



Request for Proposal (RFP)

Engagement of Locally Based CSOs to Facilitate and Support Social Audit Activities in targeted municipalities

Helvetas Kosovo invites interested local Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) registered in the Republic of Kosovo to provide services as described below.

1. Contract description

The overall goal of the Decentralisation and Municipal Support Programme (DEMOS), co-financed by the European Union, Switzerland and Sweden and implemented by Helvetas, is to improve municipal performance in governance, management and service delivery, thereby contributing to increased citizen satisfaction. DEMOS III focuses on three main areas: the Municipal Performance Grant (MPG), citizen engagement and oversight, and support to policy development.

Linking the MPG with citizen engagement and oversight, social audits enable citizens to monitor municipal investments and assess whether they respond to community priorities. Introduced by DEMOS in cooperation with the Ministry of Local Government Administration, social audits complement formal municipal oversight and strengthen accountability and citizen participation.

Within this framework, the DEMOS project, implemented by Helvetas, intends to engage one or more locally based Civil Society Organisation (CSO) to support the implementation of social audit activities and facilitate meaningful citizen participation in monitoring municipal investments.

The required services details are annexed in this document.

2. Timetable

	DATE	TIME - CET
Tender announcement	14.09.2026	-
Deadline for written enquiries to procurement.kosovo@helvetas.org	21.09.2026	14:00
Last date for Helvetas to issue clarifications (clarifications can be found in the same link where the tender dossier was posted in Helvetas website)	23.09.2026	16:00
Deadline for submitting offers to procurement.kosovo@helvetas.org account ¹	05.10.2026	14:00

3. Nature of the contract

Service Contract

¹ Any application received after this deadline will not be considered.

4. Negotiations

Helvetas reserves the right to enter into negotiations with all or part of eligible bidders in order to amend and/or complete their original offers.

Negotiations may concern the technical, financial, legal and other aspects of the contract.

5. Eligibility

Participation is open to all locally based registered Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) excluding public authorities, registered in the country.

Civil servants and persons elected or appointed in a public function are ineligible to participate as consultants in the tender procedure for this contract. Any offer containing any of such persons will be excluded from the procedure without further evaluation.

All eligible entities or groupings of such entities (consortia) may apply. A consortium may be a permanent, legally-established grouping or a grouping which has been constituted informally for a specific tender procedure. All members of a consortium (i.e. the leader and all other members) are liable to Helvetas, while the leader takes the lead responsibility. Helvetas Kosovo reserves the right to award one or more contracts and/or divide the required services among more than one successful bidder.

6. Costs for preparing offers

No costs incurred by the bidder in preparing and submitting the offers are reimbursable. Such costs fall under the responsibility of the bidder, including the costs incurred during negotiating and interviewing process.

7. Sub-contracting

Sub-contracting services to another legal person is not allowed.

8. Provisional commencement date of the contract

10 October 2026

9. Initial period of execution and possible extension of the contract

Services are to be provided between **10 October 2026** and **31 March 2027**.

10. Evaluation of offers

Each offer will be evaluated in accordance with the criteria and the weighting as detailed below. In the case of offers submitted by a consortium, these criteria will be applied to the consortium as a whole. The criteria for evaluation of services or works will be examined in accordance with the requirements indicated in attachments.

The entire evaluation procedure is confidential. The Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC) decisions are collective and its deliberations are held in virtual session. The members of the PP are bound to secrecy. The evaluation reports and written records are for official use only and may be communicated neither to the bidders nor to any party other than Helvetas.

10.1 Eligibility criteria

Only the organisations that provide signed forms below will be processed for further evaluation:

- Eligibility Documentation Form (See ELIGIBILITY DOCUMENTATION part below) and
- Application Form (See PART 1 – APPLICATION PACKAGE part below)

10.2 Evaluation criteria of eligible offers

Criteria for evaluation of the Technical offer

Requirements	Documentary evidence
1. Experience of the Organization: During the past 5 years, the bidder has implemented at least 2 assignments relevant to the ToR (<i>please refer to section 6 in the ToR</i>)	List of relevant assignments according to the ToR and sample work portfolio. The preselected bidder is requested to submit contracts, references, reports or other documentary evidence. The bidder should clearly identify any previous Social Audit assignments and the municipality/municipalities covered.
2. CVs for proposed core team , demonstrating relevant experience as per <i>section 7 in the ToR</i>	Updated CVs ²
3. Methodology, Approach and Implementation Plan to conduct Social Audits, including citizen mobilization and inclusion, local presence/coverage, quality assurance, follow-up of recommendations, risks and mitigation measures.	Up to five-page methodology and implementation plan.

