

Request for proposals

Independent evaluation services for the India energy portfolio

Issuing organization: Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet, India office

Release date: [September 18th, 2026]

The Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet, along with its partners in the Livelihood Empowerment and Action Platform (LEAP), aims to provide dependable, clean power that cuts carbon emissions and improves the livelihoods of millions of people across India by 2030. The Alliance is working toward the goal of improving the lives of more than 300 million people living with unreliable energy and accelerating India's ambition to deploy 500GW of renewable energy by 2030. To achieve these goals and transform India's energy landscape, the Alliance builds public-private-philanthropic partnerships across three interconnected solutions in multiple states. Delivered across a critical mass of states, and paired with high-quality knowledge sharing and communications, these solutions can unlock sustained adoption nationally.

1. Objective

The Global Energy Alliance is seeking proposals from qualified research organizations and evaluation firms to evaluate three distinct clean energy initiatives in India. Rather than prescribing final methodologies, we invite firms to propose the most rigorous, context-appropriate evaluation designs based on the program parameters set out in Section 2 and in Annexes A to C.

Scope of proposals

Bidders may propose against any part of this portfolio. Four combinations are open:

- A single evaluation stream in a single state;
- A single evaluation stream across all the states in which it operates;
- All evaluation streams operating in a single state; or
- The full portfolio.

Where a state hosts more than one stream, we welcome proposals that cover those streams together. All three streams operate in Odisha, and two of the three operate in Bihar and in Uttar Pradesh. Sharing field supervision, travel and survey management across streams in the same geography can lower cost without weakening design, and we will assess proposals on that basis. Bidders who wish to submit for a single stream in a single state are equally welcome to do so, and we will not score partial proposals down for their scope.

The Alliance may award more than one contract. Section 5 sets out how to price each combination.

Standard of evidence

The Alliance is commissioning these evaluations to support credible causal claims about what its support has changed. Proposals should reflect that standard.

Where a proposal makes a causal claim, the design must include a credible comparison group. Matched comparison, phased or randomized rollout, and interrupted time series with a comparison series are all acceptable, and this list is not exhaustive. Designs that rest on before-and-after comparison alone, or on cross-sectional description of program participants alone, will not be accepted as the basis for a causal claim. Bidders should state plainly what the counterfactual is, how it is constructed, and what would threaten it.

Where a credible counterfactual is not feasible for a particular question, say so, and propose contribution analysis or a process evaluation instead. A well-argued contribution claim is more useful to us than an attribution claim the design cannot support, and overstating what a design can deliver will count against a proposal.

Proposals should specify the sample size and statistical power available for each primary outcome. For qualitative and process components, set out the sampling logic and the point at which the evidence would be considered sufficient.

Cross-cutting outcomes

Each stream in Section 2 names the outcomes that matter most for that program. Alongside those, we encourage bidders to include a set of outcomes that can be compared across streams and with evaluations that the Alliance's partners commission elsewhere, including net income of the participating enterprise or farm; the household's ability to absorb and recover from shocks; women's participation in and control over the solution and the income it generates; and participants' own assessment of the solution. The Alliance can advise on outcome definitions and survey modules during inception so that results remain comparable. Where a bidder judges that one does not fit the stream or the design, say so and explain why.

2. The three evaluations

Stream 1: Micro enterprise solarization (Bihar, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh)

The program: *Installs decentralized solar for small rural productive-use enterprises through a continuous, village-by-village rolling enrollment system managed on a digital intake platform.*

This program delivers decentralized solar to small rural enterprises through a localized, rolling delivery model. It begins with primary market research and stakeholder surveys to identify technical and financial adoption gaps, followed by the appointment of a specialist project management unit (PMU) and the selection of target geographies. To manage operations and maintain transparency, the program deploys dedicated web dashboards and mobile applications. Field execution rests on localized stakeholder onboarding, in which the PMU conducts door-to-door awareness visits, focus group discussions and lead generation to enroll local channel partners, regional non-banking financial companies and microfinance institutions. Online and offline training is provided to channel partners, financiers and manufacturers throughout. As deployment moves forward, the PMU provides field-level installation support and handles customer queries on system quality and financing. Each implementation cycle concludes with sample-based quality assurance assessments that verify the physical performance and the benefits of the installed solar photovoltaic systems.

Key partners in this work: Program Management Units (PMUs), NBFCs/ Financial Institutions, State level Nodal agencies

Implementation scope, scale and timeline: see Annex A.

