



SIERRA LEONE

Independent Evaluation of SEforALL Projects in Sierra Leone: Government and Stakeholder Engagement / Betmai Hydroelectric Power Project (HPP) (Rockefeller Foundation)



EVALUATION BY:





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Key takeaways from the Independent Evaluation of SEforALL Projects in Sierra Leone: Government and Stakeholder Engagement / Betmai Hydroelectric Power Project

SEforALL ACHIEVED ITS PRIMARY OBJECTIVE(S) BY:



Successfully identifying and building strong relationships with key energy stakeholders from the public and private sector to address challenges in achieving energy access goals through an ecosystem approach; establishing a presence for SEforALL in country and facilitating collaboration within SEforALL.

SEforALL should consider developing an overarching communications and stakeholder engagement strategy and plan for Sierra Leone. This would ensure the continuation of the Government and Stakeholder Engagement activities in support of Sierra Leone’s priorities for green growth, in alignment with SEforALL organizational Theory of Change until 2030.



Effectively obtaining parliamentary ratification of the 27 MW Betmai Hydro-electric Power Plant (HPP) through project coordination, overseeing legal and project management services; this project has the potential to power approximately 500,000 households, with carbon emissions reduction potential of 107,000 tCO2e/year, contribute clearly to SDG7 and SDG13.

SEforALL should consider monitoring the evolution of Betmai HPP through the country manager to identify potential areas for future collaboration or to support a potential future evaluation of its impact.



Providing support that is highly relevant and coherent with national goals and responsive to current challenges in alignment with the local policy framework, as well as clearly aligned with the strategies and goals of both SEforALL and key strategic donors.

SEforALL should consider adopting the development of an annual Sierra Leone Action Plan with concrete support areas or projects to advance SDG7 in Sierra Leone, identified as a result of the engagements conducted and actions implemented under the communications and stakeholder engagement strategy for Sierra Leone.



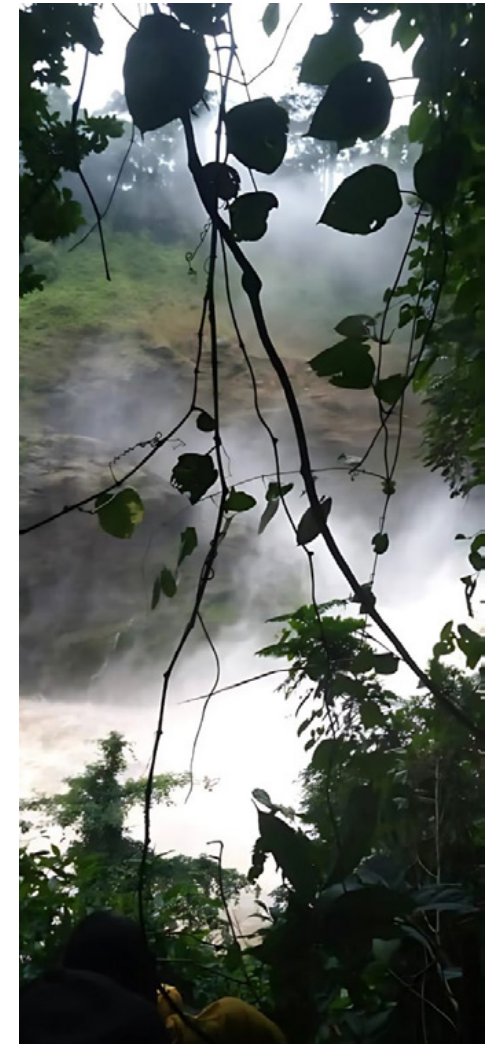
Executive Summary overview of Independent Evaluation of SEforALL Projects in Sierra Leone: Government and Stakeholder Engagement / Betmai Hydroelectric Power Project

CONCLUSIONS

1. The evaluation team found that the achieved results have been satisfactory given the local circumstances and challenges faced. Achievements made are aligned with the expected impact and contribution to SEforALL's organizational Theory of Change as well as with SDG7 and SDG13.
 - The goal of the three workstreams supported by the Rockefeller Foundation grant and the Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet (GEAPP), executed by SEforALL, was to essentially provide support to the country to **address challenges in the energy access sector** by adopting an ecosystem approach.
2. Both the Government and Stakeholder Engagement and Betmai HPP workstreams are highly relevant and coherent for Sierra Leone to advance electrification in the framework of a sustainable, just and equitable energy transition. The interventions have been, and continue to be, pertinent for the country and remain coherent with its priorities and plans.
3. There is opportunity for improving project design to facilitate the monitoring and assessment of actual achievements against the project baseline.
4. Project management has been conducted in a satisfactory and appropriate way, which allowed the project to overcome shortcomings and delays to allow the workstreams to progress towards achieving key results such as government approval and parliamentary ratification of Betmai HPP as well as finding new opportunities for supporting to the Government of Sierra Leone.

LEARNINGS

1. It is important to involve different stakeholders in project implementation from the start and doing it using an approach that adapts to the local scenario. Actively pursuing stakeholder engagement from the beginning, even before a project is designed, is key to the alignment of the future project with beneficiary needs, ensures stakeholders' participation and buy-in, and fosters ownership of the project and its results, streamlining handover processes and giving a solid base for replication and sustainability.
2. Verify that the necessary studies have been completed before the project starts executing its activities. Before the Betmai HPP project had commenced, it should have been fully verified that the necessary external dependencies were completed to avoid delays in execution.
3. Creating awareness, sharing knowledge and communicating about the importance of energy access to drive growth continues to be important to identify areas of action and ensure stakeholders' buy-in and commitment; it is always advantageous to remind stakeholders about the importance of sustainable energy access in relation to the social, environmental and economic benefits it brings



Executive Summary overview of Independent Evaluation of SEforALL Projects in Sierra Leone: Government and Stakeholder Engagement / Betmai Hydroelectric Power Project

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Building on achievements in the Government and Stakeholder Engagement workstream:** SEforALL should consider developing an overarching communications and stakeholder engagement strategy and plan for Sierra Leone. This would ensure the continuation of the Government and Stakeholder Engagement activities in support of Sierra Leone's priorities and in alignment with SEforALL organizational ToC until 2030.
- 2. Planning and coordination:** SEforALL should consider adopting the development of an annual Sierra Leone Action Plan with concrete support areas or projects to advance SDG7 in Sierra Leone. SEforALL has drafted a country strategy document for Sierra Leone that can be taken as a basis.
- 3. Monitoring, evaluation and learning:** SEforALL would benefit from extending the organizational and programmatic ToCs to the project level, so that clear linkages are established across the different intervention levels. SEforALL should consider establishing guidance or templates to ensure consistency in on-the-ground activity implementation across projects. SEforALL would benefit from improving project design and MEL, so clear linkages are established across the different intervention levels (project/workstream – programme – organizational ToC).
- 4. Sustainability of Betmai HPP Workstream support:** SEforALL should consider monitoring the evolution of Betmai HPP through the country manager to identify potential areas for future collaboration or to support a potential future evaluation of its impact.





