

CONCEPT NOTE (DRAFT)



## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

### ECOWAS FACILITY FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN ENERGY ACCESS

#### (ECOW-GEN FACILITY)



WITH FUNDING FROM  
 AUSTRIAN  
DEVELOPMENT  
COOPERATION

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## 1. Introduction

The ECOWAS Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE), with the support of the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) and the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation (AECID), is calling for project proposals for the ECOWAS Facility for Gender Mainstreaming in Energy Access (ECOW-GEN Facility). The Facility will provide technical and financial support to upscale the deployment of projects that simultaneously promote gender equality and improve energy access in the ECOWAS region.

Proposals for projects may be submitted for any of the Facility's components, namely:

- ECOWAS Women's Business Fund;
- Women's Technical Exchange program;
- Women's Economic Empowerment through Energy for Productive Uses.

The ECOW-GEN Facility will fund small grants of up to 50,000 EUR, ranging from 25, 000 EUR to 30, 000 EUR on average. Submission of proposals will open on 30 July 2015 and close on 30 September 2015.

## 2. Background

Lack of access to clean and modern forms of energy is affecting the ECOWAS region's economic growth and development. Over half of the population do not have access to electricity and access to modern fuels is even lower. Low energy access rates is especially affecting rural areas, where 60% of the population lives and 11 out of the 15 countries in the ECOWAS region are classified as Least Developed countries (LDCs) and Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPCs).

Energy access is clearly a necessity for the region, if it is to eradicate poverty and achieve the desired level of economic growth and development. To achieve this, however, developing and mobilizing the necessary human capital; attracting and building up financial capital; creating investment opportunities for ECOWAS entrepreneurs and investors, and establishing an enabling environment for inclusive dialogue, are conditions that have been identified in regional and national forums.

However, it is important to note that addressing causes of inequalities that have led to an unlevelled playing field for the region's male and female population to participate in and benefit from energy development in the region is a prerequisite for the achievement of these conditions.

In ECOWAS countries, barriers and challenges that limit women's access to the same opportunities and resources, as well as participation in decision making processes that lead to improvements in energy access, as men, remain rampant. The result is that women miss valuable opportunities for contributing to addressing the region's energy crises, and without their representation and input, programmes and projects which are designed and

implemented for them do not comprehensively meet the needs of women, the beneficiaries of these interventions.

It is against this background that the ECOW-GEN Facility works to contribute to the region's agenda for universal access to clean and modern forms of energy, by supporting women and men to move from being mere beneficiaries to contributing actively in addressing the energy challenges in the region.

The objectives of the Facility are hinged on the fact that the issue of energy access and that of gender equality are tightly linked to many aspects of society. Energy access has been demonstrated to improve gender equality, notably through releasing female domestic labor for market work and carrying gender empowerment messages via media. Conversely, gender equality has been demonstrated to improve energy access, in particular through inclusive energy programme design. Thus, tackling energy access through the lens of gender equality has the potential of supporting national and regional development in a way that breaks the cycle of energy poverty.

### **3. ECOW-GEN Facility**

The ECOW-GEN Facility is a small grant Facility under the ECOWAS Programme on Gender Mainstreaming in Energy Access (ECOW-GEN), with the objective of promoting gender-responsive investments and business development by transforming women-led business ideas in energy into real, commercially viable enterprises. Thus the Facility will aid in and contribute towards technology development and transfer; knowledge and skills acquisition; and establishment of sustainable energy businesses.

The Facility has three components: ECOWAS Women's Business Fund; Women's Technical Exchange Program; Women Economic Empowerment through Energy for Productive Uses.

#### **3.1 ECOWAS Women's Business Fund**

The ECOWAS Women's Business Fund will support female entrepreneurs with innovative business ideas to establish or upscale energy businesses.

Also the Fund includes a component on 'Gender in power generation, transmission and distribution', and will support Government Ministries, Departments or Agencies (MDAs) to incorporate gender dimensions in large scale energy infrastructure projects. To be eligible the project proposal must show how the project's activities will improve women's entrepreneurial capacity and welfare.