Only bidders that pass the Technical evaluation (**min 50% of technical evaluation scoring**) will be processed for further evaluation.

² The preselected bidder will be asked to submit documentary evidence to prove the experience of their staff. Failure to provide documentary evidence will result in disqualification of preselected bidder. By documentary evidence, this refers to contracts, references or other documentary evidence issued by a contracting authority. Only documentary evidence found to be relevant for the invitation's thematic fields will be considered.

Criteria for evaluation of the financial offer:

Requirements	Documentary evidence
Financial offer according to instructions in PART 2 of this document	Financial offer in EUR

The weighting of the criteria for evaluation of technical and financial offers are as follows:

Criteria	Max points
Technical offer*	70
Experience and local capacity of the bidder, including previous Social Audit experience	25
Proposed Methodology, Approach and Implementation Plan (including citizen mobilisation/inclusion, local coverage, quality assurance, follow-up, risks and mitigation)	25
Proposed Team (CVs)	20
Financial offer	30
Total maximum score	100

*Evaluation of the offers will be done progressively, namely lower quality of elements of the technical offer and higher financial offer will receive less points from the maximum points presented in the table.

After evaluation of offers, Helvetas reserves the right to enter into negotiations with all or part of eligible bidders in order to amend and/or complete their original offers.

Contract will be awarded to the economically most advantageous offer. The economically most advantageous offer is established by weighing technical quality against price on a 70/30 basis. Helvetas reserves the right to contract only part of required services or cancel this tender procedure should it not be satisfied with the quality of offers.

11. Submission of offers

Offers must be submitted via email in electronic format only in two separate files using the standard forms provided by the Helvetas (PART 1 and PART 2).

Technical offer shall contain:

1. **Signed Eligibility Documentation Form**³ – as per ELIGIBILITY DOCUMENTATION part below
2. **Signed Application Form** – as per PART 1 – APPLICATION PACKAGE part below
3. Bidders have to supply the **Technical Offer**, accompanied by the following documentation for the bidder:
 - Experience of the Organization
 - Proposed Methodology

³ Electronic copies of eligibility documentation should be provided only by the winning bidder prior to contract signing.

- Proposed CVs

The name of the file should have the bidder's name, Reference No: NT-0002-DEMOS and the text 'Technical offer documents' (for example ***My Organization Name NT-0002-DEMOS technical offer documents***). and

Financial offer shall contain:

1. **Signed Financial Offer form** - as per PART 2 - Financial offer part below

The Financial offer must be presented in Euros. The fees proposed in this offer should be all inclusive; the contractor will cover all costs to perform their tasks (e.g. office accommodation, transport, internet access and equipment, administrative and secretarial support, interpretation etc.). Helvetas is exempt from VAT, thus the fees offered should be without VAT. The contractor is responsible for all other taxes and duties in compliance with the legislation of the country.

The name of the file should have the bidder's name, Reference No: NT-0002-DEMOS and the text 'Financial offer documents' (for example ***My Organization Name NT-0002-DEMOS financial offer documents***).

Electronic files should be password protected, different password for each file⁴. The bidders will be informed in advance once the evaluation date is confirmed so they can stay reachable on that date in order to provide the passwords. During the evaluation process the entitled purchasing panel member will call the bidder and ask for the passwords at the spot⁵.

The subject of email should contain only the PRF reference number (for example ***NT-0002-DEMOS***). The body of the email should contain bidder's official name, address and telephone number.

Offers must be submitted in English language exclusively to the following email address procurement.kosovo@helvetas.org. Offers submitted after the deadline mentioned under point 2 Timetable of this RFP will not be considered. The counted official receipt time is the time showing on the email received from the bidder to Helvetas procurement email.