01

**The Government and
Stakeholder Engagement /
Betmai HPP (Rockefeller
Foundation)**

The Powering Sierra Leone's Hospitals Programme

CONTEXT

Sierra Leone has one of the lowest electricity access rates in the world. Electricity access reaches only 36% of the country's population (April 2024) and the installed generation capacity as of 2024 calculated and presented at the energy sector roundtable by the Ministry of Energy (MoE), is 277 MW. However, operational capacity and availability varies between 111 MW and 165 MW depending on the season.¹

Sierra Leone suffers from high technical commercial and collection losses (close to 40%), poorly maintained grid infrastructure, unreliable supply characterized by long periods without electricity and overreliance on polluting diesel generators.

¹these figures are calculated by the MoE using the Osmosys Software solutions, as per informed by the Country Manager.

Affects people's ability to conduct activities (communicating with others, studying or working) & also negatively affects the quality of basic social services, such as healthcare and education.

SEFORALL

Launched in 2011 by former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, SEforALL aims to advance Sustainable Development Goal 7 (SDG7) by ensuring universal access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy by 2030.

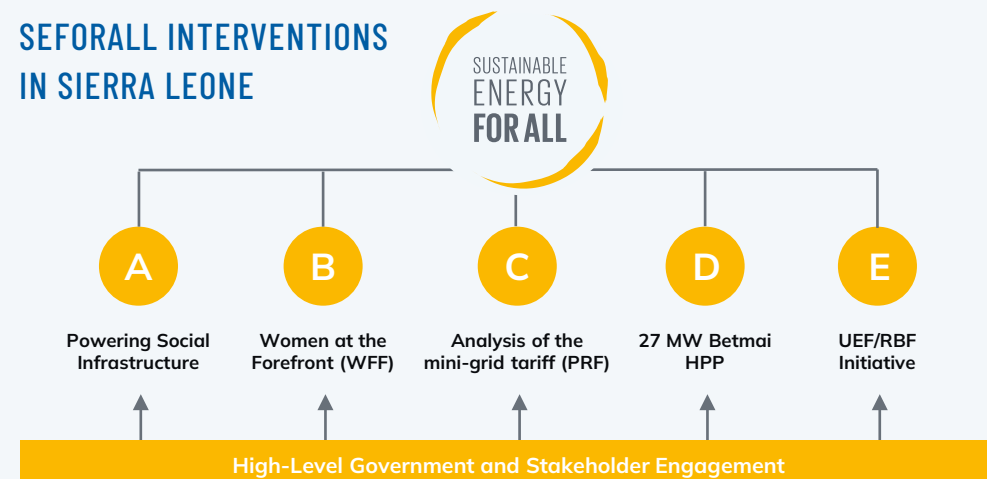
Achievement of SDG7 is underpinned by large-scale social, economic and environmental impacts, including improved climate, health, livelihoods and job creation, gender equality and food security.

In collaboration with the Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet (GEAPP) SEforALL designed a project with three workstreams that together take an ecosystem approach to address challenges in the energy access sector in Sierra Leone, having an overarching objective of achieving SDG7 and a clean energy transition, in alignment with GoSL priorities for the energy sector:

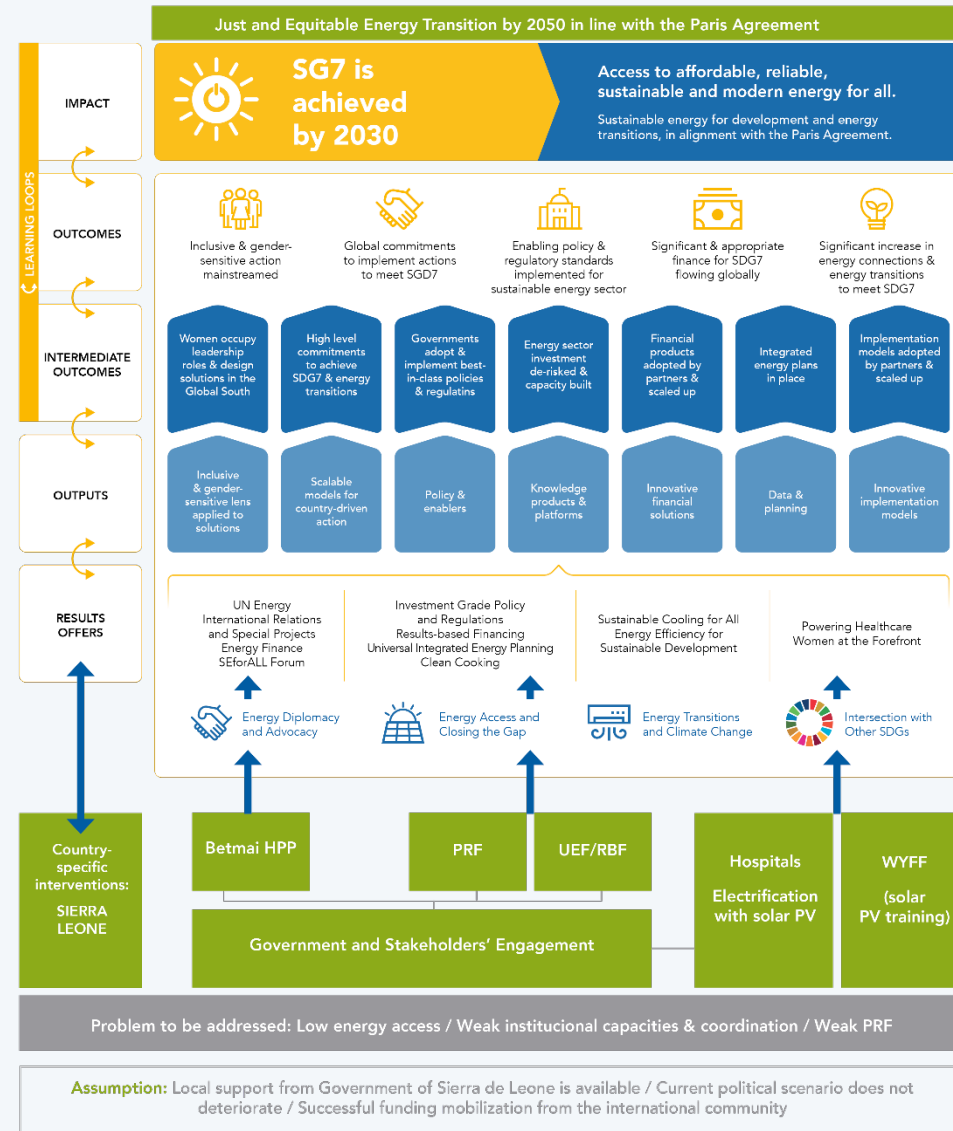
- I. Workstream #1: Government and Stakeholder Engagement,
- II. Workstream #2: Betmai Hydroelectric Power Project, and
- III. Workstream #3: Powering Social Infrastructure.

Workstream #1, Government and Stakeholder Engagement, acts as an umbrella workstream for the other five workstreams as it provides support for engagement and coordination among key stakeholders and the government agencies, ministries or officers, where necessary.

SEFORALL INTERVENTIONS IN SIERRA LEONE



SEforALL aims to implement its programmes in Sierra Leone synergistically and contribute to the delivery of the SEforALL 3.0 strategy



Strategic Partnerships



The Government and Stakeholder Engagement / Betmai HPP workstreams

Workstream #1: Government and Stakeholder Engagement

GOAL: to provide high-level engagement and in-country support, interfacing with key government and other stakeholders, aimed at improving the enabling environment to address the power shortfall and support the country's overall electricity access goals. Also, overall coordination across all workstreams, building relationships to advance additional GEAPP and SEforALL interventions as well as linkages to other initiatives in Sierra Leone.

