

SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE JOBS LENDING AT SCALE

RECOMMENDATION REPORT FOR TOURISM SECTOR JOB RETENTION AND POST-PANDEMIC EXPANSION

August 2020

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1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Tajikistan and its tourism sector

1. **The Republic of Tajikistan is a mountainous state in Central Asia, bordering Afghanistan, China, the Kyrgyz Republic, and Uzbekistan.** Tajikistan is similar in size to Greece and Nepal and has a population of 9.6 million people¹, more than half of whom are under 25. The main population centres are Dushanbe (population 846,400), Khujand (181,600), Bokhtar (110,800) and Kulob (105,500), whilst the entirety of the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO), which covers almost half of Tajikistan's land area, has a population of just 226,900 people.
2. **In 2019, Tajikistan's GDP was \$8.1 billion², equivalent to \$844 per person.** It is a lower middle income country, and since 2000 economic growth has averaged 7.7% a year. The key economic sectors are energy, mining, and agriculture, with small amounts of industry and manufacturing, forestry, fishing, and tourism. It should be noted that wealth is not evenly distributed within the country. It is estimated that only 13% of jobs in Tajikistan are in the formal private sector, there is a high level of dependence on remittances from migrant workers, and the poverty rate is 27.4%. Women, youth, and returned migrant workers, and those in rural areas, are particularly likely to be living in poverty.
3. **Tajikistan's capital, Dushanbe, is in the west of the country, close to the border with Uzbekistan.** Dushanbe has an international airport (IATA code: DYU), which is the base for national airlines Somon Air and Tajik Air. There are good flight connections with Moscow; reasonable connections with Almaty, Dubai, Istanbul and New Delhi; and less regular connections to a short list of other destinations, most of which are in neighbouring countries and in Russia. The only flight to the European Union is the Somon Air flight to Frankfurt, so the majority of European visitors route via Istanbul or Moscow. Poor flight connectivity and high ticket prices severely restrict Tajikistan's potential for tourism growth, and it is not expected that the situation will improve in the short- to mid-term.
4. **President Rahmon has declared 2018-22 to be the years of "Rural Development, Tourism and Folk Crafts"**. This demonstrates high-level domestic support for developing the country's tourism sector. The planning and implementation of tourism policies is the responsibility of the State Committee for Tourism Development, and there is support in the form of finance and technical assistance from a range of international donors, including the World Bank, Asia Development Bank, DFID, and USAID.
5. **International arrivals in Tajikistan have increased from 160,000 in 2010 to 1.25 million in 2018³.** It should be noted, however, that the majority of these arrivals are not tourists, but rather people from neighbouring countries who cross the border regularly on business or to visit friends and family. According to official data, 230,000 tourists entered Tajikistan in the first six months of 2019⁴, so an estimate of 400,000 for the year at the whole is probably reasonable, though this may include a significant proportion of business

¹ <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/tajikistan-population/>

² <https://data.worldbank.org/country/TJ>

³ <https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/pdf/10.18111/9789284421152>

⁴ <https://www.s-ge.com/sites/default/files/publication/free/economic-report-tajikistan-eda-2019-12.pdf>

tourists. Better data collection and analysis is required to accurately understand the number and profile of arrivals.

6. **UNWTO reports that in 2018, Tajikistan's international tourism receipts were \$9 million (ibid).** This appears to be an error in reporting, however, as even using the lower figure of 400,000 arrivals, that would equate to an average spend of just \$22.50 per visitor. The World Bank's figure of \$170.9 million looks to be more accurate, and is commensurate with the tourism revenue for 2017⁵. World Bank research suggests that a typical international tourist in Tajikistan spends \$800 to \$1,400 (excluding airfare) for a 6-12 day trip, which is significantly below the global average of \$3,000 for an 8-day adventure tour⁶.
7. **Tajikistan's core tourism product is adventure tourism.** The Pamir Highway is internationally regarded by overlanders and cyclists, and there are excellent opportunities for hiking and climbing in the Pamir, Fann, and Zeravshan Mountains. The Tajik National Park, which covers much of the Pamir, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Wakhan Corridor is used as a transit point into Afghanistan, as well as being a destination in its own right. Tajikistan has significant potential to develop its adventure tourism products further, particularly for niche and high profile tourism activities such as wildlife watching, astro-tourism, and backcountry skiing. This would extend the tourism season as well as increasing the number and value of the tourists who come.
8. **Cultural tourism in Tajikistan is in its infancy, but has significant growth potential.** The country has a rich history and a large number of archaeological sites, including a UNESCO World Heritage Site at Sarazm; the Sogdian capital of Ancient Panjakent; important Buddhist sites at Ajina Tepa and Takht-i Sangin; fortresses and citadels at Hisar, Hulbuk, Karon, and Yamchun (amongst others); as well as medieval shrines, mausoleums, and mosques. These attractions can be combined with Tajikistan's intangible cultural heritage -- in particular its gastronomy, music and dance, and applied arts and handicrafts -- to create varied itineraries and appeal to a different market segment.
9. **A number of critical areas hold back tourism development and growth in Tajikistan.** Poor transport connectivity to and within the country makes logistics difficult and drives up costs. The quality of accommodation and restaurants outside cities is generally poor, so investment is required in infrastructure, sanitation and hygiene, and training. There is a shortage of qualified guides, and little information is available about tourism sites. Tajikistan's tourism brand has little international visibility, and so needs to be strengthened and promoted more effectively in target markets.

1.2 The Rural Economic Development Project (REDP)

10. **The Republic of Tajikistan has received financing from the International Development Association of the World Bank Group (WBG) for the implementation of the Tajikistan Rural Economy Development Project (REDP).** The project's development objective is to improve the sources of livelihood for local populations in the

⁵ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/ST.INT.RCPT.CD?locations=TJ>

⁶ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/opinion/2019/12/03/how-to-develop-tourism-in-tajikistan>

Gorno Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO) and Khatlon regions through tourism and agribusiness. Detailed project information can be found in the project appraisal document.

11. Tourism has been identified as one of the most important drivers of growth for Tajikistan. Growth in the tourism industry is intended to generate economic opportunities for local populations, especially for vulnerable groups, including women, youth and returning migrant workers. The increased employment opportunities offered by community-based tourism will allow these groups to be productive and would discourage them from activities such as joining religious extremist groups or engaging in drug trafficking activities.

12. The project is structured according to four components, organized based on the types of intervention and beneficiaries:

i. Component 1 focuses on improving public infrastructure for the development of agribusiness and tourism.

ii. Component 2 supports micro small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs) and entrepreneurs in agribusiness, community-based tourism, and related sectors through matching grants.

iii. Component 3 focuses on strengthening skills, entrepreneurship, and business development services to enable potential beneficiaries to gain fully from the grant programs under Components 1 and 2.

iv. Component 4 provides project coordination and implementation as well as grant management and administration.

13. Component 3 includes capacity-building for public and private sectors. This component will finance three specific activities, among others. The first is training and advisory services on tourism and agribusiness development for public institutions (for example, analysis of global trends, market analysis, and public-private partnership to develop the sectors). The training will be for stakeholders such as the Tourism Development Committee, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Culture, and other project participants. The second activity is promoting tourism and agribusiness by organizing and taking part in trade fairs, familiarization or learning tours (for tour operators and agribusinesses), and media and marketing activities. Targeted marketing activities include designing and disseminating online, in-print, and visual materials. The third activity is providing training, retraining, and certification programs for skilled professionals, semi-skilled workers, and relevant entrepreneurs in the tourism sector.

14. The Jobs MDTF's "Supporting Effective Jobs Lending at Scale" program focuses on supporting the development of large-scale operational applications of the jobs agenda, with the following objectives:

i. Support the development of effective operations to improve jobs outcomes across the WBG, thereby helping to reinforce a WBG-wide narrative about the ways in which different GPs can contribute to an integrated jobs agenda; and

ii. Advance the jobs measurement agenda, so policymakers have access to the best possible information about the evolution of jobs outcomes.

The MDTF funds will be used to strengthen the consistency of ex-ante design of jobs-relevant project components; and to support the estimation of jobs outcomes in the Results Frameworks.

1.3 Outstanding issues and constraints regarding training and job opportunities

15. **The preparatory phase of the REDP identified multiple skills gaps in Tajikistan's tourism sector.** Providing targeted training to address these skills gaps will not only create employment opportunities for participating individuals, but will also enable the tourism sector as a whole to diversify and improve the quality of its product offering, thus enabling it to attract and cater to the needs of higher spending tourists. In order to fully capitalise on the tourism sector's growth potential and create jobs, training must be accompanied by access to funding for equipment, small-scale infrastructure, and events, which can be provided through the REDP's private sector and community grant schemes.
16. **Very little English (if any) is spoken at homestays and guesthouses, or by staff working in tourist sites outside Dushanbe.** The language skills of guides are also often limited. Those working in the tourism sector are typically native Tajik speakers (with significant minorities speaking Kyrgyz, Pamiri, or Uzbek), and most are conversational in Russian. Some younger Tajiks speak a few words of English, but generally not enough to understand or answer questions, or resolve any issues which arise. As the majority of high spending tourists Tajikistan wants to attract will not speak either Tajik or Russian, this language barrier needs to be addressed. Ideally, tourists would be addressed in their native languages, but as there are insufficient resources to deliver quality teaching in multiple languages, English (as the world's most spoken language) is preferred.
17. **Hygiene and cleanliness standards are generally poor across Tajikistan's tourism sector.** This applies primarily to accommodation providers and restaurants, but also to toilet facilities at tourist sites and on roadsides. There seem to be three underlying causes of this problem: a lack of awareness of the importance of hygiene and cleanliness; lack of skills in building, maintaining, and cleaning such facilities; and poor quality (or non availability) of equipment and cleaning products. The increased hygiene and cleanliness standards and expectations resulting from the COVID-19 crisis mean that addressing this problem is a higher priority than before.
18. **Safety issues also need to be addressed in order to inspire confidence amongst potential tourists.** In the context of tourism in Tajikistan, this includes improving safety standards within accommodation (in particular electrical wiring, plumbing, and fire safety); access to safe drinking water; and first aid. The latter is particularly important for guides, drivers, and homestay and guest house hosts working in remote areas which do not have easy access to medical facilities in the event that a tourist becomes ill or is involved in an accident.
19. **Tourists commonly complain about the poor availability, variety, and quality of food in Tajikistan.** Quality control and availability of ingredients are two factors in this problem, as is low demand from tourists outside of high season. However, restaurant owners also expressed that there is a shortage of skilled staff and there are no suitable training courses available locally. The cost of sending staff outside Tajikistan to train is prohibitively high:

Delhi Darbar quoted \$2,000 per person for three months' training abroad. If skilled staff were available locally, or restaurants had the means to upskill existing staff, value can be added by offering higher quality and more varied meal choices for tourists, and charging accordingly.

20. **Tajikistan has an insufficient number of qualified tour and hiking guides to meet demand.** This is problematic for two reasons: use of inexperienced, unqualified guides compromises tourist safety and has reputational risk for Tajikistan; and the tourism sector is unable to offer the specialist, high value products needed to expand. Tajikistan Guides⁷ has begun providing some professional training for local guides with financial support from the US Embassy, but thus far the courses are only available to guides in Dushanbe and Sughd. Their initial modules focus on general tour guiding (not specialist activities), and the delivery of courses has been paused due to COVID-19.
21. **Although women are employed in the tourism sector, they are typically in low paid roles in restaurants, guesthouses, and home stays.** A previous female guide training programme in Tajikistan attracted some students, but none remained working in the profession: for cultural reasons, conservative families do not want their unmarried daughters travelling around the country with strangers; and once married, women are expected to take on primary care responsibilities at home. For the same reason, women are not employed as drivers. This makes it very difficult to train and retain women as guides, though there are a small number of exceptions.
22. **Although Tajikistan has a strong crafts heritage, the quality and distribution of handicrafts products for sale as souvenirs is poor.** There are few retail outlets, and the handicrafts which are on sale tend to be of poorly designed, poorly made, and thus have correspondingly low prices. There is little or no differentiation in quality and price. Intervention in design and production, and in access to markets, could significantly improve the quality of handicrafts souvenirs and enable producers and retailers to realise higher prices. This would increase tourists' financial contribution to the wider economy and create employment opportunities for women and other marginalised groups.
23. **Lack of digital skills (including digital marketing) holds back both the public and private sector in Tajikistan, and tourism is therefore badly affected.** Computer literacy is low, access to reliable WiFi is poor, and there is a shortage of professionals working in areas such as graphic design, digital marketing, and ecommerce. This means that stakeholders in all parts of the tourism value chain struggle to market their products and connect with potential customers. Development of these skills, especially amongst youth, would not only create high quality jobs and make the tourism sector more competitive, but would also be beneficial to other market sectors.
24. **The seasonality of Tajikistan's current tourism products makes the sector unsustainable.** Guides and drivers have no work for six months of the year, and accommodation occupancy rates outside the cities fall almost to zero in winter. Not only does this adversely impact on incomes, but it also deters qualified applicants from working in the industry, and those who do work in tourism must find alternative revenue streams (or able to afford being unemployed) in winter. Developing new tourism products such as

⁷ <http://tajikistanguides.com>

backcountry skiing and snow leopard trekking (both of which take place during the colder months) would enable tourism to become a year-round business in Tajikistan, albeit with a high and low season.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Astro-tourism

25. Tajikistan has huge potential as an astro-tourism⁸ destination, but requires small investments in planning, training, and equipment in order to develop the product.