12 Alteration or withdrawal of applications

Bidders may alter or withdraw their offers by written notification prior to the deadline for submission of tenders. No offer may be altered after this deadline.

Helvetas retains ownership of all offers, which have not been withdrawn. Consequently, bidders do not have the right to have their offers returned to them.

13 Validity of offers

Bidders are bound by their tenders for 90 days after the deadline for submitting offers. In exceptional cases, before the period of validity expires, the Helvetas may ask bidders to extend the period of validity for a specific number of days, which may not exceed 40.

14 Signature of the contract(s)

⁴ Offers received without password will not be considered for evaluation

⁵ If the bidder is not reachable on the phone during the evaluation process, the offers will not be considered for evaluation

Within 3 days of receipt of the contract already signed by the Helvetas, the selected bidder shall sign and date the contract. Failure of the selected bidder to comply with this requirement may constitute grounds for annulling the decision to award the contract. In this event, the Helvetas may award the tender to another bidder or cancel the tender procedure.

15 Terms of payments

Helvetas is not a payer of value added tax (VAT). Prices in the application must be submitted, taking into account all expenses.

The payment will be made via bank account transfer to the winner of the tender in EUR within a maximum of 30 working days from the date of acceptance of goods or execution of services or works. Cases of non-performance of obligation and their legal consequences will be separately indicated in the contract.

16 Terms of cooperation

In the case of a contracting, the parties will have to perform according to the established time and in accordance with Helvetas - Supplier purchase order or Helvetas - Service provider contract. Helvetas has the right to increase or decrease the number of ordered items. Helvetas has the right to choose a implementer on the given offer according to its own discretion. Helvetas has the right to re-formulate the Request for Proposal (RFP) to its own discretion, if any additional items are needed. In case of failure or non-compliance with contractual obligations, Helvetas has a unilateral right to terminate the contract without incurring any legal obligation.

The Applicant has to be familiar with all instructions, forms and requirements mentioned in the RFP documents. The responsibility for the submission of the offer in accordance to these requirements lies entirely with the Applicant.

Helvetas signs a contract with the winning bidder. The contract will come into force upon signature by both parties.

17 Ethics clauses/Corruptive practices

Bidders making false declarations may be subject to financial penalties representing 10% of the total value of the purchase contract being awarded. This rate may be increased to 20% in the event of a repeated offence.

Any attempt by a organisation to obtain confidential information, enter into unlawful agreements with competitors or influence the PP or the Helvetas during the process of examining, clarifying, evaluating and comparing offers will lead to the rejection of its offer and may result in penalties as described above.

Organisations must not be affected by any conflict of interest with other bidders or parties involved in the project. Helvetas reserves the right to suspend or cancel the RFP procedure and/or contract if corrupt practices of any kind are discovered at any stage of the award process or during the execution of a contract.

Organisations will be rejected or contracts terminated if it emerges that the award or execution of a contract has given rise to unusual commercial expenses. Such unusual commercial expenses are commissions not mentioned in the main contract or not stemming from a properly concluded contract referring to the main contract, commissions not paid in return for any actual and legitimate service,

commissions remitted to a tax haven, commissions paid to a payee who is not clearly identified or commissions paid to a organisation which has every appearance of being a front company/organisation.

Contractors found to have paid unusual commercial expenses related to this project are liable, depending on the seriousness of the facts observed, to have their contracts terminated and/or be penalised.

The Helvetas reserves the right to suspend or cancel the procedure, where the award procedure proves to have been subject to substantial errors, irregularities or fraud. If substantial errors, irregularities or fraud are discovered after the award of the contract, Helvetas may refrain from concluding the purchase order/contract and/or terminate the purchase contract.

18 Operational language

All written communications for this tender procedure and contract must be in English.

19 Additional information

The conclusion of the tender and the award of any purchase contract are subject to the availability of funds.

Helvetas reserves the right to annul this tender procedure at any time, without any liability on its side.

