

## Request for Proposal (RFP)

### National Consultancy for Restructuring the Vietnam Tourism Development Index (VTDI) under the ST4SD Project

*Helvetas invites interested parties to provide goods /services or works as described below.*

#### 1. Contract description

The Swiss Tourism for Sustainable Development (ST4SD) Project is funded by the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) over a four-year period from April 2023 to March 2027, and is implemented by HELVETAS Swiss Intercooperation in Viet Nam (Helvetas Vietnam) as the Lead Implementing Agency, in partnership with CRED Tourism & Agriculture Solution Consulting Company Limited (CRED) as the Consortium Partner.

Since 2024, the ST4SD Project has supported the pilot research and assessment of the Vietnam Tourism Development Index (VTDI). In 2026, the Project will continue supporting the revision of the VTDI framework. Currently, the VTDI is mainly used to rank provincial tourism competitiveness. To improve its effectiveness for sustainable tourism policy planning at the local level, the Project intends to restructure the VTDI into a self-assessment tool for provinces and tourism destinations. The revised framework is expected to support local authorities in assessing tourism development performance and proactively developing appropriate management policies for sustainable tourism development.

Therefore, the ST4SD Project is seeking a qualified national consultant to carry out this assignment.

The required goods/services or works details are annexed in this document (full Terms of Reference attached).

#### 2. Timetable

	DATE	TIME - CET
Tender announcement	From 08 May to 20 May 2026	-
Video call information session (if applicable)	N/A	N/A
Deadline for written enquiries to <b>email</b>	N/A	N/A
Last date for Helvetas to issue clarifications (clarifications can be found in the same link where the tender dossier was posted in Helvetas website)	N/A	N/A
Deadline for submitting offers to <b>email</b> account <sup>1</sup>	20 May 2026	23:59

<sup>1</sup> Any application received after this deadline will not be considered.

### **3. Nature of the contract**

Purchase order/ Service or Works contract (agreement).

### **4. Negotiations**

Helvetas reserves the right to enter into negotiations with all or part of eligible bidders in order to amend and/or complete their original offers.

Negotiations may concern the technical, financial, legal and other aspects of the contract.

### **5. Eligibility**

Participation is open to Vietnamese individual consultants and consulting teams. National consultants are eligible. Eligible individuals, firms, and/or consortia may apply.

A consortium may be a legally established entity or an informal grouping formed specifically for this tender. All members of a consortium (including the lead and all partners) are jointly and severally liable to Helvetas, while the lead partner bears overall

### **6. Costs for preparing offers**

No costs incurred by the bidder in preparing and submitting the offers are reimbursable. Such costs fall under the responsibility of the bidder, including the costs incurred during negotiating and interviewing process.

### **7. Sub-contracting**

Sub-contracting services to another legal person is not allowed.

### **8. Provisional commencement date of the contract**

The contract is expected to commence on **28 May 2026**.

### **9. Initial period of execution and possible extension of the contract**

The services are expected to be implemented between **May 2026 and October 2026** in line with the assignment timeframe. Any extension of the contract, if required, will be subject to mutual agreement between the Project and the Consultant and based on project needs and satisfactory performance.

### **10. Evaluation of offers**

Offers will be evaluated based on the criteria and weighting specified in this RFP and its attachments. In case of consortium applications, evaluation will be conducted on the consortium as a whole.

The evaluation process is strictly confidential. The Purchasing Panel's deliberations are conducted collectively in closed sessions. Evaluation results and related documents are for internal use only and will not be disclosed to bidders or any third party other than Helvetas.