Bidders should propose: the strongest available approach to measuring impacts on enterprise revenue, profit, operating hours and climate resilience, using digital intake data as a baseline or fielding a baseline, and collecting qualitative data where it adds explanatory value.

Stream 2: PM-KUSUM feeder solarization (Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan)

The program: *Accelerates agricultural feeder solarization under the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan (PM-KUSUM) scheme, through technical, programmatic, regulatory and implementation support to state energy departments and distribution companies.*

The Global Energy Alliance delivers this support through a dedicated project management unit. The work begins with program planning, roadmap development and data-driven prioritization of feeders based on energy demand and agricultural load profiles. The Alliance then facilitates community outreach and stakeholder coordination to develop viable land leasing models near planned substations. For procurement, the unit structures the entire tendering lifecycle, drafting solicitations, technical specifications and model agreements, and managing pre-bid queries, bid evaluation and contract awards. Once a project is live, the team provides policy advisory support, coordinates with developers and utilities to execute power purchase agreements, and delivers stakeholder training. Implementation progress, capacity forecasting and bottleneck identification are managed through an 18-stage digital dashboard. The cycle closes with impact assessment, documentation of best practice, and planning for scale-up.

The Alliance's footprint and the baseline trend in deployment vary sharply across the three states, which bidders should take into account when constructing comparison groups.

The Alliance also manages the scheme portal and can provide details on installed capacity over time, sites/feeder details, contact details for developers, DISCOM program lead information, and operational date for feeder level installations.

Key partners in this work: DISCOMs, Program Management Units (PMUs)

Implementation scope, scale and timeline: see Annex B.

Bidders should propose: how best to tackle the dual challenge of evaluating institutional deployment speed while capturing ground-level changes in farmer incomes and water use. A proposal may address one or both, and should be explicit about which. Additionally, the solarized feeder is the natural sampling unit, with farmers and enterprises served by it as respondents; bidders should propose how to cover both.

Stream 3: Cluster-led solarization of small and medium enterprises (Maharashtra, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh)

The program: *A 15-step market aggregation and tendering framework spanning market research, policy readiness, digital platform development, field-level demand aggregation, standard tender and power purchase agreement drafting, and ongoing billing and collection oversight.*

This model uses centralized tendering and market aggregation to drive solar adoption among clusters of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) under a renewable energy service company (RESCO) model. The sequence opens with primary and secondary market research, gap assessment, and a review of state interconnection and metering frameworks. Findings are validated through structured surveys and consultations with SME owners, industry associations and government representatives. The Alliance then appoints a specialist project management unit and partners with a government anchor institution to host the program. Rollout runs on a custom web and mobile platform that aggregates field-level demand through door-to-door surveys and onboards prospective RESCOs. The unit drafts the tender documents, including eligibility criteria, fee structures, payment security mechanisms and a standard power purchase agreement, and routes them through government administrative approval. During bidding, the unit runs pre-bid meetings, updates documents, supports bid evaluation, drafts the notice to proceed and assigns aggregated SME leads to the winning RESCOs. After award, the program turns to stakeholder training, portal-based installation tracking, and oversight of billing, metering and collection.

Key partners in this work: State level government entities, PMUs, PSM (Payment Security Mechanism) facility management unit

Implementation scope, scale and timeline: see Annex C.

Bidders should propose: this stream is the least advanced of the three, which leaves the most room to shape the evaluation and the rollout together. We invite proposals on two components.

1. **An impact evaluation** of solarization on SME outcomes, including energy cost and reliability, production, revenue and employment. Clusters are onboarded in sequence; sequencing is not controllable, but some clusters onboard later for reasons unrelated to the program and can serve as a pipeline comparison. Bidders should state what sequencing their design would require and how much of it is essential. Bidders may also propose SMEs outside targeted clusters as a comparison group
2. **A process evaluation** of the 15-step implementation lifecycle, assessing implementation fidelity, bottlenecks, and the potential to replicate the model across clusters and states.

Bidders may propose either component or both. Where both are proposed, indicate the cost of each separately in the budget narrative so that we can select between them.

3. Core deliverables

1. **Inception report and pre-analysis plan.** Final sample sizes, statistical power calculations, survey instruments and evaluation protocols, agreed before field launch.
2. **Midline operational briefings.** Short progress reports tracking implementation fidelity and field data collection challenges, and a midline report where the design includes one.

3. **Final evaluation report and public goods package.** A publication-grade report, paired with cleaned and anonymized datasets and annotated analysis files, such as Stata do-files or R code, sufficient for a third party to reproduce every result.