20 Annexes

TERMS OF REFERENCES (TOR)

Engagement of Locally Based CSOs to Facilitate and Support Social Audit Activities in targeted municipalities

Part 1: Terms of Reference (ToR)

Duration: 10 October 2026 – 31 March 2027

Expected Start Date: 10 October 2026

1. BACKGROUND

The Decentralisation and Municipal Support program (DEMOS) implemented by HELVETAS Kosovo has the following overall objective: “Improved performance of municipalities in governance, management and services contributing to increased citizens’ satisfaction.” There are three outcomes of DEMOS III.

- The Municipal Performance Grant (MPG) is credible, effective and institutionalized as well as fully implemented by MLGA with further public engagement;
- Local oversight by relevant municipal bodies is improved, and citizen engagement mechanisms are functionalized by increasingly involving civil society and marginalized groups in municipal decision making;
- The policy and legal framework is more conducive for decentralized local governance and for rule-based financing of municipalities.

Social Audit is a citizen-led participatory accountability mechanism through which citizens, local CSOs and other community representatives review the planning, implementation and results of municipal capital investments. The process complements formal oversight mechanisms by examining investments from the perspective of citizens and beneficiaries and by promoting transparency, dialogue and municipal responsiveness.

DEMOS has supported successive rounds of Social Audits in Kosovo. The new round will build on this implementation experience, with particular emphasis on capable local facilitation, strong citizen ownership, meaningful inclusion of underrepresented groups, quality of findings and recommendations, and follow-up with municipalities.

2. OBJECTIVE

The aim of this intervention is to engage locally based civil society organisations and citizens in conducting Social Audits of selected municipal capital investment projects, strengthening citizen engagement, transparency, accountability and constructive dialogue between communities and municipalities.

The new round is expected to cover approximately seven (7) capital investment projects in the municipalities of Dragash/Dragaš, Rahovec/Orahovac, Partesh/Parteš, Mamusha/Mamuša and Klinë/Klina. The final list and allocation of projects among the selected CSO/CSOs will be confirmed by DEMOS. One or more local CSOs may be contracted, depending on the quality of offers, local experience, geographic coverage and implementation capacity.

The core objective of this activity is to **engage one or more capable** locally based facilitating CSOs to mobilise and support Social Audit teams from the start of the process through completion, dissemination and follow-up. Particular value will be placed on CSOs with previous direct experience in facilitating Social Audits in Kosovo or comparable citizen-led monitoring of public investments, as well as relevant local knowledge and networks in the targeted municipalities or surrounding regions.

3. TASKS AND ACTIVITIES

The selected local CSO/CSOs will work under DEMOS supervision and will be responsible for the following:

- Develop a detailed methodology, implementation plan and activity calendar for the assigned Social Audit(s), aligned with the DEMOS Social Audit approach and guidance.
- Mobilize citizens and relevant local stakeholders and establish inclusive Social Audit team(s), with attention to women, youth, persons with disabilities, non-majority communities and other relevant or underrepresented groups.
- Where feasible, build on existing local networks and previous Social Audit experience while ensuring that Social Audit teams remain citizen-led and representative of the communities affected by the monitored investments.
- Deliver orientation/training and ongoing capacity support to Social Audit team members on the Social Audit methodology, municipal project cycle, access to information, review of documentation, field monitoring, evidence collection, formulation of findings and recommendations, and constructive engagement with municipal institutions.
- Secure and maintain cooperation with relevant municipal leadership and administrative officials and facilitate access to information and project documentation required by Social Audit teams.
- Support Social Audit teams in defining the scope of each audit, preparing monitoring questions and indicators, reviewing planning, procurement and implementation documentation, and conducting field visits and other verification activities.

- Facilitate regular meetings and working sessions of Social Audit teams and ensure that citizen observations and evidence are systematically documented and analyzed.
- Support the Social Audit teams in consolidating findings and developing clear, evidence-based and actionable recommendations addressed to the respective municipality.
- Apply internal quality assurance to Social Audit reports before submission to DEMOS and presentation to municipalities, ensuring that findings are evidence-based, balanced and clearly linked to recommendations.
- Facilitate presentation and public dissemination of Social Audit findings and recommendations and constructive dialogue between Social Audit teams, municipal representatives and the wider community.
- Support follow-up with municipalities on the response to Social Audit recommendations, including documenting whether recommendations are accepted, implemented, partially implemented or not acted upon, where this can be assessed within the contract period.
- Regularly report to DEMOS on implementation progress, challenges, risks, citizen participation, municipal cooperation and emerging results, and provide a final consolidated report with lessons learned and recommendations for future Social Audit rounds.

