

SEforALL Terms of reference

Consultancy for the Evaluation of the UEF/RBF Programme

07 | 09 | 2021

Context

Sustainable Energy for All (SEforALL) is an international organization working with leaders in government, the private sector and civil society to drive further, faster action toward achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 7 (SDG7), which calls for universal access to sustainable energy by 2030, and the Paris Agreement, which calls for reducing greenhouse gas emissions to limit climate warming to below 2° Celsius.

Achieving these goals will require a radical rethink of the way we produce, distribute, and consume energy. SEforALL is at the heart of this foundational shift to ensure no one is left behind. Drawing on data and evidence, we identify a critical path to success in achieving SDG7.

Former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon launched the Sustainable Energy for All initiative in 2011. Now an independent organization, we maintain close links with the UN, including through a relationship agreement, partnerships with UN agencies and with SEforALL's CEO acting as the UN Secretary-General's Special Representative for Sustainable Energy for All and 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 are extraordinary. Aiming to achieve them in the context of the Paris Agreement on climate change involves transformation at a scale never undertaken before. Swift action must be taken by leaders in governments, private sector companies, institutions, financiers, development banks, unions, communities, entrepreneurs, and civil society. As we enter the final decade to achieve SDG7, SEforALL has strategically chosen to strengthen global agenda-setting while expanding its activities to an engagement model that prioritizes data-driven decision-making, partnerships with high-impact countries and implementation on the ground. The new SEforALL three-year business plan outlines 12 programmes, coined "Results Offers" to external audiences in the business plan, that scope out our planned interventions and demonstrate to our funding partners the impact of their support. This Terms of Reference (TOR) is focused on one of 12 programmes: Results Based Financing (RBF): the Universal Energy Facility (UEF).

Results Based Financing (RBF) Universal Energy Facility (UEF):

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.

Access to sustainable and appropriate finance is a key barrier to the achievement of SDG7 that this programme has been designed to address. 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 an appropriate level of risk of delivery to the private sector, provides greater certainty to industry

about access to the level of financial support required, and aggregates financing and scales support across multiple countries.

The Universal Energy Facility (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 provides incentive payments (i.e., grants) on a 'results-based' approach to selected eligible organizations that develop and operate systems and provide verified electricity connections.

The main objective of the programme is to provide a funding mechanism that allows for scale, speed and efficiency to achieve universal energy access by 2030 – in alignment with SEforALL's business plan. To support the scale up of the programme, the objectives since its launch in October 2020 have been to:

- Develop an operational manual/guidelines and relevant documentation
- Operationalize UEF for mini-grids, solar home systems and clean cooking
- Upstream development and operationalization of in-country implementation

SEforALL was selected as Programme Manager and established this RBF facility in collaboration with a number of donors and implementing partners. Wave 1 of the UEF was launched in 3 countries in sub-Saharan Africa (Sierra Leone, Madagascar, and Benin), with the goal of delivering more than 14,000 electricity connections through mini-grid developments. This will be followed, dependent on funding that is trending in the right direction, by a scale up to eventually deliver more than 2 million energy access connections (electricity and clean cooking) by 2023.

Evaluation Purpose and Use

The purpose of the evaluation of the first Wave of the UEF programme is to evaluate the first year of operation of the UEF in order to generate learnings and create an internal and external facing learning document. This will be a retrospective assessment looking back from the establishment of the facility in October 2020 to present day to understand of what's worked well, what's been more challenging, and outlining opportunities for improvement based on learnings generated throughout the evaluation. Learnings are expected to be complemented by key recommendations for improvement prior to substantial scale up. Such recommendations could include, but are not limited to, efficiency and effectiveness of operations, country engagement and implementation strategy, the application process for developers, and how to further support implementation for developers and relevant partners.

The target audience for the evaluation, key learnings and recommendations will be SEforALL internal Programme Management and staff, external UEF donors and partners as well as stakeholders in the broader RBF community. Evidence generated from the evaluation will be utilized to improve the programme going forward in existing operations and implementation and will be integrated in the plan to scale up the UEF. Learning outcomes are required by the end of 2021 to strategically inform the next wave of the UEF.

Evaluation Focus and Scope

The evaluation scope will include the Pre-Launch phase of the UEF; the launch and implementation of UEF's Wave 1 in the Sierra Leone and Madagascar and Benin; the two different stages of the UEF application process- the Pre-Qualification stage and the Site-Specific stage; and the contracting phase, including grant agreement signing process with successful applicants.

The evaluation is expected to be conducted remotely including a desk review and interviews with key stakeholders.

The time-period covered by the evaluation is *January 2020 to October 2021* as below:

- Pre-Launch Phase of the UEF – *January 2020 – October 2020*
 - Conceptual elaboration including development and implementation of MEL Framework and of key programme documentation
 - Pre-launch activities such as webinars for interested developers, engagement with stakeholders, design and launch of the UEF online platform.