The Women's Business Fund started with a pilot<sup>1</sup> covering two countries in ECOWAS, namely: Ghana and Senegal. More information on these projects can be found [here](#).

The goal is that through this initiative:

- Commercially viable energy projects will be initiated and ran by women, with several others replicated throughout the Member States as a result; and
- Women entrepreneurs will gain the necessary skills to be competitive as producers and suppliers in the energy sector.

### 3.2 Women's Technical Exchange Program

The Women's Technical Exchange Program is a south-south cooperation framework which aims to facilitate learning and knowledge sharing for the replications and deployments of clean energy technologies. Through this Facility, trainers and trainees will be matched up to facilitate knowledge and technology transfer.

The modalities of implementation will include,

#### **From prospective trainers (Category A):**

- The submission of expression of interest (EOI) by establishments that wish to provide training in specialized areas ranging from business development to technology fabrication and/or application.

#### **From prospective trainees (Category B):**

- The submission of EOI from female entrepreneurs or groups to be trained in a specialized area. Applicants are expected to provide justifications as to how the training will contribute to the growth of the entrepreneur's/group's capacity to contribute to improving energy access in the region, with a plan of how the training will be applied. If funding support is required, a project proposal will be submitted along with the EOI.

Trainers and trainees will be matched based on the needs of the trainees and the proposed services of the trainers.

### 3.3 Women Economic Empowerment through Energy for Productive Uses

The objective of the Women's Economic Empowerment through Energy for Productive Uses is to expand energy access to support rural women in agricultural businesses and, thus,

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<sup>1</sup> Although the pilot phase accepted projects on cooking energy, with the establishment of a Business Development Fund on cookstoves/cooking solutions under the West African Clean Cooking Alliance (WACCA) Initiative prospective project promoters are encouraged to submit proposals for other energy sub-sectors.

contribute towards poverty alleviation, increased employment, and improved health and educational levels of rural women for the sustainable development of the ECOWAS region.

The specific objectives are to:

- Increase the productivity levels of women in agricultural practices through the increased use of renewable energy technologies;
- Build the capacities of women farmers to use and maintain clean energy technologies;
- Raise awareness and educate the public on the use of renewable energy for poverty eradication at the household level and, more broadly, for rural development.

## 4. Modalities for implementation of the ECOW-GEN Facility

### a) Entities eligible for financing

The following entities will be eligible:

- Government MDAs;
- NGOs and CSOs (international and local)
- Women and Community-based groups and associations (including youth organizations);
- Entrepreneurs/private sector
- Academia and research institutions

### b) Eligible territories

Projects are expected to take place within the boundaries of the ECOWAS Member States.

### c) Beneficiary contribution and ceiling of grants

To ensure ownership and commitment by the beneficiary, it shall be a requirement that they contribute up to thirty percent (30%)<sup>2</sup> in monetary terms of the total cost of the proposed project. This amount will exclude any tax related implications.

Only projects requiring a grant of a maximum of 50,000 EUR will be considered for support.

The financing structure must point out how the entire project is going to be financed and must specify the quota of financing expected from the ECOW-GEN Facility as well as the 30% to be financed by the beneficiary.

### d) Eligible of costs included in the budget

Only “eligible costs” will be taken into account in the calculation of grants. The eligible costs to be included in the budget are the following:

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<sup>2</sup> This does not apply to the Trainers component of the Women’s Technical Exchange Program, category A.

- Purchase of energy equipment and technologies
- Workshops, awareness and sensitization activities
- Development of communication materials
- Personnel cost
- Travel and subsistence
- Services
- Assessments and analysis
- Evaluation and audit

The following costs are not eligible:

- Purchase of electronic appliances
- Items already financed in another framework
- Purchase of land or buildings
- Tax

#### **e) Financing rules**

Applicants will have to provide in their applications, a detailed explanation of the activities to be implemented and the results to be achieved by the implementation of each activity. Costs must be recorded in the beneficiary's accounts. They should be identifiable and verifiable, and be backed up by the original supporting documents. The contribution of the beneficiary is a mandatory prerequisite to a Project's approval.

