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Project Fiduciary Management Unit

Ministry of Finance

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GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE

MINISTRY OF FINANCE

RE-ADVERTISEMENT

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

(CONSULTING SERVICES – FIRM SELECTION)

ISSUE DATE 19TH JANUARY 2022

**Assignment Title: CONSULTING SERVICES TO DEVELOP A NATIONAL TOURISM STRATEGIC PLAN FOR SIERRA LEONE**

**Reference No**. SL-MOFED-163398-CS-CQS

Sierra Leone possesses pristine beaches and islands, mountains and rich biodiversity, interesting wildlife, friendliness and rich cultural capital among people and its special place in the world history of anti-slavery movement as ‘the land of the free.’ The Government of Sierra (GoSL) has officially prioritized tourism under newly formulated National Development Plan 2019 - 2023. The National Tourism Policy states the goal of tourism in Sierra Leone is to “*generate foreign exchange, encourage even development, promote tourism-based rural enterprises, generate employment, accelerate rural-urban integration and foster socio-cultural unity among the various regions of the country through the promotion of domestic and international tourism*.” (GoSL, 2017). Its National Ecotourism Policy states the goal of receiving 20,000 international and 30,000 domestic ecotourism visits to sites by 2025 (GoSL, 2017).

The Government of Sierra Leone and World Bank are implementing the Sierra Leone Economic Diversification Project (SLEDP), one of the components of which will take an integrated destination approach to improving the performance of Sierra Leone’s tourism sector. This will include facilitating the reduction of barriers to business success, assisting existing tourism providers with market access, and improving the quality of selected tourism products to place the country’s tourism sector on a sustainable and inclusive growth trajectory. This will be achieved through a mix of institutional, and policy reforms, market development and national marketing enhancement and re-branding as well as building B2B linkages and strategically developing tourism products in selected areas.

**II. Objective of the assignment**

The objective of this consultancy is to facilitate the development of a National Tourism Strategic Plan for the GoSL. The consultant will assist the GoSL in deciding on the key elements of the plan, creating a framework for the plan, and finalizing the plan in written format. Key decisions on priorities, activities and targets will be made by GoSL, with the guidance of the consultant. The result of the consultancy will be a strategic and action-oriented plan. The plan will draw from the National Tourism Policy, the Development of Tourism Act 1990, the Economic and Financial Feasibility Study on Ecotourism Potential in Selected Protected Areas of 2007, and Ecotourism Policy and Action Plan of 2017. Its purpose will be to operationalize these documents into actionable tasks and activities for their implementation by the GoSL over the next five years. The plan should be feasible to implement and within budgetary and capacity constraints of the GoSL.

The plan will be a coordinating vision document for tourism in Sierra Leone--an umbrella for other strategies that exist or are under development. It will build on existing plan in progress or completed such as the Marketing Strategy, Investment Perception Survey and Plan, Site feasibility Studies and Ecotourism Policy, It will provide one overarching vision and objectives and a five-year action plan. The plan shall have a clear focus on sustainable tourism development, particularly ecotourism and promote the empowerment of women through tourism.

**III. Scope of Work and Approach**

**Consultation and public participation**

**The consultants will use a participatory approach to plan and ensure buy-in of sector and community stakeholders.** The consultation process is considered equally as important as the end result within this consultancy so ongoing discussion, feedback and engagement are essential throughout the entire process of producing the National Tourism Strategic Plan.

The consultation will involve a series of discussions and workshops with private sector, government, community, and civil society (CSO) at each stage in the development of the plan; diagnostic, visioning and action plans validation, to ensure wide understanding and ownership of the plan. Consultations should raise awareness about the importance of tourism, its potential and the opportunities that each stakeholder must become engaged in and to impact the sector. A gender balance will be important in these discussions.

Consultations will include:

* Explanation of the National Tourism Strategic Plan development process.
* Awareness raising about the importance of tourism including presenting the current and potential role of tourism in Sierra Leone’s social and economic development.
* Presentation on the tourism value chain and the role different stakeholders play in the sector.
* Review of strengths, weaknesses opportunities and threats to tourism in the country
* Open discussions and/or group work, depending on stakeholder type, to determine stakeholder priorities and collective vision for tourism.

Consultations should be done in coordination with the GoSL to ensure they receive feedback directly and take ownership of the process and final results. Consultations should be inclusive of minority groups, taking into account youth, gender and minority concerns. Consultants should include a detailed consultation process plan in their proposal including the number and location of consultation workshop and a list of proposed stakeholder types that will be consulted. Analysis and solutions to address gender, youth, and minority concerns will be mainstreamed into the planning approach. Social and environmental sustainability will be a key central tenet to the strategy, as is highlighted in the Tourism Policy.

