

SOP
for guidance on
Master Plan, Strategy and Action Plan under the Swadesh Darshan 2.0 Scheme



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Ministry of Tourism
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**Guidance on
Master Plan, Strategy and Action Plan under the Swadesh Darshan 2.0 Scheme**

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1. Introduction

This guidance note is based on the gaps observed during the review of first iteration of various master plans under SD 2.0 and lessons learnt from delays, lack of visible impact, non-operation of the assets, focus on asset creation rather than tourist experience under SD 1.0 scheme.

The Ministry of Tourism had earlier circulated template for preparing Master Plan, Strategy and Action Plan. The guidance note is being issued in the important sections of the template.

2. Key Tourism Asset (Refer Section 3.6)

Multiple assets have been identified as 'Primary Tourist Attractions' with generic 'Unique Offering' has been provided, reflecting more descriptive information on the attraction.

Key questions to be answered by PDMC as part of this section:

- (i) Is the attraction(s) which is identified as primary a 'must visit attraction' / 'hero attraction' that primarily attracts tourist to the destination?
- (ii) In case the destination does not have a strong hero attraction, is the gap so identified also mentioned in section 3.6 and in the relevant proposals to be provided with the aim to create hero attractions at the destination in section 6 of the masterplan?
- (iii) Is the unique offering/ USP of the attraction provides unique tourist experience (hero experience) at that destination/ attraction. Does it represent the unique selling proposition/ point of difference from other destinations?

3. Destination Assessment (Section 4)

The masterplans reviewed are observed to be aligned to immediate needs of the stakeholders and lack holistic approach. The planning shall be based on in depth assessment of data collected and consultations with tourists, local stakeholders, service providers and local community and intended to achieve the larger scheme outcomes.

Key questions to be answered by PDMC as part of this section:

- (i) Have the identified gaps / issues from each sub section been structured for addressing later in Section 6 of the masterplan?

- (ii) Due consultation has been undertaken to understand the current situation and challenges
- (iii) Are the Key Takeaways been methodically summarised to capture destinations issues, gaps and opportunities?

4. Destination Connectivity (Section 4.1)

Key questions to be answered by PDMC as part of this section:

- (i) How are visitors travelling to the destination?
- (ii) Does each form of access and supporting infrastructure cater for current and future visitor flows/ volumes, as well as their expectations, satisfaction and safety?
- (iii) At the point of arrival (Airports, Railway Stations, Bus Stations) is there adequate information, amenities and a hassle-free environment for the tourists including ease of information availability, signages, professional staffs deployed in Tourist Information Centres/ Kiosks to assist with communication, lodging and conveyance.
- (iv) Is the connectivity from the major transit station or tourist gateway to the destination (if situated far off) well developed with roads of decent level of service, landscaped with proper wayfinding and wayside amenities.
- (v) Are there any planned projects for strengthening the connectivity to destination?
- (vi) Are there any gaps and issues with regard to access (Eg. poor-quality roads or terminal facilities)?

5. Tourist Statistics (Section 4.2)

The plans are not providing in depth assessment of tourist statistics giving the complete understanding of the tourist profile and challenges at the destination. Further, the data availability, reliability, completeness, and robustness of the collection methodology has not been assessed.

Key questions to be answered by PDMC as part of this section:

- (i) Do we have a good understanding of our visitors and their contribution to our economy?
- (ii) Do we know, who is coming, why they are visiting, where they are coming from, what they do and how satisfied they are?
- (iii) Understand how our visitors perceive us.

- (iv) Assess whether the data and insights reliable and robust
- (v) Where are the information gaps? How do address these?
- (vi) Is there a clear understanding of the supply-and-demand potential for visitor experiences?
- (vii) How are we monitoring community satisfaction/ sentiment about visitors and the tourism sector?