4. Implementation Principles:

- Local ownership: facilitation should rely on local knowledge, networks and sustained interaction with communities and municipalities.
- Citizen-led process: the facilitating CSO supports the process but does not substitute the Social Audit team in forming findings or recommendations.
- Inclusion: proactive efforts must be made to engage diverse community groups, particularly groups that are often underrepresented in municipal decision-making.
- Evidence and quality: findings must be based on documentation, field verification, citizen experience and other verifiable sources.
- Constructive accountability: engagement with municipalities should remain independent while encouraging practical dialogue and follow-up.
- Do-no-harm and integrity: activities must respect confidentiality, safeguarding, conflict-of-interest and ethical requirements applicable under HELVETAS procedures.

5. Expected Deliverables:

- Inception note including detailed methodology, assignment-specific work plan, activity calendar, team deployment and risk mitigation measures.
- Mobilization and establishment of Social Audit team(s) for all assigned projects/municipalities, with documented composition and inclusion efforts.
- Training/orientation of all established Social Audit teams and provision of required facilitation materials.
- Completed Social Audit process for each assigned capital investment project, including document review, field monitoring, citizen engagement, municipal interaction and evidence consolidation.
- A comprehensive Social Audit report for each assigned project or other reporting arrangement approved by DEMOS, including findings and actionable recommendations.
- Public presentation/dissemination of findings and recommendations in the respective municipality/municipalities.

- Documented follow-up with municipalities on Social Audit recommendations within the available implementation period.
- Regular brief progress updates to DEMOS and one final consolidated implementation report describing activities, participation, challenges, municipal cooperation, lessons learned and recommendations for future Social Audit cycles.

6. Required Organizational Experience and Capacity:

The bidder should demonstrate:

- Relevant experience in local governance and/or local-level transparency and accountability.
- Experience in monitoring public investments, municipal projects, public institutions or local decision-making processes.
- Demonstrated capacity in citizen engagement, community mobilization and facilitation of participatory processes.
- Previous experience in facilitating Social Audits or direct involvement in earlier Social Audit rounds in Kosovo will be considered a strong advantage.
- Experience in comparable citizen-led monitoring of public investments will also be considered highly relevant.
- Local knowledge, established networks and previous relevant work in the municipality/municipalities proposed for implementation or the surrounding region will be considered an additional advantage.
- Capacity to engage diverse groups, including women, youth, persons with disabilities and non-majority communities.
- Ability to analyze municipal/project documentation and translate evidence into clear findings and actionable recommendations.
- Adequate organizational and financial management capacity to implement the assignment within the required timeframe.

7. Proposed Core Team

The bidder shall propose an appropriately sized core team capable of delivering the assignment. The team should collectively demonstrate experience in local governance, participatory accountability/Social Audit or similar monitoring, citizen mobilization and facilitation, analysis/reporting and project coordination. HELVETAS encourages diverse team composition, including gender and community representation. The offer shall clearly state the role, responsibilities and availability of each proposed team member.

8. Geographic Coverage and Allocation

The assignment will cover minimum seven (7) capital investment projects in Dragash/Dragaš, Rahovec/Orahovac, Partesh/Parteš, Mamusha/Mamuša and Klina/Klina. Bidders may indicate the municipality/municipalities for which they have the strongest local presence, experience and implementation capacity. HELVETAS Kosovo/DEMOS may award all or part of the services to one bidder or divide the assignment among several successful bidders. The final allocation will be determined during the award/contracting process.

Reporting and Supervision

The selected local CSO/CSOs will work under the direct supervision of the DEMOS team and will maintain regular communication throughout implementation. Key methodological products and Social Audit reports will be subject to DEMOS review and quality assurance. The selected CSO/CSOs shall address

reasonable comments and requested revisions within the agreed timeframe.