4. Proposal structure and page limits

Proposals must follow the structure and page allocations below. Excess pages will not be evaluated.

Component	Page limit	Must include
Technical approach and methodology	10 pages	Proposed evaluation designs, sampling strategy, power calculations and risk mitigation plans for each stream and state bid on.
Personnel and capacity	5 pages	Short biographies of key personnel, team structure, institutional capacity, and past performance on three relevant projects with references.
Financial proposal	No limit	The completed pricing matrix at Exhibit 1 and a one-page budget narrative. See Section 5.

Where a bidder proposes more than one stream or state, the technical approach must stand on its own for each combination bid on, within the same page limit.

5. Financial proposal requirements

Bidders must submit an itemized financial breakdown for each component they bid on, alongside a consolidated rate if bidding on the entire portfolio. Include staff costs, survey costs and all other direct costs. Every submission must include the pricing matrix at Exhibit 1 and a one-page budget narrative explaining the main cost drivers, such as fieldwork days, travel and data costs, and how they follow from the proposed methodology.

Complete the matrix for every combination you bid on, and leave blank any cell you are not bidding on. Quote all costs in Indian rupees and state whether the figures include applicable taxes.

Row totals give the cost of one stream across all the states in which it operates. Column totals give the cost of all streams operating in one state. Where you bid on more than one cell, a total may fall below the sum of the cells it covers if you expect to share field, supervision or travel costs. Explain any such saving in the budget narrative.

Exhibit 1: Pricing matrix

Evaluation stream	Bihar	Maharashtra	Odisha	Rajasthan	Uttar Pradesh	All states
Stream 1: Micro enterprise solarization	[Insert cost]	—	[Insert cost]	—	[Insert cost]	[Insert cost]
Stream 2: PM-KUSUM feeder solarization	—	[Insert cost]	[Insert cost]	[Insert cost]	—	[Insert cost]

Evaluation stream	Bihar	Maharashtra	Odisha	Rajasthan	Uttar Pradesh	All states
Stream 3: Cluster-led SME solarization		[Insert cost]	[Insert cost]	—	[Insert cost]	[Insert cost]
All streams	[Insert cost]	[Insert cost]	[Insert cost]	[Insert cost]	[Insert cost]	[Insert cost]

Note: — = a state in which that stream does not operate. The bottom right cell is the cost estimate for the full portfolio.

6. Evaluation criteria

Proposals will be scored out of 100 points against the following weights:

Criterion	Weight	What we are looking for
Technical approach and methodology	45%	Appropriateness and rigor of the proposed designs for the selected streams, credibility of the counterfactual, and realism about what the design can and cannot show.
Personnel and capability	25%	Competencies of the evaluation team, experience managing field surveys or utility datasets in India, and institutional capacity to deliver at this scale.
Budget and cost efficiency	30%	Value for money, realistic budgeting for field activities, and savings demonstrated where more than one stream or state is bid together.

7. Submission guidelines

Proposals should be brief and should focus on the recommended methodology, risk mitigation for field data collection, and past performance running complex evaluations in India's energy or agricultural sectors.

Key dates

Milestone	Date
Request for proposals released	18 th September 2026
Deadline for written questions from bidders	23 rd September 2026
Alliance responses circulated to all bidders	29 th September 2026
Proposal submission deadline	5 th October
Review and shortlisting	6 th and 13 th October
Award notification	18 th October
Contract start and expected period of performance	1 st November; Suggested guidance of 12 months - could vary depending on evaluation design across workstreams

How to submit

Submit the technical and financial proposals as two separate files in portable document format to SM-India-Operations@energyalliance.org, by the deadline above. Name each file [organization name] technical and [organization name] financial. Proposals received after the deadline will not be considered.

Direct all questions in writing to SM-India-Operations@energyalliance.org by the question deadline above. We will circulate a consolidated set of questions and answers to every organization that has registered an interest.

Who may bid

We invite proposals from research organizations, evaluation firms and consortia with demonstrated experience running field-based evaluations in India.

8. Terms applying to the selected evaluator

Research ethics and consent. The selected evaluator is responsible for securing approval from a recognized institutional review board before data collection begins, and for obtaining informed consent from every respondent. Set out the intended approval route and its timeline in the inception report.