The recommended approach for Tajikistan is the astro-stays model. An astro-stay is a homestay or guest house with a telescope and accompanying accessories, where the female host has been trained in basic astronomy and is able to act as a dark sky guide for tourists. The model has been trialled successfully in Ladakh, India⁹ and adds significant value¹⁰ to rural tourism, as well as creating training and economic opportunities for women.

26. Four steps are required to develop astro-tourism in Tajikistan and to promote the country as a specialist astro-tourism destination. Firstly, an astro-tourism consultant should be hired to develop a dark sky curriculum which is tailored to Tajikistan's night sky and the equipment which will be available. The curriculum should include a general introduction to astronomy; constellations and astronomic events (i.e. eclipses and meteor showers); history and folklore of the night sky (including local traditions); how to set up, use, and maintain a telescope; and the importance of controlling outdoor lighting and light pollution. It should also include an English language component to ensure participants have the vocabulary and confidence they need to communicate with tourists. The same consultant will be responsible for delivering training to astro-stay hosts and submitting an International Dark Sky Place application to the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA), and so must be an IDA delegate.

27. The consultant should then run a pilot scheme to establish five astro-stays in GBAO. The objective of this pilot scheme is to create a small, community-based organisation of 8-10 female dark sky guides¹¹ (two per astro-stay) who can offer astro-tourism in their villages, enhancing the value of their homestays and guesthouses. The

⁸ The International Dark-Sky Association (IDA) defines astro-tourism as “any kind of tourism that involves the night sky or visiting facilities related to astronomy, like observatories, and combining that with a broader sense of ecotourism where interaction with nature is what the visitor experience is about.”

⁹ <https://astrostays.com>

¹⁰ The average cost for a standard homestay in Ladakh is \$15 per person. The cost of an astro-stay, by comparison, is \$30 per person.

¹¹ Homestay hosts will be trained from scratch: they do not require previous experience as guides, or prior knowledge of astronomy. As they will work from home, they will not be subject to the socio-cultural restraints described in 1.3.

pilot project would cover one district, most likely Ishkashim (which includes the Wakhan Corridor) or Murghab, as these areas have the least light pollution. The pilot scheme would also demonstrate local interest in, and capacity to deliver, astro-tourism products. This will support Tajikistan's application to the IDA. The training should be delivered in person in Tajikistan, on location in the district, and it is estimated that a total of 10 days of training will be required. Follow-up support may be delivered by email, phone, or Whatsapp.

- 28. Pilot scheme participants should be selected from amongst recipients of the REDP's private sector grants.** The grant management company (GMC) would solicit interest from grant recipients, with criteria set by the consultant¹². It is important that the astro-stays are grant recipients, so that they can also upgrade the quality of their accommodation, adequately meeting the needs and expectations of the tourists who will stay there, and will be bookable through online platforms. A separate budget will need to be allocated to purchase a simple but high quality refractor telescope kit for each astro-stay. The kits should include a telescope, tripod, finderscope, eye piece, filters, cleaning equipment, smartphone adapter (for astro-photography), and printed star charts. The anticipated cost is \$700 per kit.
- 29. Assuming the pilot scheme is successful, it can then be expanded to other districts.** Training can be offered to potential astro-stay hosts across GBAO and Khatlon, and as with the pilot scheme, participants should be selected from amongst recipients of the REDP's private sector grants. The cost of training (which could be delivered either by the original consultant, or by one of the women trained in the pilot scheme) should be paid for from the Jobs Trust Fund or available resources in the REDP Component 3, and the refractor telescope kits should be purchased with matching grants (REDP Component 2)¹³.
- 30. At the same time, the consultant should submit an International Dark Sky Place application to the IDA.** Although not a prerequisite for offering astro-tourism as a product, recognition from the IDA is akin to having UNESCO World Heritage Site or Ramsar Site status. Tajikistan would be the first country in Central Asia to have IDA status, which would generate significant media interest and could be leveraged for tourism marketing purposes. It would also enable astro-stay hosts and tour operators offering astro-tourism packages to charge more for their products and services. It should be noted that the application can only be submitted by an IDA delegate, so this will be a criteria for selecting the consultant.
- 31. It is estimated that the consultancy budget required for the astro-tourism project is \$25,000.** This would include the consultant's time to develop the curriculum, deliver the training for the pilot scheme and any follow-up support which is required, and produce and submit the IDA application. It also includes the cost of the consultant's flights and all travel

¹² Criteria might include location within the pilot scheme district, size and suitability of guesthouse/homestay, and having a basic level of spoken English.

¹³ This differs from the pilot scheme, where the refractor telescope kits should be provided to participants free of charge, as the value of the astro-tourism product will have already been proven. Requiring participants in the expanded scheme to part fund their equipment will ensure that only those who are genuinely interested apply, that they maintain it properly, and use it as intended.

expenses in Tajikistan. The cost of purchasing the five refractor telescope kits will be an additional \$7,000.

2.2 Digital skills

- 32. UNWTO has identified digital skills as an essential for post-COVID tourism recovery**¹⁴. “Digital skills” refers to the ability to use digital devices, communication applications, and networks to access and manage information, including creating and sharing digital content, communicating and collaborating, and solving problems, and marketing and selling products. These skills are extremely underdeveloped in Tajikistan, in both the public and private sector. This adversely affects not only the development and promotion of tourism, but other industries as well.
- 33. There are two targets for digital skills training in Tajikistan’s tourism sector.** The first group includes guides, homestays, tour operators, and other small business owners who need to develop the basic skills to connect with potential customers and market and sell their products online. The second group is young professionals who are interested in developing more advanced skills (such as website design and video editing) which will enable them to form small companies selling digital services.
- 34. Basic digital skills can be taught online, with downloadable course materials formatted for laptops and smartphones.** Courses might include introductions to content marketing (including use of blogs, photos, and video); ecommerce (specifically use of third-party bookings sites and booking and payment plugins for WordPress); email and newsletter marketing; online advertising (an introduction to Google Ads and free alternatives, the importance and use of keyword searches, etc.); review sites (including TripAdvisor, Facebook reviews, and Google business reviews); social media (strategy, content development, and advertising); and WordPress editing (to enable participants to build simple websites, or edit sites they have commissioned from third parties). All training materials should be accessible via a single portal, most likely a page on the Committee for Tourism Development (CTD) website¹⁵. It must be possible to download course materials instead of streaming them, as internet bandwidth in Tajikistan is often poor; and the software used must be free to the end user, not reliant on a paid subscription¹⁶. The training should be open to all, with participants able to select the courses which are most useful to them, and to complete them at their own pace. Completing the courses will not earn a formal qualification, but the CTD may like to issue certificates of completion. The GMC should encourage grant recipients to complete relevant courses so that they can maximise revenue generation through effective marketing.
- 35. Advanced digital skills should be taught with a combination of online materials and workshops, and be accompanied by ongoing mentorship**¹⁷. Subjects might include

¹⁴ https://webunwto.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2020-04/COVID19_Recommendations_English_1.pdf

¹⁵ <https://ctd.tj>

¹⁶ This could include free software such as QuickTime and WordPress, but also applications where the project can purchase multiple licenses to be used by students on the course.

¹⁷ Mentorship can be delivered remotely providing both parties have internet access.

more in-depth courses on content and digital marketing (including strategies, search engine optimisation, impact analysis, etc.); data analytics (including Google Analytics, Facebook Insights, and Twitter Analytics, how they work, why they are important, and how they inform digital marketing strategies and campaign responses); ecommerce (specifically the creation of profiles on third-party bookings sites and the installation and customisation of booking and payment plugins for WordPress); photo and video editing; and website development using WordPress. The courses should include downloadable materials, live webinars with question and answer (Q&A) sessions, and practical activities so that participants can apply what they are learning through real world tasks, and develop usable solutions. The optimum course size is 8-12 participants, so that instructors have adequate time to support all participants. If there are more applicants than places, duplicate courses could run on different dates. Participants will need their own laptop and a reliable WiFi connection.

- 36. A digital consultant should be hired to develop course curricula, identify and collate relevant training materials, and produce online training workshops.** The medium of instruction of the basic skills courses should be Tajik. As pre-existing, good quality training materials will not be available in Tajik, a budget will have to be made available for translation and reformatting of materials. The medium of instruction for the advanced courses should be English. It is not expected that the consultant will have the required level of knowledge and experience to produce and deliver workshops on all the required subjects: he or she will therefore need to outsource certain components to a suitably qualified third-party, whilst retaining responsibility for quality, content relevance, and consistency.
- 37. There are multiple organisations within Tajikistan in desperate need of digital services.** Support for UCT is discussed in 2.5, but other departments and organisations requiring assistance to create or improve their online presence include the CTD (<https://traveltajikistan.tj>), the National Museum (<http://www.newnmt.tj/en/>), the National Museum of Antiquities (<http://www.afc.ryukoku.ac.jp/tj/>), Hulbuk Museum, etc. Whilst their staff may be encouraged to participate in the basic and advanced skills training, it may be more effective to provide small grants for them to purchase digital services, including website development and maintenance, and the commissioning and implementation of social media strategies. This would also create high value freelance employment opportunities for participants who have completed the relevant advanced digital skills courses.

2.3 English

- 38. The lack of English language skills in Tajikistan's tourism sector should be addressed in two ways.** Firstly, students who have graduated with English degrees and/or have a good working knowledge of the language should be encouraged to engage in tourism-specific training courses and to seek employment in the sector. They should be given priority access to join the astro-tourism, digital marketing, guiding, and hospitality schemes. Secondly, English language training should be incorporated as an element of the other training programmes. This will enable participants to develop specific vocabulary

which is relevant to their area of work, which will increase levels of student engagement, confidence, and knowledge retention.

- 39. These two interventions do not require specific contracts or TORs as they will not be standalone projects.** Instead, they should be listed as objectives and/or within the scope of work for the other projects' TORs.

2.4 Guiding

- 40. Tajikistan needs to increase the number of guides, raise guiding standards, and ensure local guides are able to deliver specialist guiding services.** The number of guides and quality of guiding should be delivered as one intervention; and the training of specialist guides for activities such as wildlife photography, mountaineering, and backcountry skiing, as a second (albeit connected) intervention.
- 41. A local organisation should be hired to facilitate and deliver guide training in Tajikistan, with international support for specific activities.** This is important because the project will only be successful with buy-in from local stakeholders who can identify, recruit¹⁸, and engage current and future guides in a training programme which is tailored to their current skill level and the needs of the tourism sector. The recommended organisation is Tajikistan Guides, which has been established by domestic and international tour operators and has a track record of delivering guide training in Tajikistan. More detail about the company is given in 3.1.
- 42. The organisation should deliver three modules of guide training.** Module 1¹⁹ is an initial training course for new guides, will be delivered over 10 days, and is a basic introduction to guiding and guiding skills. Module 2²⁰ is for those who have completed module 1, or who already have some experience working as a guide in Tajikistan. It is a 12 day course, delivered by local and regional instructors. Its content should be adapted to focus on the themes/subjects relevant to guiding in Khatlon and GBAO, in particular the archeological sites, hiking,. Module 3²¹ is an advanced level course for experienced guides and those who have completed module 2. The curriculum was developed with ATTA, it is delivered by an international instructor, and results in recognised guide accreditation. Relevant English language skills should be incorporated into the module curriculum to improve the level of communication between guides and tourists.
- 43. The training modules should be delivered at a mutually agreed, accessible location in GBAO or Khatlon²².** Priority for module 1 should be given to students who have graduated with English degrees and/or have a good working knowledge of the language. Module workshops are limited to a class size of 20, and participants attend daily. Courses should be scheduled in the winter when guides are not working, and thus will be able to

¹⁸ The GMC would not be required to provide support with recruitment of guides for training.