### 10.1 Eligibility criteria

Only applications that include duly completed and signed documents listed below will be considered for further evaluation:

- Eligibility Documentation Form (See ELIGIBILITY DOCUMENTATION part below) and
- Application Form (See PART 1 – APPLICATION PACKAGE part below)

### 10.2 Evaluation criteria of eligible offers

#### Criteria for evaluation of the Technical offer

Requirements	Documentary evidence
<b>Relevant experience in tourism policy and index systems:</b> Proven experience in tourism planning, policy analysis, and development or revision of tourism indicator systems or index tools.	CV and Technical Proposal (and/or Company Profile)
<b>Experience in stakeholder engagement and capacity building:</b> Experience working with government agencies, NGOs or donor-funded projects, including stakeholder consultation, facilitation, and training activities.	
<b>Technical expertise in research and data analysis:</b> Experience in designing research methodologies, data collection tools, indicator development, and analysis methods such as benchmarking and gap analysis.	CV and Technical Proposal
<b>Understanding of Vietnam tourism context:</b> Good knowledge of Vietnam tourism sector, institutional structure, and provincial planning system. Familiarity with VTDI or similar tools is an advantage.	CV and Technical Proposal
<b>Methodology and implementation approach:</b> Clear and practical approach for restructuring VTDI into a Destination Self-Assessment Toolkit, including indicator framework, scoring method, benchmarking approach, and use of results for policy application by VNAT and provinces.	Technical Proposal

The bidders that pass the Technical evaluation (**min 50% of technical evaluation scoring**) will be processed for further evaluation.

#### Criteria for evaluation of the financial offer:

Requirements	Documentary evidence
Financial offer according to instructions in PART 2 of this document	Financial offer in VND

The weighting of the criteria for evaluation of technical and financial offers are as follows:

Criteria	Max points
<b>Technical offer*</b>	<b>100</b>
Relevant experience in tourism policy and index systems	15
Stakeholder engagement and capacity building experience	25
Research and data analysis expertise	20
Understanding of Vietnam tourism context	15
Methodology and implementation approach	25
<b>Financial offer</b>	<b>N/A</b>

\*Evaluation of the offers will be done progressively; namely lower quality of elements of the technical offer and higher financial offer will receive less points from the maximum points presented in the table. Helvetas uses the evaluation method of Weighted Value for Money to take into account the weight of the price criteria and the relative weight of quality criteria.

The bidders are required to provide the estimation of travel costs necessary to fulfil the assignment. Such estimation of travel costs may constitute the determination of the bid winner.

After evaluation of offers, Helvetas reserves the right to enter into negotiations with all or part of eligible bidders in order to amend and/or complete their original offers.

Purchase order/Contract will be awarded to the economically most advantageous offer. The economically most advantageous offer is established by weighing technical quality against price. Helvetas reserves the right to purchase/contract only part of required services or cancel this tender procedure should it not be satisfied with the quality of offers.

In case of services, having selected an offer partly on the basis of evaluation of consultants presented in the offer, Helvetas expects the contract to be executed by these specific consultants. However, additional consultants may be proposed/contracted during the implementation period.

## 11. Submission of offers

Offers must be submitted via email in electronic format only in two separate files using the standard forms provided by the Helvetas (PART 1 and PART 2).

**Technical offer** shall contain:

1. **Signed Eligibility Documentation Form<sup>2</sup>** – as per ELIGIBILITY DOCUMENTATION part below
2. **Signed Application Form** – as per PART 1 – APPLICATION PACKAGE part below
3. Bidders have to supply the Technical offer, accompanied by the following documentation

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<sup>2</sup> Electronic copies of eligibility documentation should be provided only by the winning bidder prior to contract signing.

for the bidder:

- *Curriculum Vitae (CV) of the proposed expert(s);*
- *Letter of Interest;*
- *Technical proposal describing understanding of the assignment and approach for VTDI restructuring, including methodology, indicator development, scoring, benchmarking, and stakeholder consultation.*
- *Financial proposal with a protected password. The password will be requested after the submission deadline.*

The name of the file should have the bidder's name, Reference No: RFPC1-020426 and the text 'Technical offer documents' (for example: **Nguyen Van A\_RFPC1-070526\_Technical offer documents**).