6. Destination Vision (Section 5.1)

Key questions to be answered by PDMC as part of this section:

- (i) Is the vision simple clear and unique to the destination?
- (ii) Does the vision include the perspectives of visitors, tourism operators, local communities, and local government stakeholders and to which all the stakeholders will be committed to?
- (iii) Is the vision statement aspirational, inspirational, and engaging?
- (iv) Have we identified values/principles to guide the stakeholders and the development of the Master plan?
- (v) Does the vision for the destination aligns with the vision for developing sustainable and responsible tourist destination under Swadesh Darshan 2.0?

7. Target Outcomes (Section 5.2)

Key questions to be answered by PDMC as part of this section:

- (i). Do we have clearly defined outcomes and an agreed understanding of what success looks like? Do these consider the four well-beings of environmental, cultural, social, economic?
- (ii). How will we know when we have achieved our vision?

8. Proposed Interventions (Section 6)

As part of the iteration 1, masterplan may target at least 1 major attraction at the destination for developing a hero experience. The experience shall account for end-to-end mapping of tourist journey (refer annexure 1) to ensure enhancement of experience.

Focus on creating comprehensive end-to-end tourist experience at the major attractions. The initiative aims to provide tourists with a seamless and memorable journey output of

the SD 2.0 Program and not directly as creation of infrastructure and services as output of the scheme.

Key questions to be answered by PDMC as part of this section:

- (i). Is the interventions conceptualised to provide direction to DMO for development of tourism destination for a period of 10-year horizon?
- (ii). What is the experience that we intend to deliver to the tourists? Have we all mapped tourist experience touch points?
- (iii). Are the offered experiences meeting the needs and expectations of the domestic and international target markets?
- (iv). Are there any gaps in the tourism offering and is there demand for it?
- (v). How can we develop new tourism experiences or enhance the existing ones, with a focus on collaboration, innovation and authentic and indigenous/ cultural experiences?
- (vi). Is there an opportunity to create a hero attraction(s) as a catalyst attractor?
- (vii). Are we managing high-demand sites (icons/ heroes) appropriately in terms of carrying capacity and supporting infrastructure? Are we monitoring them effectively?
- (viii). Does the proposed experiences and allied interventions benchmarked with best practices national or internationally?
- (ix). Details of operations including packaging, variable pricing, branding, promotion and resource requirements.
- (x). Who will champion the delivery of experience (Service levels, resources, frequency etc.)
- (xi). How will the performance of experience delivery be measured?
- (xii). Is the conceived experience sustainable (financially, technically)
- (xiii). Can the intervention be funded through private investments?
- (xiv). What is the readiness of conceived interventions (Land, SH Onboarding, Local Issues, Clearances etc.)

NOTE: Total cost of masterplan shall not be limited to funding under Swadesh Darshan Scheme, however, shall take holistic development in the planned 10 year period. Future

funding from Ministry of Tourism, State, Line ministries, Multilaterals, PPP may be planned for these initiatives.

9. Branding, Marketing and Promotion (Section 6.1 D)

Successful destinations have a clear brand and positioning that captures the essence of the destination. Collections of people, places and experiences create the destination's brand story and value proposition. The destination's logo is a symbol that represents the destination and the experience offered.

Key questions to be answered by PDMC as part of this section:

- (i). Does the brand capture the essence, character/personality and 'tone of voice' of the destination?
- (ii). Does it provide a clear point of difference or competitive advantage and support the destination's offering?
- (iii). Does it provide a strong platform for 'place making' and 'storytelling'?
- (iv). Do the industry, key stakeholders and local community all support the brand?
- (v). Does the brand incorporate the essence of the cultural experience? Is local community involved in the branding process and its stewardship?
- (vi). Does the brand strategy clearly outline how to use the brand?
- (vii). Who is responsible for our regional brand strategy marketing and stewardship?

Further, the destination's marketing and promotional activity is a core part of managing a destination effectively, targeting the right type of visitors, encouraging regional dispersal and addressing seasonality. For a region to create a viable, sustainable tourism sector, it needs to stand out in a highly competitive marketplace.

Key questions to be answered by PDMC as part of this section:

- (i). Are the marketing and promotional activities of the destination aligned with the aspirations of the tourism industry, stakeholders and community?
- (ii). How effective are the marketing strategies in creating the right visitor demand?
- (iii). Are there clear measures and tools for assessing visitor awareness, marketing effectiveness and return on investment?

