

SEforALL Terms of reference: Independent Verification Agent

Universal Energy Facility Stand-Alone Solar for Productive Use Programme (SSPU)

21 | 11 | 2022

Context

Sustainable Energy for All (SEforALL) is an International Organization operating a worldwide multi-stakeholder platform focused on the delivery of Sustainable Development Goal 7 (SDG7). Launched as a UN initiative in 2011 by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-Moon, SEforALL is widely acknowledged for its achievement in raising global awareness of the world's sustainable energy challenges, ensuring they were included in the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. Now an independent international organization, SEforALL is directed by its CEO as it works toward the achievement of SDG7. The organization also supports the work of the CEO in her additional roles as Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General (SRSG) for Sustainable Energy for All and as co-chair of UN-Energy. These roles include advising the UN Secretary-General and his staff on issues relating to sustainable energy and the implementation of SDG7 and supporting the coordination of sustainable energy issues in the United Nations system.

The ambitions of SDG7 on ensuring universal access to affordable, reliable, and modern energy services by 2030 are extraordinary. Aiming to achieve them in the context of the Paris Agreement involves transformation at a scale never undertaken by humanity before. Swift action needs to be taken by leaders in governments, companies, institutions, financiers, development banks, unions and communities, entrepreneurs, and civil society. As a global team, SEforALL crafts interventions that support these leaders in accelerating the delivery of actions. All interventions comprise one or more of SEforALL's competencies: (i) to marshal the evidence, (ii) to benchmark progress towards SEforALL objectives, (iii) to amplify the voices of the energy poor; (iv) to tell stories of success, and (v) to connect stakeholders and solutions. All interventions systematically draw on strategic insight, build on compelling communications, and are delivered through and include action-oriented partnerships. <http://www.seforall.org/>

Universal Energy Facility – Results-Based Financing

2020 marked the start of the final decade to achieve SDG7 – access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all – by 2030. The world is not on track and a renewed sense of urgency and new approaches are required.

Providing finance at the speed and scale needed to achieve SDG7 requires a paradigm shift towards results-based financing (RBF). RBF allows governments and donors to shift the risk of delivery to the private sector and aggregates financing and scales support across multiple countries.

Understanding the benefits of RBF, SEforALL, launched and operationalized the Universal Energy Facility (UEF), a multi-donor RBF facility, to speed and scale up new energy connections in Sub-Saharan Africa. Specifically, the UEF is a multi-donor RBF facility established to support the electrification of households, businesses, public institutions, and other potential electricity consumers in sub-Saharan Africa that do not have reliable access to modern electricity services. The UEF will provide incentive payments (i.e., grants) on a 'results-based' approach to selected eligible organizations that develop and operate systems and provide verified electricity connections. In 2020, the UEF was opened to mini-grid developers in Sierra Leone, Madagascar, and Benin, and in August 2022, the UEF Stand-alone Solar for Productive Use (SSPU) opened in Nigeria. The SSPU component is limited to the deployment of stand-alone solar systems of between 100W and 5kW.

Scope of work

In support of the UEF, SEforALL is implementing a robust project connection audit, and multi-faceted Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) framework, which includes on-the-ground verification to ensure the connections financed comply with programme requirements. As part of the Grantee's Claims Report, the UEF performs remote connection verification through the UEF Platform. For remote verification, the UEF Platform enables the verification of the existence and consumption of every connection reported over 30 days through the Grantee Customer Relationship Management/Pay-As-You-Go platform (if applicable). The Grantee completes the verification process for all deployments or connections submitted in a claim before submission.

The audit and MEL framework also involves capturing the impacts that these energy access connections have on the lives of people and communities.

SEforALL seeks to engage a consulting firm to conduct on-the-ground verifications in Nigeria to verify SSPU deployments and connections at the reported locations and that they are operating in compliance with the UEF technical standards as per the Grantee's Claims Reports. The consultant is expected to conduct verification visits in at least two states across each of the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria in line with the Claims Report.

