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## COVID-19 Solidarity Program in the Eastern Partnership countries

*A Comprehensive Response to Emergencies Threatening Key Populations in Eastern Partnership countries*

### About the Program

*AFEW International* has launched the regional “**COVID-19 Solidarity Program in the Eastern Partnership countries**” with the financial support of the European Union. This project will support community based organizations (CBOs) to respond to the immediate and longer term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in the **Eastern Partnership** countries. *AFEW International* together with the **Netherlands Helsinki Committee** is part of the consortium led by **People in Need**. The consortium has the goal of enhancing the capacities of CSOs to effectively respond to short- and medium-term needs and influence longer-term policy reforms that support vulnerable groups and those disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

COVID-19 is a moving target: it’s a new virus, much is still unknown about its epidemiology, spread, and risk factors. Due to the fast spread of the novel coronavirus, countries worldwide introduced measures, based on WHO recommendations to contain the COVID-19 pandemic. Countries from the Eastern Europe and Central Asian region have followed a similar approach to contain the COVID-19.

COVID-19 as a disease may have consequences linked to its pathophysiology for those with a health condition such as people living with HIV (PLWH), people with (history of) tuberculosis or with viral hepatitis, or other health conditions. The impact of COVID-19 on their individual medical condition is not likely to be different in EECA then elsewhere in the world. However, the epidemiology of some of the risk factors in EECA is such, that they are likely to have a substantial impact on certain populations, e.g. because of the relatively high burden of tuberculosis, especially drug-resistance TB.

Marginalized groups of people, including **Key Populations** have poor access to health services, in particular in the Eastern Partnership countries. Hence, it is commonly believed that marginalized groups are more likely to also have hindered access to COVID-19 related services. This can be influenced also by the stigma and discrimination

COVID-19 Solidary Program in Eastern Partnerships countries strives for a comprehensive response to emergencies threatening Key Populations as the aftermath of COVID-19. Through **small grants** to CBOs, working with Key Populations, with activities ranging from advocacy and prevention, to treatment and care in terms of COVID-19 implications, based in countries of the Eastern Partnership countries, *AFEW International* responds to arising and anticipated post-pandemic challenges. Therefore, *AFEW International* launches this call for proposals to disburse grants to CSOs that both address the immediate



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COVID-related health and socio-economic needs of Key Populations, and enable them to continue supporting their usual constituents.

### Funding available

In order to reach the overall goal, *AFEW International* aims at supporting **9 organisations** from the Eastern Partnership countries<sup>1</sup> with small grants in the period of **October 2020 – September 2021**. The maximum amount per grant is **€ 5 000**.

### Assessment of Applications

Call for application to promote the COVID-19 Solidarity Program for the Eastern Partnership countries is distributed on *AFEW International's* channels and through associated partners in the region.

Applications meeting the eligibility criteria will be scored based on the selection criteria. Applications will be assessed after the **deadline (27 September 2020 at 17:00 CET (Amsterdam time))**. Decisions will be made within 3 weeks. We aim to initiate transfer of the funds within **14 days** after a positive decision.

### How can CBOs apply

In order to apply, please follow these simple steps:

1. Fill out the application form. An application shall be submitted in English or Russian. The deadline for submitting the form is on **27 September 2020 at 17:00 CET (Amsterdam time)**. All proposals submitted after the deadline will not be reviewed!
2. Send this form to the following email address: [covid19@afew.nl](mailto:covid19@afew.nl). Once submitted, you will receive an automated notification.
3. Wait for the decision of the Selection Commission regarding your application. The review of the applications will be done within **3 weeks** after the deadline. The decisions will be announced on **19 October 2020**.
4. If you have questions, please refer them to the above-mentioned email address or to **Valeria Fulga: [valeria\\_fulga@afew.nl](mailto:valeria_fulga@afew.nl)**.

The Application Form consists of two parts. Part 1 refers to the content of the proposal. Part 2 refers to organizational and banking details. Both parts need to be submitted at once.

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<sup>1</sup> Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine



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## Eligibility Criteria for COVID-19 Emergency Grants

### Eligibility criteria for the applicant

- Applicant is a **Community based organization (CBO)** or represents the interests and needs of the following groups:
  - Sex workers
  - LGBTQI
  - Men who have sex with men (MSM)
  - Women vulnerable to HIV
  - Migrants
  - Adolescents and/or youth
  - People using drugs
  - People living with HIV (PLHIV)
- Applicant is based in *Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine*.
- Applicant is a registered CBO or - if not registered - provides references from partner organisations. COVID-19 Solidary Program for Eastern Partnership countries operational team shall be able to receive sufficient information about an applicant and can request information about applicant's capacities from mentioned partners. An applicant can be a national or regional network. Proposals by individuals will not be taken into consideration for funding. Unregistered initiatives and groups if awarded a grant, need to find a reliable fiscal partner which can receive the grant money through an international transfer.

### Eligibility criteria for the application

- Projects address the immediate COVID-19 related health and socio-economic needs of Key Populations, and enable them to continue supporting their usual constituents.
- Activities respond to a situation that threatens the health, and/or the physical or juridical safety of one or more people from the above target groups or threatens the financial and/or legal situation of an NGO/CBO.
- The activity will be used as a tool for local, national and/or international advocacy for preventing similar emergencies occurring in the future.
- The activities to relieve an emergency will be immediately implemented and will last no longer than **12 months**.
- The proposal is submitted in **English or Russian**.
- The proposal is submitted through the provided email before the deadline.

Organizational information is collected with care and delicacy. Information will be stored in a secured database.



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## Selection Criteria for Emergency Grants

After an application is found to be eligible, the application will be assessed by the Operational Team based on the selection criteria for COVID-19 Emergency Grants.

### Selection criteria

1. The situation is qualified as **emergent** according to provided background information.
2. **Relevance** of proposed activities: Are the proposed activities in the given context relevant for solving the emergency situation?
3. **Sustainability** and **Advocacy**: Is proposed plan sustainable for this activity and for the advocacy? How likely is that the situation will improve after the activities have ended?
4. **Budget** is clear and reasonable and the demonstrated need for items is clearly indicated, and is within the limit of 5000 EUR.
5. **Capacity** to implement the proposed activities. Does the applicant have sufficient capacity to implement proposed activities?

Each criterion is scored from 1 to 5. Only applications with an average score higher than **3.5** will be considered for funding.

Reviewing the applications, we will keep the following in mind:

- We will prioritize activities which are not (easily) fundable through other means.
- We will prioritize activities that will also be used as a means for advocacy and/or publicity, addressing the causes of and striving to find more structural solutions for an emergency, and thus benefiting larger target groups.
- In the portfolio of grants, we strive to have all mentioned key populations represented and all countries represented.

### Selection Commission

AFEW International has established an internal selection committee consisting of three experts working with key population groups in Eastern Europe.

### Due diligence

As part of selection process, the Operational Team may want to assess governance and accountability structures of the applicant, and may to that extent request from applicant additional information on organizational structures; (financial) management and leadership; demonstrated capacity to implement the proposed activities (track record); funding history or recommendation letters (where available); and the meaningful involvement of key populations. This is to ensure that a sufficient level of organizational capacity is guaranteed. For selected grantees, a short organizational assessment will be conducted.