



TOR for Expert

Head Office / Secretariat of the Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group in South-Eastern Europe (SWG) – Skopje

Terms of Reference (ToR) for experts for organization of Online workshop/s and development of small Guide Books for rural tourism regarding legal and administrative procedures in North Macedonia

1. Introduction

The Regional Rural Development Standing Working Group (SWG), as a platform for networking and regional co-operation, has been established during the Agricultural Policy Forum 2005 (“Rural Development Opportunities for Co-operation in the SEE”) held in North Macedonia and Serbia in June 2005.

With the International Agreement in March 2009, the SWG is registered as an International Intergovernmental Organization, with its managing and coordinative body – SWG Head Office/Secretariat based in Skopje, North Macedonia. On September 7th 2009, the Law on Ratification of the SWG Agreement has been decisively completed by the Parliament of the Republic of North Macedonia.

The main SWG strategic framework is composed of the following elements:

SWG vision is to promote innovative and sustainable agriculture and rural development through regional cooperation, to improve rural livelihoods in the SEE countries.

Mission - to increase horizontal cooperation among respective countries and territories of South Eastern Europe, by coordinating regional initiatives related to agriculture and rural development and supporting the process of social and economic development of rural areas in SEE region.

General objective of SWG is to facilitate close cooperation between the Ministries of Agriculture and other stakeholders in the field of agriculture and rural development and to support EU integration in SEE. The SWG has four specific objectives on which the organization has focused its work:

- To improve the common understanding on agriculture and rural development policies;



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- To assist the improvement of implementing structures and systems for agriculture and rural development, with specific emphasis on cross border cooperation;
- To improve the understanding and use of implementation tools for agriculture and rural development;
- To identify and share information and application of good practice in agriculture and rural development to broaden the rural agenda.

2. Background

In September 2018 the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development approved the realization of a 3-years regional programme with the title “**Support to economic diversification of rural areas in Southeast Europe (SEDRA)**”.

The project aims at strengthening the institutional capacities of selected stakeholders in South-east Europe for supporting EU-compliant economic diversification in rural areas.

The renewed EU accession process is the main incentive for harmonisation and adaptation of the rural development policies and instruments of the six Southeast European countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo*, North Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia) to the needs of their rural regions and the people living there. An explicit aim of the EU is to strengthen economic and social cohesion through its structural policy, its common agricultural policy (CAP) and their accompanying instruments.

The project contributes to improvement of the technical, methodological and implementation capacities for evidence-based rural development policies for economic diversification, facilitates community-led area-based development, as well as, value chain development.

The regional project includes the Southeast European countries/territories and the lead executing agencies are the ministries competent for agriculture and rural development, through their membership in the regional organisation Standing Working Group for Regional Rural Development (SWG RRD), which at the same time is the main implementing partner.

The three central project outputs are:

- 1) Regional cooperation and policy advice,
- 2) Sustainable business models, and
- 3) Community-led and area-based development strategies.

3. Specific situation

The project strengthens the regional and national capacities in SEE states and the whole region through facilitating theme-specific policy dialogues and providing technical expertise on issues related to the economic diversification as a key strategy for rural development.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence



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The target group of the project is the rural population in the selected project countries, especially in border areas, which is especially affected by poverty, due to the structural weakness of such areas as well as stakeholders (public, private and civil society) involved in the realization of rural development policies and programmes. The SWG RRD has already established regional cooperation structures and networks in the seven cross-border regions Sharra (Albania, Kosovo and North Macedonia), Prespa (Albania and North Macedonia), Drina-Tara (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia), Drina-Sava (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Serbia), Krsh (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Montenegro), Prokletije-Bjeshket e Nemuna (Albania, Kosovo, and Montenegro), and Pcinja-Krajshte (Bulgaria, North Macedonia, and Serbia) within the framework of an EU supported area-based development approach.

The project also aims to develop sustainable business models in structurally weak border regions. This includes improvement of the production and marketing of agricultural and wild products, local crafts and culinary traditions, digitalization, and sustainable tourism. The support is realized through capacity building and targeted investments for relevant key stakeholders from the private sector that will facilitate the cooperation and networking process.