- Launch and Implementation of the UEF Wave 1 – *October 2020 to ongoing*
 - Sierra Leone and Madagascar launched in October 2021
 - Benin launched in January 2021

- UEF Application Process – *21 October 2020 - October 2021*
 - Pre-Qualification stage
 - Activities around the launch
 - Evaluation by the UEF team of the Pre-Qualification applications
 - Decision making and consultations with the UEF's Advisory Board
 - Engagement and communication with developers/applicants and other relevant stakeholders
 - Pre-Qualification Webinars
 - Pre-Qualification post application process Survey
 - Site-Specific Stage
 - Evaluation by the UEF team of the Site-Specific applications
 - Decision making and consultations with the UEF's Advisory Board and Investment Committee
 - Engagement and communication with developers/applicants and other relevant stakeholders
 - Site-specific stage Webinar for Sierra Leone and Madagascar
 - Providing support and information for applicants
 - Site-Specific post application process Survey

- Contracting with Developers – *July 2021 – September 2021* (Sierra Leone and Madagascar)
 - Project Approval and Grant Agreement Signing
 - Process of grant agreement signing

Evaluation Criteria and Key Questions

Given the purpose of the evaluation is for both learning and improvement of UEF operations, the criteria selected are consistent with the four OECD-DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and coherence. The following are some initial key evaluation questions, while the evaluation proposal is expected to further develop and refine this list. SEforALL acknowledges there are limitations to how deep the evaluation can go into these questions considering the timeframe and welcomes feedback from bidders on how to mitigate this challenge while maintaining the integrity and purpose of the evaluation

Relevance

- Is the intervention doing the right things in order to achieve its intended results and impact?
- Is the design of the UEF programme an adequate solution to unlock finance more efficiently for energy access? Does it reduce the main causes of the problem? What can be improved? What should the programme continue to prioritize?
 - Are there other types of finance, such as blended finance or other mechanisms, the UEF should consider beyond grants in this model?
- Does the UEF programme have the potential for replication in Asia?
- Compared to other RBF facilities available, how do developers and other key stakeholders perceive the relevance of the UEF?

Effectiveness

- What worked well in launching and implementing the UEF?
 - What went well prior to the launch of the UEF in Sierra Leone and Madagascar?
 - What worked well during both stages: The Pre-Qualification stage and the Site-Specific stage?
- What was less successful in launching and implementing the UEF?
 - What did not go well prior the launch of the UEF in Sierra Leone and Madagascar?

- What was less successful during both stages: The Pre-Qualification stage and the Site-Specific stage?
- Leveraging survey data and enriching with interviews:
 - How did applicants (developers) find the application process?
 - What was the value communication and support from the UEF team?
- To what extent has gender been addressed in the UEF programme design and implementation? Where is there room for improvement in terms of gender focus and considerations?
- Are there policy or regulatory barriers that project developers are facing that the UEF could further support in addressing?
- Is the UEF on track to achieve its intended outcomes and results?

Efficiency

- Has the UEF been managed efficiently? What measures can be taken during planning and implementation to ensure that resources are used more efficiently?
- Could the UEF have been implemented with fewer resources without reducing the quality and quantity of the results?
- Could more of the same result have been produced with the same resources?
- Leveraging survey data and enriching with interviews:
 - To what extent did developers and other stakeholders in the sector value the support they received from UEF/SEforALL?

Coherence

- How well does the UEF programme align with the needs of the sector / other initiatives / the needs of Wave 1 countries?
 - What are key considerations for scaleup in Africa, with a focus on complementing other RBF initiatives, filling in the gaps and avoiding replication?
 - Where do synergies exist with other RBF initiatives? How are these synergies perceived to be working, what were the benefits? Is the UEF missing opportunities to further align with other RBFs in the sector, if so, how could the programme better align?
 - How well is the UEF aligned with the priorities of each country of operation, are there opportunities for further alignment?
 - Is the UEF integrated well enough into the political dialogue in each country of operation in order to support project developers at the right political level in country?
- Are the UEF's activities well aligned with SEforALL's 3-year Business Plan?
 - Are there opportunities to further align with SEforALL's programmes of work?

The evaluation questions will be further developed and refined by the selected evaluation team in alignment with SEforALL during the inception phase.

Evaluation Approach and Methodology

As this is considered primarily a formative and process evaluation, an integrated mixed-methods approach is likely to be the most appropriate. SEforALL requests a proposed evaluation approach and methodology as part of the proposal to this TOR and is open to the most pragmatic approach to rapidly inform our operations and scale up. It is expected the evaluation will be conducted as a desk review of all available and relevant documentation, complemented by desk research and interviews with key stakeholders. Once an evaluation team is selected, a more detailed evaluation design will be developed in consultation with UEF/RBF staff and the SEforALL MEL Team.

Deliverables, Timeline, and Budget

Timeline and Budget: The evaluation is expected to start in early October 2021 and be completed by early December 2021.

The budget range for the evaluation is: USD 30,000 to 50,000 USD.