¹⁹ <http://tajikistanguides.com/module-1/>

²⁰ <http://tajikistanguides.com/module-2/>

²¹ <http://tajikistanguides.com/module-3/>

²² Previous Tajikistan Guides courses have been delivered in Sughd, and future sessions are scheduled for Dushanbe and Sughd. Separate training courses have been offered to guides in GBAO by the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN).

participate. For modules in 2020, 15 scholarships were available to cover the cost of training, and any additional course participants paid a nominal fee. The subsidy of training costs was possible as Tajikistan Guides received grants and the organisers volunteered their time unpaid.

- 44. The estimated budget for the delivery of all three training modules is \$36,000.** This figure is based on Tajikistan Guides' 2020 training budget, where \$6,000 was allocated for modules 1 and 2²³; and the US Embassy paid \$30,000 for module 3 (delivered twice, with an accompanying first aid course). Module 3 was significantly more expensive as the cost included the consultancy fees and travel expenses of the foreign instructor, and the US Embassy specified that it must be an ATTA-approved instructor from the US. Hiring a similarly qualified instructor from Europe is likely to be cheaper (particularly given the lower flight costs), but the exact cost, including any taxes, will have to be negotiated with the chosen consultant.
- 45. Additional training is required for Tajikistan's guides to be able to offer higher value tourism products such as mountaineering, backcountry skiing, and wildlife tours.** These specialist skills are not covered in the current Tajikistan Guide modules because the training is more in depth, should be delivered by expert instructors, should result in internationally recognised certification or association membership, and also requires investment in equipment. These specialist skills are important because they enable guides to develop a marketable unique selling proposition (USP), for which they can charge a premium; and, in some cases, to guide tourists for winter activities, extending the length of the tourist season and thus making it more economically viable to work as guides. There need to be two separate specialist guide training programmes²⁴.
- 46. For these training programmes, Tajikistan Guides should coordinate the recruitment of participants and facilitate the training sessions, but hire expert instructors to teach.** Applicants for the specialist training courses should have already completed the three standard guiding modules, or be able to demonstrate equivalent skills and experience. This is important from a foundation skills perspective, but also because it shows that they have already invested significant time and effort in their professional development and guides, and thus are likely to continue working in the tourism sector once their training is complete. It is likely that those intending to do the mountain guide programme will also need to complete a foundation course in skiing, as they will not previously have had the opportunity to develop that skill.
- 47. The mountain guide programme should incorporate both alpine guiding (mountaineering) and skiing²⁵.** This combination is advisable because there is a significant overlap in skills, and those guides who complete the course will then be able to

²³ The venue was provided for free, and there were no transport or accommodation costs. This aspect of the budget will therefore have to be revised upwards for training sessions located in Khatlon and/or GBAO.

²⁴ If additional funding is available, a third course should be offered to train certified river rafting guides, and to purchase rafts and associated safety equipment.

²⁵ Tajikistan's ski resort is Safed Dara in the Region of Republican Subordination, so this would be used as the ski training base. The training focus will be on backcountry (off piste) skiing, however, so that once guides are trained and qualified, there will be the opportunity to expand ski tourism into other parts of the country.

work year-round. Mountain guide training and certification is offered by a number of international mountain guiding associations²⁶, and the highly respected qualification is recognised by the International Federation of Mountain Guides Associations (IFMGA). The standard curriculum is available on the IFMGA website²⁷. The training will need to be delivered by an IFMGA accredited expert instructor (hired by Tajikistan Guides) on location in Tajikistan in two or more different sessions -- summer and winter -- in order to incorporate both activities. It is suggested that this programme is offered to a maximum of 12 guides, recruited by Tajikistan Guides, and that the course content be focused on locations and activities in the Region of Republican Subordination (the location of Safed Dara, Tajikistan's only ski resort), Khatlon, and GBAO²⁸.

48. The wildlife guiding programme should have two components: field guide training, and basic photography. Field guides have a detailed understanding of wildlife, the natural environment, and conservation issues, and develop skills such as species identification and tracking. This training should be delivered in partnership with the Association of Nature Conservation Organizations of Tajikistan (ANCOT)²⁹ as they already have the required expertise about Tajikistan's wildlife, habitats, and conservation issues. Some of the training can be classroom based, but the rest should be in the field. The second programme component is basic photography.³⁰ Guides should be able to take their own, high quality images for information and marketing purposes, but also have basic skills to be able to support tourists visiting Tajikistan on wildlife and photography tours. There is a small number of professional photographers in Tajikistan, including photographers with experience shooting wildlife, so Tajikistan Guides should be able to identify a suitable local instructor to teach this course. It is suggested that this programme is offered to a maximum of 20 guides, and that the course teaching focuses primarily on locations and wildlife in Khatlon and GBAO³¹.

49. The budget for the two specialist training programmes is not yet known. This is because the costs will depend on a variety of factors, including which expert instructors are selected to deliver the training, the duration of training required for the participating guides to reach the required standards, and the number of visits which the instructor has to make to Tajikistan (if they are not already resident). There may also be an assessment and/or accreditation fee, and so the cost of this will depend on how many guides complete the courses. As the wildlife programme will use local instructors (hired by Tajikistan Guides), and will not result in international accreditation, it will be significantly cheaper to

²⁶ These include the Kyrgyz Mountain Guide Association (KGMA), which is an IFMGA member and may be the most cost-effective and culturally appropriate training partner for Tajikistan.

²⁷ <https://ifmga.info/%3Cnolink%3E/training-and-assessment>

²⁸ Guides from across Tajikistan work in GBAO in the summer months, so the majority of economic benefit from the training will be for GBAO, regardless of the origin of the guides.

²⁹ <https://tajwildlife.com>

³⁰ It is not viable to teach the guides advanced photography because they will not have access to the necessary equipment: the zoom lenses used for expert-level wildlife photography costs thousands of dollars each, and thus are prohibitively expensive.

³¹ Tour itineraries typically include multiple regions of Tajikistan, and though the wildlife of primary interest is in Khatlon and GBAO, there are also some important birding sites in the Fann and Zeravshan Mountains.

deliver than the mountain guide course. Both, however, are valuable to Tajikistan's tourism development and ability to offer high value tourism products.

- 50. A separate budget will need to be allocated for specialist equipment to enable the mountain guides to complete their training and subsequently work.** Tajikistan Guides should coordinate the purchase and distribution of specialist equipment with the REDP's project implementation unit (PIU) and GMC, and make it available to participants on a matching grant basis³². No guide will be able to participate in the course without the requisite equipment, which will include technical clothing and mountaineering boots, skis and ski boots, and safety equipment such as helmets, crampons, axes, and avalanche kits³³. The estimated cost of equipment is \$2,000 to \$2,500 per guide. This equipment is not available to rent or buy in Tajikistan, and so will have to be purchased and imported specifically for this programme. It should be possible to negotiate a bulk-buy discount with a supplier.

2.5 Handicrafts development

- 51. In Tajikistan, handicrafts are underdeveloped as a revenue stream.** Quality is generally poor, there is little attempt to attractively package and promote the products, and thus prices are low and buyers are few. There is, however, significant opportunity for growth and job creation, and investment in this area would particularly benefit women, the disabled, and those working in seasonal jobs, as it is possible to work from home, with flexible hours, including during the winter. USAID has identified two key segments for handicrafts products, home accessories and tourist souvenirs³⁴, and Tajikistan has the potential to produce both. Importantly, distribution channels are shortening, and when combined with the digital skills discussed in 2.2, Tajikistan's handicrafts producers have the opportunity not only to sell to tourists and local retailers, but also to market and sell their products online.
- 52. A consultant should be hired to work with the Union of Craftsmen of Tajikistan (UCT),³⁵ FINCA Tajikistan,³⁶ and other handicrafts associations within the country.** The consultant should identify the product types which have the greatest commercial potential, and then support individual producers to design and make products (and packaging) which are consistent in quality and will appeal to the tastes of tourists. The consultant would also be expected to research and recommend ways of improving artisans' access to markets (both domestic and international), and to develop a series of crafts-themed tours, which would enable tourists to visit artisans in their workshops, learn about their techniques and traditions, and buy products directly from producers. These tours could then be offered as a new product by guides who have completed the Tajikistan

³² Alternatively, the equipment could be owned by Tajikistan Guides and lent free of charge to the guides for an agreed period, after which the guides can purchase it for a nominal fee.

³³ Avalanche kits are required for backcountry skiing. They typically include an avalanche transceiver, shovel, and probe. Advanced kits may also include an airbag.

³⁴ https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADN210.pdf

³⁵ <http://tajikartisans.com/en/>

³⁶ <https://www.finca.tj/en/>

Guides training modules, as the skills they have developed during the course will be directly relevant.

- 53. The UCT should be given a small grant to improve and maintain its website, and to commission and implement a digital marketing strategy.** It may be appropriate to hire participants in the digital skills workshops to undertake these contracts. The UCT website should be viewed as a showcase for the artisans of Tajikistan and the best work which they produce. The grant should be used to pay for removing hacker content and surplus default fields; increasing the number of artisan profiles; adding galleries of products; adding a section on handicrafts tours; and creating an ecommerce function so that website users can buy products and book tours, paying for them by card online³⁷. The digital marketing strategy should revamp UTC's existing Facebook and Instagram channels, and may also include the creation of YouTube and Twitter accounts and content. The strategy objectives are to raise awareness of artisans and products made in Tajikistan, to drive web traffic to the UTC site, and to convert that traffic into product sales and handicrafts tour bookings.

2.6 Construction and hospitality

- 54. Tajikistan's skills shortage negatively affects all areas of the hospitality sector, from the construction of accommodation to customer service in restaurants.** As long as quality remains low, tourism businesses in Tajikistan cannot cater to the mid- and high-end tourism markets they might otherwise be able to attract, restricting their earning capacity. The REDP's matching grants will provide restaurants and accommodation providers with the finance they need to build, renovate, and/or equip their premises. However, this funding needs to be accompanied by capacity building, so that the labourforce also becomes more skilled and can undertake the work to the required standards. Investment in skilled trades such as plumbing, electrics, tiling, plastering and decorating, etc. will deliver benefits not only to the tourism sector but also to the wider economy, creating high value employment in a sector with constant demand.
- 55. The skills shortage should be addressed in two ways.** There needs to be a vocational training programme to train skilled labourers, with curricula equivalent to the level 3 City & Guilds national vocational qualifications (NVQs)³⁸. A company or organisation³⁹ should be hired to recruit participants from Khatlon and GBAO, and deliver small group, practical training for each key skill (plumbing and heating; electrics; brick laying; carpentry and joinery; plastering and tiling; painting and decorating). Participants in those workshops should then be given priority when hiring skilled labourers for REDP grant-funded projects.

³⁷ The UCT could earn a small revenue stream from handling these transactions on behalf of artisans and tour guides.

³⁸ <https://www.cityandguilds.com/qualifications-and-apprenticeships/construction#>

³⁹ Training and construction could be done in partnership with international NGO Geres, which is already working in the housing/construction sector in Tajikistan, and has a particular interest in sustainability and energy efficiency.

This will not only guarantee them employment, but also ensure that the grant-funded projects are completed to acceptable standards.