Expected outcomes:

- I. a well-established relationship between SEforALL and the Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) / other key stakeholders conducive to the implementation of recommendations;
- II. clear identification of areas for improvement in Independent Power Producer (IPP) regulations and processes;
- III. the establishment of a baseline for energy access and energy transition to track progress;
- IV. identification of capacity needs for relevant public institutions in the energy sector.

Workstream #2: Betmai Hydroelectric Power Project (HPP)

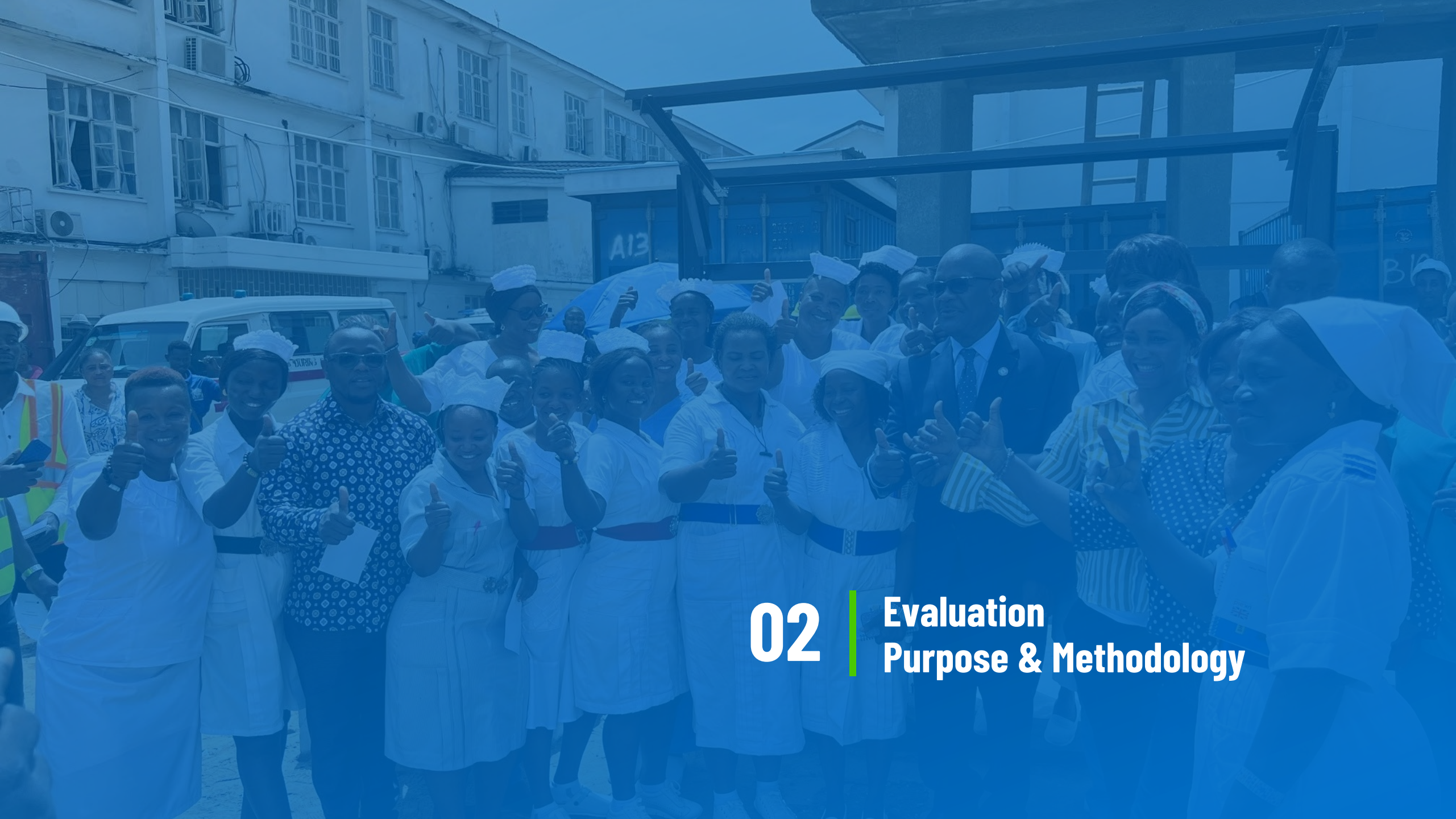
GOAL: SEforALL aims to enable the implementation of the Betmai HPP in Sierra Leone through the provision of legal and technical project management support. Betmai HPP is a proposed 27 MW run-of-river hydroelectric power generation project to be located on the Pampana River in the north of the country.

Expected outcomes:

The major expected outcome of this workstream is to facilitate the project's financial closure. This project has been under development for more than eight years and required finalization of outstanding legal and technical advisory services and project documentation before financing could start to be mobilized. Supporting the development of the Betmai HPP project will lower Sierra Leone's risk profile for other potential IPPs, therefore attracting the necessary private-sector participation to reduce energy poverty.

The Agreement:

The agreement between the Rockefeller Foundation/GEAPP and SEforALL was signed in **November 2021** and was expected to conclude in **December 2023**. A non-cost extension was granted until **May 2024**.



02

**Evaluation
Purpose & Methodology**

Evaluation Purpose & Methodology

Overall objective: independently and objectively assess the implementation of the Government and Stakeholder Engagement / Betmai HPP workstreams

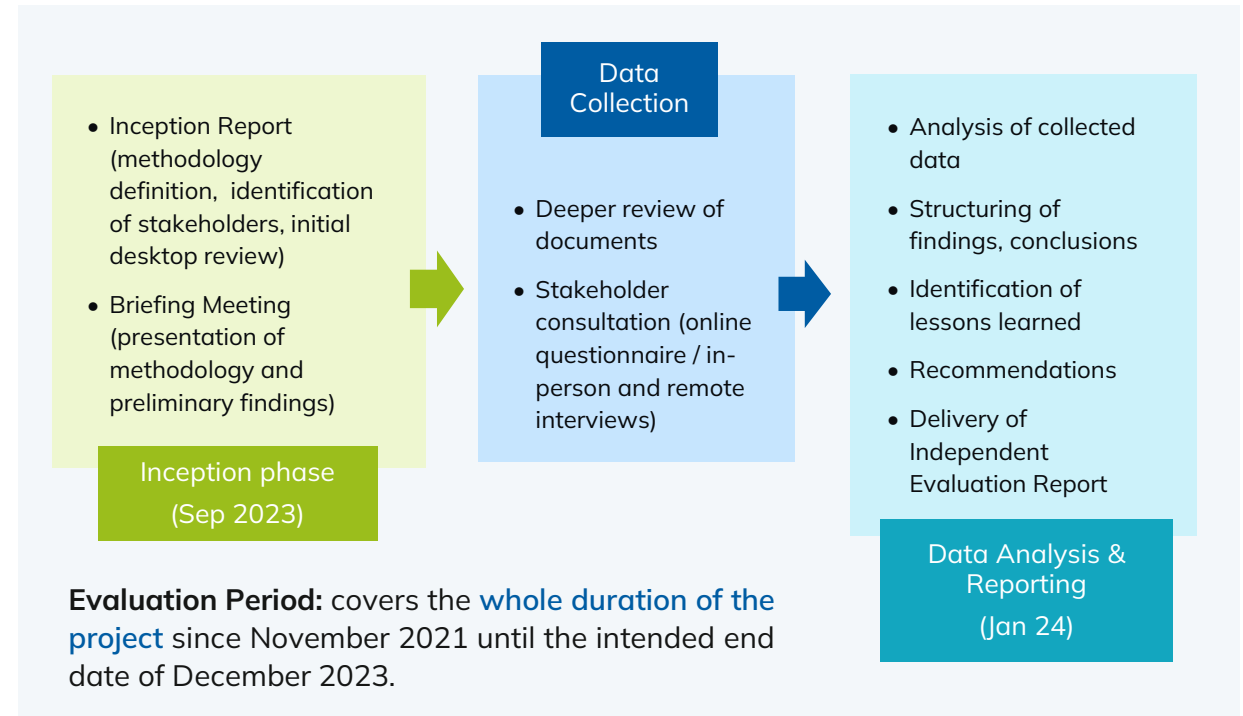
TWO SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

