



Terms of reference

Consultancy to Develop a Business Plan for the ECOWAS Certification Scheme for Sustainable Energy Skills (ECSES) at the ECOWAS Centre for Renewable Energies and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE)

1. Context

In fulfilment of the ECOWAS Renewable Energy Policy (EREP) and National Renewable Energy Action Plans (NREAPs) of Member States, the ECOWAS Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE) with the support of the European Union, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) and other partners, has established the ECOWAS Certification of Sustainable Energy Skills (ECSES) Programme. The aim is to promote professional competency and to address the issue of quality assurance that exist along the renewable energy (RE) and energy efficiency (EE) value-chain in West Africa.

The certification exams are based on Job-Task-Analysis (JTA) at various levels, developed by experts from the ECOWAS member states and the international community, with the support of technical and financial partners. ECREEE is also working towards getting accredited by ISO, specifically aligning all the structures and procedures of the certification system to the requirements of ISO/IEC 17024:2012 "conformity assessment-General requirements for bodies performing certification of persons". ECREEE has also formed a Technical Committee (TC) with representatives from each of the ECOWAS countries that serves as an advisory body to the programme.

The current certification level covers off-grid solar photovoltaic system installers according to JTA. The area of skills envisaged for the other levels of certification are as follows:

- Certification of installers of hybrid PV mini-grids;
- Certification of designers of PV-Hybrid mini-grids;
- Certification of Inspectors of PV-Hybrid mini-grids;
- Certification of energy auditors;
- Certification of wind turbine installers.



To organize the certification exams in each country, ECREEE partners with selected examination centres in ECOWAS countries and a Memoranda of Understanding is signed between the Centers and ECREEE for five years. Non-experienced candidates are referred by ECREEE to training partners to complete a training program based on the JTA, before taking the certification exam. During the first phase of the programme implementation, twenty-four (24) exams and training centres were selected in eight ECOWAS countries and four (04) examinations were organized. ECREEE plans to hold five more exams in five countries before the end of October 2021.

At the end of this pilot phase, the activities of the ECSES will continue and should be sustainable in the ECOWAS region, taking into consideration the challenges. In particular, future considerations include:

- The operationalization of the regional certification body in accordance with its bylaws;
- The deployment of Level 1 certification in all ECOWAS countries;
- The operationalization of the other levels of certification covering the other fields of RE and EE;
- Training of trainers and training of inexperienced candidates;
- The regularity of certification exams;
- Communication and awareness-raising activities on the professional certification process;
- The integration of training modules into the curricula of training institutions; and
- The development of a virtual platform for training and certification for certain skill levels.

To realize these activities and consolidate the institutional and regulatory framework of the ECSES, it is necessary to develop a business plan, to ensure the sustainability of the certification body considering the ECSES bylaws adopted in August 2019 in Frankfurt during a meeting of the then ECREEE Executive Board.

2. Purpose of the Service

The objective of this work is to develop a business plan for the ECSES program, in order to clearly lay out the elements and milestones that are important for its success. This is part of ECSES vision to be a world-class certification body towards supporting the development of the sustainable energy market.



3. Scope of the Assignment

The following tasks are to be performed in the cause of the work:

- Study the existing documents and strategies related to the regional certification system;
- Propose a three-year action plan for the deployment of certification in all the countries of the region and an estimated budget;
- Propose a strategy for integrating certification into the criteria for recruiting technicians, companies, and design offices for works and services in the field of sustainable energy,
- Propose a systematic approach including specific activities to anchor the certification program on a long term in ECOWAS countries;
- Evaluate the subsidies necessary for the next phase which working towards financial autonomy.
- Propose a strategy for integrating training modules into the curricula of technical training institutions in ECOWAS countries,
- Estimate the costs associated with the certification process;
- Propose or assess a potential number of applicants for sustainability of the ECSES;
- Estimate the revenue that will be generated by the certification process through the various services;
- Assess the situation of certification bodies for sustainable energy skills already in existence or under development in the member states and propose a collaboration strategy with the RCB;
- Analyze the cooperation between the examination centres, training centres, and the ECSES and propose appropriate arrangements for cooperation;
- Identify potential donors to support the regional certification system;
- List the constraints and difficulties (and solutions) in adopting and integrating the certification process in certain countries;
- Propose project sheets for donors support through grant or scholarships, for the costs of examinations and training of candidates; and
- Perform a risk assessment of the regional certification program.

The assignment must be based on the RCB bylaws adopted in 2019.

4. Qualifications of Consultant

The consultant should have the following knowledge and skills:



- At least a Master's degree in Economics, Project Management, Economics, Energy, Environment or any other equivalent diploma;
- Good knowledge of the renewable energies and quality policy, knowledge of these ECOWAS policies will be an added advantage;
- An overall experience of 10 years including at least 05 years in the field of project management, business plan development, or resource mobilization, especially in the field of energy or environment;
- Experience in the certification process and/or in conformity assessment;
- Work experience in the ECOWAS region will be an advantage;
- Fluent in one official language of ECOWAS (English, French or Portuguese).

5. Procedure and duration of the consultation

- The assignment will have a duration of 30 days upon signature of contract.
- The consultant should plan a for virtual sessions on scoping and partial feedback. The final feedback at ECREEE headquarters.
- He/She will organize virtual exchanges with two training and examination institutions and donors.
- The consultant will propose a detailed methodology for the Business Plan and a detailed work schedule.
- S/he will work closely with ECREEE and will provide reports weekly reports on the status of the work.

6. Deliverables

The deliverables expected from this consultation are as follows:

- A work plan, detailing the methodology for conducting the mission;
- Project sheets for submission to potential technical and financial partners;
- A draft ECSES business plan including a roadmap for the implementation of the business plan;
- The final business plan including a roadmap for the implementation of the business plan.

The final document must be translated in the 3 official languages of ECOWAS: Portuguese, English, and French.



7. Application Requirements and Evaluation

The Consultants will present technical and financial offers. Offers can be submitted in English or French.

The technical offer must include:

- The consultant's detailed CV with copy of diplomas;
- Comments on the terms of reference;
- A detailed methodological approach to the conduct of the service;
- A work schedule;
- Evidence of the most relevant experiences for similar assignments.

The financial offer must include a detailed budget indicating, the consultant's daily rates and any other related expense.

Applicants will be evaluated based on qualifications, experience, methodology, understanding and presentation of work

The required documents listed above should be sent by email to bplan_cert@ecreee.org, the deadline for submission of Proposals is **October 26, 2021, 23:00 UTC-1**