic, with over 350,000 Ukrainian refugees currently residing in the country. Among these, the most vulnerable groups—particularly women, children, the elderly, those with disabilities, pre-existing and newly acquired diseases, and mental health conditions—face heightened challenges. Many of these individuals reside in collective centers or shelters, where living conditions, exclusion from host communities, and insecurities about the future exacerbate their vulnerability and negatively impact their psychosocial well-being. These environments can lead to a deterioration in mental health, manifesting in issues such as anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which are already prevalent due to the experience of displacement, losses, and the ongoing conflict in their homeland.

The capacity of existing mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services in Czechia is inadequate to meet the specialized needs of these vulnerable populations. There is an ongoing need for targeted interventions that can provide comprehensive support to these groups, especially those in collective centers and shelters who often have limited access to essential services. As donor funding is likely to decrease over time, it is critical to develop sustainable approaches to ensure the continuity of care for these refugees. This includes integrating MHPSS services into the national health system and creating community-based support structures that can operate independently of short-term funding streams.

**Objectives**

This call for proposals aims to identify initiatives that can address these needs, focusing on creating durable, long-term solutions that prioritize the most vulnerable refugees and ensure their successful integration into Czech society.

**Deliverables and Indicators**

**Deliverable 1:** Providing MHPSS Services to the Most Vulnerable Groups of Ukrainian Refugees with a Focus on Those Staying in Collective Centers and Shelters

**Output:** Direct provision of focused MHPSS services, including linking people with psychosocial problems to resources and services, case management, psychological counseling, psychotherapy, or clinical management of MNS (mental, neurological, and substance use) conditions to vulnerable Ukrainian refugees residing in collective centers and shelters across various regions in Czechia.

**Indicators:**

 **-** Number of refugees per at-risk group receiving focused MHPSS care.

 - Percentage of service recipients reporting improved mental health outcomes (e.g., reduced anxiety, depression, and PTSD symptoms) based on standardized assessment tools (e.g., Beck Depression Inventory, Generalized Anxiety Disorder Scale).

 - Number of service sessions (e.g., individual counseling, group therapy) conducted in collective centers and shelters.

 - Percentage of follow-up visits or continued care provided to service recipients to ensure ongoing support and integration into the community.

**Deliverable 2:** Advocating for Policy Changes to Support Long-Term MHPSS Service Provision

**Output:** A policy brief or advocacy document aimed at influencing national and regional policies to secure long-term funding and integration of MHPSS services for Ukrainian refugees into the Czech national health system.

**-Indicators:**

 **-** Number of policy recommendations adopted by national or regional authorities.

 - Percentage increase in funding allocations for MHPSS services.

 - Number of advocacy meetings held with key stakeholders and decision-makers.

 **Proposal Duration and Budget**

Duration: 1 October 2024 – 31 May 2025 (up to 8 months). A retroactive start from 1 July 2024 can be considered upon justification, extending the duration to up to 11 months.

Maximum Budget: The maximum amount for the proposal should not exceed 350,000 USD. The budget should be provided in Czech Korunas (CZK).

**Proposal Submission Requirements**

Eligibility Criteria:

**-** Organizations must be legally registered in Czechia and possess demonstrable expertise and experience in coordinating and implementing Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) programs, particularly in contexts involving refugee populations and vulnerable groups.

- A minimum of three years of relevant experience is required, with a proven track record of successfully managing collaborative projects on national and regional levels involving multiple stakeholders, including effective collaboration with national and local health/social authorities.

- The organization should have qualifications in psychology, psychiatry, social work, mental health, or related fields.

- Proficiency in proposal development, budget management, and conducting assessments of service delivery is mandatory.

- Strong analytical, cultural competence, and communication skills within the team are essential.

- Compliance with national accounting, procedural standards and regulations.

- Compliance with the United Nations’ Prevention of Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (PSEAH) requirements is mandatory (<https://www.un.org/preventing-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse/content/policies-and-protocols> ).

- The organization must agree to undergo an external audit if necessary to ensure adherence to these standards and other operational protocols as well as capacity assessment of the implementing partner by the external party before the start of the project.

**Submission Package:**

The proposal shall include the following:

1. Project Proposal in English, Word format, based on the provided template (attached).

2. Project Budget in English, in Excel format, in Czech Korunas (CZK), based on the provided template (attached).

3. Supporting Documents (might be in Czech) proving that the organization meets the eligibility criteria (e.g., registration documents, proof of past experience, technical qualifications of the experts, proficiency of the core staff, compliance with the PSEAH and economical national and UN standards in the status of the organization or any other SoPs).

**Submission Guidelines:**

- All documents should be submitted electronically to the WHO Czechia mailbox: [eurowhocz@who.int](mailto:eurowhocz@who.int) by September 16, 2024, at 18:00.

- Ensure all files are clearly named, indicating the content and the submitting organization.

- Files should be submitted in PDF or DOCX format for the project proposal, and in XLSX format for the budget.

**Proposal Evaluation and Selection Process**

Evaluation Criteria:

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Relevance: Alignment with the objectives and focus of the call.

- Feasibility: The practicality of the proposed activities within the given timeframe and budget.

- Sustainability: Potential for long-term impact and integration into the national health system.

- Evidence-based: Evidence-based approaches to MHPSS service provision.

- Cost-effectiveness: Efficient use of resources to achieve maximum impact.

**Decision-Making Process:**

- The evaluation of proposals will be conducted by a panel of experts from WHO.

- The decision-making process will involve a review of the submitted documents, followed by possible additional requests for clarification from shortlisted organizations.

**Timeline:**

**-** Proposal Submission Deadline: September 16, 2024, at 18:00.

- Decision Announcement: The results of the proposal evaluation will be communicated to all applicants by September 23, 2024.

- **Announcement of Results:**

**-** All applicants will be notified of the outcome of their submission via email.

- Successful proposals will be publicly announced on the WHO Czechia website and other relevant platforms.

**Contact for Queries:**

For any questions or further clarification regarding this call for proposals, potential applicants may contact WHO Czechia at eurowhocz@who.int .

**Terms and Conditions**

**-** WHO reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, negotiate terms, or request additional information after submission.

- All proposals and related documents will be treated as confidential.

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We look forward to receiving your proposal and working together to support the most vulnerable groups of Ukrainian refugees in Czechia.