



# ACA

## ASSOCIATION CONSEIL POUR L'ACTION

*(Appui au Développement)*

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### **Request for Application**

#### **Off-grid Regional Energy Advisor (OEA)**

Association Conseil pour l'Action (ACA) is a not-for-profit organization that serves as the Technical Partner of the United States African Development Foundation (USADF) in Senegal. ACA seeks an Off-grid Regional Energy Advisor to assist USADF in fulfilling its energy portfolio oversight and project management responsibilities of off-grid energy grant agreements in Africa.

USADF's goal is to increase access to energy and create pathways to economic prosperity in the communities it serves. Through the Off-Grid Energy Challenge, USADF has made seed capital grants to over 100 small and medium enterprises that are developing off-grid energy solutions to meet the needs of rural communities. Many of these enterprises are seeking to expand and replicate their off-grid energy businesses in financially sustainable and profitable ways. These enterprises often need business planning support for expansion as well as outside investment beyond the period of the grant. In addition, the complexity and size of these projects often requires ongoing technical support and monitoring to ensure successful implementation and long-term sustainability. The overall objective of this position is to assist USADF to find and evaluate off-grid energy opportunities, support the due diligence of potential opportunities, and support portfolio off-grid enterprises to be investment ready to secure follow on financing for their business and projects. This will be done by this position working with the enterprises to prepare them to submit proposals to financial institutions (for commercial, pre-commercial and grant financing, where appropriate) to secure funding for expansion and replication.

The purpose of this position is to best support USADF energy grantee enterprises to develop and refine their expansion plans and to support them to become "investment ready" to attract additional outside financing. The ultimate objective is for the enterprises to secure the capital needed to expand and replicate their systems in a profitable and financially sustainable way to deliver benefits (including but not exclusive to electrical connections) to grassroots communities.

This is a West African position and will be based in Senegal and will cover the USADF energy portfolio programs for the West Africa region.

#### **SCOPE OF WORK**

##### **The OEA shall perform the following:**

Project Identification, Due Diligence and Pipeline Development (35%): The OEA shall source and identify potential off-grid energy opportunities, support and document the receipt of grant applications, conduct the initial screening and sorting of applications, and present candidate applications to the Off-grid Energy Lead (OEL). In accordance with OEL instructions, the OEA conducts site visits and prepares site

visit reports of select applications. The OEA shall assist with the collection, completion, and/or verification of due diligence information relating to a grant application including monitoring and reporting applicable local policies that may affect project execution or completion. The OEA is responsible for maintaining correspondence with all off-grid energy applicants on the status of grant applications. Under the direction of the OEL, the OEA shall orient grantees to the USADF grant agreement. The OEA may also be asked to conduct outreach activities to publicize USADF's country program and encourage groups to apply.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Project Support (30%): The OEA shall conduct site visits to gather observations and grantee feedback and report to the OEL on 1) the quality of the financial management systems implemented by the grantee, including any potential for waste, fraud, or abuse of grant funds; 2) the quality and technical capability of grantee in execution and implementation of project, and 3) the effectiveness of the in-country partner's non-technical support of grantees. The OEA shall conduct at least one site visit to every grantee at least once every two years, or as determined by an annual monitoring plan established with the OEL. The OEA shall provide a site visit report for each grantee site visit. In special cases the site visit may also include remediation activities as directed by the OEL. The OEA shall assist grantees with identifying challenges and provide support for troubleshooting and problem-solving. The OEA is expected to be familiar with the status of grantees by reviewing grantee quarterly reports and grantee disbursement requests on a timely basis.

Post-Grant Monitoring & Reporting, and Follow-on Financing (35%): The OEA shall assist with final financial reconciliations, draft grant programmatic close-out reports, and provide other services in support of energy related grant audit follow up and grant close-out activities. The OEA shall also maintain contact information on expired energy grantees for at least three years after grant expiration and collect and report post-grant information on grantee activities and performance as directed by the OEL. The OEA shall conduct an overview of potential funding sources and opportunities – learning about their due diligence process, key underwriting criteria, investment parameters – and advise grantees on applicable funding opportunities. The OEA shall work with grantees, country partner and other USADF staff in supporting the grantees to reach “investor readiness” and be able to receive follow-on finance.

