﻿**USAID Trade & Competitiveness (USAID T&C)**

**Title of Assignment:**Assisting Pokhara Metropolitan City (PMC) in developing comprehensive Terms of Reference (TORs) for different tourism initiatives to be commissioned by PMC.

**Type of Consultancy:**Short-Term Technical Assistance (STTA)(Individual)

**Period of implementation:** 15th February 2024 to 14 April 2024 (2 months)

**LOE:**Up to 15 Days

**Project Description**

**USAID Trade and Competitiveness Activity (Activity)** is a five-year activity that will provide opportunities for the Nepali economy as it recovers from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Activity will enable Nepal to capitalize on global integration to diversify toward higher quality and higher value exports, foster sustainable job growth and income-generating opportunities for those that have previously been left behind by economic growth, and create greater sustainability and resiliency. The Activity will also deliberately promote the integration of women, youth, and marginalized groups into markets to participate in economic opportunities created as Nepal’s economy grows. It will increase jobs and exports while supporting the private sector in managing risks from climate change, COVID-19, and other threats.

The goal is to accelerate firm and sector level competitiveness, generate employment opportunities, and increase sales of firms through interventions that incentivize public and private sector actors across the ecosystem to adopt new behaviors driving outcomes across four objectives:

1. To increase access to market-based financial and non-financial services;
2. To increase productivity in sectors with high growth and employment potential;
3. To improve the investment climate and business enabling environment (BEE), especially for targeted sectors; and
4. To support private sector-led economic recovery.

**Background**

Nepal, despite its tourism potential, falls short of maximizing its capabilities. Pre-pandemic, tourism contributed around 7.5% to the GDP and supported 7.8% of direct and indirect employment—figures below the global average of 10%. Average daily tourist spending in Nepal stood at $40 which is very low compared with other South Asian countries. Economic benefits primarily concentrated in four of the seven provinces, and despite the inauguration of two new international airports, the anticipated surge in arrivals has not materialized.

The tourism sector is a pivotal focus within the current Activity, identified as having substantial opportunities for both vertical and horizontal expansion. Recognized for its potential to generate employment, create business avenues, and contribute to overall economic growth, the tourism sector faces challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, including inadequate infrastructure, a shortage of skilled human resources, and limited promotional and market access initiatives.

A 2023 Firm Performance Survey revealed the tourism sector's slow recovery, reaching only 38% of pre-pandemic sales levels. Factors contributing to this slow rebound include substantial investments in the sector for "Visit Nepal 2020," followed by the disruptive shocks of the COVID-19 pandemic, increased petroleum prices due to the Ukraine War, and a financial liquidity crisis from mid-2022 to mid-2023.

Identified opportunities for reviving the sector encompass attracting long-stay tourists, extending the tourism season, exploring new market segments, targeting expats from the Gulf region, and venturing into wellness tourism. Specific attention is given to the preferences of different demographic groups, such as Millennials, Gen Z, and high-income Indian tourists, each requiring distinct approaches for engagement. Digitalization and ICT emerge as pivotal trends shaping the tourism landscape. However, Nepal lags in ICT readiness, as highlighted by the World Economic Forum's 2021 assessment.

The Federal structure implemented since 2015 provides a unique opportunity for strengthening Destination Management Organizations at the subnational level. The Activity signed a Letter of Collaboration with Pokhara Metropolitan City (PMC) on November 9, 2023. Within the framework of the Activity, the focus encompasses collaboration with local governments to address challenges in budget alignment, with emphasis on Agriculture, Tourism, and Digital Services. Recently, the formation of a study committee by the Gandaki provincial government underscores the recommendation to declare Pokhara as the tourism capital of Nepal, emphasizing the cooperation and coordination between Gandaki Provincial Government and PMC. There is a clear need to enhance PMC's Tourism Department's technical capabilities for sectoral development along with an action plan for its implementation, ultimately supporting the goal of declaring Pokhara as the Tourism Capital City.

**Purpose**

This assignment seeks to hire a short-term technical assistance (STTA) to develop three Terms of Reference (TORs)- tasks, deliverables, timelines and qualifications for hiring Tourism Experts to carry out the following:

1. Development of the Integrated Tourism Development Master plan for Pokhara.
2. Development of the action plan of Pokhara as Tourism Capital City.
3. Formulation of a MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) strategy and a detailed action plan.