Performance Objective

1. Focus on progress made and results achieved in comparison to planned and expected outcomes, outputs and targets (accountability)
2. Assessment of projects' performance in terms of coherence, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and progress to impact

Learning Objective

1. Identify lessons learned and good practices as a foundation for learning
2. Provide utility-focused recommendations to inform future work of the different teams based on what worked well / not so well
3. Improve planning, coordination and enhance the design of new SEforALL projects



Evaluation Purpose & Methodology

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

In total, 25 in-person & virtual interviews were carried out (individuals or groups):

- Reached 37 stakeholders (in 16 individual meetings and 9 group meetings, covering the remaining 21 people)
- In-person interviews conducted during the mission to Sierra Leone and by the ITP Energised local consultant.

ELECTRONIC QUESTIONNAIRE

- Distributed to 51 people. Received responses from 21 people (41% response rate), with 57% women participation.
- Out of the total, only four people answered for workstream #1 and workstream #2 (combined).
- Responses were received from the private sector, financial institutions and national government.

IN-PERSON INTERVIEWS:

- A total of 23 representatives from all identified stakeholder types were engaged including: SEforALL teams located in Sierra Leone and abroad; government and public institutions from Sierra Leone; project partners involved in the execution of project activities; project beneficiaries; and donors.





03

Key Findings of the Evaluation

Key Findings of the Evaluation



01 PROJECT DESIGN

Overall Design

Project Logframe

OVERALL DESIGN:

- The overall project design is considered satisfactory as it includes relevant information that describes the intended intervention. The proposal document designed by SEforALL and GEAPP detailed the need for the intervention, the challenges to be addressed, the relevance to SEforALL, the expected outcomes, and the activities envisaged to reach them, within an indicative timeline of 26 months and making use of the USD 2.5 M budget.
- Government institutions, rural and urban communities are identified as beneficiaries of the intervention.
- There is no tailored MEL plan for these workstreams but SEforALL tracks their progress by applying the organizational MEL strategy and framework steps described in the SEforALL Business Plan 2021–2023. Risks have been identified in a risk matrix and are mentioned in the progress reports.
- The baseline documents also outlined the cross-cutting nature of the Government and Stakeholder Engagement workstream, where the country manager plays a fundamental role in establishing strong in-country presence and building relationships of trust with the GoSL. The country manager was also responsible for overseeing the Betmai HPP workstream execution, and for ensuring overall coordination across SEforALL interventions.

PROJECT LOGFRAME:

- No individual logframe was created to track progress against specific indicators and targets for these two workstreams, as it was not required at the time. However, other project management structures and tools are in place to ensure proper management and delivery against milestones included in the RF/GEAPP Grant Agreement.
- These workstreams were conceived in a time when country-level interventions were new, therefore no framework was available at SEforALL that required the inclusion of a logframe for on-the-ground individual activities. Nevertheless, the two workstreams have been managed under the International Relations and Special Projects (IRSP) Programme that has a programmatic-level Theory of Change (ToC) and Logframe that guide the overall programme implementation and provide a framework for MEL activities.

Key Findings of the Evaluation



02 PROJECT PERFORMANCE

Impact

Effectiveness

Relevance

Coherence

Efficiency

Sustainability

The Government and Stakeholder Engagement workstream has facilitated discussions with the GoSL that have contributed to increasing awareness and addressing topics that are relevant for the achievement of SDG7 long-term impacts.

- Contributions from SEforALL during the Government and Stakeholder Engagement workstream implementation were positive for the advancement towards the ToCs' goals and long-term impacts. Betmai HPP, the Gender & Youth, the UEF, the PRF workstreams and the Powering Sierra Leone's Hospitals Programme benefitted from the received support.
- In-country support provided by the country manager showed a positive impact particularly for the teams and stakeholders acting in the UEF and PRF workstreams. The convening of meetings and engagements of energy-sector stakeholders have led to an improved understanding of the role that mini-grids and renewable energy generation projects can play towards the achievement of universal energy access and SDG7. It has also fostered discussions about what the potential changes in policies might be to improve the enabling environment that would lead to increased private-sector investment in this area.
- The relationships developed by the country manager with the GoSL and other energy-sector partners led to the opportunity for SEforALL to support the GoSL in the development of the Sierra Leone Energy Transition/Green Growth Plan, in collaboration with the Office of the President under the supervision of the Ministry of Energy and the Advisor, Presidential Initiative of Climate Change, Renewable Energy, and Food Security (PI-CREF).

Key Findings of the Evaluation



02 PROJECT PERFORMANCE

Impact

Effectiveness

Relevance

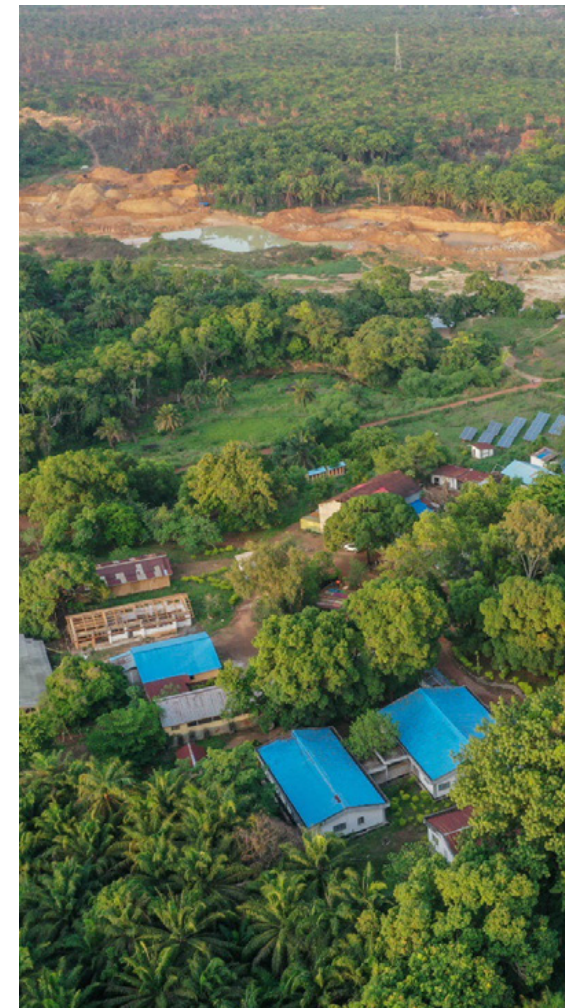
Coherence

Efficiency

Sustainability

The Betmai HPP workstream results show that SEforALL support has led to receiving parliamentary ratification of the project.