Data protection, ownership and publication. Personal data must be handled in line with the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023. Data collected under this contract, together with cleaned and anonymized datasets and analysis code, belongs to the Global Energy Alliance. The Alliance intends to publish evaluation reports and to release anonymized datasets as public goods. Bidders should note any restriction on publication they would seek.

Conflict of interest. Bidders must disclose any current or recent commercial, advisory or implementation relationship with the Global Energy Alliance, the project management units, participating government agencies, or the service companies and developers associated with these programs. A disclosed relationship does not by itself disqualify a bidder; however, an undisclosed one will.

Detailed terms will be set out in the contract.

Annex A. Stream 1: Micro enterprise solarization

Implementation steps

1. **Market research and gap assessment**

- Conduct primary research to understand the overall market.
- Identify technical, financial and knowledge gaps in decentralized renewable energy adoption.
- Validate those gaps through a market survey with stakeholders.

2. **Appointment of the project management unit**

- Appoint the unit through the Global Energy Alliance procurement process.

3. **Geography selection**

- Identify the geography offering the greatest scope for on-the-ground implementation and deeper impact.

4. **Development of digital tools**

- Develop a mobile application and web dashboard for project monitoring, execution and transparency.

5. **Stakeholder coordination and onboarding**

- Reconfirm the target geography at field level.
- Run awareness and lead generation through door-to-door visits, focus group discussions, and meetings with channel partners and financiers.
- Reach out to and enroll local channel partners.
- Onboard non-banking financial companies and microfinance institutions and their regional representatives.

6. **Training, ongoing**

- Conduct online and offline training for channel partners, financiers, the project management unit and equipment manufacturers, covering the digital tools and program processes.

7. **Installation support and customer engagement**

- Support channel partners during installation and with customer queries.
- Resolve customer queries on savings, financing and quality, and build customer understanding of solar photovoltaic systems.

8. **Quality assurance**

- Assess installation quality and performance on a sample basis, to confirm the financial and other benefits reaching the enterprise.

Implementation scale

The unit of implementation is the individual micro enterprise. Systems are rated as 10 kilowatts on average.

State	Enterprises reached to date [July 2026]	Target by 2027
Bihar	1140	7500
Odisha	400	5000
Uttar Pradesh	1160	7500
Total	About 2,700 enterprises	About 20,000 enterprises

Timeline

Micro Enterprise solarization started from May 2023 in Uttar Pradesh followed by Bihar and Odisha

Annex B. Stream 2: PM-KUSUM feeder solarization

The Global Energy Alliance supports the state nodal agency step by step, through the activities below.

Implementation steps

1. **Program planning and roadmap development.** Develop the overall implementation strategy and program management framework for agricultural feeder solarization.
2. **Prioritization of agricultural feeders.** Prioritize suitable feeders against parameters covering energy demand, agricultural load profile and implementation feasibility.
3. **Land identification and leasing facilitation.** Conduct community outreach near substations where a solar plant is planned, and assist the state energy department to develop viable land leasing models and stakeholder coordination mechanisms.
4. **Preparation of procurement documents.** Support the preparation of solicitations, bid documents, technical specifications, evaluation criteria, model agreements and other procurement documents aligned with national and state guidelines.
5. **Tendering and bid process management.** Run pre-bid meetings, respond to bidder queries, support technical and financial bid evaluation, prepare evaluation reports, and facilitate contract award.
6. **Policy and regulatory support.** Provide technical advisory support on scheme guidelines, tariff frameworks, regulatory approvals and other policy matters needed for implementation.
7. **Developer engagement and project facilitation.** Coordinate among the state energy department, distribution companies, project developers, engineering contractors and other stakeholders to secure timely execution, including dedicated staff placed at the state energy department.
8. **Support for power purchase agreements.** Facilitate execution of power purchase agreements and coordination with the relevant utilities and developers.
9. **Digital dashboard for monitoring implementation.** Provide project monitoring dashboards that track implementation progress in real time across 18 stages, enabling prompt corrective action and accurate forecasting of new capacity additions in a given period.
10. **Capacity building, ongoing.** Organize capacity-building programs, technical workshops and training, online and offline, for all stakeholders on the digital platform and program processes.
11. **Project monitoring and implementation support.** Track progress, identify bottlenecks, recommend corrective action, and support timely commissioning.
12. **Impact assessment and knowledge management.** Undertake impact assessment and economic analysis, document implementation experience, prepare case studies, and disseminate best practice to support evidence-based scale-up.

13. **Program scale-up.** Support the state energy department to identify further feeder solarization opportunities, engage private sector partners, and scale decentralized renewable energy programs.