## **MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS**

The Candidate shall have the following minimum qualifications:

- Citizen of a country in sub-Saharan Africa.
- A bachelor's degree from an accredited university in business administration, management, engineering, finance, accounting, sustainability, economics, or a related field.
- Minimum five years of professional experience in business development, engineering, finance, energy development (including renewable energy), investment banking, auditing, business or energy consulting, monitoring and evaluation, and/or management of international development programs in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Experience in energy project development and finance is preferred including sourcing and securing financing for energy projects.
- Experience working with micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), marginalized groups and/or community-based enterprises.
- Experience managing client relationships, especially in grants management, banking, business development, or international development context.
- Experience with financial management/accounting, financial analysis and modeling, project finance, development finance, and preparation of financial reports.

- Experience originating, executing, and implementing energy projects in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Experience auditing, monitoring, or evaluating international development programs.
- High level of fluency in spoken and written English and French is required.
- Willingness to travel extensively throughout West and Central Africa.
- High level of motivation, personal commitment, and ethical standards.
- Existing and extensive network of professional contacts in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Demonstrated ability to operate independently in high visibility, high-pressure environments and operate in complex office environment, emergency, and/or political crisis situations with minimal supervision.
- Knowledge of community needs assessment, mobilization, community enterprise participatory development, and/or monitoring the implementation of an assistance activity under a grant or cooperative agreement.
- Knowledge and experience in working with Renewable Energy Enterprises will be an added advantage.

### **PREFERRED SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE**

- Experience working with international donors.
- Experience with grant management or commercial/micro lending.
- Knowledge of and commitment to USADF mission and priorities.
- Knowledge or experience with community needs assessments.
- Experience with participatory development methods.

### **HOW TO APPLY**

To apply for this position, send an e-mail attaching a cover letter (letter of intent), your resume (CV) and three references (with name and contact info) to [applications@aca.sn](mailto:applications@aca.sn) with the email subject: “Response to the solicitation for REA3 and the applicant’s name.”

### **DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION:**

Candidates must submit their applications no later than April 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

### **About U.S. African Development Foundation**

United States African Development Foundation (USADF) is the independent federal government agency focused on community-led development at the grassroots level in Africa. USADF was established to support African-designed and -driven solutions that address grassroots economic and social problems. USADF is strategically focused on (1) improving the operational efficiency and effectiveness of the Agency, (2) being the economic development partner of choice for corporations, countries, and communities, and (3) measuring and increasing programmatic impact in Africa.

USADF invests directly in communities, by providing seed capital and access to technical assistance to agricultural, off-grid energy, and youth-led enterprises. In its \$57M portfolio, USADF supports and invests in African-designed and -managed enterprises and works to improve lives and livelihoods in poor and vulnerable communities in Africa. With an innovative grants program in 20 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, the USADF team is outcome-oriented, evidence-based, and committed to public service. The grants help organizations create tangible benefits such as increasing or sustaining the number of jobs in a community, improving income levels, and addressing social development needs.

### **About Association Conseil pour l'Action (ACA)**

ACA is a Senegalese NGO created to support the development of African organizations engaged in the production of goods and services highly valued by grassroots organizations.

As USADF's technical partner, ACA helps Senegalese youth, women and agricultural producer organizations, to access and make the most of the various types of USADF funding. The support offered by ACA ranges from the identification of needs to the implementation of development actions, collegially designed by the stakeholders of each project.

Its partnership with USADF is helping to strengthen the autonomy and viability of community development organizations that provide technical assistance and support to grassroots groups. To this end, ACA seeks to establish linkages with Senegalese government agencies, as well as with other financial partners and the local private sector, to support sustainable grassroots development.