

Terms of Reference

Training to Build the Capacity of National Renewable Energy Associations ECOWAS Regional Advocacy Workshop on VAT & Import Duty Exemptions

Background

The National Renewable Energy Associations (NREAs) play a key role in activating national off-grid electrification markets and are crucial partners in creating and maintaining enabling policy and financial environments. Without a strong single national voice representing the off-grid industry, governments as well as other stakeholders such as development partners, do not have a legitimate counterpart and the basis for constructive public-private dialogue is missing.

Given that policy measures are often shaped on a regional level (e.g. through ECOWAS or EAC), regional cooperation and coordination among associations is essential to ensure their active role in the regional dialogue. However, associations are confronted with various challenges, including but not limited to insufficient human and financial resources. Developing a strategic vision of the association's role in the national as well as regional energy access eco-system, attracting members, and offering relevant membership services can be challenging in this context.

GOGLA is leading the PowerUp! network, funded by the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office and administered by the [Carbon Trust's Transforming Energy Access Programme](#), where we are building the capacity of NREAs to:

- Deliver valuable services and fully represent their members' interests, also in interactions with governments;
- Strengthen ties between associations to address regional policy challenges affecting off-grid energy; and
- To share relevant experiences and resources to promote informed policy debates and business decisions concerning off-grid energy.

As part of the programme, we have created a learning and sharing network for the NREA's to facilitate peer-to-peer learning, regular trainings, thematic workshops, and funder's meetings. Topics range from strengthening governance to fundraising abilities, depending on what the network outlines as priority areas. These meetings and trainings are taking place throughout 2019 – 2021 and will be provided free of charge to the associations. GOGLA will facilitate the trainings, inviting experts and external service providers where needed.

In Q4 of 2020, GOGLA will be organizing three workshops on VAT and import duty legislation, including how to successfully advocate for exemptions. Associations will be grouped into one of these three workshops according to their regional belonging: EAC, ECOWAS and SADC. Due to COVID-19 travel restrictions, the trainings will be organized via online platforms.

To deliver this training, we are looking for a person(s) with expertise in

- 1) The national and regional application of legislation related to VAT and import duties for off-grid solar products (or renewable energy products), and
- 2) Advocating for VAT and customs duty exemptions on off-grid solar products (or renewable energy products) at a national and/or regional level in West Africa.

The successful applicant(s) will be required to deliver a 6-hour workshop via an online platform provided by GOGLA to NREA staff. The training will be delivered over two days, each day consisting of a three-hour session.

Global Off Grid Lighting Association / Association (Vereniging) incorporated in the Netherlands / Chamber of Commerce KvK number 62066064. Address: GOGLA (Global Off-Grid Lighting Association), Johan Cruijff Boulevard 83-95, 1101 DM, Amsterdam Zuid-Oost, The Netherlands

In addition to this ToR for the ECOWAS Advocacy Workshop, GOGLA is also seeking applications to two other ToRs for the EAC and SADC regions. Applicants may apply to one, two or three of these ToRs if the applicant has expertise and experience in one or more of these regions. In the case that one applicant would like to apply under more than one ToR, the applications will need to be sent separately (i.e. one application per ToR).

About GOGLA

GOGLA is the global association for the off-grid solar energy industry. Established in 2012, GOGLA now represents over 180 members as a neutral, independent, not-for-profit industry association. Its mission is to help its members build sustainable markets, delivering quality, affordable products and services to as many households, businesses and communities as possible across the developing world.

www.gogla.org

About the TEA program

The Transforming Energy Access programme is leading development of innovative technologies, business models, partnerships and skills that will accelerate access to affordable, clean energy services for households and enterprises in developing countries.

<https://www.carbontrust.com/tea/>

Objectives of the Assignment

Recent developments in the removal of previously held tax exemptions on solar products have heightened the interest from NREAs to undertake a training on the application and implementation of VAT and duty exemptions as well as on the advocacy processes for gaining exemptions for solar equipment on the national and regional level.