The evaluation process and expected deliverables are set out below. Note that dates (in italics) are to be confirmed:

- Contract signed and on-line kick-off meeting: *1 October 2021*
 - Contract signed followed by a discussion with the SEforALL team, documents supplied; information access and list of key internal contacts provided.
 - Discussion on external stakeholders, introductions, etc.
- Delivery of Inception Report/Document: *15 October 2021*
 - Evaluation design and implementation plan, including details of qualitative and quantitative methods, data collection, data analysis clearly set out in an evaluation design matrix.
 - The rationale for selection of the approach and methods must be explained.
 - Any existing and anticipated limitations must also be explained.
- Evaluation implementation: *18 October – 12 November 2021*
 - Ongoing communication with the SEforALL UEF/RBF team and/or MEL Team, desk review and research, interviews, access to stakeholders, and scheduling meetings/interviews, etc.
- Preliminary Learnings Draft from desk review - *22 October 2021*
 - Starts in parallel with inception
 - Based on available data and early discussions, a rough draft of preliminary learnings for SEforALL to discuss as preliminary in key meeting in October
- Delivery of Draft Evaluation Report: *16 November 2021*
 - UEF/RBF team and/or MEL team to respond with comments by – *23 November 2021*
- Final Evaluation Report / Learning document & accompanying external facing PPT submitted: *30 November 2021*
 - The Evaluation Report / Learning Document will be presented to the UEF/RBF team in a slide deck in addition to the internal facing word document

Deliverable	Due Date
Inception report	15 October 2021
Preliminary learning draft from desk review	22 October 2021
Draft Evaluation Report – Internal facing	16 November 2021
Final Evaluation Report – Internal facing & accompanying external facing PPT	30 November 2021
Evaluation Presentation	1 December 2021

Evaluation Team Competencies

Organizations wishing to submit a proposal must match the minimum requirements laid out below:

- Lead Evaluator – Masters level post-graduate qualification in evaluation, social sciences, international relations, political science, development studies, economics, energy, engineering, or climate science. Other relevant qualifications may also be considered along with significant relevant experience
 - 7 years demonstrated relevant experience in monitoring and evaluation, including experience in undertaking evaluation of projects and programmes specifically focused on sustainable development, development finance, partnerships, innovation and systems change, programme design and implementation, preferably in the energy sector.
- Evaluation team has a minimum of 2 years’ experience working with the lead evaluator.

- Demonstrated experience conducting evaluations that focus on the enabling environment - including policy, regulation and finance considerations of specific developing countries and associated markets.
- Demonstrated experience of programme evaluation at an international level, including qualitative and quantitative methods.
- Demonstrated experience of formative and process evaluation.
- A demonstrated track record of conducting high quality evaluations in the international development space with professionalism, integrity, respect, and impartiality when drawing conclusions and interacting with all key stakeholders.
- Language skills: high level of competency in both written and spoken English, as well competency in French strongly preferred.

Desirable Skills and Experience:

- Demonstrated experience working in, and / or evaluating, clean energy market development in Africa and Asia; knowledge and understanding of the nuances of market development including factors such as barriers to implementation, policy and regulation, access to finance, political will and support, and other considerations for project developers to succeed.
- Experience and knowledge of the energy sector in Sierra Leone, Madagascar and / or Benin, including current enabling environment and challenges for the private sector a strong asset.
- Knowledge of Results-Based Financing (RBF), within the energy space.
- Recent experience of working with the UN system, multilateral organisations, and donors.
- Experience in evaluating projects for international organizations similar to SEforALL.
- Demonstrated experience in delivering high quality evaluation in the energy sector.

Reporting

The evaluation will be managed by the UEF/RBF team with support of the SEforALL MEL Team. All enquiries about this TOR up to selection can be sent to SEforALL's Procurement Team: procurement@seforall.org.

Quality assurance of the evaluation process and final products will be monitored jointly by the SEforALL MEL team and UEF/RBF team. All deliverables will be approved by the Programme Manager of the UEF.

Travel

Due to ongoing COVID-19 restrictions, travel is not required for this evaluation. The evaluation activities will therefore be carried out remotely from the evaluator's home base. No site-specific travel is expected for this evaluation.

Gender Mainstreaming

The selected firm(s) should make a concerted effort to mainstream gender considerations throughout this assignment. This includes, for example, the team deployed for this purpose implement a 40:60 female to male ratio (if applicable), provide a copy of gender policies followed by the organization and follow a gender balanced approach in the assignment.

Bidding Process

Proposals must include the following (in either PDF or PPT format):

- 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
- Methodology/Plan of action to carry out the services required and meet criteria outlined above is mandatory (it is strongly recommended to leverage this TOR while adding in evaluation approach and the evaluator's own suggestions from experience)
- Relevant experience and examples of work
- Key personnel profiles
- Proposed budget

- An explanation of conflicts of interest (if any)
- Gender Policy/ Gender balancing approach

All bids are to be submitted to procurement@seforall.org by 21st September 2021 by 23:59 PM Central European Summer Time (CEST)