The Euro should be used in project application and reporting.

## **5. Eligibility criteria**

Each application will undergo a further screening to assess suitability in terms of the ECOW-GEN Facility objectives. All applications will be subjected to the following criteria which must be met:

#### **a) Sector or Strategic Fit:**

Project is within the priority areas considered by the ECOW-GEN Facility.

#### **b) Development Impact:**

The project improves the quality of life of the local population.

#### **c) Regional priority:**

The authorities (e.g. government Ministries, traditional leaders, etc.) are aware and in support of the project as contributing to the country's development goals and agenda.

#### **d) Institutional Capacity**

The project should currently have capacity or should have credible plans to add capacity towards management and project implementation.

### **Project Priority Criteria**

It is important to note that applications will also be prioritized against certain additional priority criteria, namely:

1. Project must demonstrate that the grant will be additional in contributing to women's economic empowerment by enhancing employment and self-employment opportunities for women, especially those living below the poverty line.
2. Project should be market oriented, producing services for rural and urban markets and should support the development of the local labour market and improved opportunities for employment and skills development.
3. Projects must include a component with a strategy on public education/awareness raising, targeting the general population (men, women and youth), about the social value of women's economic empowerment and gender equality.
4. Project proposals should describe a sustainability strategy which will ensure that the project continues to deliver benefits of poverty eradication and women's empowerment even after the grant.
5. Project proposals should include components on promoting lasting results to women's entrepreneurship development through the inclusion of actions for improving functional literacy and vocational training programmes.
6. Project proposals should demonstrate how the community will be involved from the inception to the final implementation of the project, particularly the role men will play in the project's activities. Emphasis should be placed on demonstrating how the project benefits the whole community.
7. Proposal should demonstrate practical, immediate results that the project will offer in the short term, e.g. increase in income or greater availability of resources.
8. Proposals should show how the approaches and activities developed in the project are adapted to the needs of the beneficiaries, particularly women.
9. A significant proportion of the heat or electricity generated from the renewable energy technology must be dedicated to income generating activities.

10. Projects for 'women's economic empowerment through energy for productive uses' are projects that lead to an increase in women's income levels and decision making capacity.
11. The project should have a clear management structure, including structures for the operation and maintenance of the renewable energy installation.
12. The project should be able to be viewed and visited by others so that it acts as a true demonstration project.
13. Projects must satisfy environmental requirements and should not infringe on nature reserves.

## 6. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals which fulfil the eligibility and selection criteria indicated above will be assessed according to the evaluation criteria contained in Annex A.

## 7. Submission of the application

To be eligible for consideration, the application must be submitted using the prescribed application form available at [www.ecreee.org](http://www.ecreee.org) . This will be operational on 30 July 2015.

At the point of application, applicants need to ensure the following (where applicable):

- Registered legal entity or identifiable natural persons (evidence to be attached)
- Established bank account at a registered ECOWAS Region financial institution (evidence to be attached)
- Tax clearance certificate (evidence to be attached)
- No adverse audit findings or disclaimer of audit opinion in last 2 years
- Not barred from participating in government procurement
- Not credit blacklisted through a default judgment or an un-rehabilitated insolvent

## 8. Application Review Process

ECREEE as fund manager will receive all project applications through the online application process and together with the proposal review committee will review the projects along the criteria set out in the Annexes and will present a report for consideration to the Steering Committee. In brief the process described below will be followed by the ECREEE:

**Step 1:** The Request for Proposals is released for interested parties to apply on line for grant funding as per eligible criteria;