This will be the second of three online trainings in this regionally focused series and will include the NREAs present in the Western African countries: Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, Benin, and Mali.

This workshop will be conducted with the aim of increasing the NREA staff capacity to advise members on the current legislation regarding, and application of national and regional VAT and import duties for solar products, and to develop and implement national and regional advocacy strategies relating to VAT and duty exemptions for solar equipment in particular. Each NREA will be represented by two staff members when possible (one from the Board of Directors and the other from the staff team).

Many of the associations are actively involved in advocating for VAT/duty exemptions at the national level. Nevertheless, NREAs value regional trainings where they can share learnings from national level advocacy campaigns and that at the same time encourage regional cooperation with their respective regional institutional bodies. As the regional blocs are increasingly harmonising and standardising legislation across the member countries, it is crucial for the associations to be able to represent the industry in their respective countries, and on the regional level to support the scaling up the off-grid electrification market. For this training, we are looking for examples and lessons learnt from within the Western African member countries and would like the successful applicant to also engage with the regional renewable energy body ECREEE to present and participate in the meeting.

This training will provide a chance to further build the link between the associations and the regional bodies, align on the understanding of VAT and duties implementation at a country and regional level, share lessons learnt from the region on the implementation of exemptions as well as to understand the processes involved and advocacy needed to secure these exemptions.

At the end of this training, the workshop participants will be equipped to:

- Understand the status of the current legislation on VAT and import duties for solar equipment at the national and regional level as well as their implementation in practice (including current categorisation and HS codes)
- Develop an understanding of the national and regional policymaking processes, as well as the key actors related to the taxation of solar products
- Understand the elements of a good public-private dialogue
- Understand the processes behind the successful advocacy efforts for removing VAT and import duty exemptions for SHS
- Design a strategic vision for a national and regional advocacy strategy around exemptions
- Develop practical tools for implementing advocacy strategies related to VAT and import duty exemptions
- Know how to monitor advocacy efforts on national and regional level
- Know how to implement VAT and import duty exemptions as a result of successful advocacy efforts

Scope of the Work and Key Tasks

Location: Zoom Online Meeting

Dates: December 15th and 16th

The expert will be responsible for the planning of the online workshop, development of the online training modules and materials conducting a 6-hour workshop for the invited participants on the afore mentioned dates.

The workshops should consist of a balance of lectures, group activities, case-studies, and practical exercises from across the regional bloc.

This workshop can be held in English or in French, simultaneous translation will be provided by GOGLA for French/English speaking participants.

Training material should be delivered two weeks prior to first workshop date, to ensure time for professional translation to English/French.

During the workshop, the expert is also expected to provide the participants with relevant reference materials, which may help them in their work and future projects.

Summary of Key Deliverables

- Conduct an online workshop for a max 16 participants including members of the Board of Directors and NREA staff members
- Familiarise participants with key concepts and practical framework of current VAT & import duty legislation related to solar products, including where applicable any exemptions, at national and regional levels
- Equip training participants with the required tools to be familiar and skilful when developing advocacy strategies for VAT and import duty exemptions – from issue identification to defining advocacy messages to the implementation of advocacy strategies
- Showcase practical cases of lessons learned from advocacy strategies relating to VAT and import duty exemptions from the standpoint of an association
- Document and share observations regarding weaknesses and issues that need further development as well as recommendations
- Prepare a training manual and other related materials for the workshop for dissemination by GOGLA and TEA partners
- (Optional): Personal two-hour consultations with NREA staff individually after the event.

Participants

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Staff and/or higher management of selected NREAs, GOGLA team members, and the applicable regional renewable energy body. Levels of knowledge on the topic are expected to vary between the different NREA participants, and the training should thus cater to associations with varying levels of experience.