- (iv). Do we understand the visitor journey and the information touchpoints that influence visitor decision making?
- (v). Is there a coordinated, collaborative approach between the public and private sectors in the region?
- (vi). How do the marketing activities manage visitor behaviour and risks, as well as issues such as overcrowding at peak times?
- (vii). How to use the communications to provide the local community with good information about the local tourism sector?

10. Institutional Structure (Section 6.1 E)

Funding for destination management is essential to ensure high experience delivery to the tourists. The master plan through conceived experiences shall create avenues for revenue generation for the DMO. Relevant interventions shall be proposed to enable DMO role in planning and management. Eg. Monetisation of tourism assets, Revenue generation avenues for DMO etc.

Annexure 1: Implication on the Tourist's Experience

The project(s) identified at a destination/ attraction shall explain how it would be instrumental to the development of various tourist touch points. If any of the following elements are currently missing the DPR Package shall try to integrate the same.

(i) Inspiration to travel to a destination

A tourist is enticed to travel to a destination by factoring many considerations. Hence visibility of the destination in the various promotional platforms such as films, advertisements & documentaries, websites, apps and importantly social media is crucial for **inspiring** a tourist to travel to the destination.

(ii) Planning and Booking

Once the tourist decides the destination, further options for travel, stay and activities are explored in the **planning** stage. This includes arriving at a suitable itinerary for his travel from the available packages. Advance **booking** facilities for all travels (including last mile connectivity and local commute to attractions), accommodation, sight-seeing and ticketed attractions is also desired at this stage.

(iii) Arrival at Destination

While undertaking journey from the point of **arrival** (Airports, Railway Stations, Bus Stations), the tourist needs adequate information, amenities and a hassle free environment with an easy access to get to the destination. This would include professional staffs deployed in Tourist Information Centres/ Kiosks to assist with communication, lodging and conveyance.

The connectivity from the major transit station or tourist gateway to the destination (if situated far off) should be well developed with roads of decent level of service, landscaped with proper wayfinding and resting areas.

(iv) Accommodation Services

After arriving at the destination, the overnight tourists majorly desires a comfortable experience at their place of **stay**. This also could be attending to various special needs of the tourists such as barrier free access, language assistance, food requirements and emergency situations.

(v) Travelling locally

At the destination, the tourist needs a convenient mode of **commute** to visit the nearby **local attractions** which could be offered through a well laid out pedestrian network, bicycle rentals, cabs, rickshaws, shared autos or through a decent public transport facility.

(vi) Visiting local Attractions

The spatial information and significance of various **attractions** at the destination such as places of worship, monuments, museums, natural landscapes, markets etc has to be easily available in a tourist map. The tourists expects a seamless movement between these attractions during their sightseeing.

Availability of trained guides, audio guides (in preferred languages), amenities, souvenirs, tout free environment with adequate safety instruments, barrier free access and optimum visitor management are instrumental factors in achieving enhanced experience at the attractions.

(vii) Visiting local eateries, shopping and entertainment places

The traditional cuisine and local flavours has a huge potential to savour the tourists. A tourist could enjoy the **food** in its true essence if they are served in safe, hygienic and ambient conditions at food streets and restaurants.

Tourists also requires leisure time between their hectic schedule to undertake few **recreational** activities such as strolling and hiking, engaging with the local community and their livelihood activities especially of rural households, shopping at local markets and souvenir shops.

In order to perform this, placemaking and plaza development at important tourist hotspots is necessary. Showcasing local culture and exhibiting traditional artforms for the tourist through public arts, street arts or night tourism also leaves a good impression with the tourists.

(viii) Sharing the experience, providing feedback and ratings

Finally, a tourist shall be encouraged to share their experience visiting the place. Feedbacks could be recorded through kiosks located at strategic locations. Today, destination reviews from tourist blogs and vlogs have huge market and is a decisive factor in inspiring tourists to visit the destinations.