The STTA should have a good understanding of the global trends and local (Nepal and Pokhara) tourism context, government procedures, and procurement rules and regulations. The consultant will work collaboratively with PMC to produce comprehensive TORs that align with PMC’s vision, take into consideration ongoing and planned activities and available resources. All three documents should be completed no later than 14 April 2024. The below activities are planned under this technical assistance:

* Carry out secondary research to gather insights from global best practices in the proposed areas of TOR development.
* Identify key stakeholders to be involved in the formulation of the three documents.
* Conduct in-depth discussions with PMC, City Planning Commission (CPC) and other stakeholders to comprehend the city's vision and strategic goals, industry needs, expectations, and desired outcomes focused on enhancing existing tourism products and creating new ones.
* Take stock of existing activities undertaken by PMC independently and in collaboration with donors, bilateral, and multilateral agencies. Ensure that ongoing and planned activities are considered in the TOR development.
* The TORs should be detailed to ensure that it provides potential bidders with clarity on the tasks, outcomes, deliverables, timelines, and action plans to guide PMC.
* Define key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure the success of the master plan and action plans.
* Finalize the TORs and submission to the Activity and PMC. The below TORs are expected to be submitted at the minimum -
  + Integrated Tourism Development Master Plan for Pokhara;
  + Action Plan for Designating Pokhara as Tourism Capital City;
  + MICE Strategy and Detailed Action Plan.

**Deliverables, Timeline and Payment Schedule**

The below are the deliverables, timelines and payment schedule for the assignment:

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| **#** | **Deliverable** | **Due Date** | **Payment Schedule** |
| 1. | Inception report detailing the approach and methodology for carrying out the assignment. | 23 February, 2024 | 10% |
| 2. | Presentation on the outcome of the stakeholder Consultations | 08 March, 2024 | 20% |
| 3. | Submission of Draft TORs for review:   1. Integrated Tourism Development Master Plan for Pokhara. 2. Action Plan for Designating Pokhara as Tourism Capital City. 3. MICE Strategy and Detailed Action Plan. | 29 March, 2024 | 40% |
| 4. | Submission of the final TORs incorporating the comments from the Activity and PMC. | 14 April, 2024 | 30% |

**Required Qualifications:**

* Masters in Tourism, Business Management, or related field.
* 7 years’ experience in developing tourism masterplans, tourism strategy and tourism product development.
* Familiarity with MICE tourism and international trends in tourism.
* Familiarity with procurement rules and regulations.
* Good understanding of the local context and government procedures.
* Experience of working with the local government preferred.

**Contractual and working arrangements.**

The selected applicant shall work in close collaboration with PMC and CPC under the technical guidance of Vice Chairman of CPC. The working modality shall be agreed between the selected applicant, PMC, CPC, GPPC and USAID T&C. The applicant shall report periodically to USAID T&C office as and when required/ requested and coordinate with Public Investment Mobilization Manager of USAID T&C for this purpose. All deliverables shall be approved by PMC and CPC before being submitted to USAID T&C. Payments shall be processed by USAID T&C only after the approval of deliverables and all applicable taxes shall be deducted at source.

**Proposal submission and evaluation**

Interested service providers (individuals) are requested to submit their interest with a CV and cover letter no later than**05th February 2024** **at 5:00 PM**via email to [**info@tc-udhyamnepal.com**](http://tc-udhyamnepal.com/) with a subject line “(Candidates Full Name) + Technical Assistance for Assisting Pokhara Metropolitan City (PMC) in developing comprehensive Terms of Reference (TORs)”. Applicants are encouraged to share documents, publications, research papers or reports of any similar work that might add value in the evaluation process. Applicants are required to mention their overall engagement cost for 2 months under consultancy agreement arrangement.

Proposal shall be evaluated based on the criteria below:

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| **SN** | **Criteria** | **Weight** | **Source of evaluation** |
| 1 | Educational background and relevancy to the assignment. | 10% | CV |
| 2 | Knowledge and years of experience related to the assignment. | 70% | CV and additional documents as shared by applicant |
| 3 | Communication (written and verbal in Nepali and English) and query handing skills, facilitation skills for Public Private Dialogue. | 20% | Interview and observation |

Two to three applicants securing the highest score in criteria 1 and 2 of above table shall be invited for an interview and final selection decision shall be made.

All interested applicants shall submit their resume to [**info@tc-udhyamnepal.com**](http://tc-udhyamnepal.com/) no later than COB **5.00 pm February 16, 2024**.