- Although the project has not yet reached financial closure, it has developed an updated suite of project documents, which in addition to receiving parliamentary approval and ratification is a step forwards, and development can now continue (the developer needs to complete the ESIA studies and the Lender Negotiations).
- Once built and operative, the Betmai HPP has huge potential to bring positive socio-economic impacts and benefits for Sierra Leone and the region, thanks to the increased access to clean electricity. The 27 MW hydropower plant is expected to positively impact 500,000 households.
- Betmai HPP, the PRF and UEF workstreams improved the understanding of the public sector about what is necessary to develop renewable energy generation projects, crucial for the improvement of the enabling environment that would support such projects.



Key Findings of the Evaluation



02 PROJECT PERFORMANCE

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The implementation results of the first outcome under the Government and Stakeholder Engagement workstream have evidenced a continuous and effective relationship building process and high-level engagement, primarily across government agencies and institutions. They have also supported the execution of other SEforALL workstreams by facilitating meetings and enhancing communications among involved parties.

- Having an SEforALL country manager has been instrumental in mainstreaming and coordinating SEforALL workstreams on the ground, enabling synergies and opening communication channels with the GoSL to support project execution and manage risks in close collaboration with SEforALL workstream teams. As government areas and agencies sometimes tend to work in silos, having a person in the country has helped in coordinating actions.
- Stakeholders active in UEF and PRF workstreams highlighted the relevance of engaging in conversations with the GoSL to increase institutional awareness and discuss potential areas for improvement of the enabling environment and how the GoSL can play a key role in supporting mini-grid development for the achievement of energy access goals and SDG7 with renewable energy.
- The country manager has successfully established focal points of contact and facilitated meetings, working groups and communications with key public sector institutions including the Ministry of Energy, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Environment, SLEWRC, EPASL, among others. This was evidenced for example during the commissioning event of the PV systems installed at the Ola During Children's Hospital in January 2024, where high-level stakeholders in government and development partners were well represented.

Key Findings of the Evaluation



02 PROJECT PERFORMANCE

Impact

Effectiveness

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Efficiency

Sustainability

The main goal of the Betmai HPP workstream was to reach financial closure for the 27 MW project. Although this has not yet been achieved, the project, after being stalled for eight years, made progress as it has been approved by the GoSL and received parliamentary ratification in October 2023.

- The project management firm and the legal firm met the terms of their contracts, under the supervision of the country manager, who put together a clear plan of recommended next steps to be undertaken by the project developer, as captured in the project closure report.
- The main issues affecting the achievement of financial closure were beyond SEforALL's control. They included:
 - I. the national elections that meant delays in obtaining signatures and navigating administrative processes,
 - II. delays in the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment which as of November 2023 was still to be finalized,
 - III. the local macroeconomic scene in Sierra Leone that is perceived as risky for potential investors, which in combination with the ambitious timeline remaining after the several delays have failed to lead to financial closure.



Key Findings of the Evaluation



02 PROJECT PERFORMANCE

Impact

Effectiveness

Relevance

Coherence

Efficiency

Sustainability

The Betmai HPP is a 27 MW renewable energy generation project aimed at increasing electricity access and is therefore relevant to accelerating a just and equitable energy transition and achieving SDG7 in Sierra Leone.

- Despite not reaching financial closure, progress has been made, as it has received cabinet approval and parliamentary ratification, which confirms the GoSL interest in supporting projects that are important for the country's socioeconomic development and the population's well-being.

The Government and Stakeholder Engagement workstream has been and continues to be relevant to promote and foster coordination, discussions and conversations around critical topics to address energy access challenges in Sierra Leone.

- The engagement driven by the country manager under the Government and Stakeholder Engagement workstream, has kept key stakeholders actively engaged and improved communications with the GoSL.
- This engagement is important for maintaining SEforALL's interventions relevant for the country and for the organization. An example is the support to be provided by SEforALL to the GoSL in the development of the Sierra Leone Green Growth Plan that resulted from the engagement activities.

Key Findings of the Evaluation



02 PROJECT PERFORMANCE

Impact

Effectiveness

Relevance

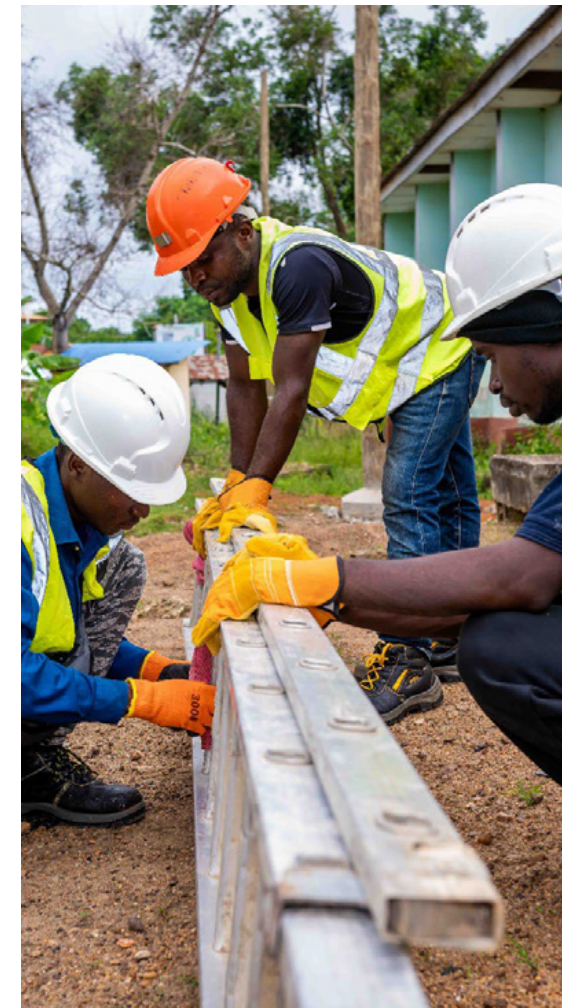
Coherence

Efficiency

Sustainability

Coherence of both workstreams is considered high as they fit well into national goals and respond to current challenges in alignment with the local policy framework. They are clearly aligned with the strategies and goals of both SEforALL and donors.

- They directly support the national ambition to reduce CO2 in-country emissions and to improve energy access through the implementation of renewable energy technology, in clear alignment with the updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) of Sierra Leone, to name one significant document.
- The strengthening of institutional capacity is also described as a need to be tackled in the updated NDC. The actions undertaken through increased and improved coordination, engagement, discussions and networking in the scope of the Government and Stakeholder Engagement workstream contribute to address this need.
- The workstreams are aligned with SEforALL's mandate on advancing SDG7 and with RF/GEAPP ambitions to support initiatives that tackle energy poverty, increase electrification sustainably with renewable energies and support a just and equitable energy transition by increasing private investment in this field.