Implementation scale

Across the three states, the program is expected to cover about 4000 sites, supporting some 14 million connections, including roughly 4 million farmers and 270,000 enterprises.

State	Sites solarized to date [July 2026]	Connections to date	Farmers to date	Enterprises to date
Maharashtra	24	250k	88k	6k
Odisha	1	2k	700	50
Rajasthan	1900	4.5 million	1.4 million	100k
Total	About 2000	Around 4.5 million	About 1.5 million	Around 100k

State	Sites targeted by 2027	Connections targeted by 2027	Farmers served by 2027	Enterprises served by 2027
Maharashtra	300	3.4 million	1 million	70k
Odisha	50	100k	38k	2k
Rajasthan	4000	10 million	3 million	200k
Total	About 4300	Around 14 million	About 4 million	Around 270k

Timeline

The program started with Rajasthan in September 2023. Maharashtra and Odisha started in Q2 2025

Annex C. Stream 3: Cluster-led solarization of small and medium enterprises

Implementation steps

1. **Primary and secondary market research.** Build an overall understanding of the SME cluster market, covering energy consumption profiles, cluster composition and the existing constraints on solar adoption.
2. **Identification of adoption gaps.** Identify the technical, financial and other gaps restricting solar adoption among SMEs.
3. **Regulatory and policy readiness assessment.** Assess readiness for RESCO-based adoption in the target state or region, including the prevailing framework for net metering, gross metering, net billing and other interconnection policies that shape the tender and the power purchase agreement.
4. **Stakeholder consultation and market survey.** Consult SME owners, industry associations, service companies and government representatives, and run a structured market survey to validate and deepen the understanding of the gaps identified above.
5. **Appointment of the project management unit.** Appoint a unit to manage the program end to end. Technical skills in tendering, solar and service company models, and digital platform management, together with a presence in the target cluster, are the highest-priority selection criteria in the Alliance procurement process.
6. **Government agency partnership.** Engage government agencies to build trust and identify an anchor institution willing to host the tender and own the program. This engagement is foundational, since the anchor institution is critical to the entire tender-led model.
7. **Development of the web and mobile platform.** Develop a platform covering demand aggregation, installation tracking, billing and metering data, and monitoring dashboards for all stakeholders.
8. **Stakeholder coordination, demand aggregation and awareness.** The project management unit leads coordination, customer engagement, service company onboarding and awareness. This covers identifying the cluster geography, engaging government counterparts and formally onboarding the tender-hosting institution, aggregating field-level demand through door-to-door survey and industry association engagement, outreach to prospective service companies, and work with industry associations to build awareness among their members.
9. **Tender drafting.** Draft the tender with the government agency, covering eligibility criteria for bidding service companies, the fees attaching to the tender, the default coverage and payment security mechanism protecting against non-payment risk, and a standard power purchase agreement.
10. **Administrative approval.** Route the drafted tender and associated program documents through the required approval process within the government agency before publication.

11. **Tendering process support.** Support the anchor agency through the tender: arranging the pre-bid meeting, responding to pre-bid queries, updating the tender document, supporting bid evaluation against eligibility and technical and financial criteria, drafting the notice to proceed, finalizing the power purchase agreement between the service company and the SMEs, and assigning aggregated SME leads to awarded companies.
12. **Training of all stakeholders, ongoing.** Train service companies on effective use of the program portal, the government agency on its administrative role within the portal, and unit members and other stakeholders as needed.
13. **Overall program monitoring.** Monitor program activity through the digital platform, tracking installation progress and service company performance against the timelines in the notice to proceed.
14. **Billing, metering and collection services.** Oversee billing, metering and collection under the power purchase agreement, securing accurate metering data capture, timely billing to SME customers, and collection performance tracking that safeguards service company revenue and program sustainability.
15. **Program scale-up.** Use the learning, standardized tender documentation, trained unit capacity and digital platform to replicate the model across further clusters and geographies.

Implementation scale

One cluster corresponds to an industrial area of a district. Across the three states, the program plans 16 clusters supporting more than 5,000 small and medium enterprises.

State	Clusters onboarded to date [July 2026]	Clusters targeted by 2027	Enterprises served by 2027
Maharashtra	6	10	4000
Odisha	-	2	500
Uttar Pradesh	2	4	1000
Total	8	16	Around 5500

Timeline

The first cluster level solarization should happen by Q4 2026 in Maharashtra followed by Uttar Pradesh and Odisha in Q1 2027.