Specific tasks

The consulting firm will be responsible for the following tasks:

- i. Desk Review: Checking the information provided in all the Claims Report(s) to verify the following details:
 - a. Identity of the end-use customer
 - b. Customer category and type
 - c. GPS coordinates and contact details of customers
 - d. SSPU systems/inverter serial number (solar PV standalone or inverter system)
 - e. Customer load (W or kW)
 - f. Date of SSPU connection or deployment
 - g. Gender of the customer (head of household/business)

- h. ID/project name and name of solar provider
 - i. All electronics and PUE appliances directly receiving power from the SSPU system
 - ii. Field Verification: Verifying a sample of connections per grantee (as communicated by UEF) according to UEF technical specifications which will include checking the following
 - a. Actual SSPU System (PV modules and battery) Capacity
 - b. Compliance with the minimum level of service as specified in the UEF SSPU operating manual (Attached as [Annex I](#))
 - c. Compliance with National Codes/Standards (where applicable)
 - d. Actual Productive Use of Energy equipment/appliances being powered by SSPU system
 - e. Verify the signed customer agreement and actual cost of SSPU to end-use customer based on the Customer Sales Agreement
 - f. The Independent verification agent will also be required to take three to five photos per deployment site or equipment(system)
- iii. Collection of qualitative and quantitative information in addition to the information above through customer surveys of a sample of SSPU users in each location and for each category of SSPU users; SEforALL will provide the details of these users in advance. The consultant will be required to code the findings in a database and generate a summary of customer feedback. The purpose of these surveys will be to obtain information on the impacts of connections on livelihoods, gender, as well as economic and social impacts
- iv. Collaborate with SEforALL and UEF grantees to identify customers, and coordinate visits and logistics.
- v. Obtain written permissions and release forms from any individuals included in the photographs and the videos. Once the consultant is notified by the UEF that connections are ready for verification, on-ground verification will take place within seven days of notice.

Approach:

The selected company will maintain close contact with a designated SEforALL team contact throughout the assignment. All draft deliverables will be reviewed by SEforALL. The selected company will participate in weekly project coordination meetings and/or as required by SEforALL and present status reports on its approach, findings, challenges, and next steps.

The selected firm should make a concerted effort to ensure gender parity throughout this assignment. This includes, for example, the team deployed for this purpose must implement a 40:60 female-to-male ratio, provide a copy of gender policies followed by the organization and follow a gender-balanced approach in the assignment. The selected company/consortium shall also work to ensure all stakeholder engagements are gender balanced.

Reporting

The selected firm shall report to the identified SEforALL Programme Manager for this Assignment and the designated focal point.

Deliverables and Timeframe

The selected firm is expected to adhere to the following schedule of deliverables between 1 February 2023 to 30 March 2024 to achieve the following schedule of deliverables:

Activity	Indicative Timeline
An inception report containing detailed methodology and approach, data collection tools including timings and any initial observations or issues that will affect the implementation	By 28 th March 2023
Provide verification visits/reports The IVA shall prepare a report for each grantee covering: Profile of the Company Recommendation of the IVA Statement of verified connections Overview of methodology of the verification Summary of findings of the verification process Annexes to the report containing detailed connection analysis, photos of sampled connections and permission forms	Within 14 days of receiving notification from the UEF that connections are ready for verification
Present (i) a draft consolidated verification report and (ii) the impact report containing a summary of customer feedback and lessons learned during the verification exercise for SEforALL review	1 st March 2024
Develop final (i) consolidated SSPU verification report (ii) impact report with all the annexes- the Database of coded findings and questionnaires (iii) A slide deck summarizing the reports.	25 th March 2024

Duration of Assignment

14 months (1 February 2023 to 30 March 2024)

Travel

- Duty travel is defined as travel that is requested as part of the performance of services under the Contract. Duty travel is usually from the duty station to the place of the mission and returns to the duty station.
- Offerors should exclude any 'duty travel' related costs in their financial proposals. The financial proposal should include only costs related to professional services.

Qualification and Expertise

Organizations wishing to submit a proposal must have

- A presence in sub-Saharan Africa with the ability to travel to verification sites simultaneously (multiple sites at once)

- More than 7 years of demonstrated experience managing or evaluating programmes in the off-grid energy sector in sub-Saharan Africa; Prior experience in Nigeria is preferred
- At least 5 years of demonstrated experience in conducting verification exercises in the energy sector, specifically within the off grid electricity;
- The firm should have experts in Project Management, Electrical Engineering, Financial Analysis/Auditing Energy Economics, and Database Management.
- The Team leader will have expertise in one of the technical areas listed above as well as expertise and 10+ demonstrated experience in designing verification and survey methodologies and data collection tools and demonstrated experience in leading similar assignments. Other team members should have at least 5 years of experience in their respective fields.
- Fluency in written and spoken English

Bidding Process

Bidders are allowed to submit bids as a consortium. Proposals must include the following (in either PDF or PPT format). Technical and Financial proposal are meant to be submitted as separate documents.