**Financial offer** shall contain:

1. **Signed Financial Offer form** - as per PART 2 - Financial offer part below

The Financial offer must be presented in Vietnam Dongs. The fees proposed in this offer should be all inclusive of all costs to perform their tasks (e.g. office accommodation, transport, internet access and equipment, administrative and secretarial support, interpretation etc.). The service contractor is responsible for all other taxes and duties and/or Helvetas shall withhold Personal Income Tax (if any) for individual work contract/agreement in compliance with the legislation of the country.

The name of the file should have the bidder's name, Reference No: RFPC1-020426 and the text 'Technical offer documents' (for example: **Nguyen Van A\_RFPC1-070526\_Technical offer documents**).

**Electronic files should be password protected**<sup>3</sup>. The bidders will be informed in advance once the evaluation date is confirmed so they can stay reachable on that date in order to provide the passwords. During the evaluation process the entitled purchasing panel member will call the bidder and ask for the passwords at the spot<sup>4</sup>.

The subject of email should contain only the **RFPC1-050726**

The body of the email should contain bidder focal point's name, address and telephone number (for password enquiry).

Offers must be submitted in English language exclusively to the following email address: [procurement@st4sd.vn](mailto:procurement@st4sd.vn); [assist3@st4sd.vn](mailto:assist3@st4sd.vn) Offers submitted after the deadline mentioned under point 2 Timetable of this RFP will not be considered. The counted official receipt time is the time showing on the email received from the bidder to [procurement@st4sd.vn](mailto:procurement@st4sd.vn); [assist3@st4sd.vn](mailto:assist3@st4sd.vn)

## **12 Alteration or withdrawal of applications**

Candidates may alter or withdraw their offers by written notification prior to the deadline for

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<sup>3</sup> Offers received without password will not be considered for evaluation

<sup>4</sup> If the bidder is not reachable on the phone during the evaluation process, the offers will not be considered for evaluation.

submission of tenders. No offer may be altered after this deadline.

Helvetas retains ownership of all offers, which have not been withdrawn. Consequently, bidders do not have the right to have their offers returned to them.

### **13 Validity of offers**

Bidders are bound by their tenders for 90 days after the deadline for submitting offers. In exceptional cases, before the period of validity expires, the Helvetas may ask bidders to extend the period of validity for a specific number of days, which may not exceed 40.

### **14 Signature of the contract(s)**

Within **05** days of receipt of the purchase order/ contract already signed by the Helvetas, the selected bidder shall sign and date the contract. Failure of the selected bidder to comply with this requirement may constitute grounds for annulling the decision to award the contract. In this event, the Helvetas may award the tender to another bidder or cancel the tender procedure.

### **15 Terms of payments**

Helvetas is not liable for Value Added Tax (VAT). Prices in the application must be submitted, taking into account all expenses.

The payment will be made via bank account transfer to the winner of the tender in VND within a maximum of 30 working days from the date of acceptance of goods or execution of services or works. The advance may be considered but not exceed 30% of the total consultancy service fee. Cases of non-performance of obligation and their legal consequences will be separately indicated in the contract.

### **16 Terms of cooperation**

In the case of a contracting, the parties will have to perform according to the established time and in accordance with Helvetas – Supplier purchase order or Helvetas – Service provider contract. Helvetas has the right to increase or decrease the number of ordered items. Helvetas has the right to choose a supplier/ implementer on the given offer according to its own discretion. Helvetas has the right to re-formulate the Request for Quotation (RFQ), Invitation to Bid (ITB) or Request for Proposal (RFP) to its own discretion, if any additional items are needed. In case of failure or non-compliance with contractual obligations, Helvetas has a unilateral right to terminate the contract without incurring any legal obligation.

The Applicant has to be familiar with all instructions, forms and requirements mentioned in the RFQ, ITB or RFP documents. The responsibility for the submission of the offer in accordance to these requirements lies entirely with the Applicant.