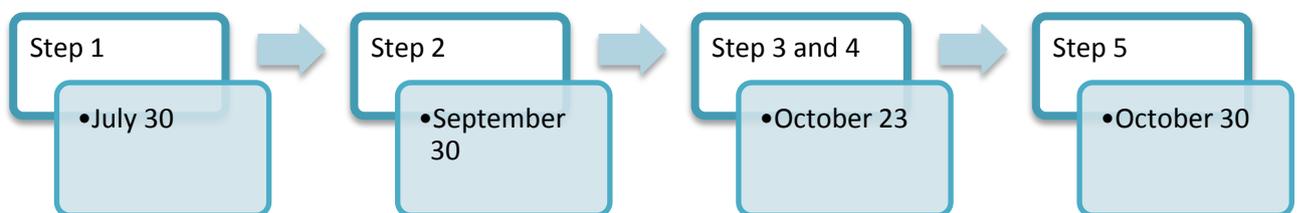
**Step 2:** The proposals will be received and reviewed by ECREEE and Proposal Review Committee against the eligibility criteria and checked to ensure that the documents are complete and that all necessary information is included.

**Step 3:** Eligible and complete applications will either be approved for due diligence or rejected by the Steering Committee. Applicants are updated on the outcome of the process.

**Step 4:** Project proposals accepted from step 3 will undergo a due diligence and an appraisal report will be prepared by the fund manager for final recommendation to the ECOW-GEN Facility Steering Committee (AECID and ADA) to make grant funding available. Pending on information presented, the fund manager could request additional detailed information from the applicant.

**Step 5:** The applicant will be informed of the final decision, and if approved be offered a grant Facility agreement.

*Figure 1: Timeline for Application Review Process (from July 30 – October 30 2015)*



## 9. Reservations

The ECOW-GEN Facility Steering Committee expressly reserves the following rights:

- a) To reject all or any proposals.
- b) To waive any or all irregularities in the proposals submitted.
- c) To retain the right not to select any application/s even if meeting all the requirements.

## 10. Contract Negotiations

The successful applicant/s will be required to enter into a written Grant Facility Agreement with ECREEE.

## 11. Validity

All applications will be regarded as valid for a period of 12 months from the closing date. ECREEE may upon evaluation request an updated application or open another request for proposals.

## 12. Closing Date

The Request for Proposals opens at **09h00 Cabo Verde Standard Time (GMT - 1) on the 30<sup>th</sup> of July 2015 and closes on 30th of September 2015 at 09h00 Cabo Verde Standard Time (GMT -1).**

Applications must be submitted electronically in the prescribed format.

## 13. Additional Information

There will be no briefing sessions held. Only enquiries sent to [ecowgenfacility@ecreee.org](mailto:ecowgenfacility@ecreee.org) will be responded to. Responses to all enquiries will be published on the dedicate page for the Facility at [www.ecowgen.ecreee.org](http://www.ecowgen.ecreee.org) on a weekly basis.

## 14. Corrupt or Fraudulent Practices

ECOWAS requires that the applicant/s observe the highest standard of ethics during the procurement and executions of the project/s. See the [ECOWAS Procurement Rules](#) and [ECOWAS Tender Code](#) for information on these ECOWAS' Policies.

## Annex A: Assessment/Selection Criteria

Selection criteria			
Criteria	Sub-criteria	Weight	Rating
<b>Project Preparation Quality</b>	<b>Technical design and tender documents</b>	<b>15</b>	
	- Quality of design	10	
	- State of preparation of tender documents	5	
	<b>Market and Economic studies</b>	<b>10</b>	
	- Market analysis	2	
	- Marketing strategy	2	
	- Reliability of sales prospects	2	
- Sensitivity of economic benefits	2		
- Strength of economic return	2		
<b>Financial studies</b>	<b>10</b>		
- Readiness of financing plan	4		
- Likelihood of expected revenues	2		
- Strength of overall financial return	2		
- Robustness of business plan	2		
<b>Gender studies</b>	<b>10</b>		
- Quality of GIA	6		
- Appropriateness of remedial measures	4		
<b>Social studies and Public information</b>	<b>5</b>		
- Public acceptance of project	2		
- Strength of Awareness and Communication strategy	3		
<b>Risks analysis</b>	<b>5</b>		
- Overall preparedness of project	3		
- Technical risk	2		
	<i>Total</i>	<i>60</i>	
<b>Proposal Quality</b>	<b>Project Presentation</b>	<b>10</b>	
	- Outlines of Terms of Reference	5	
	- Schedule and Cost	5	
	<i>Total</i>	<i>20</i>	
<b>Applicant Fitness</b>	<b>General capacity</b>	<b>10</b>	
	<b>Previous Experience in similar projects</b>	<b>4</b>	
	- Adequacy of Proposal and Implementation personnel	6	
	<i>Total</i>	<i>20</i>	
	<i>Grand total</i>	<i>100</i>	