- 56. In an ideal scenario, training courses would be provided by dedicated instructors in purpose-built classroom workshops.** However, given that this is likely to be beyond the scope of this project, an apprenticeship model with on the job training is the next best option. A curriculum can still be followed in this environment, delivered by the company or organising managing the project, and participants can gain certification once they demonstrate set levels of competencies.
- 57. Small grants, administered by the GMC, will need to be made available for participants to purchase safety equipment and basic tools.** This could be done on a matching grant basis. The equipment and tools required will differ between courses, but might include protective gloves, ear muffs, hard hats, and goggles; and, for those on the electricians course, for example, an approved voltage indicator (AVI), battery drill, insulated screwdrivers, and a multifunctional tester (MFT). It is recommended that the GMC include in the Catalog of Products a list of such equipment that meets the required standards.
- 58. Hospitality training courses should be offered to all recipients of REDP grants for accommodation and food-related projects.** Undertaking the courses should be voluntary, with the exception of those courses relating to COVID-19 management and food safety, which should be compulsory due to the critical importance of hygiene and infection control. All the course materials should be available for participants to download and work through in their own time, but the compulsory courses will also need to be offered as physical training sessions at locations throughout GBAO and Khatlon, to ensure that recipients without internet access are also able to participate.
- 59. A consultant should be hired to produce a curriculum and training materials for each course.** The courses should include COVID-19 management⁴⁰, food safety (including hygiene and allergies), and courses equivalent to City & Guilds Hospitality and Catering levels 1-3, Food and Beverage Service, Culinary Skills, Barista Skills, and Customer Service. There should also be a basic English course, focused on the vocabulary participants will use in daily interactions with guests⁴¹. Course materials should be based on international best practice⁴² but should be adapted to recognise the realities for small businesses in Tajikistan, and must be produced in both Tajik and Russian. All training materials should be accessible via a single portal, most likely a page on the CTD website⁴³.
- 60. The physical training should be delivered at accessible locations across GBAO and Khatlon.** Each workshop would be limited to one day, divided into two sessions: one session for each compulsory course. They should be delivered by a local instructor⁴⁴ in

⁴⁰ Based on the new WHO guidelines for the accommodation sector (<https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/331638>).

⁴¹ The British Embassy in Dushanbe may well be interested in supporting this component of the project.

⁴² For example materials produced by the Food Standards Agency (<https://www.food.gov.uk/business-guidance/safer-food-better-business-for-caterers>)

⁴³ <https://ctd.tj>

⁴⁴ This could be the GBAO and Khatlon local facilitators already hired under the REDP.

Tajik, once the instructor has been trained/briefed online by the consultant and is confident of the subject matter. Venues used must be sufficient in size to accommodate the expected number of participants, and also have space for a digital projector and screen (brought to the venue by the instructor).

3. OPERATIONAL DETAILS

3.1 Market research on available companies and consultants for the envisaged capacity building activities

Astro-tourism

Megan Eaves-Egenes (megan.eaves@gmail.com)

Megan is a dark sky and sustainable tourism consultant, and also an IDA Delegate. She is the former editor of Lonely Planet's Central Asia guidebooks, and visited Tajikistan in 2019 under the Program for Asia Connectivity and Trade (PACT). Megan is currently writing a book about star gazing, light pollution, and the importance of darkness, which includes a chapter on Tajikistan. More information about her dark sky advocacy and consultancy work is available online at <https://meganeaves.com/dark-skies/>.

Digital skills

Lauren Keith (laurenkeith@gmail.com)

Lauren is a tourism and digital skills consultant with 10 years of experience in online journalism, social media marketing, tech support, and software development. She has a strong working knowledge of InDesign, InCopy, Wordpress, Microsoft Office, Adobe Acrobat, GitHub, Zendesk, HTML, and SEO, and has held a variety of roles with high profile brands such as Lonely Planet and We Are Social⁴⁵. Lauren's work at Lonely Planet included providing technical support, training, and documentation to writers and editorial staff, producing analytics reports, and commissioning and managing printed and digital content using Wordpress and a custom-built content management system.

Jeremy Head (jeremyhead@hotmail.com)

Jeremy is a digital content and marketing consultant with significant experience in the tourism sector. He spent nine years as the travel content strategist for digital agency iCrossing⁴⁶ delivering award winning marketing campaigns; and is now a content and social media consultant to the World Travel & Tourism Council. Jeremy has also worked for clients such as Visit Wales, Visit Sweden, Virgin Holidays, and TUI, devising digital content strategies and teaching members of their content, social, and paid media teams.

Guiding

⁴⁵ <https://wearesocial.com/uk/>

⁴⁶ <https://www.icrossing.com>

Association of Nature Conservation Organizations of Tajikistan (info@tajwildlife.com)

ANCOT (also known as Taj Wildlife) addresses a variety of conservation issues within Tajikistan, including community-based wildlife management, sustainable hunting, and scientific research. It is actively involved in the monitoring of species such as snow leopard, markhor, and Marco Polo sheep, and is supported by a number of international donors and partners, including UN Environment, IUCN, and Panthera. More information about ANCOT is available at <https://tajwildlife.com>.

International Federation of Mountain Guide Associations (office@uiagm.info)

The IFMGA is a membership organisation representing professional mountain guide associations in 25 countries around the world. They provide professional training in all guiding, technical and climbing skills (including ski guiding), culminating in assessment and internationally recognised certification. Full details of the training and assessment programme is outlined online at <https://ifmga.info/%3Cnolink%3E/training-and-assessment>.

Kyrgyz Mountain Guides Association (yarik8806@rambler.ru)

The KMGGA was founded in 2007, developed with the support of the Swiss and British Mountain Guides Associations, and is a member of the IFMGA. KMGGA has run mountain guiding courses since 2008 and delivers teaching in Russian, though passing an English language test is a requirement to receive the diploma. More information about the KMGGA is available on their website: <http://mguide.in.kg/en>.

Marley Burns (marley@silkroadadventures.com)

Marley is the founder of Silk Road Adventures, a high end tour operator specialising in tailor made tours to Central Asia. He has led a significant number of tours to Tajikistan, including motorbike expeditions on the Pamir Highway and Sophy Roberts' recent press trip for the *Financial Times*. Marley is already working on capacity building with ANCOT, local tour operators, and guides, and is uniquely well placed to be the instructor for training module 3 on account of his firsthand knowledge of Tajikistan's tourism sector, and extensive experience of leading tours for the most demanding international guests. He is particularly keen to train Tajikistan's guides on risk management, health and safety, and communication skills, as well as introducing international best practice guidelines for tours. For more information on Silk Road Adventures, see <https://www.silkroad-adventures.com>.

Tajikistan Guides (info@tajikistanguides.com)

Tajikistan Guides works with industry partners and international donors to deliver education and training to guides in Tajikistan, as well as offering paid internships and employment opportunities. They employ trainers from Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, and have a US Embassy grant

to hire an ATTA trainer from the US to run an advanced level guiding course. See <http://tajikistanguides.com> for more details.

Handicrafts development

Renuka and Sharique Savasere (renukasavasere@gmail.com)

Renuka and Sharique are product designers and crafts consultants specialising in handicrafts development. Sharique set up the Crafts Development Institute (CDI) in Srinagar, India, and teaches innovation and entrepreneurship to craftsmen across the country. Renuka specialises in consultancy for artisans and weavers, and is the crafts consultant for a World Bank project to conserve and convert the Rambagh Silk Factory into an arts and cultural centre. She has created crafts and heritage walking tours for J&K Tourism, and focuses on connecting handicrafts to the tourism value chain.

World Crafts Council (wccinternational@craftscouncil.org.uk)

The WCC is a non-profit, NGO that was founded in 1964 to foster economic development through income generating craft related activities through crafts. It is affiliated to UNESCO and has members (which include national crafts associations) around the world. Tajikistan is covered under the WCC's Asia Pacific Region (WCC-APR), and thus Tajikistan is eligible to receive technical assistance (training courses, workshops and financial assistance to craftspersons) from the Asia Pacific Craft Fund. The WCC-APR is therefore a potential partner to the Jobs Trust Fund and REDP, as well as being a source of consultants for this project. Further information is available from <https://wccapr.org>.

Construction and hospitality

City & Guilds (general.enquiries@cityandguilds.com)

For the past 140 years, City & Guilds has provided vocational training, assessment, and accreditation to help people achieve their potential through work-based learning. Whilst they might not be able to consult directly to this project, they would be able to recommend companies which are approved to deliver their courses internationally. For more information, see <https://www.cityandguilds.com>.

Fakhrudin Safarov (fakhrudin.safarov@gmail.com)

Fakhrudin is currently the Human Resources Manager at the Hyatt Regency Dushanbe, though he will be available for consultancy from 15 September. He qualified outside of Tajikistan, at Goa University, and through Hyatt has been exposed to international best practice in the hospitality sector for a number of years. Fakhrudin is fluent in English, Russian, and Tajik and is directly responsible for the training of Hyatt's staff. He comes highly recommended by Hyatt's GM, Orkhan

Alakbarov, and is uniquely well qualified to deliver the hospitality training component of this project.

Geres (tajikistan@geres.eu)

Geres is an international NGO working in the housing/construction sector in Tajikistan since 2011. Geres works in partnership with local communities, universities, local governments, micro-finance institutions, and development organisations, and the majority of activities target vulnerable and female-headed households. Their actions focus on the development and dissemination of Low-Energy Consumption Houses, energy-retrofitting of individual houses and buildings, and the dissemination of solar passive and thermal insulation techniques. They also aim to increase access to microfinance, and to stimulate the local construction sector. More information about Geres' work in Tajikistan is available here: <https://www.geres.eu/en/our-actions/countries-of-intervention/tajikistan/>.

TVET UK (matthew.anderson@tvetuk.org)

TVET UK provides consultancy on technical and vocational education and training (TVET). They deliver both commercial and aid funded projects, and draw upon the knowledge base, experience, and personnel of a wide range of colleges, private training providers, awarding bodies, and educational organisations such as Sector Skills Councils and national agencies. TVET UK has prior experience working in Central Asia, including in Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. Their website is <http://www.tvetuk.org>.

4: TERMS OF REFERENCE (TORs)

4.1 Consultant: Astro-tourism development

REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN

SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE JOBS LENDING AT SCALE

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR ASTRO-TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Background

1. **The Republic of Tajikistan has received financing from the International Development Association of the World Bank Group (WBG) for the implementation of the Tajikistan Rural Economy Development Project (REDP).** The project's development objective is to improve the sources of livelihood for local populations in the Gorno Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBO) and Khatlon regions through tourism and agribusiness. Detailed project information can be found in the project appraisal document.
2. **Tourism has been identified as one of the most important drivers of growth for Tajikistan.** Growth in the tourism industry is intended to generate economic opportunities for local populations, especially for vulnerable groups, including women, youth and returning migrant workers. The increased employment opportunities offered by community-based tourism will allow these groups to be productive and would discourage them from activities such as joining religious extremist groups or engaging in drug trafficking activities.
3. **The project is structured according to four components, organized based on the types of intervention and beneficiaries:**
 - i. Component 1 focuses on improving public infrastructure for the development of agribusiness and tourism.
 - ii. Component 2 supports micro small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs) and entrepreneurs in agribusiness, community-based tourism, and related sectors through matching grants.
 - iii. Component 3 focuses on strengthening skills, entrepreneurship, and business development services to enable potential beneficiaries to gain fully from the grant programs under Components 1 and 2.
 - iv. Component 4 provides project coordination and implementation as well as grant management and administration.
4. **Component 3 includes capacity-building for public and private sectors.** This component will finance three specific activities, among others. The first is training and advisory services on tourism and agribusiness development for public institutions (for example, analysis of global trends, market analysis, and public-private partnership to develop the sectors). The training will be for stakeholders such as the Tourism Development Committee, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Culture, and other project participants. The second activity is promoting tourism and agribusiness by organizing and taking part in trade fairs, familiarization or learning tours (for tour operators and agribusinesses), and media and marketing activities. Targeted marketing activities include designing and disseminating online, in-print, and visual materials. The third activity is providing

training, retraining, and certification programs for skilled professionals, semi-skilled workers, and relevant entrepreneurs in the tourism sector.