Helvetas signs a purchase order/contract with the winning bidder. The contract will come into force upon signature by both parties.

### **17 Ethics clauses/Corruptive practices**

Bidders making false declarations may be subject to financial penalties representing 10% of the total value of the purchase order/contract being awarded. This rate may be increased to 20% in

the event of a repeated offence.

Any attempt by a company/organisation to obtain confidential information, enter into unlawful agreements with competitors or influence the PP or the Helvetas during the process of examining, clarifying, evaluating and comparing offers will lead to the rejection of its offer and may result in penalties as described above.

Companies/organisations must not be affected by any conflict of interest with other bidders or parties involved in the project. Helvetas reserves the right to suspend or cancel the RFP procedure and/or purchase order/contract if corrupt practices of any kind are discovered at any stage of the award process or during the execution of a contract.

Companies/organisations will be rejected or purchase order/contracts terminated if it emerges that the award or execution of a contract has given rise to unusual commercial expenses. Such unusual commercial expenses are commissions not mentioned in the main contract or not stemming from a properly concluded contract referring to the main contract, commissions not paid in return for any actual and legitimate service, commissions remitted to a tax haven, commissions paid to a payee who is not clearly identified or commissions paid to a company/organisation which has every appearance of being a front company/organisation.

Contractors found to have paid unusual commercial expenses related to this project are liable, depending on the seriousness of the facts observed, to have their contracts terminated and/or be penalised.

The Helvetas reserves the right to suspend or cancel the procedure, where the award procedure proves to have been subject to substantial errors, irregularities or fraud. If substantial errors, irregularities or fraud are discovered after the award of the purchase order/ contract, Helvetas may refrain from concluding the purchase order/contract and/or terminate the purchase order/contract.

### **18 Operational language**

All written communications for this tender procedure and purchase order/ contract must be in English.

### **19 Additional information**

The conclusion of the tender and the award of any purchase order/contract are subject to the availability of funds.

Helvetas reserves the right to annul this tender procedure at any time, without any liability on its side.

**Prepared by**

**Approved by**

**Tran Thu Hien**

**Olivier Messmer**

ELIGIBILITY DOCUMENTATION FORM

LIST OF REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Eligibility criteria

Requirements	Documentary evidence
The bidder is registered	The full Registration certificate (for businesses only)

STATEMENT<sup>5</sup>

I, the undersigned (for consortiums, **every consortium member should sign a separate statement as part of this application**) hereby declare that we have in possession all documents listed above. All documents are valid as requested in the table above and hard copies or electronic copies can be distributed as/when needed.

Signed on behalf of the bidder

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

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<sup>5</sup> Statement should be signed by each member of consortium, if a consortium.

**PART 1 – APPLICATION PACKAGE****APPLICATION FORM****1 SUBMITTED by (i.e. the identity of the bidder)**

	Name(s) of entity(ies) making this application	Nationality
Leader		
Member 2 <sup>6</sup>		
Member 3 ...		

**2 CONTACT PERSON (for this application)**

Name	
Organisation	
Address	
Telephone	
e-mail	

**3 STATEMENT<sup>7</sup>**

I, the undersigned, the authorised signatory of the above bidder (for consortiums, **every consortium member should sign a separate statement as part of this application**), hereby declare that we have examined the tender dossier for the contract referred to above. We hereby accept its provisions in their entirety, without reservation or restriction.

We agree to become one of the parties of the framework contract and to submit an offer whenever requested by the Helvetas in accordance with the terms of the tender dossier and the conditions laid down, without reservation or restriction.

We are making this application for this tender in our own right. We confirm that we are not tendering for the same contract in any other form. We understand that our consultants may be excluded if we propose consultants who have been involved in offers of other bidders.

