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Press release

26 January 2026

SOGREA Initiative Opens Call for Private Sector Developers to Fast-Track Rural Electrification in Sierra Leone

EUR 24 million grant for a European Union-Denmark-backed programme to scale green mini-grids, cut energy costs and expand access for rural communities in Sierra Leone

Freetown, 26 January 2026: The Salone Off-Grid Renewable Energy Acceleration (SOGREA) Initiative today launched its first Call for Pre-Qualification Applications, inviting private sector companies to develop and upgrade green mini-grids in rural communities across Sierra Leone. The call marks a major step forward in accelerating universal energy access while unlocking new opportunities for renewable energy investors and developers.

Delivered in partnership with the Government of Sierra Leone, SOGREA aims to crowd in private capital to expand clean, reliable electricity to underserved communities, strengthening local economies and supporting climate-resilient development. The announcement was made during a live-streamed event hosted by Sustainable Energy for All (SEforALL) marking the International Day of Clean Energy.

The SOGREA is funded by the European Union and the Government of Denmark and totals EUR 24 million in catalytic funding. The three-year programme is designed to reduce investment risk and boost the commercial viability of rural electrification in Sierra Leone. The initiative provides performance-based capital support to cover a portion of upfront development costs for green mini-grids, with payments released against independently verified milestones.

By bridging the gap between the true cost of electricity supply and what rural households and businesses can afford, SOGREA helps lower tariffs while expanding connections. The approach builds on Sierra Leone's recent mini-grid sector reforms, including progressive regulation and transparent tariff-setting mechanisms that provide long-term certainty for investors.

The Call for Pre-Qualification Applications is open to eligible applicants, who are licensed, for-profit mini-grid developers registered to operate in Sierra Leone, with proven experience operating green mini-grids in Sub-Saharan Africa, the capacity to deliver new projects within 12 months, smart-meter integration capability, compliance with UEF requirements and at least 30% female representation across administrative and operational roles. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis, with Pre-Qualification submissions closing on 9 March 2026. Successfully pre-qualified companies will be invited to submit site-specific proposals for development of new or upgrade of already



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existing green mini-grid projects. Funding decisions will be made on a first-come, first-served basis until available resources are fully allocated.

This performance-based capital support reflects the EU and Denmark's commitment to advancing clean energy access, sustainable investment and climate action in Africa. The initiative is implemented by UNOPS, with its host entity Sustainable Energy for All, in close partnership with the Government of Sierra Leone.

For application guidelines, eligibility criteria, and submission details, please visit the SOGREA webpage: <http://www.universalenergyfacility.org/programme/sogrea> or contact us via: UEF@seforall.org.

QUOTES

Hon. Cyril Arnold Grant, Minister of Energy in Sierra Leone:

"The Ministry of Energy expresses its appreciation to the European Union and the Government of Denmark for the funding support provided, including resources allocated to SOGREA, which will play a critical role in advancing sector reforms and accelerating access to sustainable energy solutions. This partnership reflects our shared commitment to strengthening institutional capacity and delivering lasting benefits to communities nationwide."

Dr Kandeh Yumkella, Chairman of the Presidential Initiative on Climate Change, Renewable Energy and Food Security (PI-CREF):

"This contribution reinforces our collective efforts to accelerate Sierra Leone's energy sector reforms, expand access to reliable and affordable electricity and crowd in private sector investment. By aligning donor resources with national priorities, we are laying the foundation for a resilient, inclusive and sustainable energy system that supports economic growth and social development."

"We value the European Union and Denmark's continued partnership and remain committed to ensuring that these resources deliver measurable, high-impact outcomes for the people of Sierra Leone."

H.E. Jakob Linulf, Ambassador of Denmark to Ghana:

"The Government of Denmark is pleased to support Sierra Leone's energy transition, in line with our shared commitment under the Accelerated Partnership for Renewables in Africa. Access to green energy is vital to the green transition, and essential for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. With affordable, reliable, and sustainable energy through green mini-grids, Sierra Leone can unlock innovation, empower youth, attract investment, and transform its economy."



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H.E. Jacek Jankowski, Ambassador of the European Union to Sierra Leone:

"The investment support provided under SOGREA clearly demonstrates Team Europe's commitment to a green transition. We recognize that successful rural electrification requires more than just funding; it demands a strategic partnership between visionary government leadership and efficient private sector involvement. Through the Global Gateway —the European Union's comprehensive offer to close the development financing gap, we are working to deepen connectivity and sustainable development across Sierra Leone. We are proud to collaborate with the Government of Sierra Leone to provide rural communities with the clean, reliable power essential for socio-economic growth. By de-risking investments and offering tangible incentives through CAPEX support, we have created a scalable model that we believe can serve as a benchmark for the entire region. We invite the private sector to join us in this mission to providing power to communities nationwide, fostering a more resilient and prosperous future for all."