5. The Jobs MDTF’s “Supporting Effective Jobs Lending at Scale” program focuses on supporting the development of large-scale operational applications of the jobs agenda, with the following objectives:

- i. Support the development of effective operations to improve jobs outcomes across the WBG, thereby helping to reinforce a WBG-wide narrative about the ways in which different GPs can contribute to an integrated jobs agenda; and
- ii. Advance the jobs measurement agenda, so policymakers have access to the best possible information about the evolution of jobs outcomes.

The MDTF funds will be used to strengthen the consistency of ex-ante design of jobs-relevant project components; and to support the estimation of jobs outcomes in the Results Frameworks.

Objectives

6. The objective of the assignment is to introduce astro-tourism as a new product in Tajikistan.
Doing so will:

- i. Create high quality training and employment opportunities particularly for women in rural areas;
- ii. Enhance Tajikistan’s nature-based tourism product offering;
- iii. Increase the average per capita spending of tourist;
- iv. Provide Tajikistan with a prestige tourism product which can be leveraged for marketing purposes.

Scope of work

- 7. The astro-tourism consultancy project will be broken down into five steps.** The consultant will be responsible for organising and implementing all components, with support from the Committee for Tourism Development (CTD) and grant management company (GMC) where specified.
- 8. The consultant will develop a dark sky curriculum which is specific to astro-tourism in Tajikistan.** The curriculum should include a general introduction to astronomy; constellations and astronomic events (i.e. eclipses and meteor showers); history and folklore of the night sky (including local traditions); how to set up, use, and maintain a telescope; and the importance of controlling outdoor lighting and light pollution. The curriculum should also incorporate basic English language teaching to ensure participants have the relevant vocabulary and confidence they need to communicate with the astro-tourists they will host. Once complete, the curriculum should be submitted to the REDP’s tourism advisor to the CTD for feedback and approval.
- 9. At the same time, the consultant should identify the specific refractor telescope kit which is most suitable for the astro-stays pilot project.** The Consultant needs to (i) identify a list of three suitable products, (ii) report these products to GMC (to be included in the “Catalogue”), and (iii) recommend these products to beneficiaries of the training. These kits will then be purchased and delivered to the CTD in Dushanbe prior to the commencement of the astro-stays training.

10. **The consultant will plan an astro-stays pilot project in one district in GBAO or Khatlon.** The district should be chosen by the consultant, in consultation with the REDP's tourism advisor to the CTD and the GMC. The GMC will be responsible for recruiting 8-10 women (from five guesthouses or homestays within the chosen district) whose properties will receive REDP private sector grants for physical improvements to their facilities. These women will be trained as the astro-guides. The Consultant may be asked to draw the selection criteria and participate in the selection of the candidates who receive training.
11. **The consultant will deliver the astro-stays training in person in the selected district.** It is estimated that the initial training will take place over 10 days, and will include classroom-style teaching as well as practical workshops on using the equipment and identifying objects in the night sky. The REDP's regional project coordinator will accompany the consultant throughout the training to provide logistical assistance and translation as required. At the end of the training, the new astro-guides should be confident in the use and maintenance of the equipment, and able to accurately identify and explain astronomical objects to tourists. The consultant will continue to support the guides remotely for a period of six months, answering queries by email, phone, or Whatsapp.
12. **After the successful completion of the astro-stays pilot project, the consultant will prepare and submit an International Dark Sky Place application to the International Dark Sky Association (IDA).** The consultant will identify and agree with relevant stakeholders in Tajikistan the appropriate designation, and also any policy changes or other interventions which may be required to meet the IDA's criteria. The consultant will prepare the application, providing supporting evidence and documentation as required, and submit it to the REDP's tourism advisor to the CTD for feedback and approval. The consultant will then submit the application to the IDA. If the application is rejected for any reason, the consultant will get feedback from the IDA, advise the CTD on additional steps which need to be taken, and, once they have been implemented, update and resubmit the application.

Schedule for completion of tasks

13. **The consultant will prepare and submit the curriculum and equipment purchase order within three months of signing the contract.** This submission will be considered as the first deliverable, and will trigger the first payment, payable within 30 days.
14. **The consultant will plan and deliver the astro-stays training in summer 2021.** If it is not possible to travel to Tajikistan at this time (for example due to COVID-related travel restrictions and/or a Foreign & Commonwealth Office travel advisory), the consultant will be expected to deliver the training in the first summer after the restrictions have been lifted. Completion of the training will be considered as the second deliverable, and will trigger the second payment (including reimbursement of travel expenses), payable within 30 days. The exact time should be agreed with the tourism advisor to the CTD in order to avoid / reduce the loss of homestays when they receive the training.
15. **The consultant will prepare and submit the IDA application not more than 12 months after the astro-stays training has been completed.** This period is required in order to thoroughly research and prepare the application (including any revisions resulting from feedback) but also to demonstrate to the IDA that the training has resulted in the creation of a successful, sustainable dark sky community capable of sustaining dark sky tourism. Submission of the application will be considered as the third deliverable, and will trigger the third and final payment, payable within 30 days.

Final Outputs

16. During the course of this assignment, the consultant should submit:

- i. A Tajikistan-specific dark sky curriculum suitable for training astro-guides;
- ii. A purchase order for five refractor telescope kits;
- iii. An International Dark Sky Place application to the IDA.

17. The consultant is also expected to deliver the in-person training course for astro-guides on location in Tajikistan.

Reporting

18. The consultant will report to the REDP advisor to the CTD. He or she will be expected to provide short monthly progress updates, soft copies of which will be provided to the CTD and World Bank.

Assignment duration

19. It is expected that the consultant will complete the assignment within 24 months. However, if delivery of the astro-guides training component is delayed due to travel restrictions, the assignment duration will be extended.

Location of work

20. The consultant will be able to work remotely for the majority of the assignment. This will include the time allocated for the preparation and submission of the curriculum and purchase order, and for the preparation and submission of the IDA application.

21. It will be necessary, however, for the consultant to travel to Tajikistan to deliver the astro-guides training. It is anticipated that this will be a period of 10 days, plus travel time between the consultant's home and the district where the training is taking place. The consultant will be reimbursed at cost for travel expenses, including visa, flights, domestic transport, accommodation, and meals.

Qualifications and Requirements

22. The consultant must demonstrate experience in astronomy, dark sky advocacy, and/or the development of astro-tourism. This requirement includes being an IDA delegate, or able to acquire that status, as only delegates are permitted to submit International Dark Sky Place applications to the IDA.

23. It is expected that the consultant will possess a degree in astronomy, travel and tourism, or intercultural communication. As an alternative, the consultant can demonstrate at least five years experience working in a tourism-related field, or in education and training. Teaching experience, in particular teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL), is highly desirable.

24. The consultant is expected to be familiar with the tourism sector in Tajikistan. This includes an understanding of local culture and society (including behavioral and employment constraints for women), and the physical conditions in which the astro-guides training will be delivered.

4.2 Consultant: Digital skills

REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN

SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE JOBS LENDING AT SCALE

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR DIGITAL SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Background

1. **The Republic of Tajikistan has received financing from the International Development Association of the World Bank Group (WBG) for the implementation of the Tajikistan Rural Economy Development Project (REDP).** The project's development objective is to improve the sources of livelihood for local populations in the Gorno Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO) and Khatlon regions through tourism and agribusiness. Detailed project information can be found in the project appraisal document.
2. **Tourism has been identified as one of the most important drivers of growth for Tajikistan.** Growth in the tourism industry is intended to generate economic opportunities for local populations, especially for vulnerable groups, including women, youth and returning migrant workers. The increased employment opportunities offered by community-based tourism will allow these groups to be productive and would discourage them from activities such as joining religious extremist groups or engaging in drug trafficking activities.
3. **The project is structured according to four components, organized based on the types of intervention and beneficiaries:**
 - i. Component 1 focuses on improving public infrastructure for the development of agribusiness and tourism.
 - ii. Component 2 supports micro small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs) and entrepreneurs in agribusiness, community-based tourism, and related sectors through matching grants.
 - iii. Component 3 focuses on strengthening skills, entrepreneurship, and business development services to enable potential beneficiaries to gain fully from the grant programs under Components 1 and 2.
 - iv. Component 4 provides project coordination and implementation as well as grant management and administration.
4. **Component 3 includes capacity-building for public and private sectors.** This component will finance three specific activities, among others. The first is training and advisory services on tourism and agribusiness development for public institutions (for example, analysis of global trends, market analysis, and public-private partnership to develop the sectors). The training will be for stakeholders such as the Tourism Development Committee, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Culture, and other project participants. The second activity is promoting tourism and agribusiness by organizing and taking part in trade fairs, familiarization or learning tours (for tour operators and agribusinesses), and media and marketing activities. Targeted marketing activities include designing and disseminating online, in-print, and visual materials. The third activity is providing training, retraining, and certification programs for skilled professionals, semi-skilled workers, and relevant entrepreneurs in the tourism sector.

5. The Jobs MDTF’s “Supporting Effective Jobs Lending at Scale” program focuses on supporting the development of large-scale operational applications of the jobs agenda, with the following objectives:

- i. Support the development of effective operations to improve jobs outcomes across the WBG, thereby helping to reinforce a WBG-wide narrative about the ways in which different GPs can contribute to an integrated jobs agenda; and
- ii. Advance the jobs measurement agenda, so policymakers have access to the best possible information about the evolution of jobs outcomes.

The MDTF funds will be used to strengthen the consistency of ex-ante design of jobs-relevant project components; and to support the estimation of jobs outcomes in the Results Frameworks.

Objectives

6. The objective of the assignment is to increase proficiency in digital skills in Tajikistan’s tourism sector. Doing so will:

- i. Enable small business owners to better promote their products and services, connect to potential customers, and take bookings online;
- ii. Give young entrepreneurs in Tajikistan the skills they need to establish digital enterprises and sell digital services to other companies;
- iii. Increase the online visibility of Tajikistan as a tourism destination, as well as the products and services it has to offer;
- iv. Enable business in Tajikistan to capture a greater proportion of revenue from the tourism supply chain;
- v. Accelerate the pace of post-COVID tourism recovery in Tajikistan.

Scope of work

7. The consultant will be responsible for planning, organising, and delivering the digital skills training. He or she will be provided with a translator and supported by the REDP’s regional project coordinators, as well as by the REDP advisor to the Committee for Tourism Development (CTD). Before starting the project, the consultant will agree with the REDP advisor the subjects and titles for a minimum of eight basic courses, and six advanced courses.

8. For each of the basic skills courses⁴⁷, the consultant will produce curricula and the online teaching materials required to deliver them. It is expected that each course will equate to four to eight hours of personal study time, depending on the subject and the existing skill level of the course participants. The course materials must be formatted for download rather than streaming, as internet bandwidth in Tajikistan is often poor; and the software used must be free to the end user, not reliant on a paid subscription. The language of the materials should be Tajik, for which the consultant will use the services of the translator. Once the final version of the materials is

⁴⁷ Basic skills courses might include introductions to content marketing (including use of blogs, photos, and video); ecommerce (specifically use of third-party bookings sites and booking and payment plugins for WordPress); email and newsletter marketing; online advertising (an introduction to Google Ads and free alternatives, the importance and use of keyword searches, etc.); review sites (including TripAdvisor, Facebook reviews, and Google business reviews); social media (strategy, content development, and advertising); and WordPress editing (to enable participants to build simple websites, or edit sites they have commissioned from third parties).

approved, the consultant will be responsible for uploading them to the training portal, which will be on a WordPress platform.

9. **For each of the advanced skills courses⁴⁸, the consultant will produce curricula and the online teaching materials and webinars required to deliver them.** It is expected that each course will equate to 15 to 20 hours of personal study time, depending on the subject and the existing skill level of the course participants. The online teaching materials must be formatted for download, and the webinars must be delivered via a channel which is flexible in the case of poor internet connectivity (i.e. option to reduce quality of video, turn off video and have sound only, or download video to watch later). The software used must be free to the end user, not reliant on a paid subscription. The language of instruction should be English. Once the final version of the materials is approved, the consultant will be responsible for uploading them to the training portal, which will be on a WordPress platform.
10. **If the consultant does not have the expertise to deliver one or more of the webinars, he or she can outsource this task to a third party expert.** The consultant will retain responsibility for the quality, relevance, and consistency of all the webinars, and the involvement of any additional experts should be pre-approved in writing by the REDP advisor to the CTD.
11. **The consultant is expected to provide ongoing support to participants in the advanced skills courses.** This support, which may be delivered by email, phone, or WhatsApp, should be provided for a period of six months after the course materials have been uploaded to the training portal.

