



**REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
(CONSULTING SERVICES – FIRMS SELECTION)**

Republic of Armenia

Local Economy and Infrastructure Development (LEID) Project

Loan No.: P150327

Assignment Title: Consulting Services for Development of Goris Tourism Cluster Vision

Reference No.: TRIP-QBS-DGCV-01

The Government of Armenia has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Local Economy and Infrastructure Development (LEID) Project, and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The Local Economy and Infrastructure Development Project (LEIDP) is expected to result in higher economic growth and employment in the selected regions. Project activities intend to focus on improving the quality and reliability of municipal infrastructure; supporting the tourism and agribusiness development; and creating an enabling environment to attract private sector investments.

The Armenian Territorial Development Fund (ATDF) under the LEID project Component 2: Institutional Development, seeks consultancy services for development Goris Tourism Cluster Vision for Armenia Tourism and Regional Infrastructure Development Project (P179968).

Goris cluster is part of the country-level tourism clusterization strategy to be adopted by the Armenian Government. Among 20 clusters identified by the strategy, Goris tourism cluster aims to develop as a unique cultural heritage destination with a focus on cave and urban culture. The cluster aims to attract both international and domestic visitors by offering diverse tourism experiences such as cultural tourism, adventure tourism, and nature-based tourism. The main objectives of the cluster include developing a competitive destination for cultural, adventure, and nature-based tourism, attracting new investors, creating new jobs, and improving the standards of living for the locals.

"Goris is a favored overnight location for many local and foreign tourists who visit popular tourist sites located in Southern Armenia such as Tatev Monastery Complex and Wings of Tatev ropeway, and Zorats Qarer megalithic complex. The town has a lot of accommodation and restaurants too. First settled in the Stone Age, Goris and neighboring settlements are considered to have a huge potential for becoming a unique cultural heritage destination. Several investments have already been made to revamp the community heritage center under the ongoing LEIDP, including: (i) renovation of the residential houses in the central part of Goris, (ii) restoration of the cultural and historical environment, restoration of riverbank of Vararakh river, and (iii) refurbishment of a prominent writer's house-museum."

Within the Goris tourism cluster, the primary focus of interventions within Armenia Tourism and Regional Infrastructure Development Project would be put on but not limited with the available unique resources-caves, whose potential has not been revealed at its fullest and used yet. The list of nearby settlements that might be included in the cluster are: Goris (Center), Shinuhayr, (Old) Khot, (Old) Halidzor, (Old) Harzhis, and (Old) Khndzoresk. The possible investment components might include: (i) development of cave restoration concept under one single umbrella which will become the dominant brand component / “visit card” due to its uniqueness, a mandatory point of this component is the profound analysis by speleologist of the security aspects of the caves and their transformation to tourist places, (ii) development and establishment of connecting the caves including hiking trails and paths, (iii) creation and establishment of concepts for cave theater/cave museum, cave exhibition galleries with mandatory usage of IT & innovation technologies where the cave walls will allow, (iv) reorganization of the lifestyle of ancient settlements, possibility of equipping caves for tourists stays, that does not hinder the historical and environmental features; (v) development of digital products presenting the uniqueness of ancient Goris center and other settlements in the cluster.

The objective of this assignment is to assess the current socio-economic context of Goris cluster and propose a prioritized portfolio of investments that will turn the existing unique cultural and natural assets into high value tourism products. These investments should be aimed at enlivening public and private spaces, breathing new life into structures and streetscapes, bolstering local business viability, and enhancing public safety. The envisioned outcome is a more resilient Goris with sustainable and thriving tourism ecosystem.

Throughout the work, the consultant is expected to ensure active engagement of key ecosystem actors, considering this endeavor as a collaborative effort by locals, individuals, and groups to collectively reimagine their surroundings.

The consultant shall:

The proposed engagement unfolds into the following two tracks:

- Phase 1: Cluster Context Analysis;
- Phase 2: Cluster Investment Portfolio

The details of the works envisaged under each phase include:

Phase 1: Cluster Context Analysis

1.1 Baseline assessment of the current state, including

- i) Assets [detailed mapping of all endowed (e.g. nature, cultural heritage) and acquired (e.g. events/festivals, hiking trail networks)]
- ii) Ecosystem actors [detailed mapping of key public (both local and central), private and civil society actors engaged/contributing to the tourism value chain, mapping/analysis of the current linkages/interdependencies between the actors, and their role within the existing ecosystem]
- iii) Tourist [profiling of key tourist archetypes, their motivations, preferences, variety of experiences (including type, length, cost)]
- iv) Host community [socio-demographic characteristics of the host community, behavioral patterns, perception of tourism impact, social cohesion matters in regard to locals engaged in tourism related jobs and not]

1.2 Trends / benchmark analysis

i) Analysis of global trends for heritage cave sites and outline the specific advantages/potential that Goris cluster has, to be positioned/branded as a competitive regional destination

ii) Benchmark analysis - analysis of regional and international benchmarks (both peer and aspirational cases, up to 6) to understand the competitive landscape and potential market segments/niches, while at the same time, including the not successful experiences and lessons learnt.

1.3 Gap analysis

[detailed description of gaps identified across the tourism value chain and framing of development needs both within hard and soft infrastructure]

1.4 Cluster specialization

[outline of potential tourist value propositions, experiences, product/service lines within cultural tourism (heritage cave sites in particular), adventure and nature tourism driven both by global tourism trends and local context]

Phase 2: Cluster Investment Portfolio

2.1. Selection criteria [strategic rationale/selection criteria for the investments to be included in the cluster;] 2.3 Feasibility study of investments [detailed description of each investment in the cluster, including operational model, cash flows and financial outcomes; assessment of feasibility from implementation, operation and maintenance stances, stakeholder management plan (power/interest matrix), impact value chain, risk management plan;]

2.4. Investment portfolio – [portfolio level aggregation of all cluster investments in terms of operations and financial flows]

2.5. Management modality of the cluster [governance and modus operandi of the structure responsible for the overall destination management]

The implementation period is **four months** after signing the contract.

The Armenian Territorial Development Fund (ATDF) now invites eligible consulting firms (“Consultants”) to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services.

The shortlisting criteria are:

The contractor should:

a) Provide evidence on minimum 10-years work experience in development of strategic development documents.

b) Relevant experience in developing and implementing strategic visions in at least one community in Armenia or somewhere else.

Examples of similar work samples from previous projects; brief description, duration, name of the client (beneficiary) should be presented. If the results of the service are available online, the relevant link must be presented.

The contractor best complying with all the qualification criteria, must present in the Technical Proposal the methodology of services and describe how the relevant professional and organizational standards will be met during the implementation.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to paragraph 1.9 of the World Bank’s Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants under IBRD Loans by World Bank

Borrowers (“Consultant Guidelines”), setting forth the World Bank’s policy on conflict of interest.

Consultants may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture or a sub consultancy to enhance their qualifications. The consortium of maximum 3 different members is allowed.

A Consultant will be selected in accordance with the Quality-Based Selection (QBS) method set out in the Consultant Guidelines.

Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours from **09:00 to 17:00 (Yerevan time)**.

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by e-mail) by **April 23, 2024, at 17:00 (Yerevan time)**.

Armenian Territorial Development Fund
Attn: Mrs. Lilit Sedrakyan
Head of Procurement Department
Yerevan 0037, Armenia
K. Ulnetsu st. 31bld
Tel: (+374 60) 501 560 ext.508
E-mail: L.Sedrakyan@atdf.am