

Terms of Reference – Monitoring & Learning Consultancy

Context and Rationale

In 2022, the Aeonian Foundation brought together five partners with the aim to improve educational outcomes for students in Madagascar through the provision of affordable, efficient and safe solar lighting and charging through a Light Library model, available to students at primary (and in some cases secondary) schools.

Under the banner of Solar United Madagascar (SUM), Money for Madagascar (MfM), Feedback Madagascar (FBM) and SEED Madagascar (SEED) started working with Jiro-Ve, a Malagasy social enterprise providing affordable energy access solutions through rental models, implementing Light Libraries in 20 schools and testing tablets/projectors to support digital learning.

SolarAid (SA), an international NGO focusing on last-mile energy access for homes, schools and health centres in Africa, has played a supporting and advisory role throughout the pilot phase. SA undertook an energy access market study, co-created a shared monitoring and learning framework and is coordinating the programme across partners.

Building on the learning and the emerging positive impact in the pilot communities, all partners committed to scaling the approach in a second phase, starting September 2023 over a two-year period, installing initially 40 Light Libraries and digital learning trials in 35 schools.

The programme is evolving, with all partners and the donor collaborating closely to iterate, learn and develop a sustainable (social) business model.

Starting as soon as possible, the consortium seeks a consultant able to **provide strategic and operational Monitoring and Learning (M&L) expertise at different points of time during the course of the 2-year programme.**

The programme requires timely management information as well as medium-to longer term impact data. Working across a consortium of partners robust and relevant quantitative and qualitative data gathering is critical to assess the potential to scale the programme.

Responsibilities

1. Review the existing M&L framework in terms of
 - appropriateness/relevance of metrics and
 - robustness of methodologies, approaches and tools for quantitative and qualitative data collection
2. Work alongside partners, and lead on building appropriate digital data collection platform (suggested use of Kobo Toolbox)
3. Lead on translation and communication of technical information/evidence/M&L findings into audience appropriate formats, for internal and external dissemination to inform programme development.
4. Review and advise on M&L capacity and resource needs of the consortium.
5. Develop and deliver trainings to partners.
6. Integrate data needs of in-depth energy access research (*Leave-no-one behind*) in a sample of communities (exact number to be confirmed).
7. Support the integration of business model data needs into M&L processes and systems.

Whilst a significant part of the work can be undertaken remotely, it is essential that time be spent with partners in their respective geographies in Madagascar, to test, assess, train and embed approaches and systems. SUM will cover actual expenses for all associated costs (flights, visas, insurance, accommodation etc.)

The consultant/s is/are expected to collaborate closely with all implementation partners reporting to the programme coordinator. The contractual relationship will be with SolarAid.

Application process and timeframe

Expressions of interest are requested as soon as possible, as interviewing will be undertaken on a rolling basis. Interested individuals or parties are requested to email astrid.walkerbourne@solar-aid.org with

- A cover letter providing evidenced experience pertinent to the TORs
- CV(s) of personnel suggested to undertake the assignment
- A brief outline of steps to be undertaken to respond to the TORs
- An estimate of days/fees for the proposed work (including expenses)
- An indication of availability over the period September to March 2024

Areas 1, 2, 3 and 4 of the above TORs are required at the outset of the programme and it is estimated that a minimum of 3 up to 6 weeks of time are needed starting as soon as possible after the beginning of September 2023.

Following selection process and induction a more detailed joint plan of work will be co-created between the M&L consultant/s with the programme coordinator and partners.

Skills, Knowledge and Experience

SUM is open to consider applications of a small team, i.e. two to three people undertaking the work jointly.

- Degree in International Development, Research Methods, Statistics, or related field and/or significant professional experience in the field of strategic and operational Monitoring and Learning
- Experience in the design, refinement, development and implementation of M&L frameworks for international development programmes
- Experience of participatory approaches to M&L
- Experience leading MEL-related capacity-building and cross-learning initiatives.
- Demonstrable experience of coordinating and undertaking data collection and analysis, for both qualitative and quantitative data, including proficiency in Excel.
- Experience managing, designing and uploading forms on data collection platforms, such as Kobo, Open Data Kit, or SurveyCTO.
- Strong ability and desire to work independently and within teams from different economic and cultural backgrounds and across multiple language barriers, and to build capacity across cultures.
- Strong ability to provide leadership and mentorship to partners
- Ability to work to deadlines in an organised manner and to a high standard
- A flexible and patient attitude, with excellent problem-solving skills
- Excellent communication skills, including a sound ability to adapt material for different audiences
- Fluency in English and French, knowledge of Malagasy is desirable especially for the operationalisation aspect of the consultancy
- Ensure all of SolarAid's policies and procedures are adhered to