Schedule for completion of tasks

12. **The consultant will prepare and submit the curriculum for the basic and advanced skills courses within three months of signing the contract.** This submission will be considered as the first deliverable, and once the curricula have been accepted by the REDP advisor to the CTD, it will trigger the first payment, payable within 30 days.
13. **The consultant will prepare the basic skills teaching materials within three months of curricula approval.** The materials will be checked by the REDP advisor to the CTD, and the text sent for translation. Once the consultant receives the translated text back, they will have two months to update the materials and upload them to the training portal. This is the second deliverable, and will trigger the second payment, payable within 30 days.
14. **The consultant will have a further six months to prepare the teaching materials and webinars for the advanced skills courses.** This will include the time for the REDP advisor to the CTD to review and approve the materials, and for the consultant to incorporate any feedback and upload the final materials to the training portal. This is the third deliverable, and will trigger the third payment, payable within 30 days.

Final Outputs

15. **During the course of this assignment, the consultant should submit:**

⁴⁸ Advances skills courses might include more in-depth courses on content and digital marketing (including strategies, search engine optimisation, impact analysis, etc.); data analytics (including Google Analytics, Facebook Insights, and Twitter Analytics, how they work, why they are important, and how they inform digital marketing strategies and campaign responses); ecommerce (specifically the creation of profiles on third-party bookings sites and the installation and customisation of booking and payment plugins for WordPress); photo and video editing; and website development using WordPress.

- i. Curricula and teaching materials for a minimum of eight basic skills courses on agreed subjects;
- ii. Curricula, teaching materials, and webinars for a minimum of six advanced skills courses on agreed subjects.

16. The consultant is also expected to provide support to participants in the advanced skills courses, for a period of six months.

Reporting

17. The consultant will report to the REDP advisor to the CTD. He or she will be expected to provide short monthly progress updates, soft copies of which will be provided to the CTD and World Bank.

Assignment duration

18. It is expected that the consultant will complete the assignment within 18 months. This includes 12 months for deliverables one to three, and a further six months of ongoing support

Location of work

19. The consultant will work remotely for the duration of the assignment. As the focus of the training is digital skills, all course participants will have to have the hardware and internet connectivity to engage in e-learning. It is neither necessary nor cost-effective for the consultant to deliver face-to-face teaching in Tajikistan.

Qualifications and Requirements

- 20. The consultant is expected to have a minimum of five years of experience in digital marketing, digital publishing, digital training, and/or tech support.** He or she must be able to demonstrate high levels of competency in the majority of subjects to be taught as courses, and have a working understanding of the other subjects.
- 21. The consultant must demonstrate experience of using digital skills for the development and marketing of the travel sector.** This might include previous contracts with travel brands such as national and regional tourist boards, airlines, tour operators and travel agents, and/or travel publishers. Work examples should be provided on request.
- 22. Strong written and spoken communication skills are essential for this role.** The consultant must be fluent in English, and capable of breaking down complex ideas and processes into simple steps which can be understood by those without prior subject knowledge.
- 23. It is desirable that the consultant has a well established social media presence, or has created and managed social media content for high profile brands.** This will demonstrate competency in a core area of the project, and give the consultant credibility and real-world experience to draw upon when teaching course participants.

4.3 Consultant: Handicrafts development

REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN

SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE JOBS LENDING AT SCALE

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR HANDICRAFTS DEVELOPMENT

Background

1. **The Republic of Tajikistan has received financing from the International Development Association of the World Bank Group (WBG) for the implementation of the Tajikistan Rural Economy Development Project (REDP).** The project's development objective is to improve the sources of livelihood for local populations in the Gorno Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO) and Khatlon regions through tourism and agribusiness. Detailed project information can be found in the project appraisal document.
2. **Tourism has been identified as one of the most important drivers of growth for Tajikistan.** Growth in the tourism industry is intended to generate economic opportunities for local populations, especially for vulnerable groups, including women, youth and returning migrant workers. The increased employment opportunities offered by community-based tourism will allow these groups to be productive and would discourage them from activities such as joining religious extremist groups or engaging in drug trafficking activities.
3. **The project is structured according to four components, organized based on the types of intervention and beneficiaries:**
 - i. Component 1 focuses on improving public infrastructure for the development of agribusiness and tourism.
 - ii. Component 2 supports micro small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs) and entrepreneurs in agribusiness, community-based tourism, and related sectors through matching grants.
 - iii. Component 3 focuses on strengthening skills, entrepreneurship, and business development services to enable potential beneficiaries to gain fully from the grant programs under Components 1 and 2.
 - iv. Component 4 provides project coordination and implementation as well as grant management and administration.
4. **Component 3 includes capacity-building for public and private sectors.** This component will finance three specific activities, among others. The first is training and advisory services on tourism and agribusiness development for public institutions (for example, analysis of global trends, market analysis, and public-private partnership to develop the sectors). The training will be for stakeholders such as the Tourism Development Committee, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Culture, and other project participants. The second activity is promoting tourism and agribusiness by organizing and taking part in trade fairs, familiarization or learning tours (for tour operators and agribusinesses), and media and marketing activities. Targeted marketing activities include designing and disseminating online, in-print, and visual materials. The third activity is providing training, retraining, and certification programs for skilled professionals, semi-skilled workers, and relevant entrepreneurs in the tourism sector.

5. The Jobs MDTF’s “Supporting Effective Jobs Lending at Scale” program focuses on supporting the development of large-scale operational applications of the jobs agenda, with the following objectives:

- i. Support the development of effective operations to improve jobs outcomes across the WBG, thereby helping to reinforce a WBG-wide narrative about the ways in which different GPs can contribute to an integrated jobs agenda; and
- ii. Advance the jobs measurement agenda, so policymakers have access to the best possible information about the evolution of jobs outcomes.

The MDTF funds will be used to strengthen the consistency of ex-ante design of jobs-relevant project components; and to support the estimation of jobs outcomes in the Results Frameworks.

Objectives

6. The objective of the assignment is to improve the quality of handicrafts production and marketing in Tajikistan, and connect producers to markets. Doing so will:

- i. Create high quality training and employment opportunities for women in rural areas;
- ii. Enhance Tajikistan’s cultural tourism through the development of intangible cultural heritage;
- iii. Increase the average per capita spending of tourists through the addition of shopping opportunities;
- iv. Diversify Tajikistan’s tourism products with the addition of handicrafts tours and workshops;
- v. Provide Tajikistan with a high quality crafts product which can be leveraged for marketing purposes.

Scope of work

- 7. The consultant’s first role regards product design and development.** The consultant will work with the Union of Craftsmen of Tajikistan (UCT), FINCA Tajikistan, and other handicrafts associations within the country to identify the product types which have the greatest commercial potential. The consultant will submit an initial report outlining (i) who the stakeholders and artisans are, (ii) which product types have been chosen and why, and (iii) a plan of work specifying how they intend to support each participating artisan to improve the quality of their product (and packaging) over the next 12 months. Smaller, easily transportable products such as textiles, jewellery, ceramics, carpets, and homeware items are a priority, as are products which can be standardised and produced in larger quantities for export. The consultant will then carry out the work plan as planned in the initial report for a period of 12 months. At the end of the 12 month period, the consultant will submit a second report about the interventions which were made, the progress of each supported artisan (with photographs of their work), and any further recommendations for the artisan, or for other artisans working in the same area.
- 8. Secondly, the consultant will be expected to research and recommend ways of improving artisans’ access to markets, both domestic and international.** This will include writing a report suggesting improvements to the UCT website, identifying potential retail outlets in Tajikistan, recommending viable ecommerce solutions, and introducing artisans to potential partners, retail

outlets and wholesale buyers abroad. Any regulatory considerations affecting export goods (for example relevant safety standards or labelling requirements) should be included in this report.

- 9. Lastly, the consultant will identify artisans able and willing to host tourists in their workshops, and develop a series of handicrafts themed tour itineraries.** This is to enable tourists to visit artisans, learn about their work, and buy products directly; and will be a new, high value tourism product which will diversify and enhance the product offering of guides and tour operators. The consultant will produce a minimum of three handicrafts itineraries, including at least one in Khatlon and one in GBAO. It is expected that the consultant will design the tour; train the participating artisans and local guides in order to ensure smooth execution of the itineraries; and produce supporting marketing materials which the CTD and tour operators can use to promote the handicrafts tours online.

Schedule for completion of tasks

- 10. It is anticipated that the consultant will spend the first three months of the project meeting stakeholders, and identifying the product types with greatest commercial potential, as well as the artisans who produce them.** At the end of this three month period, the consultant will submit their initial report, for approval by the REDP's advisor to the CTD. This will be the first deliverable for the project, and trigger the first payment, payable within 30 days.
- 11. The consultant will spend the next 12 months implementing the plan of work outlined in the initial report.** At the end of this 12 month period, the consultant will submit their second report, for approval by the REDP's advisor to the CTD. This will be the second deliverable for the project, and trigger the second payment, payable within 30 days.
- 12. In parallel with this, the consultant should undertake their research on connecting the artisans to markets.** The consultant will submit this report (including recommendations) for approval by the REDP's advisor to the CTD. This will be the third deliverable for the project, and trigger the third payment, payable within 30 days.
- 13. The consultant will design the handicrafts tour itineraries within the first nine months of the project.** The itineraries should be submitted to the REDP's advisor to the CTD for approval. This will be the fourth deliverable for the project, and trigger the fourth payment, payable within 30 days. The consultant will then have a further six months to train the participating artisans and local guides and produce the supporting marketing materials for the itineraries. Completion of the training, and submission of the marketing materials for approval by the REDP's advisor to the CTD will be the fifth deliverable for the project, and trigger the fifth payment, payable within 30 days.

Final Outputs

- 14. During the course of this assignment, the consultant should submit:**

- i. An initial report outlining who the stakeholders and artisans are, which product types have been chosen and why, and a plan of work for product development;
- ii. A report detailing the interventions which were made, the progress of each supported artisan (with photographs of their work), and any further recommendations;
- iii. A report recommending ways of improving artisans' access to markets, both domestic and international;
- iv. Three original handicrafts itineraries;
- v. Supporting marketing materials for the handicrafts itineraries.

- 15. The consultant is also expected to deliver in-person product design and development support for artisans, and training for artisans and local guides so that they can deliver the handicrafts itineraries.**

Reporting

- 16. The consultant will report to the REDP advisor to the CTD.** The required reports and their timing are described in the Schedule for completion of tasks. Soft copies of the reports will be provided to the CTD and World Bank.

Assignment duration

- 17. The total assignment duration is 15 months from the signing of the contract.** However, if delivery is delayed due to travel restrictions, the assignment duration will be extended.

Location of work

- 18. The consultant will need to travel to Tajikistan regularly in order to execute this assignment.** This will include a minimum of four weeks (20 working days) during the first three months of the assignment, and subsequent trips to support the artisans and conduct training related to the handicrafts itineraries. The number, duration, and timing of these subsequent visits will be outlined in the consultant's initial report and agreed with the REDP advisor to the CTD.

Qualifications and Requirements

- 19. The consultant should have a university degree in applied arts, fine art, product design, textiles and materials, or other related fields.** Non-related degree subjects will be acceptable if the consultant can demonstrate significant professional and/or academic interest in these fields, for example by lecturing, publishing books and articles, producing or curating exhibitions, etc.
- 20. Minimum 10 years experience in product design, handicrafts development, and/or handicrafts marketing and sales.** The consultant should have firsthand experience working in the private sector, and experience working with the public sector and/or third sector (including associations) will be advantageous.
- 21. Understanding of the intersections between the handicrafts and tourism.** This might include prior experience developing workshops and tours; organisation of festivals, exhibitions, and events; and the development and marketing of handicrafts products as souvenirs.
- 22. Strong verbal communication skills are essential for the success of this assignment.** The consultant must be fluent in English or Russian, and will be assisted by a Tajik-speaking translator or guide for field visits.
- 23. The consultant is not expected to have worked previously in Tajikistan.** However, he or she should have experience in countries or regions with a similar level of economic development and comparable handicrafts heritage, for example other Central Asian or Caucasian republics, Afghanistan, India, Iran, or Pakistan.