The project addresses two value chains:

1. Traditional products:

Traditional products are an important part of culture, identity, and heritage. Local agro-food products are foods that people perceive to have some added value(s) because of its place of origin. Most of the selected cross-border regions are already famous for their typical dairy and meat products or processed non-wood forest plants, local crops, fruit and vegetables. The value chain aims to foster productive, commercial, and institutional relationships among small-holders, farmers, consumers, and their respective organizations, and its purpose is to develop /strengthen the value chain in the regional and domestic market. The grant scheme aims to provide more employment for rural population by making the small farming sustained through investments support in adding value through traditional processing. Adding value to agricultural production in rural areas offers tremendous potential to boost rural employment, incomes, reduce poverty and improve diversification.

2. Tourism:

The overall objective of rural tourism is to provide a sustainable source of local revenue to integrate and enable local communities to improve their living conditions through own means while contributing to the conservation of natural and cultural assets (biodiversity, natural and cultural heritage and traditional values). Rural tourism involves a range of activities and services offered by the population in rural areas. It is based on the principles of sustainability and a set of elements that contain the region's environment, natural resources, environmental values of local residents and traditional hospitality, culture & history. The primary beneficiaries of rural tourism are the local population, particularly the small-holders and farmers which profit from increased demand for local products and specialties.

The main outcomes of this assignment are:



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- Preparation of materials and conducting 1-to-3 (depending on situation) online or/and in person workshops jointly with SWG team members where legal and administrative procedures regarding rural tourism will be presented to participants from North Macedonia;
- Preparation of a small Guide Book for rural tourism regarding legal and administrative procedures which should include some of the following topics:
 - Expectations of guests from rural tourism (up to 1 page);
 - Introduction with cross cutting issues related to legal and administrative procedures in rural tourism (up to 1 page);
 - Possible expenses (including hidden expenses) relevant with existing legal framework;
 - Step by step on how to register rural tourism household (up to 3-4 pages per country);
 - Categorization of rural tourism household with examples from respective countries;
 - Future legal framework for development of rural tourism (e.g ecological standards, EU perspectives);
 - Required knowledge and skills (legal and administrative issues);
 - Positive and negative examples from the WB region (photos).

4. Scope of work

The assignment includes the following tasks:

- Report/Minutes from on line workshop ;
- Short Guide Books for rural tourism regarding legal and administrative procedures should be developed up to 20 pages with photos (B5 format)

The Contractee might be required to perform additional tasks that are deemed necessary for the completion of the defined assignment.

All activities will be closely coordinated by SWG within the programme “Support to economic diversification of rural areas in Southeast Europe (SEDRA)”.

5. Reporting and deliverables

The expert reports to the SWG Head of operations – Ms. Katerina Kolemisevska and the SWG Regional Manager – Mr. Darko Buzaroski.

The following deliverables are foreseen for the expert within this ToR:



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Deliverable	Timeframe/Deadline in 2021
Short Guide book in local language with representative photos	15 March
Power Point slides in local language for organization of On-line or in person workshop	23 March
Technical Report	30 March

6. Time and Place of assignment

The place of assignment of the expert is North Macedonia.

All travel, accommodation, transportation and any additional costs occurring from the travel arrangements for participation on the field missions to the participating countries will be covered by the contracted party and should be accounted in the financial offer.

7. Timeframe

The expert should accomplish the deliverables from the date on which the last party signs the contract until 30 March 2021.

8. Minimum qualifications of the expert(s)

- Minimum university degree in tourism, hospitality or closely related economic or social science discipline relevant to the assignment;
- Extensive experience (at least 10 years) in field of rural tourism ;
- Proven working experience in rural tourism;
- Ability to work in a team;
- Experiences in preparation of various reports, documents;
- Knowledge and experience from the targeted regions;
- Knowledge of current trends in rural development with a special focus on rural tourism;
- Existing knowledge of current trends of rural development / rural tourism in the Western Balkans would be an advantage;
- Extensive knowledge of English language, advanced writing and communication skills.