1. **Tourism Sector Diagnostic**
   1. Conduct a diagnostic of Sierra Leone’s tourism sector, including the following elements at minimum:
      1. Institutional framework. This includes briefly assessing the organizational structure and analyzing the roles, capacity and effectiveness of key institutions, stakeholders and partners. Special focus should be put on identifying capacity gaps in areas such as marketing, statistics, and quality control and budget.
      2. Legal and regulatory framework. Review the key regulatory mechanisms impacting the tourism sector in the country including but not limited to: taxation, environmental safeguards, construction permits, licensing, access to foreign exchange, and imports are influencing the development of the sector. Identify any gaps or areas in need of updating particularly related to ecotourism or women in tourism.
      3. Plans. A rapid review of past tourism plans and strategies in Sierra Leone, including annual work plans, their process, results and any lessons learned or observations in process or outcomes.
      4. Enterprises. Analyze results from recent NTB tourism business census including number of establishments by category using NTB survey and other available data
      5. Statistics. Conduct a full review of the collection and analysis of visitor arrival statistics by the Dept of Immigration and NTB. Capacity. Conduct a full review of the capacity of NTB and MoTCA in areas of, data collection, analysis and dissemination and identify any gaps and risks and next steps towards the development of a TSA or tourism economic impact assessment.
      6. Review environmental and social issues: based on discussions with public and private stakeholders, describe the current situation and outlook regarding the positive and negative social, cultural, and environmental impacts of tourism along with any particular sensitivities include climate change issues or issues related to gender-based violence.
      7. Demand trends: working from research produced by NTB, global research providers, the marketing plan, or other initiatives, identify main local, regional, and international demand trends and key segments for future development matched to key products. No primary research is anticipated here as Market Research is currently underway. The consultant may need to conduct desk research to identify existing research on relevant global tourism trends.
      8. Stocktakes of tourism products, key destinations and circuits: map current product by type, location and patterns of tours/ visitor flow current and potential. This should build on rather than repeat current work on the Western Peninsula to include adventure, wildlife and historic destinations up country and in more remote locations with an aim identify priority areas for tourism outside of Freetown and the Western Area such as Kabala, Warawara and Tiwai island. Note that island and wildlife products will be assessed under the policy development for those areas so this plan will not repeat that.
   2. Conduct a rapid competitor analysis of tourism products and strategies adopted by Sierra Leone’s top five international destination competitors (defined in consultation with GoSL).
   3. Summarize the above with a SWOT-style mapping of the diagnostic results for each of the above areas (i-viii).
2. **Strategic Vision, Objectives and Recommendations**

Based on the results of the sector diagnostic, the consultant team will work with the GoSL to assist them in preparing a tourism plan that incorporates social, environmental, cultural and economic considerations. The plan will include:

* 1. Updated vision and goals or validation of the existing vision as articulated in the tourism policy and in line with new marketing strategy.
  2. A set of specific recommendations for improving tourism policy framework and addressing any existing gaps.
  3. A set of objectives and development strategies to reach the updated vision and goals. Measurable annually and 5-year targets will be developed.
  4. Tourism growth and revenue projections incorporating three scenarios
  5. Priority public/PPP investments and policy changes that could improve performance of the sector from a social, environmental and economic perspectives
  6. Priority geographic areas for tourism development

1. **Five-year action plans by category**

Action plans will include priority activities, policies, and implementation arrangements with a clear implementation framework including estimated cost, responsible entity and support entities. For the 5 highest priority actions, more detailed implementation guidelines will be developed and serve as implementation guides to the MTCA/NTB for specific projects and quick wins.

* 1. The plans’ objectives and targets will be based on the sector diagnostic and grounded in the realistic and sustainable utilization of the country’s tourism asset. They will focus on the categories of:
     1. **Institutional framework** with a focus on increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of tourism institutions, improving public sector coordination on tourism and strengthening legal and regulatory frameworks for improved sector governance and increased competitiveness
     2. **Statistical Framework.** Develop a clear set of actions to transition Sierra Leone to best practice in the collection and analysis of visitor statistics, assessment of the economic impact of tourism and the dissemination of the results to stakeholders including the private sector on a regular basis. This will include a draft TOR for and Economic Impact or TSA study for the country.
     3. **Circuit-based product and destination development zones:** map and phase the development of market-oriented priority circuits and destination zones along such circuits in a realistic manner and in-line with market demand (existing and latent), access constraints, lodging availability, impact of tourism development, sustainability, community interest, etc.
     4. **Environmental guidelines:** Guidelines for the management of wildlife-human interaction, natural resource and waste management issues related to tourism. Environmental issues should consider land and marine protection, coastal planning, wildlife conservation, climate change adaptation, resilience, waste management and reduction of plastics.
     5. **Social guidelines** will include strengthening community involvement in tourism and supporting the increased participation of women and youth in the tourism value chain. It will also consider guidelines to prevent the emergence of child-sex tourism, prostitution, drug-use and other criminal activity.