The rating should use the following scale (out of a total of 10)<sup>1</sup>:

- 7 to 10: good to excellent
- 4 to 6: acceptable to fair
- 0 to 3: unacceptable to poor

## Annex B: Minimum criteria for Conducting a Gender Impact Assessment

A Gender Impact Assessment (GIA) is a vital exercise conducted before the onset of an intervention with the aim to identify the potential impacts of the intervention on its male and female beneficiaries. The goal is to ensure that the impacts are equally felt and the benefits are equally shared, thus promoting gender equality<sup>3</sup>.

Adherence to the principle of equal participation in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation stages of the project is principal.

*The following is recommended:*

Define issues and goals

- Identify and define what the project is trying to achieve (this should include the objectives, results and impacts in the near and long-term)
- Identify the inherent issues, such as social norms, perceptions and practices that may pose challenges for the project's benefits being felt and shared equally
- Develop a strategy to achieve equal participation and contribution in defining the project's component's and activities

Data collection and analysis

- Gather gender disaggregated statistics on direct beneficiaries in regards to needs/gaps and challenges
- Consult experts, women and men groups, including youth groups
- Analyses and interpret from different perspectives, with a focus on the perceived needs, challenges and expectations

Develop options

- Determine impact/implications for different groups
- Identify opportunities for the different groups
- Define remedial actions

Communicate (See Annex C for detailed minimum criteria for defining a communication strategy)

- Integrate with development commitments
- Design different strategies
- Use inclusive language

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<sup>3</sup> Gender equality signifies equal access to the "opportunities that allow people to pursue a life of their own choosing and to avoid extreme deprivations in outcomes," including gender equality in rights, resources, and voice. Gender equality does not necessarily mean equal numbers of men and women or boys and girls in all activities, nor does it necessarily mean treating men and women or boys and girls exactly the same. It signifies an aspiration to work towards a society in which neither women nor men suffer from poverty in its many forms, and in which women and men are able to live equally fulfilling lives.

## Annex C: Minimum Criteria for an awareness and communication strategy

### *Objective*

The specific objectives of the guideline are to enable project promoters develop an awareness raising and communication strategy that:

- Communicates the existence of the project, its mission and objectives to the direct and indirect beneficiaries.
- Creates public awareness of the issues being addressed and build up public support on the strategies to address these issues.
- Generates the support of decision-makers, beneficiaries and other key stakeholders.
- Encourages the identified target groups to adopt behaviors intended to be beneficial to them.
- Through participatory approaches, encourages dialogue about specific components of the project during the project formulation, implementation and evaluation.

### *The following is recommended:*

1. **Have a designation communication expert in the team:** a person with experience in planning and executing awareness raising and communication events should be part of the project team in order to ensure that communication problems are considered at the very early stage and implemented at strategic periods of the project's implementation.
2. **Conduct a communication audit:** identify the main communication channels used in the project location. Channels could include: radio and TV stations, newspapers and magazines, NGOs, places of worship, groups and associations. Also, the communication behavior of the direct beneficiaries should be recorded for monitoring.
  - **Develop a stakeholders list:** identify the likely stakeholders and classify them based on categories of direct and indirect stakeholders, influential and least influential (with regards to the achievement of the project's objectives). Develop a SWOT (strength, weakness, opportunities and threats) analysis based on this categorization.
  - **Develop a baseline:** to track and monitor the effects of the awareness and communication strategy, it is important to develop a baseline of the present situation in regards to attitudes, behaviors and perceptions (this is essentially the level of awareness).
3. **Design a strategy and activities for awareness raising and communication:** the strategy should outline
  - the purpose,
  - the channels that would be used (describe how the message would be transmitted and/or how the stakeholders would be informed)