UNOPS Representative: Silvia Gallo, Regional Director for West Africa Multi-Country Office:

"Investing in reliable energy means transforming lives. Through SOGREA, we will bring clean, reliable electricity to households, schools, clinics and small businesses in communities that have waited too long. This initiative demonstrates the lasting social and economic benefits that are possible when governments, development partners and the private sector work together. By mobilizing private investment and strengthening local energy markets, we are expanding electricity access and laying the foundation for long-term economic growth and sustainable development."

Anita Otubu, Senior Director of the Universal Energy Facility, Sustainable Energy for All:

"The Universal Energy Facility (UEF) continues to demonstrate the transformative power of Results-Based Financing to de-risk private investment, accelerate energy access, and support rural economic development. The UEF is proud to be one of the most effective and innovative catalytic finance platforms operating today, having mobilized more than US\$74 million towards energy access projects since 2020."

We deliver measurable, lasting impact through an ecosystem approach – mobilizing public and private capital, strengthening government institutional capacity and enacting progressive policy frameworks that enable communities to reach their full potential. Looking ahead, we aim to deepen collaboration with our global partners and unlock new partnerships as we expand our work across sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, and Asia - ensuring clean energy access for everyone, everywhere."

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Note to Editors

About the SOGREA initiative

The Salone Off-Grid Renewable Energy Acceleration (SOGREA) initiative supports Sierra Leone's transition to clean, affordable, and reliable energy by strengthening governance, scaling investments in mini-grids, and piloting innovative renewable energy solutions.

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About the Ministry of Energy, Government of Sierra Leone

The Ministry's guiding mission is to develop, regulate, and promote a sustainable, reliable, and affordable energy sector that supports national development, drives economic growth, and improves the quality of life for all Sierra Leoneans through transparent governance, effective service delivery, and strategic partnerships.

About PI-CREF

The Presidential Initiative on Climate Change, Renewable Energy and Food Security (PI-CREF) plays a critical role in guiding and coordinating efforts to address the impacts of climate change, catalyse universal access to sustainable and affordable energy, and improve food and nutrition security in the country.



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About the European Union Delegation to Sierra Leone

The European Union and its Member States are committed to supporting Sierra Leone's transition to a sustainable energy future. Through the Development Partnership and the [Multiannual Indicative Programme for 2021-2027](#), the EU focuses on providing access to affordable, reliable, and modern energy services. This initiative aims to drive inclusive economic growth, create decent jobs, and promote the adoption of sustainable energy sources, fostering a green economy across Sierra Leone.

About The Government of Denmark

The Government of Denmark supports Sierra Leone's transition to a sustainable energy future through its development cooperation and in close partnership with the European Union. In line with Denmark's Africa Strategy, Denmark promotes access to affordable, reliable, and renewable energy—particularly through decentralized solutions such as green mini-grids—to drive inclusive economic growth, strengthen livelihoods, and support climate mitigation in line with national priorities and the Accelerated Partnership for Renewables in Africa (APRA).

About UNOPS

UNOPS offers practical solutions across peace and security, humanitarian and development operations. We help the United Nations, governments, and other partners, such as the European Union and its Member States, manage projects and deliver sustainable infrastructure and procurement globally. Read more: www.unops.org.

About The Universal Energy Facility (UEF)

The Universal Energy Facility (UEF), a multi-donor fund managed by Sustainable Energy for All ([SEforALL](#)), was established in 2020 to accelerate and scale up energy access across Sub-Saharan Africa and beyond, in line with SDG7 and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. The UEF provides incentive payments to clean energy companies deploying energy solutions and providing verified end-user electricity connections (via mini-grids and stand-alone solar systems) and clean cooking solutions based on pre-determined service standards. Read more: <https://www.universalenergyfacility.org>.

About SEforALL

Sustainable Energy for All has a global mandate to accelerate progress on the energy transition in emerging and developing countries. Hosted by UNOPS, we work at the intersection of energy, climate and development, partnering with governments and organisations worldwide to end energy poverty, double energy efficiency, significantly expand renewable energy and combat climate change. Read more: <https://www.seforall.org/>