1. **Monitoring Report:** At the close of the assignment, the consultancy will produce a brief monitoring presentation which will include the following details:
   * Summaries of each workshop and consultation process
   * Number of persons consulted, number and location of workshops, broken down by type (private, public, community, CSO), and gender of attendee for the entire consultancy
   * Level of satisfaction of stakeholders with the consultation process (results of short surveys after each workshop)
   * Level of satisfaction of stakeholders with the final plan through a final private sector and community verification process.
2. **Deliverables**

The consultant will submit the following deliverables while carrying out the tasks listed above. Each deliverable will be no longer than 60 pages (excluding annexes) and be accompanied with a summary power point.

| **Deliverables** | **Delivery Dates** |
| --- | --- |
| Inception report, including table of contents of the plan, timeline, travel plan and consultation plan | 2 weeks after contract signing |
| Draft of diagnostic section of strategy | 12 weeks after contract signing |
| Draft of vision and objectives of the Strategy | 12 weeks after contract signing |
| Draft Strategy and Action Plan | 18 weeks after contract signing |
| Final Strategy and Action Plan | 22 weeks after contract signing |
| Monitoring report | 24 weeks after contract signing |
| **Total** | **24 Weeks** |

It is expected for this consultancy to be undertaken under the timeframe of 24 weeks. At least 10 weeks of the team’s time are required to be on site in Sierra Leone.

Validation/comments on deliverables will be provided within 14 days from receipt of the report.

1. **Reporting**

The consultants report to Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs (MoTCA) and the SLEDP Project Coordination Unit and ensure intensive consultations with stakeholders from the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Trade and Industry, the National Protected Areas Authority (NPAA), the Tourism Federation, the board of airlines representatives, the World Bank and other relevant entities.

The implementing entity (beneficiary) of the strategic plan will be the MoTCA, in coordination with partners and sector stakeholders.

1. **Criteria for selection**

The firm will meet the following criteria:

1. International experience in producing strategic tourism master plans, diagnostics and assessments for countries or tourism destinations, having implemented similar projects within the past 7 years
2. Strong experience in participatory processes and consultations, having undertaken at least 3 similar participatory planning exercises with broad stakeholder feedback in the past 7 years
3. Expert with experience in upgrading national statistics systems preferably with UNWTO
4. Experience in carrying out tourism sector or destination investment plans along with identifying and/or assessing lodging investment opportunities in remote locations
5. Strong credentials in sustainable and ecotourism
6. Experience working in similar developing countries, fragile and conflict states, in Africa and knowledge of Sierra Leone in particular is a plus
7. Positive references for the completion of similar assignments are essential
8. Local team members with skills and experience in planning and project logistics

The minimum team leader competencies required are the following.

*Team Leader*

* Advanced Degree in tourism, public policy, or a relevant field
* At least 15 years-experience in the creation and implementation of tourism strategies, policies and plans at the destination or national level
* Evidence of leading the development of at least two previous tourism strategies or master plans in Africa
* Outstanding organizational, project management and leadership skills
* Proven track record in managing ensuring good client communication.
* Experience in institutional assessments and
* Excellent written and oral communication in English

At least three additional team members will be required at least one should be a local consultant and at least one of the team should be a woman.

Product specialist

* Advanced Degree in tourism, public policy or a relevant field
* At least 10 years in the field of tourism planning and policymaking
* Evidence of participation in at least one previous tourism strategy or master plan development process
* Proven experience with tourism product assessment and evaluation
* GIS mapping skills a plus

Statistics tourism expert

* Advanced Degree in tourism, public policy, or a relevant field
* At least 10 years in the field of tourism statistics and related areas
* Proven experience with Tourism Satellite Accounting
* Experience with UNWTO a plus
* Proven ability to work on statistics and immigration systems elsewhere in Africa

Local tourism expert

* Experience in the tourism industry
* Experience in meeting facilitation, logistics and itinerary planning
* Knowledge of the country
* Fluent Krio language

Technical submissions will be no longer that 30 pages. CVs are restricted to two pages per consultant and should be placed in an annex along with firm qualifications which may be up to 10 pages. **Kindly note that key experts are not evaluated at this stage**

The Project Fiduciary Management Unit of Ministry of Finance now invites eligible firms to express their interest in providing the services. The firm should provide information demonstrating having the required relevant experience, managerial and organizational capabilities for the assignment. The shortlisting shall be based on the relevant experience, managerial and organizational capabilities of the firm for the assignment.

The firm will be selected in accordance with the Approved Selection Methods for Quality and Cost Based Selection as set out in the Procurement Regulations Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants under IDA Grants by World Bank Borrowers, (July 2016, Revised November 2017,2018 and fourth edition 2020).

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours.

Project Fiduciary Management Unit

13a Howe Street Freetown

9:00am to 5:00pm Monday -Friday

Expression of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below via email or hard copies not later than 2nd February 2022 at 4:00pm.

Project Fiduciary Management Unit

Ministry of Finance

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