Outputs and Schedule

Milestones:

	Item
October 30 th	Proposal Submission Deadline
November 9 th	Expert Contracted
November 16 th	Inception, outlines
Until November 30 th	Designing training material, sharing first draft for the training
December 7 th	Delivering written material for translation
December 15 th & 16 th	Time frame for the online training

Support provided by GOGLA

Support/inputs to be provided by GOGLA in the development of the training include:

- Guidance on the development of the workshop and the materials
- Connection and introductions to the participating NREA's beforehand – if needed
- Connection and introductions to the regional organisation (ECREEE)
- Access to relevant GOGLA material and information
- Access to GOGLA Zoom account for the workshops (if needed).
- GOGLA PowerPoint and word document templates for the submission of final deliverables

Intellectual property

GOGLA and funders will make the materials available for sharing via its channels, giving due recognition to the author(s) of the materials, adding basic branding to the various documents and materials as applicable. The consultant will be expected to ensure that the materials prepared are free of any intellectual property rights or grant a GOGLA and funders a free licence (for at least three years) to publish them at no cost.

Contracting, Remuneration and Expenses

If applicable, GOGLA shall pay the consultancy fee to the consultant as agreed between both the parties by contract agreement. The proposed payment scheme is 30% upon delivery of the written training material and 70% after completion of the training; both to be delivered to the satisfaction of GOGLA.

A draft contract is attached as Annex. Please review this carefully before applying to ensure that the contract terms are acceptable.

Qualifications and Experience

We are looking for a person(s) with experience in taxation legislation related to solar products, and advocating at a national and regional level for VAT and import duty exemptions in the off-grid solar energy space as well as with experience in capacity building training. Region-specific expertise is crucial. The expert should have:

- Advanced knowledge and experience in legislation related to VAT and import duties as well as with developing advocacy strategies to secure taxation exemptions within West Africa
- Proven record of conducting training and capacity building workshop sessions
- Good communication skills (in writing and verbally)
- Advanced facilitation and training skills

- Experience in producing high-quality written content and reports
- Ability to deliver written training materials and online training session in English

Please note that we allow applications that also cover the other regional workshops in SADC and ECOWAS in case experience in several regions can be demonstrated by the expert(s). See separate ToR for Southern Africa (SADC) and East Africa (EAC) workshops.

Evaluation

The criteria which shall serve as basis for evaluating offers will be:

Technical Qualification weight: 40%

Financial/Price Proposal weight: 30%

Regional Engagement Experience weight: 30%

A two-stage procedure is utilized in evaluating the proposals, with evaluation of the technical proposal being completed prior to any financial/price proposal being compared. The financial/price proposal of the candidates who passed the minimum technical score of 50% in the technical qualification evaluation will be evaluated.

Submission of Proposal

Submission package:

- Technical proposal / methodology on how they will approach and complete the assignment
- Financial proposal. The financial proposal shall specify a **total lump sum amount** with a clear break down of costs.
- Example of work on VAT/duty exemptions within the ECOWAS region.
- Brief description of why the individual(s) considers him/herself/themselves as the most suitable for the assignment
- Personal CV(s), indicating all experience from similar projects or topic area, as well as the contact details (email and telephone number) of the expert(s) and 2-3 professional references

Submission Deadline

The proposal must be submitted:

1. In the English or French language, and valid for a minimum period of 120 days.
2. To Laura Fortes at l.fortes@gogla.org and Kia Muukkonen k.muukkonen@gogla.org by latest 5PM CET on October 30th, 2020
3. With a title "ECOWAS_Regional_Exemptions – application pack by [name of applicant]"

Any questions to this ToR must be submitted:

1. In the English language
2. To Laura Fortes at l.fortes@gogla.org and Kia Muukkonen k.muukkonen@gogla.org by latest 5PM CET on October 23rd, 2020
3. With a title "Regional_Exemptions – question by [name of applicant]"

Applications for other TORs of this series must be submitted:

1. In the English language, and valid for a minimum period of 120 days.
2. To Laura Fortes at l.fortes@gogla.org and Kia Muukkonen k.muukkonen@gogla.org by latest 5PM CET on October 23rd, 2020 for EAC and on October 30th, 2020 for SADC.
3. With a title "Joint proposal_ Regional_Exemptions – application pack for [name of regions] from [name of applicant]"