



ECOWAS Certification for Sustainable Energy Skills (ECSES)

Terms of Reference for

Members of the Technical Committee of the Regional Certification Scheme

Version 28.6.2018



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ECOWAS CENTRE FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY
CENTRO PARA AS ENERGIAS RENOVÁVEIS E EFICIÊNCIA ENERGÉTICA DA CEDEAO
CENTRE POUR LES ENERGIES RENOUVELABLES ET L'EFFICACITÉ ENERGÉTIQUE DE LA CEDEAO



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1. Introduction

The ECOWAS Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE) legally instituted through the ECOWAS Council of Ministers' adoption of Regulation C/REG.23/11/08 is mandated to mainstream Renewable Energy (RE) and Energy Efficiency (EE) of ECOWAS Vision 2020 into its regional activities and policies. Also in fulfillment of the ECOWAS Renewable Energy Policy, as per the 43rd ordinary session of the authority of heads of states of government, supplementary ACT A/SA.3/07/1, ECREEE is also to enable harmonization of among other things to harmonise tax and duty policies and common standards and regional quality labelling for equipment and systems as well as the certification of skills.

The certification of skills is considered essential for the success of the RE and EE market and future projects in the West African States because certification gives the reassurance that technicians and professionals have the competencies and capacities required to complete an installation or a job safely and effectively. More specifically, the certification is a way to promote the quality and safety of RE and EE systems. In order to achieve this quality assurance at various levels of the value chain, stakeholders put emphasis on the establishment and enforcement of product standards. However, high-quality products that will enter the region will only provide the desired services if systems are designed, installed and maintained by highly qualified professionals.

As such, ECREEE in cooperation with the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) has established a Regional Certification Scheme to certify technicians and professionals of RE and EE based on the Job-Task-Analysis (JTA) that was developed by stakeholders and recognized by all member states of ECOWAS. The Regional Certification Scheme is a voluntary scheme that is initially focusing on certifying the competencies and skills of off-grid PV systems technicians but will gradually cover other RE and EE professions.

Candidates that want to acquire these skills must meet all the requirements set by the Regional Certification System. These competencies will be assessed through regional examinations which will be hosted by Partner Examination Centres in each member state. Registered candidates that will pass these examinations will receive a regional certificate that is recognised by the member states of ECOWAS. The added value of this voluntary regional certification scheme as compared to the national certification schemes that are being established in some countries is that it will be recognized by all ECOWAS member states. ECREEE will also seek ISO accreditations, which is expected to strengthen the reputation of the scheme.

The first phase of the program started with the development of the Job Task Analysis (JTA)¹ for technicians of off-grid solar PV systems. The JTA was presented to stakeholders from seven UEMOA member states² in a workshop held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso by IRENA and the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) in April 2015. A second workshop was

¹ JTA defines core knowledge areas, critical work functions, and/or skills for solar photovoltaic technicians.

² The countries represented at the workshop in April 2015: Benin, Burkina-Faso, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo.

organized in July 2015 to present the draft JTA to representatives of the remaining ECOWAS member states³ and to gain their commitment for the regional programme. These two workshops marked the start of national consultation processes with solar PV experts from all ECOWAS member states to review the content of the JTA. The results of these consultations were then integrated into the final French and English versions of the JTA for off-grid solar PV systems which were validated at a regional workshop with all 15 ECOWAS member states held in Praia, Cabo Verde in December 2015 and later translated to Portuguese. During this workshop ECREEE confirmed its willingness to serve as the Regional Certification Body (RCB). The participants from the ECOWAS member states also discussed the structure and functioning of the regional certification scheme and suggested candidates for the Technical Committee (TC) with representatives from each of the 15 ECOWAS member states. This TC will serve as an advisory group to the RCB and be consulted at key stages of the implementation and further development of the RCS. After an analysis of the profiles and qualifications of these candidates, ECREEE concluded the formation of the TC in November 2017.

In 2018, ECREEE has reached the stage where the RCS became operational in the 15 ECOWAS countries. At this stage, the views and opinions of the TC members representing these countries is need for the progress of programme. Participating in the Committee is an essential voluntary assistance to ECREEE that aims at delivering meaningful and respected skills certification in the region. This document explains how the TC is expected to help further the RCS's mission in the region.

2. Objectives

The overall objectives of the Technical Committee of the RCS are to

- (1) assist ECREEE in promoting the regional certification scheme;
- (2) serve as a channel of information between national stakeholders in the home countries of the TC members and ECREEE;
- (3) provide advice to ECREEE on the design, rules, procedures and instruments of the RCS.

3. Voluntary Activities of the Technical Committee Members

The Technical Committee members will support ECREEE free of charge in undertaking the following activities to help achieve the objectives of the regional certification scheme:

3.1 Participate in the review process of relevant documents such as:

- the Regional Certification Guidelines which describe among others the certification process, the selection criteria for additional training institutions as well as the assessment and examination framework. On a case-by-case basis this may also require consultations with national stakeholders. Inputs are expected to be provided remotely or during physical meetings.
- The Job Task Analysis for another regional certificate for advanced solar PV skills and other RE and EE professions as needed.

³ The countries present at the workshop in July 2015: Cape Verde, Ghana, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Gambia

- 3.2 Inform national stakeholders (potential solar PV technicians, training institutions, government representatives, solar companies) about the details and benefits of the certification program.
- 3.3 Assist ECREEE in developing and updating the country strategy for the implementation of the RCS in the respective home country of the TC member by providing advice e.g. on institutions that could be encouraged to participate as TIs or examination bodies, on the coordination with government institutions and other potential cooperation partners.
- 3.4 Submit recommendations to the certification body via ECREEE's certification email at certification@ecreee.org for the enhancement of the programme.