Key Findings of the Evaluation



02 PROJECT PERFORMANCE

Impact

Effectiveness

Relevance

Coherence

Efficiency

Sustainability

Efficiency of both workstreams is deemed satisfactory, as both exhibit appropriate project and risk management, timeline tracking and decision-making in response to arising challenges, and have conducted reporting in accordance with donor requirements. In addition, a restructuring of milestones was agreed with the donor, leading to a small part of the budget being unspent. This has been repurposed to continue supporting the GoSL until May 2024 as part of a non-cost extension.

- **Timeline:** the two workstreams were implemented during the original 26-month period (until 31 December 2023), and a non-cost extension was agreed with the donor to continue supporting the GoSL until end of May 2024, under the Government and Stakeholder Engagement workstream. Betmai HPP suffered some delays due to external factors including the Presidential elections that slowed down the GoSL response and administrative processes, and due to the development of studies (ESIA).
- **Project management:** the project team (country manager and the executing partners) were able to lead and manage arising issues and submitted the Betmai HPP project with its documentation package to receive government review and approval (in addition to the development of the closure report with next steps). The Presidential election was foreseen as a risk that needed to be addressed across all workstreams. The project team mitigated to the extent possible any potential impact (delays) in obtaining government responses, demonstrating very good risk management capacity and coordinated teamwork. The country manager provided support from the ground to the different programme leads and workstreams to solve arising issues as well as to support the identification of collaboration opportunities over common areas of interest amongst SEforALL interventions in Sierra Leone, for example on the tariff topic, which is relevant for both the SEforALL UEF and PRF teams.

Key Findings of the Evaluation



02 PROJECT PERFORMANCE

- Impact
- Effectiveness
- Relevance
- Coherence
- Efficiency**
- Sustainability

Efficiency of both workstreams is deemed satisfactory, as both exhibit appropriate project and risk management, timeline tracking and decision-making in response to arising challenges, and have conducted reporting in accordance with donor requirements. In addition, a restructuring of milestones was agreed with the donor, leading to a small part of the budget being unspent. This has been repurposed to continue supporting the GoSL until May 2024 as part of a non-cost extension.

- **Budget:** the milestones restructuring under the Government and Stakeholder Engagement workstream resulted in two deliverables not finalized* and in USD 250,000 not being spent, which was repurposed to three new workstreams in a non-cost extension until May 2024, strategically agreed upon with the donor. The new workstreams will focus on the mini-grid sector: by a) supporting wider stakeholder consultations with regards to the challenges in the mini-grid sector to accelerate mini-grid deployment; b) empowering the regulator to update the regulatory environment to be responsive to economic shocks and improve the long-term viability of the mini-grid sector; and c) encouraging country-to-country exchange and learning on best regulatory practices.
- **Reporting:** The reports analyzed within the evaluation period followed the RF grant agreement requirements. Additionally, the country manager reported monthly to the SEforALL Executive Office detailing progress made on the different SEforALL workstreams.

*included a Country Assessment and an assessment report with recommendations on improving the enabling environment for future IPP projects.

Key Findings of the Evaluation



02 PROJECT PERFORMANCE

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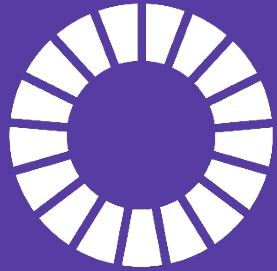
Sustainability of both workstreams is considered satisfactory. SEforALL has been able to identify areas where the organization can continue supporting the GoSL in its sustainable growth path and simultaneously aim to achieve SDG7.

- Having an in-country presence has proved to be fundamental for ensuring a cohesive in-country approach, for managing and overseeing the different interventions and for keeping an active dialogue with the GoSL. It has led to the identification of areas to continue supporting the country, thus demonstrating sustainability, which include, as the most relevant example, the support to develop the Green Growth Plan.
- SEforALL is also developing a draft strategy about how it sees its support to continue evolving in Sierra Leone, in alignment with the needs of the GoSL.

SEforALL has supported Betmai HPP in reaching government approval and parliamentary ratification. Although the project's sustainability depends on the completion of documents and finding an appropriate financial model, the results obtained under this workstream are positive for the sustainability of the sector.

- Sierra Leone has abundant hydropower resources that could be harnessed to replicate similar hydropower projects, provided factors that negatively impact long-term sustainability of renewable energy generation projects are addressed.

Key Findings of the Evaluation



03 CROSS-CUTTING TOPICS

Mainstreaming of Gender and Youth

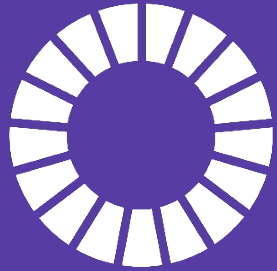
Climate Change Considerations

Although gender (women) is at the core of SEforALL’s organizational ToC as a cross-cutting element of relevance to be integrated in its interventions, this is not clearly reflected in the design of the workstreams with specific targets or KPIs, except for specific actions being undertaken during the implementation of the Government and Stakeholder Engagement and Betmai HPP workstreams.

- **Actions:** SEforALL hired a female country manager and included a requirement in the ToRs for a minimum 40% female participation in proposed teams and the submission of available gender policies.
- The evaluation team (ET) found out through the stakeholders’ consultation process that other workstreams have considered the gender and/or youth topics as follows:
 - I. the WYFF workstream (currently ‘Gender and Youth’*) focused exclusively on women and youth and in collaboration with the Powering Sierra Leone’s Hospitals Programme, implemented a hands-on training course solar PV installation for 12 young female STEM graduates;
 - II. the PRF workstream consulted with the current SEforALL gender focal point on how to integrate gender considerations in its activities;
 - III. the UEF workstream applies a gender action plan and has an operating manual that specifies gender requirements at the country-implementation level and monitors gender-disaggregated data to understand the impact of electrification projects in the communities it serves.
- SEforALL has recently drafted an internal “Guidance for Integrating Gender & Youth in Programme Design” that is expected to be used to improve design and implementation of gender actions.

*The WYFF workstream has recently been renamed to ‘Gender and Youth’ (G&Y).

Key Findings of the Evaluation



03 CROSS-CUTTING TOPICS

Mainstreaming of Gender and Youth

Climate Change Considerations

Climate Change considerations have been integrated into the Betmai HPP in terms of the greenhouse gas reduction potential from the renewable energy generated by the plant.

- The reduction potential is 107,000 tCO₂e/year. The analysis could be further expanded to understand, for example, climate change impacts on rainfall patterns and water availability, and potential improvements in the communities' adaptive capacity.





04

Conclusions

Conclusions

C1

The ET found that the achieved results have been satisfactory given the local circumstances and challenges faced. Achievements made are aligned with the expected impact and contribution to SEforALL's organizational ToC as well as with SDG7 and SDG13.