Technical Proposal:

- Your organization’s profile including organization’s name, address, contact information and a brief background
- Your organization’s understanding of the assignment, including any proposed changes to the Scope of Work
- Proposed team structure
- Proposed approach (Gantt chart with key milestones, activities, and any sub-activities)
- Relevant experience and examples of work
- Key personnel profiles and roles of subcontractors, where applicable
- Client References (at least 3)

The technical quality of the proposal will be given a weighting of 70% based on the evaluation criteria.

The criteria against which proposals will be evaluated are outlined in the table below.

Technical Proposal Key areas of Evaluation	Award
Technical capacity of the firm and previous experience in a similar assignment(s) and references <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and experience and presence in energy access in SSA • Knowledge and experience in Nigeria • Experience in conducting verification/audits and monitoring of results-based programmes • Demonstration of 7 years of experience managing or evaluating programmes in the off-grid energy sector • Experience in verification or auditing of energy programs in the last 5 years. 	30
Proposed approach and methodology to undertake this assignment, highlighting how the applicant will address the needs of this TOR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coherence of the overall approach and methodology 	20

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach proposed for each task • Detailed activity work plan • Provision of at least 3 client references 	
<p>Proposed team (qualification and adequacy)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The firm’s organogram to demonstrate the firm’s technical and managerial capability and demarcation of responsibilities in line with the scope of work and workstreams • Firm’s ability to conduct multiple/simultaneous verifications at the same time • Team meeting minimum requirements at least 10 years of experience for the Team Leader and 5 for the rest of the team members in respective fields. 	20

Financial Proposal:

All costs must be in USD

- Detailed financial proposal inclusive of LOE, equipment costs and any other costs expected to be incurred

Evaluation, Conflict of Interest, and Terms of Payment

- Bidders are requested to disclose and explain any potential conflicts of interest
- Terms of payment at SEforALL follow a deliverable based framework. The breakdown of the milestones-payments will be communicated to the selected company
- The evaluation of proposals will be based on a 70 – 30 split for technical proposal and financial proposal, respectively.

How to Apply and Deadline

Please submit your proposals to procurement@seforall.org by 12th December 2022, 17:00 CET

In case of questions or queries contact SEforALL at procurement@seforall.org

Annex I: Minimum Technical Specifications

Service Standard

Each SSPU deployment shall be based on the individual customer's energy needs and affordability threshold. The UEF requires the Grantee to deploy high-quality SSPU systems, based on the contractual agreement with the customer that provides quality and reliable electricity supply and meets the minimum service standards listed in the Table below:

Parameters	Requirements	Description	
Load/system capacity	≥100 W to ≤5 kW	Load requirement of the customer and power capacity of the SSPU	
Availability	At least 8 hours per day	Provides adequate energy to power the customers load for a minimum of 8 hours and at least 3 hours of evening availability	
Reliability	At least 97% availability or ≤5 service disruptions per year with total duration of less than 20 hours	Provides uninterrupted energy service for the rated load and period of availability of service	
Rated Charge Current	10 – 60 A	The solar modules, charge controllers, inverters and batteries must be compatible	
Output Voltage	220	Voltage changes do not affect the use of desired appliances	
Output Frequency	48 – 52 Hz		
Specification	Standard	Documentation	Means of verification
System sizing	100Wp – 5kWp	Lighting Global specification sheet and verification letter or VeraSol certification (systems <350Wp).	Certificates
Solar Modules	ISO/IEC/UL standards	Certification	Certificates
Batteries	Lithium-Ion Battery Banks	IEC or UL certification	Certificates
Solar Controllers	IEC 62109 Safety of power converters for use in photovoltaic power systems	IEC or UL certification	Certificates
Inverters	IEC /UL standards	IEC or UL certification	Certificates
Minimum Product Warranty requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solar Panels: 10 years (Manufacturers) Battery: at least 5 years Charge Controller: at least 5 years 	Warranty Certification	Certificate

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inverter: at least 5 years		
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