

Project:	Beyond the Grid Fund for Africa (BGFA)
Project countries:	Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Mozambique, Uganda, and Zambia (Project Countries)
Sector:	Off-grid renewable energy
Funding source:	BGFA via Nefco
Type of contract(s):	Consulting services: Mid-term evaluation of the Beyond the Grid Fund for Africa Programme
Type of notice:	Invitation for expression of interest
Issue date:	23 September 2024
Closing date:	11 October 2024 at 12:00 (noon) local time in Helsinki (Eastern European time (EET)).

Project/assignment description: Nefco as the facility manager of the Beyond the Grid Fund for Africa (BGFA) intends to procure consulting services from a qualified consulting company or a consortium of companies (“Consultant”) to undertake a mid-term evaluation of the BGFA programme.

The BGFA Programme is an innovative financing programme managed by Nefco. The BGFA was established by Nefco in 2019 on Sida’s initiative and is now a EUR 126 million programme funded by Sweden, Denmark, Germany and Norway. The ultimate aim of the programme is the creation of long-term self-sustainable markets that can and will continue and expand beyond the expected four-year country programme implementation and access to BGFA financing. BGFA provides results-based financing complemented with technical assistance to incentivise the investee companies to establish themselves or scale-up their services in Sub-Saharan markets and enable them to sell more affordable and sustainable off-grid energy services to customers in remote areas. Further information on the BGFA is available at <https://beyondthegrid.africa>.

The purpose of the mid-term evaluation is to ensure **accountability** by assessing the quality of the programme's implementation and its success in achieving its expected outcomes and impacts. Additionally, the evaluation aims to provide valuable **learning** insights to inform necessary modifications to the remaining programme implementation, adapting to the evolving context since the programme's inception. Furthermore, the evaluation seeks to take an anticipatory view of the **future** development of the off-grid energy sector, identifying the programme's potential role in this dynamic context, including possible follow-up activities. All the components together allow **documenting** and **communicating** the results achieved – and challenges faced – by BGFA so far. Additionally, its purpose is to outline a **roadmap** for the remaining years of implementation. The learnings from this evaluation will contribute also to the broader development of the off-grid energy sector in sub-Saharan Africa.

The **objectives** of the evaluation are to:

1. Assess the quality of programme implementation, document the results achieved and challenges faced, and evaluate its success in achieving expected outcomes and impacts.
2. Provide insights for necessary modifications to adapt the remaining implementation to the evolving context.
3. Anticipate future developments in the off-grid energy sector and identify the programme's potential role in the evolving context.
4. Outline a roadmap for the remaining years of implementation.
5. Contribute to the design of future off-grid energy programmes.

Assignment Start Date and Duration: The Assignment is expected to start in January 2025 and be completed at the latest by October 2025.

Maximum Budget Available for the Assignment: Up to EUR 400,000 (exclusive of VAT) which includes reimbursable costs (such as travel). The budget also includes a contingency reserve of 10% of the total budget.

Funding Source: Beyond the Grid Fund for Africa via NEFCO.

Eligibility: There are no eligibility restrictions on the nationality of the Consultant.

Consultant Profile: The Consultant will be a company or a consortium of companies with in-depth experience from independent evaluation of results-based financing programmes in the context of off-grid energy access in Sub-Saharan Africa.

In terms of previous experience and financial standing, the Consultant (either lead consultant or consortium partners) in case of consortia should demonstrate the following minimum criteria:

1. **Experience conducting strategic or large-scale evaluations;** i.e. assignments such as the evaluation of specific strategies, thematic or country programmes, multi-project evaluations, or evaluations of entire financial instruments, funds or institutions. Evaluation of large-scale programmes of which overall implementation budget exceeds 30 million EUR can also be included here. Minimum **five** evaluations in the past 10 years of minimum contract value equivalent to or greater than 200 000 EUR.
2. **Experience evaluating off-grid energy/energy access programmes;** minimum three evaluations in the past 10 years of minimum contract value equivalent to or greater than 50 000 EUR.
3. **Experience providing strategic foresight advisory services¹;** minimum three assignments in the context of Sub-Saharan African sustainable development of minimum contract value of 30 000 EUR. These references can pertain to either a company or an individual expert.²
4. **The Company's (or the case of Consortia, the lead Company's) annual turnover** should be minimum 200 000 EUR per year in the past three years.

One reference can cover one or more of the above-mentioned minimum criteria, e.g. the evaluation of a *fund* in the *off-grid sector* contributes to the minimum criteria 1 and 2. Evaluations and mid-term reviews/evaluations qualify as evaluation assignments. However, appraisals or thematic studies on specific topics are not eligible. Experience evaluating results-based finance programmes is considered an asset.

Submission Requirements: Interested Consultants are hereby invited to submit their Expressions of Interest for the purposes of being shortlisted. To assess the qualifications and competence of the Consultants seeking to be shortlisted, the information submitted should include the following:

- Company/Consortium profile, including clearly indicated information on the minimum requirements (max 3 pages);
- Description of available evaluation methods (max 1 page);

¹ To qualify as a strategic foresight assignment, it must include the use of specific foresight tools or methods, such as megatrend analysis, weak signal detection, Delphi survey, horizon scanning, scenario planning, backcasting, futures wheel, or similar techniques.

² If the applicant is selected for the next phase, the same expert or another expert with equivalent qualifications must be included in the full proposal.

- Experience in BGFA partner countries (max 1 page).

Annexes:

- Separate reference cards (maximum 1 page per card, max 20 reference cards); and
- A summary table of the references as indicated below:

Reference nro	1. Experience conducting strategic or large-scale evaluations	2. Experience evaluating off-grid energy/energy access programmes	3. Experience providing strategic foresight advisory services
1	1		
2			
3		1	
4	1	1	
5		1	
6			1
7			1
8	1		1
9	1		
10	1		
11			
...			
...			
...			
...			
TOTAL	5	3	3

Notes:

1. The shortlist of qualified and experienced Consultants will be made from responses to this notification. The short-listed consultants will be asked to submit technical and financial proposals, from which the highest-ranked consultant will be selected.

2. Nefco will evaluate received Expressions of Interest only from those Consultants that meet the Minimum Criteria defined above; 3-4 of the highest-ranking Expressions of Interest will be invited to submit a full proposal.

Next steps:

The preliminary timeline is as follows: NEFCO expects to distribute a Request for Proposal, including Terms of Reference with specific evaluation criteria among the shortlisted Consultants in October 2024. The expected submission deadline for Consultants’ proposals is mid/late November 2024 and the Assignment is expected to start in January 2025.

Expressions of Interest shall be submitted in English in one pdf file by email to Nefco at procurement@nefco.int with copy to petra.mikkolainen@nefco.int with subject: “BGFA Mid-Term Evaluation - Expression of Interest” to reach NEFCO no later than 11 October 2024 at 12:00 (noon) local time in Helsinki (Eastern European time (EET)).

Please allow sufficient time for the submission taking into account the time differences and noting that NEFCO will not accept any late submissions.

Questions and Answers:

Any questions on this Invitation for Expression of Interest shall be provided in writing to NEFCO by e-mail: at procurement@nefco.int with copy to petra.mikkolainen@nefco.int no later than **30 September 2024** after which all questions will be compiled by NEFCO without any editing in the form they are sent to NEFCO. Answers to the questions will be published at <https://www.nefco.int/procurements/>.

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