- The goal of the three workstreams supported by the RF grant and GEAPP, executed by SEforALL, was to essentially provide support to the country to **address challenges in the energy access sector** by adopting an ecosystem approach. Current electricity access rates in Sierra Leone are among the lowest globally, reaching only 36% of the population, posing serious impediments to its sustainable socio-economic development. Thus, the ET believes that the approach taken by the organizations, as per the proposal submitted to GEAPP and the achieved results, responds to the needs of that scenario, because:
 - Through the Government and Stakeholder Engagement workstream, the country manager has successfully identified and built strong relationships with key energy stakeholders from the public and private sector, establishing a presence for SEforALL in the country and frequently liaising with them to create opportunities for potential collaboration.
 - The country manager has not only been responsible for driving and executing the Government and Stakeholder Engagement workstream, but also for overseeing Betmai HPP workstream implementation, where she was instrumental in managing the communications between the different parties and with the government to support the project's moving towards obtaining government approval and parliamentary ratification.



Conclusions

C1

- Having a country manager has positively contributed to engaging different teams of SEforALL workstreams in conversations and finding areas for collaboration and synergy creation, such as for example in between the UEF/RBF and PRF workstreams, who found in the electricity tariffs a common topic of interest and opportunity to work together.
- The 27 MW Betmai HPP is a relevant project for Sierra Leone as it has the potential to power approximately 500,000 households (i.e., approximately 2 million people*), reducing carbon emissions and contributing to SDG7 and SDG13 goals. In spite of this workstream not being able to reach its goal of financial closure, the team was able to navigate the challenges arising during implementation and the project made progress by obtaining government approval and parliamentary ratification after eight years of being stalled. SEforALL effectively coordinated and oversaw the legal and project management services to develop several documents and agreements eventually used to obtain government sign-off. The developer now has the opportunity to develop the remaining studies, including ESIA, Transmission and Interconnection, and to continue looking for sources of funding.

*Video interview to SERL:
[Bitgreen](#), GEAPP, and Sewa Energy Resources partner to build \$110M Hydroelectric Facility in Sierra Leone - AfricaBusiness.com



Conclusions

C2

Both Workstreams #1 and #2 are highly relevant and coherent for Sierra Leone to advance electrification in the framework of a sustainable, just and equitable energy transition. Finding actions and projects aligned to this concept, as well as with national, SEforALL and donor commitments, and implementation partners' priorities, is necessary to allow for long-term impact realization.

- The interventions have been, and continue to be, pertinent for the country and remain coherent with its priorities and plans. Maintaining an active dialogue with and between public and private stakeholders of the energy sector is key to making sure SEforALL's work in Sierra Leone remains coherent and relevant. The usefulness of keeping open channels of communication, in this case through a country manager working directly on the ground, was evidenced for example during the restructuring of milestones under Workstream #1 where discussions were held, and a decision was made to redirect efforts and repurpose funds to support the GoSL in addressing issues the mini-grid sector is currently facing. An important example of relevant support that SEforALL has recently agreed to provide to the GoSL is on the development of the Sierra Leone Green Growth Plan.
- The government and stakeholder engagement process implemented was capable of building relationships of trust among key energy-sector stakeholders, which need to be built on and continue. There is the potential for continuing this process under a slightly different approach (see Recommendation R1), to solidify SEforALL's presence and ability to provide support that effectively responds to the actual needs of the beneficiaries, i.e., continues to be highly relevant, coherent, aligned with GoSL priorities as well as those of donors, and other energy-sector actors, without losing responsiveness to SEforALL's mandate. The Government and Stakeholder Engagement processes are important to also keep coherence of SEforALL among workstreams.



Conclusions

C3

There is opportunity for improving project design to facilitate the monitoring and assessment of actual achievements against the project baseline.

- Project design has not included a clear set of activities and sub-activities under each workstream, with indicators, targets, baselines, assumptions, means of verification, etc., that would establish a baseline as a starting point, and therefore provide the opportunity for a fruitful ex-post comparison at evaluation stage. There is a logframe at organizational level to which, in accordance with the MEL framework, all initiatives conducted on the ground should contribute. Given the current project design and information available, the ET concludes that the link between the workstreams' expected results and how those contribute to the organizational ToC is not explicitly addressed or reported (see Recommendation R2).
- In terms of how the workstreams aim to address vulnerable groups, e.g., women and youth, SEforALL's proposal to GEAPP does not explicitly include a communication and engagement plan with women and youth nor specific sex- or age-disaggregated indicators at design stage (which could have been included in a logframe, for example). The ET believes that SEforALL could benefit from including specific actions and indicators targeting these groups to allow for a more detailed impact analysis and reporting (see Recommendation R2).

C4

Project management has been conducted in a satisfactory and appropriate way, which allowed the project to overcome shortcomings and delays to allow the workstreams to progress towards achieving key results such as government approval and parliamentary ratification of Betmai HPP as well as finding new opportunities for supporting to the GoSL.

- The Betmai HPP suffered delays due to external factors (e.g., presidential elections, external dependencies causing delays i.e. in the conduction of the ESIA, etc.). However, the project team was able to consider these challenges, assess the risks and derive mitigation actions, and worked on driving the project to the best of its abilities until end date.
- Reporting was carried out in accordance with the RF Grant Agreement. However, the focus of reporting was on Workstream #2 and limited information about Workstream #1 was included in the reports. This limited the ability of the ET to understand how that workstream progressed. The ET believes that a reason for this is that donor-reporting requirements were minimal and did not include detailed specifications for contractual reporting requirements on Workstream #1. In addition, the ET is aware that the cross-cutting nature of the Government and Stakeholder Engagement workstream across all interventions makes it more challenging to report on it as a "stand-alone" project.
- There are internal SEforALL reporting structures (regular reports to the executive office and a bi-annual MEL reporting cycle) which were met and provided information on Workstream #1 performance, thus mitigating the effect of the previously described issue.
- Financial findings show that part of the budget had to be repurposed for three other workstreams as part of a new proposal agreed with the donor to bring benefits in better alignment with sector needs, to be used between April 2023 and May 2024. The focus of these new workstreams is on supporting the mini-grid sector.



05

Recommendations

Recommendations

R1

To solidify the positive outcomes and build on the achieved results from Workstream #1, SEforALL should consider developing an overarching communications and stakeholder engagement strategy and plan for Sierra Leone. This would ensure the continuation of the Government and Stakeholder Engagement activities in support of Sierra Leone’s priorities and in alignment with SEforALL organizational Theory of Change until 2030.

- The plan would enable SEforALL to establish clear guidelines to engage further and advance dialogue with key national and international stakeholders that would like to support Sierra Leone’s energy transition and achievement of SDG7 by 2030, in alignment with the recent organizational “SEforALL Country Engagement Strategy Development 2023” (dated 1 March 2023). It would ensure coherence with how the organization wishes to apply its overall communication, knowledge management and stakeholder engagement across countries and programmes, and that country-level actions, though adapted to the local culture and specific needs, are aligned with the organizational ethos.
- It would improve the sustainability of the actions because:
 - I. it would not depend on a strict timeframe imposed by a project(s) or grant;
 - II. it would possibly enable the option to draw financial resources from different sources instead of relying on a single grant or project as the sole source of funding (the funding model of such a strategy should be discussed and analyzed further).
- It would allow for flexibility of response; providing active support to any initiatives that SEforALL wishes to implement on the ground in Sierra Leone, ensuring cohesiveness across workstreams too.
- It would ensure alignment with the Business Plan 2011–2023 and 2020–2030 ToC, and with the three strategic pillars in the SEforALL Strategic Plan 2024–2026 (global advocacy and knowledge dissemination, scalable solutions and platforms, and tailored country support).
- It would allow for the inclusion of a suggested list of quantitative and/or qualitative indicators and targets for measuring impact and progress in alignment with MEL framework and reporting requirements and in support of concrete on-the-ground projects and activities.