We are fully aware that, for consortiums, the composition of the consortium cannot be changed in the course of the tender procedure, unless Helvetas has given its prior approval in writing. We are

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<sup>6</sup> Add/delete additional rows as appropriate

<sup>7</sup> Statement should be signed by each member of consortium, if a consortium.

also aware that the consortium members have joint and several liabilities towards Helvetas concerning participation in the above tender procedure and any contract awarded to us as a result of it.

We will inform Helvetas immediately if there is any change in the above circumstances at any stage during the implementation of the contract. We also fully recognise and accept that any inaccurate or incomplete information deliberately provided in this application may result in our exclusion from this and other contracts funded and/or managed by Helvetas and that penalties may be applied as specified in the tender dossier.

We note that the Helvetas is not bound to proceed with this tender and that it reserves the right to award only part of the contract and that it will incur no liability towards us should it do so.

Signed on behalf of the bidder

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

**1. Include text from ToR, Technical specifications or similar.**


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**TERMS OF REFERENCE – CONSULTANCY SUPPLIER**


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Project:	Swiss Tourism for Sustainable Development in Vietnam (ST4SD)
Consulting service:	National Consultancy for Restructuring the Vietnam Tourism Development Index (VTDI)
Contract term:	From 28 May to 30 October 2026
Application deadline:	Before 23:59 pm, 20 May 2026

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**1. Background**

The Swiss Tourism for Sustainable Development (ST4SD) project is funded by The Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) for a duration of four years, from April 2023 to March 2027, with implementation led by HELVETAS Swiss Inter-cooperation in Vietnam (Helvetas Vietnam) as the Lead Implementing Agency, and CRED Tourism & Agriculture Solution Consulting Company Limited (CRED) as the Consortium Partner.

The main objective of the ST4SD project is to contribute to a more sustainable and inclusive tourism sector in Vietnam. In the long term, the project aims to support the creation of new livelihoods and promote sustainable economic development in the country. This overarching objective will be achieved by focusing on three key outcomes:

- Outcome 1 (macro level): Enhancing sustainable tourism development by ensuring that national and subnational action plans, master plans, and relevant policies include necessary actions. This includes facilitating the decision-making and implementation processes.
- Outcome 2 (meso level): Strengthening Vietnamese training institutions to provide quality training and develop skills and expertise in sustainable tourism. The project will assist in the selection and enhancement of these institutions.
- Outcome 3 (meso and micro level): Encouraging tourism destinations and companies to adopt more sustainable practices in their operations and investments. This outcome aims to make both the destinations and the companies more environmentally and socially responsible.

From 2024, the ST4SD Project provided consultancy and support to the pilot research and assessment of the Vietnam Tourism Development Index (VTDI). In 2026, the Project continue to support the revision of VTDI. Currently, VTDI is being used as a tool to rank the competitiveness of provinces. To improve the effectiveness of sustainable policy planning at the local level, the ST4SD Project is seeking a national consultant to restructure the VTDI. Instead of being used for ranking

purposes, the new tool will serve as a basis for provinces and tourist destinations to self-assess their tourism development, thereby proactively developing appropriate management policies and promoting sustainable tourism development. Thus, the Project is recruiting a national consultant to carry out this assignment in early 2026.

## 2. Main tasks and activities:

Experts will work under the coordination of the ST4SD Project and in close collaboration with international consultant and the Vietnam National Authority Tourism (VNAT). Key tasks include:

- *Desk Review*: Reviewing the current structure of the 111 indicators across the 17 pillars of the VTDI 2024. Analyzing the shortcomings of using VTDI for "ranking" and researching destination self-assessment models worldwide.
- *Restructuring the indicator set*: Developing a new methodology framework divided into two layers: a mandatory "Core Indicators" layer for the entire country and a "Context-Specific Indicators" layer allowing localities to select based on their specific resources (sea, mountains, heritage, etc.).
- *Transforming the measurement method*: Developing a new scoring and reporting methodology. Transitioning from a relative comparison (ranking) system to absolute benchmarking/gap analysis combined with a traffic light system helps identify risks and weaknesses.
- *Policy integration consultation*: Proposing a mechanism for VNAT to manage the index; guiding provinces on how to use these self-assessment results to draft tourism development documents/resolutions.
- *Stakeholder consultation*: Attending in consultation meetings with VNAT, with the participation of provincial tourism departments representing different regions and other relevant stakeholders to refine the methodology. Field trip to provinces to collect data may be needed.

