



Terms of Reference (ToR)

Baseline assessment in Rural Tourism Sector

Swisscontact Kosovo for the project:

Fostering Employment and Growth Opportunities (FEGO)

Introduction

The Fostering Employment and Growth Opportunities (FEGO) project in Kosovo is financed by Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and implemented by Swisscontact in Kosovo. The project aims to generate employment and income for women, men, and youth, presently living in poverty and socio-economic marginalization. This is intended to be achieved through sustainable and scalable growth of micro/small (family) business and start-ups, in the apparel, furniture and rural tourism sectors.

FEGO applies a Market Systems Development (MSD) approach, specifically focusing on market facilitation through new, innovative business models to ensure large-scale sustainable changes in respective sectors. The project will reach its goal through two main objectives: 1) Fostering the growth and development of micro/small (family) business in the *apparel* and *furniture* sectors and facilitating their entrepreneurship growth and 2) supporting local communities operating with rural tourism activities, and their micro and small enterprises towards development **of rural tourism**. Both outcomes will contribute to more sustainable and inclusive market systems, improving income, productivity and enhancing job creation in the private sector, therefore contributing to address high unemployment and poverty rates in the country, especially amongst youth and women. Swisscontact, through the FEGO project, promotes inclusive social, economic, and ecological development to make an effective contribution towards sustainable and widespread prosperity, offering the chance to economically and socially disadvantaged people to improve their lives on their own initiative.

Background

Rural tourism is amongst three sectors that FEGO project considers with priority and plans to intervene during this phase of project implementation. The project focuses on supporting micro and small businesses in rural areas with potential to develop rural tourism services.

The tourism sector in Kosovo is still in the early stages of development with more significant signs of improvement having taken place within the last five to seven years. While the increased sector

development has had an impact on official data provision, the latter remains scarce with limited information and rural tourism data. Availability of rural tourism data and market information in certain destinations is key to the successful implementation of FEGO interventions, strategic planning and in monitoring and results measurement. As such, the FEGO project has selected several destinations to start with the project interventions where more information on such destinations is needed. The selected destinations to initiate the FEGO interventions are Jazerc (Municipality of Ferizaj), Municipality of Rahovec, Zym and the surrounded villages of Has (Municipality of Prizren).

As part of this assignment, FEGO is interested in undertaking a baseline study to gather data and information in the selected destinations in the rural tourism sector in Kosovo.

Objective and Scope of the Baseline

The objective of the baseline assessment is to identify the baseline level of the indicators (quantitative and qualitative) and to gather information on the selected destination in the rural tourism sector prior to start of the project interventions which then serve as a benchmark from which to measure the progress of the project interventions. The baseline data is crucial for the project as it will be a reference milestone throughout the project. Furthermore, this assessment will also generate information that will be important for the FEGO project team to assess and understand the starting point of intervention against later progress that will be used for reporting the project implementing period.

The baseline assessment will be completed before the start of the project intervention and the information gathered will be in regard to size of the destination, number of MSMEs, services (accommodation units, food and drinks providers, transportation), products, attractions, inbound tour operators, visitors/tourists, employment, revenues, promotion and marketing channels used, enabling business environment etc.

The baseline data is to be used for monitoring, measuring, and evaluating the FEGO project implementation and outcomes. It is meant to constitute the basis to measure the project performance over time. Furthermore, baseline information will be utilized for implementation, to develop new and adopt existing interventions. As such, the FEGO team is interested in services of a consultant/s or companies to conduct the baseline assessment for the FEGO rural tourism sector. The consultant is expected to develop an in-depth understanding of the current situation in the selected destinations.

The key objectives of the baseline assessment are:

- Assess the situation of the rural tourism sector in the given selected destinations;
- Modify baseline survey questionnaire, collect data from field and data analysis;
- Interpret findings from the data collection methods and field visits in line with project outputs and outcomes;
- Analyze the information and suggest modifications in the indicators if needed to better assess the situation and contribute to project interventions;
- Develop a comprehensive baseline report of the project.

Finally, due to the substantial impact that the coronavirus pandemic COVID-19 has had on the tourism industry, the baseline study will also incorporate aspects of COVID-19 in regards to fluctuations in the number of tourists/visitors in the period 2019-2021.