- methods or formats (the specific approaches selected, e.g. group meetings, posters or handbooks, radio or TV broadcast)
  - output (the number of events or media which would be conducted or produced)
  - message that would be communicated to the stakeholders should be developed
4. **Establish monitoring and evaluation procedures:** the impact of the awareness and communication activities should be evaluated and reported periodically, to help refine the strategy if necessary. Note that this should be reported according to stakeholders

## Annex D: Technical Project Focus

### **Renewable Energy:**

- Renewable Energy in general (multi-focus)
- Biomass (e.g. improved stoves and charcoaling, co-generation, power generation)
- Bio-fuels (e.g. Biodiesel, Bioethanol)
- Biogas
- Waste-to-Energy
- Geothermal Energy
- Hydroelectric Power (medium, small, micro, pico)
- PV (e.g. grid/off-grid, SHS, lighting, pumping, desalination)
- Solar thermal (water heating, CSP, cooling, process heat, solar cooking and drying)
- Wind Energy (off-grid, grid connected, on- and off-shore, water pumping, for desalination)
- Wave, tidal and ocean thermal
- Hybrids (indicate sources)
- Mini-Grids
- Storage systems (batteries, hydrogen)

### **Energy Efficiency:**

- Sustainable transport
- Efficient appliances
- Building efficiency
- Cleaner production
- Transmission
- Energy conservation and management

### **Other focus:**

- LPG for cooking

### **Energy Services:**

- Electricity for (...)
- Illumination for (...)
- Motive power and transport
- Mechanical power for pumping or grinding
- Heating (space heating, water heating, process heat)
- Cooking
- Cooling (e.g. for refrigeration)
- Drying
- Desalination and sanitation
- Transportation
- telecommunication

## Annex E: Success stories of Women Energy Entrepreneurs globally

### Box 1: Example of women Energy Entrepreneurs breaking grounds in the sector

- **Wandee Khunchornyakong**

Thailand's solar power pioneer Wandee Khunchornyakong runs SPCG, country's largest solar power firm, which she founded in 1993. It has 36 solar farm projects across 10 provinces, 2 of which are currently operational, supplying 260 megawatts annually to an area covering 2,000 acres in the northeast. She has 54% of the company that counts the International Finance Corporation and Kyocera among its key investors.

(Source: [Forbes](#)).

- **Bineta Kamara**

Managing the operations of the EOL Senegal, Bineta Kamara is not only at the center of, but championing, the deployment of appropriate, sustainable energy technologies in Senegal. The work of the EOL Senegal includes manufacturing, installation and maintenance of small wind turbines for rural electrification and water pumping, helping to alleviate issues of energy poverty.

(Source: [Company website](#)).

- **Yvonne Faye**

Yvonne Faye is the technical director for EnergieR in Dakar, Senegal—a solar PV business with a successful track record of installing solar systems for remote telecommunications stations. With a master's degree in computer science, electronics and electrical engineering, Yvonne developed expertise in the solar PV systems sector that she used to co-launch EnergieR.

(Source: [Changemakers](#)).

- **Fatoumata Souaré**

Fatoumata Souaré and her children own and operate a sustainable charcoal production business that nets some \$2800 every three months. The income has allowed Mrs. Souaré, who lost her husband a few years ago, to build a new house, install a solar panel, send her children to school, and purchase health insurance for her family.

(Source: [World Bank](#)).

- **Mojisola Abdul**

Mojisola Abdul is the president/chief executive officer of MOJEC International Nigeria Limited. The Company, in partnership with a Chinese meter manufacturing company, is setting up a multi-billion naira world-class SKD meter assembly plant in Lagos.

MOJEC International is one of the companies engaged by Power Holding Company of Nigeria (PHCN) to sell and install meters under the newly introduced Credit Advance Payment Metering Implementation Scheme (CAPMI).

(Source: [Business Day](#))