## 3. Expected deliverables

The national expert is expected to deliver the following key deliverables:

- A report analyzing the current situation and proposing a new structural framework for the Destination Self-Assessment Toolkit.
- A report on the Methodology and Calculation Toolkit Guidelines (including the Core Layer and customized Layers for provinces).
- A User Manual for Tourism Departments to integrate self-assessment results into policy planning.
- Attend to and present advices in at least two meeting or workshop/ training courses organized by VNAT or ST4SD to the aforementioned advisory content.

\*All reports and deliverables must be prepared and submitted in both English and Vietnamese.

## 4. Key competencies and experience

The selected expert is expected to meet the following qualifications and experience:

- A minimum of a Master's degree in Tourism;
- At least 20 years of professional experience in the tourism sector;

- Proven knowledges on tourism policy development, international tourism criteria/index (WEF, UN Tourism...), including the experiences to consult or work with governmental agencies, both national and provincial levels.
- Experience in tourism capacity building and training activities.
- Proven knowledge in writing researches, books, papers on sustainable tourism or tourism policies is an advantage;
- Proficiency in both English and Vietnamese, with the ability to prepare and submit all deliverables in both languages;
- Demonstrated experience working with NGOs, government agencies, or donor-funded projects related to sustainable tourism development.

## 5. Working methodology

Of the various applicable research methods and techniques available to consultants, it is expected that at least the following will be applied.

- Consultative meetings with project staff, international consultant, and key tourism stakeholders to ensure alignment and gather inputs;
- Desk review of relevant documents (VTDI 2024 report, TTDI report by WEF and other national and international tourism index and policies, strategies, reports on sustainable tourism destination management in Vietnam and comparable contexts;
- Attending capacity building workshop to present the consultatory results.

## 6. Time Frame of the assignment

The indicative start date for the assignment is expected to be on 28 May 2026 and the period of implementation is expected to end on October 30, 2026. The assignment would officially end when the project accepts the deliverables.

## 7. Logistics

- ST4SD will provide logistics support to the consultant if needed.
- The meetings or workshops expenses will be covered by Helvetas in accordance with Helvetas' cost norms.
- All other expenses and procedures incurred during the consultancy will be managed by the consultant, in compliance with the terms outlined in the contract with HELVETAS.

## 8. Application document

Interested experts are invited to submit application to ST4SD project at [procurement@st4sd.vn](mailto:procurement@st4sd.vn) and [assist3@st4sd](mailto:assist3@st4sd) no later than 20 May 2026. Application documents include:

- (1) CV of applicant
- (2) Methodological approach to conduct the consultancy
- (3) Certificate of good completion of similar consultancies and experiences.

- (4) Financial proposal (with number of working day and proposed daily rate)

Please note that only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.

The submitted documents must be ***password-protected***. You will be asked for the password after submitting the application.

**PART 2 - FINANCIAL OFFER**

**Financial offer**

Helvetas is exempt from VAT, thus the cost should be without VAT. The contractor is responsible for all other taxes and duties in compliance with the Law of the country.

<b>Goods/Services or Works Items – specifications</b>	<b>Qty</b>	<b>Price unit / VND</b>	<b>Total</b>
<i>Based on PRF and evaluation criteria's above</i>			
<i>Based on PRF and evaluation criteria's above</i>			
.....			
.....			
<b>Total cost (sum of units)</b>			

Signed on behalf of the bidder

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	