Methodology and Approach

The selected consultant/s or company will be required to prepare a detailed research methodology in coordination with the FEGO team. Baseline assessment will be proposed to apply both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods and review secondary information to source the appropriate information from the respondents. The survey will be conducted using structured questionnaire developed by the FEGO team in close coordination with the consultant/s and key informant interviews in order to triangulate and collect qualitative data.

Primary data collection will be collected through mobilization of qualified enumerators which their selection is the responsibility of the consultant/s or company. The consultant/s or company will be responsible for management of enumerators and electronic devices required for this assessment. Similarly, consultant/s or company is also liable for capacity building of enumerators (orientation to enumerators) on data collection tools etc. The surveys should be done using digital data collection tools such as KoBo Toolbox where all of the surveys will be recorded and accessed at any time. Appropriate sampling methodology will be used to determine sampling frame. FEGO aims to interview all tourism related actors in the selected destinations. However, the consultant/s or company should not be limited only to the proposed methods.

The baseline assessment will be carried out in Jezerc (Municipality of Ferizaj), Municipality of Rahovec, Zym and surrounded villages of Has (Municipality of Prizren) and the baseline data should also include segregation of beneficiaries by age, gender and ethnicity.

Below are some of the indicative baseline assessment questions for the selected destinations. The final questionnaire will be developed in close coordination between all stakeholders.

- a) Size of the destination;
- b) Products and services offered in the destination (restaurants, accommodation, transportation, outdoor tourism products, cultural sites/monuments, artisanal etc.);
- c) Travel agencies/operators and their touristic package;
- d) Workforce in the sector and the required skills;
- e) Tourists/visitors flow (international, regional and domestic);
- f) Level of satisfaction of tourists/visitors;
- g) Revenues generated by SMEs;
- h) Promotional channels that SMEs use;
- i) Quality of the services offered in the destination.

Task and Responsibilities

To achieve the objectives, the consultant/s or company is responsible for the following during the baseline process:

- Provide a detailed methodology for undertaking the baseline assessment including tools and data collection plan;
- Conduct secondary research for rural tourism sector in the selected destination (information related to international, diaspora and local visitors, based on indicators such as number visitors/arrivals, length of stay, origin, gender, age groups, spending etc and other relevant information);
- Modify baseline survey questionnaire in close coordination with the FEGO team;
- Carry out data collection, including surveys, interviews with key stakeholders and focus group discussions (if relevant);
- Supervise the whole process of conducting interviews and surveys;
- Ensuring quality assurance through continuous monitoring of enumerators and immediate logical checks and random verification of completed questionnaires;
- Prepare the draft baseline report;
- Revise the draft report as per the FEGO team comments;
- Deliver the final baseline report based on feedback and comment incorporation.

Deliverables

The consultant/s or company is expected to deliver the following:

- The baseline report in the selected destination for the rural tourism sector in Kosovo

The report must be written in English.

Timeframe

The assignment period is planned between the period from mid of August 2022 to mid of October 2022.

All costs including, travel expenses, meals, enumerators' fee and other related costs, should be foreseen in the consultant/s' or company's proposal.

Consultant/s or company experience:

- Be a consulting individual/company with expertise on economics, business administration and/or statistics;
- A minimum of 7 years of proven relevant experience and practical working experience in conducting market research, baseline assessment and managing surveys;
- Strong capacity and experience in planning and organizing survey logistics;

- Good network of experienced enumerators, supervisors and data entry clerks;
- Proven knowledge of tourism sector and tourism businesses in Kosovo;
- Capability to deliver required outputs on schedule;
- Good interpersonal, social, communication and computer skills;
- Fluency in English. Excellent written and verbal communication skills in English;

Contact and Submission of Offer

Interested candidates/companies shall submit a brief technical and a financial offer based on the terms of reference by 08 August 2022, CoB with the subject REF: “FEGO Baseline assessment in rural tourism sector” to fegoinfo@swisscontact.org.

Applicants must submit:

- Professional profile of the consultant/company (CVs of consultant or team of consultants);
- Technical Offer including (methodology that shall be used, draft work plan and suggested timetable);
- Financial offer (indication of specific costs in gross amount).