4.4 Consultant: Hospitality

REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN

SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE JOBS LENDING AT SCALE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

FOR CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR HOSPITALITY SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

Background

1. **The Republic of Tajikistan has received financing from the International Development Association of the World Bank Group (WBG) for the implementation of the Tajikistan Rural Economy Development Project (REDP).** The project's development objective is to improve the sources of livelihood for local populations in the Gorno Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO) and Khatlon regions through tourism and agribusiness. Detailed project information can be found in the project appraisal document.
2. **Tourism has been identified as one of the most important drivers of growth for Tajikistan.** Growth in the tourism industry is intended to generate economic opportunities for local populations, especially for vulnerable groups, including women, youth and returning migrant workers. The increased employment opportunities offered by community-based tourism will allow these groups to be productive and would discourage them from activities such as joining religious extremist groups or engaging in drug trafficking activities.
3. **The project is structured according to four components, organized based on the types of intervention and beneficiaries:**
 - i. Component 1 focuses on improving public infrastructure for the development of agribusiness and tourism.
 - ii. Component 2 supports micro small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs) and entrepreneurs in agribusiness, community-based tourism, and related sectors through matching grants.
 - iii. Component 3 focuses on strengthening skills, entrepreneurship, and business development services to enable potential beneficiaries to gain fully from the grant programs under Components 1 and 2.
 - iv. Component 4 provides project coordination and implementation as well as grant management and administration.
4. **Component 3 includes capacity-building for public and private sectors.** This component will finance three specific activities, among others. The first is training and advisory services on tourism and agribusiness development for public institutions (for example, analysis of global trends, market analysis, and public-private partnership to develop the sectors). The training will be for stakeholders such as the Tourism Development Committee, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Culture, and other project participants. The second activity is promoting tourism and agribusiness by organizing and taking part in trade fairs, familiarization or learning tours (for tour operators and agribusinesses), and media and marketing activities. Targeted marketing activities include designing and disseminating online, in-print, and visual materials. The third activity is providing training, retraining, and certification programs for skilled professionals, semi-skilled workers, and relevant entrepreneurs in the tourism sector.
5. **The Jobs MDTF's "Supporting Effective Jobs Lending at Scale" program focuses on supporting the development of large-scale operational applications of the jobs agenda, with the following objectives:**

- i. Support the development of effective operations to improve jobs outcomes across the WBG, thereby helping to reinforce a WBG-wide narrative about the ways in which different GPs can contribute to an integrated jobs agenda; and
- ii. Advance the jobs measurement agenda, so policymakers have access to the best possible information about the evolution of jobs outcomes.

The MDTF funds will be used to strengthen the consistency of ex-ante design of jobs-relevant project components; and to support the estimation of jobs outcomes in the Results Frameworks.

Objectives

- 6. The objective of the assignment is to ensure that recipients of the REDP's private sector grants are also able to improve their hospitality skills.** Doing so will:
 - i. Ensure accommodation and food service providers understand and are able to comply with COVID-19 management and food safety guidelines;
 - ii. Improve the quality of the hospitality sector in Tajikistan, enabling suppliers to charge more for their products and services;
 - iii. Increase levels of tourist satisfaction in a sub-sector which currently generates negative feedback;
 - iv. Contribute to the continuing professional development (CPD) of hospitality workers, increasing their earnings potential and job satisfaction.

Scope of work

- 7. The consultant will produce curricula for 10 training courses, based on international best practice but tailored to the needs and realities of the hospitality sector in Tajikistan.** One of these courses -- food and dining safety (including food hygiene and allergies, and COVID-19 dining management) -- will be compulsory for all recipients of REDP private sector grants; and the remaining seven courses (equivalent to City & Guilds Hospitality and Catering levels 1-3, Food and Beverage Service, Culinary Skills, Barista Skills, and Customer Service, plus a basic English as a foreign language course) will be voluntary. The curricula should be submitted to the REDP advisor to the CTD for feedback and approval.
- 8. The consultant will produce online training materials to deliver each curricula.** The training materials must be bilingual in Tajik and Russian (translation services will be provided if required), allow participants to complete the courses at their own pace, be smartphone compatible, and not require significant internet bandwidth (i.e. any video should be available in a low resolution format, and accompanied by PDF downloads covering the same content). Once the training materials have been approved by the REDP advisor to the CTD, and the translated text sent to the consultant (if required), the consultant will upload them to the designated training portal, which will be on a WordPress platform.
- 9. The consultant will train two local instructors to deliver the two compulsory courses in physical workshops in Khatlon and GBAO.** The consultant will teach the instructors in face-to-face training sessions Dushanbe, and will provide remote support during the workshop sessions if required.

Schedule for completion of tasks

- 10. The consultant will prepare and submit the course curricula within three months of signing the contract.** They should be submitted to the REDP advisor to the CTD, and will be approved once any feedback is incorporated. This submission will be considered as the first deliverable, and will trigger the first payment, payable within 30 days.
- 11. The consultant will then have three months to produce the training materials for the two compulsory courses.** These two modules should be prepared, submitted to the REDP advisor to the CTD for approval, and then uploaded to the online training portal. At the same time, the consultant should train the local instructor to deliver these two courses in workshops. Uploading the training materials and completion of the instructor training will be considered as the second deliverable, and will trigger the second payment, payable within 30 days.
- 12. In the final six months of the project, the consultant will prepare and upload the training materials for the remaining eight courses.** These eight modules should be prepared, submitted to the REDP advisor to the CTD for approval, and then uploaded to the online training portal. Uploading the training materials will be considered as the third deliverable, and will trigger the third payment, payable within 30 days.

Final Outputs

- 13. During the course of this assignment, the consultant should submit:**
- i. Tajikistan-specific curricula for the 10 hospitality training courses ;
 - ii. Online training materials required to deliver each of the 10 courses.
- 14. The consultant is also expected to train the local instructor to deliver the two compulsory courses in workshop sessions.**

Reporting

- 15. The consultant will report to the REDP advisor to the CTD.** In addition to the outputs described above, the consultant will be expected to provide short monthly progress updates, soft copies of which will be provided to the CTD and World.

Assignment duration

- 16. It is expected that the consultant will complete the assignment within 12 months.** However, if there is a delay in the supply of the translated materials, this period may be extended.

Location of work

- 17. The consultant will be able to work remotely for this assignment.** It is not expected that the consultant will travel to Tajikistan, unless he or she is already resident in the country.

Qualifications and Requirements

- 18. The consultant should have a minimum of five years professional experience in the hospitality sector.** This should include familiarity with accommodation and food and beverage sub sectors, and knowledge of international best practice (for example from working for an international brand).

- 19. The consultant should have a degree in hospitality management, travel and tourism, or a related field.** An additional five years of professional experience in the hospitality sector will be accepted in lieu of a degree.
- 20. Teaching experience is expected.** This might include teaching vocational courses in a college or university; teaching English as foreign language (TEFL); developing elearning programmes; and/or delivering continuing professional development (CPD) for colleagues in a hospitality setting.
- 21. The language of the assignment is English.** However, fluency in Russian and/or Tajik is highly desirable.

4.5 Company: Construction training

REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN

SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE JOBS LENDING AT SCALE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

FOR CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR CONSTRUCTION SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

Background

1. **The Republic of Tajikistan has received financing from the International Development Association of the World Bank Group (WBG) for the implementation of the Tajikistan Rural Economy Development Project (REDP).** The project's development objective is to improve the sources of livelihood for local populations in the Gorno Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO) and Khatlon regions through tourism and agribusiness. Detailed project information can be found in the project appraisal document.
2. **Tourism has been identified as one of the most important drivers of growth for Tajikistan.** Growth in the tourism industry is intended to generate economic opportunities for local populations, especially for vulnerable groups, including women, youth and returning migrant workers. The increased employment opportunities offered by community-based tourism will allow these groups to be productive and would discourage them from activities such as joining religious extremist groups or engaging in drug trafficking activities.
3. **The project is structured according to four components, organized based on the types of intervention and beneficiaries:**
 - i. Component 1 focuses on improving public infrastructure for the development of agribusiness and tourism.
 - ii. Component 2 supports micro small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs) and entrepreneurs in agribusiness, community-based tourism, and related sectors through matching grants.
 - iii. Component 3 focuses on strengthening skills, entrepreneurship, and business development services to enable potential beneficiaries to gain fully from the grant programs under Components 1 and 2.
 - iv. Component 4 provides project coordination and implementation as well as grant management and administration.
4. **Component 3 includes capacity-building for public and private sectors.** This component will finance three specific activities, among others. The first is training and advisory services on tourism and agribusiness development for public institutions (for example, analysis of global trends, market analysis, and public-private partnership to develop the sectors). The training will be for stakeholders such as the Tourism Development Committee, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Culture, and other project participants. The second activity is promoting tourism and agribusiness by organizing and taking part in trade fairs, familiarization or learning tours (for tour operators and agribusinesses), and media and marketing activities. Targeted marketing activities include designing and disseminating online, in-print, and visual materials. The third activity is providing training, retraining, and certification programs for skilled professionals, semi-skilled workers, and relevant entrepreneurs in the tourism sector.

5. **The Jobs MDTF’s “Supporting Effective Jobs Lending at Scale” program focuses on supporting the development of large-scale operational applications of the jobs agenda, with the following objectives:**

- i. Support the development of effective operations to improve jobs outcomes across the WBG, thereby helping to reinforce a WBG-wide narrative about the ways in which different GPs can contribute to an integrated jobs agenda; and
- ii. Advance the jobs measurement agenda, so policymakers have access to the best possible information about the evolution of jobs outcomes.

The MDTF funds will be used to strengthen the consistency of ex-ante design of jobs-relevant project components; and to support the estimation of jobs outcomes in the Results Frameworks.

Objectives

6. **The objective of the assignment is to increase the level of skilled labour in Tajikistan’s construction sector.** Doing so will:

- i. Create high quality training and employment opportunities for young people and returning migrants;
- ii. Improve the quality of construction, safety, and sanitation;
- iii. Ensure there is a local workforce capable of delivering REDP grant-funded projects to the required specifications;
- iv. Improve the guest experience for tourists, enabling the hospitality sector to charge more for products and services.

Scope of work

7. **A company will be hired to plan and deliver vocational training in key construction skills.** The courses required are plumbing and heating; electricians; brick laying; carpentry and joinery; plastering and tiling; painting and decorating. The curricula should be equivalent to the City & Guilds national vocational qualifications (NVQs), but adapted to reflect the local realities of the construction sector in Tajikistan. The language of instruction should be Tajik and Russian.
8. **The first task will be the development of curricula.** Each course should be broken down into three modules, equivalent to NVQ levels 1, 2, and 3. The curricula should be accompanied by a detailed plan outlining how the training will be delivered. Any online course materials must also be available as physical handouts, and the majority of training should be offline, including classroom-based sessions, practical workshops, and on the job training.
9. **At the same time, the company should produce a purchase order for safety equipment and basic tools required for participants to complete the training.** The Company needs to (i) identify a list of three suitable products, (ii) report these products to GMC (to be included in the catalogue), and (iii) recommend these products to beneficiaries of the training. This equipment will be purchased and delivered to Dushanbe prior to the commencement of training.
10. **The company will be expected to liaise with the grant management company (GMC) and the REDP’s regional project coordinator to identify and recruit suitable participants for the courses.** There should be a minimum of 12 participants on each course, the majority of whom

should be from Khatlon and GBAO. Priority for course places should be given to women, returning migrants, and youth.

- 11. The company will deliver the training on location in Tajikistan, engaging local partners as required.** Participants who complete each module should be assessed and awarded certification if they meet the required level of competency. It is a requirement that at least 60% of participants complete and pass each module. If participants do not reach the required standard, the company will have to extend and/or change the training programme to ensure that the pass threshold is met.

Schedule for completion of tasks

- 12. The company will have three months from the date of signing the contract to prepare and submit the course curricula and work plan for implementation.** The purchase order for equipment and tools should be submitted at the same time. The approval of these documents by the REDP's advisor to the CTD will be the first deliverable, and will trigger the first payment, payable within 30 days.
- 13. The recruitment of course participants and the delivery of training courses should be undertaken over 24 months from approval of the curricula and work plan.** Courses should be run concurrently. Each training module will be a standalone deliverable, and payment will be triggered when 60% of course participants are assessed to have met the required standard, and been awarded their certification. Once deliverables are met, payments are payable within 30 days.

Final Outputs

- 14. During this assignment, the company should submit:**

- i. A curricula for 10 courses, each broken down into three modules, and equivalent to the requirements of NVQ levels 1, 2, and 3;
- ii. A work plan for the delivery of training;
- iii. A purchase order for safety equipment and tools.

- 15. The company is also expected to deliver the in-person training for course participants in Tajikistan, and to award them with certification once they reach the required standards.**

Reporting

- 16. The consultant will report to the REDP advisor to the CTD.** In addition to the outputs described above, the company will be expected to provide short monthly progress updates, soft copies of which will be provided to the CTD and World Bank.

Assignment duration

- 17. The duration of this assignment is 27 months.** Of this, three months is the preparatory phase, and the remaining 24 months is allocated for the recruitment of course participants and the delivery of training. However, if delivery of the training component is delayed due to COVID restrictions, or the originally planned training does not enable the course participants to meet the required standards, the assignment duration will be extended.

Location of work

- 18. The preparatory phase of the assignment -- namely the production of the curricula, work plan, and purchase order -- can be undertaken remotely.** However, it is expected that the company will liaise closely with stakeholders in Tajikistan to understand the current skill level of participants and the local construction sector's needs, and what will be required to upskill participants in order that they can confidently pass the course assessments and obtain certification.
- 19. All training modules will be delivered in Tajikistan.** The company's instructors and assessors (which may include local partners) will be expected to travel to GBAO and Khatlon to deliver training and assessment there.

Qualifications and Requirements

- 20. The company hired must have a minimum of 10 years experience delivering vocational education for the construction sector.** The training courses offered must be equivalent to City & Guilds NVQs, though alternative exam boards are acceptable.
- 21. Individual instructors hired by the company under the project must have a minimum of five years of teaching experience.** Alternatively, two years of teaching experience will be accepted if it is combined with five years of experience working in the construction sector. Instructors must be fluent in Tajik (or Dari/Farsi) or Russian, and hold a IOSH Managing Safely certificate (or equivalent).
- 22. The company is not required to have worked in Tajikistan previously.** However, the successful delivery of vocational training projects in similar countries (for example in Russia and CIS) is highly desirable.
- 23. It is expected that any international company bidding of this contract will have comprehensive public and employers liability insurance, valid worldwide.**

4.6 Company: Guide training

REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN

SUPPORTING EFFECTIVE JOBS LENDING AT SCALE

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR GUIDE TRAINING

Background

1. **The Republic of Tajikistan has received financing from the International Development Association of the World Bank Group (WBG) for the implementation of the Tajikistan Rural Economy Development Project (REDP).** The project's development objective is to improve the sources of livelihood for local populations in the Gorno Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast (GBAO) and Khatlon regions through tourism and agribusiness. Detailed project information can be found in the project appraisal document.
2. **Tourism has been identified as one of the most important drivers of growth for Tajikistan.** Growth in the tourism industry is intended to generate economic opportunities for local populations, especially for vulnerable groups, including women, youth and returning migrant workers. The increased employment opportunities offered by community-based tourism will allow these groups to be productive and would discourage them from activities such as joining religious extremist groups or engaging in drug trafficking activities.
3. **The project is structured according to four components, organized based on the types of intervention and beneficiaries:**
 - i. Component 1 focuses on improving public infrastructure for the development of agribusiness and tourism.
 - ii. Component 2 supports micro small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs) and entrepreneurs in agribusiness, community-based tourism, and related sectors through matching grants.
 - iii. Component 3 focuses on strengthening skills, entrepreneurship, and business development services to enable potential beneficiaries to gain fully from the grant programs under Components 1 and 2.
 - iv. Component 4 provides project coordination and implementation as well as grant management and administration.
4. **Component 3 includes capacity-building for public and private sectors.** This component will finance three specific activities, among others. The first is training and advisory services on tourism and agribusiness development for public institutions (for example, analysis of global trends, market analysis, and public-private partnership to develop the sectors). The training will be for stakeholders such as the Tourism Development Committee, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Culture, and other project participants. The second activity is promoting tourism and agribusiness by organizing and taking part in trade fairs, familiarization or learning tours (for tour operators and agribusinesses), and media and marketing activities. Targeted marketing activities include designing and disseminating online, in-print, and visual materials. The third activity is providing training, retraining, and certification programs for skilled professionals, semi-skilled workers, and relevant entrepreneurs in the tourism sector.
5. **The Jobs MDTF's "Supporting Effective Jobs Lending at Scale" program focuses on supporting the development of large-scale operational applications of the jobs agenda, with the following objectives:**

- i. Support the development of effective operations to improve jobs outcomes across the WBG, thereby helping to reinforce a WBG-wide narrative about the ways in which different GPs can contribute to an integrated jobs agenda; and
- ii. Advance the jobs measurement agenda, so policymakers have access to the best possible information about the evolution of jobs outcomes.

The MDTF funds will be used to strengthen the consistency of ex-ante design of jobs-relevant project components; and to support the estimation of jobs outcomes in the Results Frameworks.

Objectives

- 6. The objective of the assignment is to increase the number of tourist guides in Tajikistan (including specialist guides), and improve the quality of their guiding.** Doing so will:
 - i. Create high quality training and employment opportunities for youth and returning migrants;
 - ii. Enable tour operators in Tajikistan to offer a greater variety and quality of tourism products;
 - iii. Lengthen the tourism season in Tajikistan, making it a year-round destination;
 - iv. Increase the contribution of tourism to Tajikistan's economy;
 - v. Make Tajikistan more competitive as a tourism destination.

Scope of work

- 7. A local company or organisation will be hired to facilitate and deliver guide training in Tajikistan.** There will be two complementary activities: activity 1 is the provision of three training modules for general guides; and activity 2 is specialist training programmes for mountain guides and wildlife guides.
- 8. For activity 1, the company will recruit a maximum of 20 participants for each guiding course.** Priority for module 1 should be given to applicants who have graduated with English degrees and/or have a good working knowledge of the language.
- 9. The three training modules will be delivered at a mutually agreed, accessible location in GBAO or Khatlon.** The basic curricula for courses have already been produced by Tajikistan Guides, but should be adapted to focus on themes and locations relevant to Khatlon and GBAO. The company will be responsible for hiring suitably qualified course instructors, and arranging the logistics for training, including venues, transportation, teaching materials, translation, etc. The company will also ensure that the training modules are delivered in accordance with the curricula, and assess participants at the end of courses to ensure they have reached the required levels of proficiency. Module 1 will be taught by a local instructor; module 2 will be taught by a regional instructor; and module 3 will be taught by an international instructor.
- 10. Prior to starting activity 2, the company will prepare a purchase order of specialist equipment required for participants on the mountain guiding course.** This should include equipment specifications and three price quotes. This equipment -- which will include technical clothing equipment, and safety equipment -- is not available to purchase in Tajikistan, and will therefore have to be purchased and imported before the mountain guide training can begin.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ The Grant Management Company (GMC) will include the products into a "Catalog", so these products will become available for purchase by matching grant beneficiaries of the project.

- 11. Activity 2 is subdivided into two specialist courses.** One course is for mountain guides, and the other is for wildlife guides. In both cases, the company will be responsible for recruiting course participants, hiring suitably qualified course instructors, and arranging the logistics for training, including venues, transportation, teaching materials, translation, etc. The mountain guide course should be available to a maximum of 12 participants, and the wildlife course should be available to a maximum of 20 participants. Participants in these courses should already have completed the three standard guiding modules, or be able to demonstrate equivalent professional skills and experience.
- 12. The mountain guide programme is an internationally recognised course which results in accreditation from the International Federation of Mountain Guides Associations (IFMGA).** It incorporates both alpine guiding and ski guiding, and the standard curriculum is published on the IFMGA website. It is an intensive programme which requires significant commitment from participants, and must be delivered by an IFMGA accredited expert instructor. The company will facilitate the delivery of this programme with training sessions in multiple locations across Tajikistan, and in different seasons, so that participants are exposed to, and have the opportunity to develop the necessary skills for, all the required activities. The company will also organise additional support and work experience for course participants, in between the instructor-led sessions, to enable them to meet the course assessment criteria and acquire certification from the IFMGA.
- 13. The company will be responsible for developing a Tajikistan-specific curriculum for the wildlife course.** This should be done in partnership with local partners such as the Association of Nature Conservation Organizations of Tajikistan (ANCOT). The company will hire suitably qualified instructors in both wildlife/conservation and photography, and then facilitate the delivery of training. Some of the training will be classroom based, but most should be in the field. The company will also organise additional support and work experience for course participants, in between the instructor-led sessions. Completion of this course will not result in an internationally recognised qualification, but the company should assess and issue certificates to those participants who demonstrate proficiency in the skills taught during the course.

Schedule for completion of tasks

- 14. The company will have three months from the date of contract signing to plan the training schedule for the three standard guiding modules, and to propose instructors.** Once the schedule and proposed instructors have been approved by the REDP advisor to the CTD, the company will then have 12 months to deliver the three modules. The submission of the training schedule and proposed instructors list is deliverable 1, and will trigger payment 1, equal to 80% of the module delivery costs (including instructor fees and travel expenses). Completion of the module 3 training will be the second deliverable, and will trigger payment 2, the remaining 20% of the module delivery costs.
- 15. In the same 12 month period, the company will prepare for activity 2.** Submission of the equipment purchase order is deliverable 3, and will trigger payment 3; identifying and hiring of suitably qualified instructors is deliverable 4, and will trigger payment 4; and production of the wildlife curriculum (with input from the hired instructors) is deliverable 5, and will trigger payment 5.
- 16. The activity 2 training courses will begin in month 15.** This is so that participants in the first three guiding modules may advance onto one of the specialist courses. The wildlife programme should be completed within 12 months; and the mountain guide programme should be completed within 24 months.

Final Outputs

17. During the course of this assignment, the company should submit:

- i. A training schedule for the three standard guiding modules;
- ii. A list of proposed instructors, with their corresponding fees and travel expenses;
- iii. A purchase order for technical clothing and equipment for the mountain guide course;
- iv. A curriculum for the wildlife course.

18. The company will also be responsible for:

- i. Recruiting course participants;
- ii. Identifying and hiring course instructors;
- iii. Delivering training programmes;
- iv. Supporting specialist course participants with additional personalised interventions and work experience placements;
- v. Issuing certificates to those who complete the three standard guiding modules and the wildlife programme.

Reporting

19. The company will report to the REDP advisor to the CTD. The company should provide short monthly progress updates, soft copies of which will be provided to the CTD and World Bank.

Assignment duration

20. The expected duration of this assignment is 39 months. However, if visits by international instructors are delayed due to travel restrictions (including COVID-19 restrictions), the duration may be extended.

Location of work

21. The company will work in Tajikistan for the duration of the project. It will not be possible to deliver this project remotely due to the requirement for ongoing engagement with local partners and course participants. It is noted, however, that the international instructors will visit Tajikistan only when their presence is required for the delivery of training sessions.

Qualifications and Requirements

22. The company must have a proven track record of delivering guide training. This should be evidenced by previous experience developing training curricula and teaching courses, online or in physical workshops and through on-the-job training.

23. The company must demonstrate strong B2B relationships with domestic and international tour operators. This is important for the credibility of the guide training, but will also ensure the company can arrange the requisite work experience placements, and increases the likelihood that course participants who complete the training will find employment in the tourism sector.

24. A detailed knowledge of Tajikistan, its tourism products and stakeholders is essential. The company should be known and respected amongst the guiding community in Tajikistan, and have the network and communications channels required to recruit course participants who will go on to play a meaningful role in Tajikistan's tourism sector.

25. Previous experience working with donors and/or international associations such as ATTA or IFMGA is highly desirable.