Recommendations

R2

SEforALL should consider adopting the development of an annual Sierra Leone Action Plan with concrete support areas or projects to advance SDG7 in Sierra Leone, identified as a result of the engagements conducted and actions implemented under the communications and stakeholder engagement strategy for Sierra Leone (R1). This action plan should align with national and donor goals. SEforALL has drafted a country strategy document for Sierra Leone that can be taken as a basis.

- The ET thinks that in light of the achieved results and the experience gained so far, not only through the implementation of the RF grant but also through the implementation of the Powering Sierra Leone's Hospitals Programme financed by UK FCDO, SEforALL could consider the development of an annual country action plan on a regular basis. SEforALL has drafted a "country strategy document" proposed for the 2024–2025 period, that can be taken as the first plan and as a sample for future ones. Resource allocation for the implementation of the action plan should be taken into consideration and evaluated against the envisaged actions (e.g., budget, human resources, physical space to operate, etc.).
- It is important that the action plans clearly align with the three strategic pillars of the Strategic Plan 2024–2026 and the organizational ToC 2020–2030, and that they are developed in consultation with key local energy-sector stakeholders to ensure coherence with local needs. In addition, these potential action plans would need to respond to the overarching communication and stakeholder engagement strategy for Sierra Leone and to the MEL framework requirements to ensure that on-the-ground actions translate into measurable impacts.

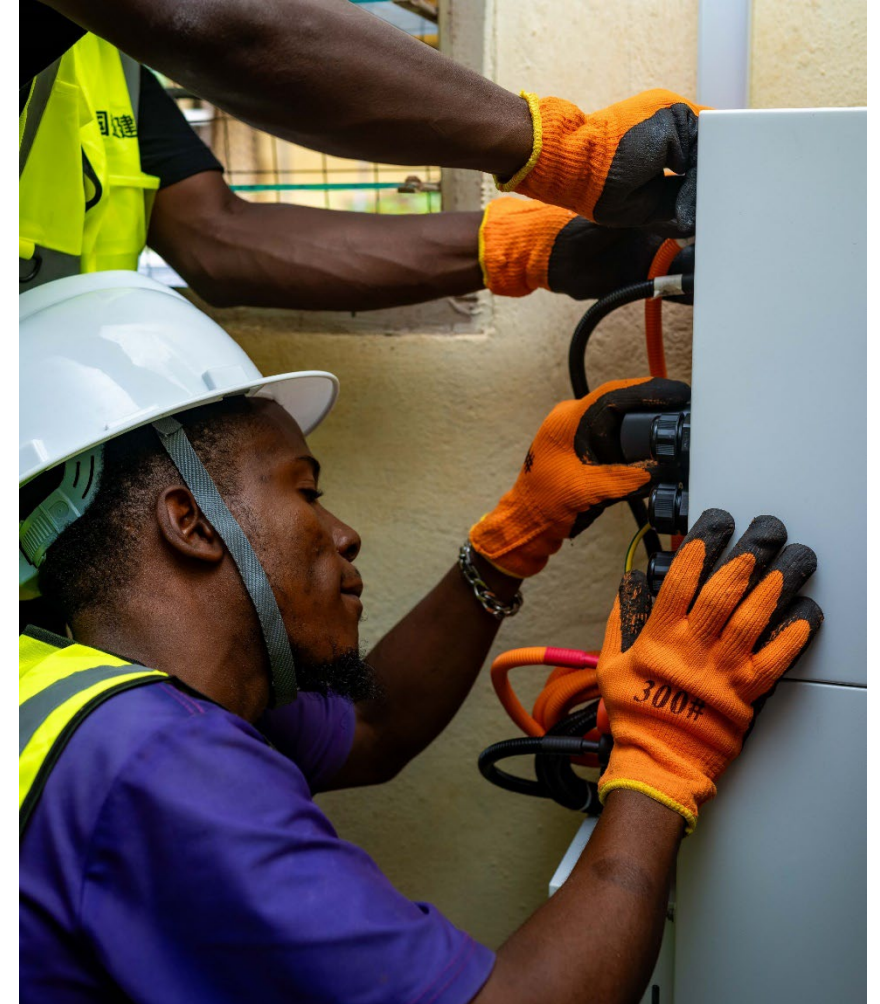


Recommendations

R3

SEforALL would benefit from extending the organizational and programmatic ToCs to the project level, so that clear linkages are established across the different intervention levels.

- SEforALL should, in its project design and programmatic approach, seek to establish clear linkages specifically between projects (“on-the-ground” initiatives) and the programmes they respond to, and also to the organizational KPIs and ToC. This could be done through the adoption of a standardized MEL framework for projects that link to the programmatic KPIs and MEL Framework as well as to SEforALL’s organizational strategies as appropriate. This will enhance internal and external MEL activities, providing a consolidated and replicable framework.
- SEforALL should make a clearer distinction between ToCs and logframes (at the project level and programmatic level). Both tools are used in project planning and evaluation, but they serve different functions. While ToCs provide a conceptual overview of how a change might occur, logframes offer the structured format for project execution and assessment.
 - ToCs are about the “big picture”. They outline the rationale and sequence of steps leading to a desired outcome, focusing on the underlying assumptions and causal linkages. They help understand and describe how and why a desired change is expected to happen in a particular context. They focus on the causal relationship between activities and the overall goal. They are like a roadmap that shows how change will unfold over time. ToCs are usually flexible and can be adapted as the project progresses.



Recommendations

R3

- Logframes, on the other hand, are more structured. A logframe is a tool used for planning, implementing and monitoring a project, detailing indicators, resources/sources of information, baselines, targets and assumptions, built usually in a table format, and for which impact, outcome and output levels are provided. Logframes are conceived at project design and then revised and kept up to date during project implementation to account for any potential deviations or changes. Guidance provided by UKaid* can be followed to build logframes. Donor organizations usually provide suggestions in terms of what they would like to see in the logframes developed for the projects they fund and are very similar to the logframe provided by UK FCDO for the Powering Sierra Leone's Hospitals Programme.
- The SEforALL MEL and Grant Management team should co-develop the ToC and logframes for the project, ensuring that these tools are aligned with both SEforALL and the grant provider organizational MEL practices, and thus aligned with the organization's overarching strategies.
- SEforALL should consider establishing guidance or templates to ensure consistency in on-the-ground activity implementation across projects. This could encompass key information such as project components, activities and sub-activities, resources allocation, budget, timelines, indicators, targets, responsible parties, expected benefits, risks, sources of information and any other relevant information. Such an organized approach could potentially offer several advantages (see next slide).

*[Developing a logframe guide \(ukaidmatch.org\)](http://ukaidmatch.org)

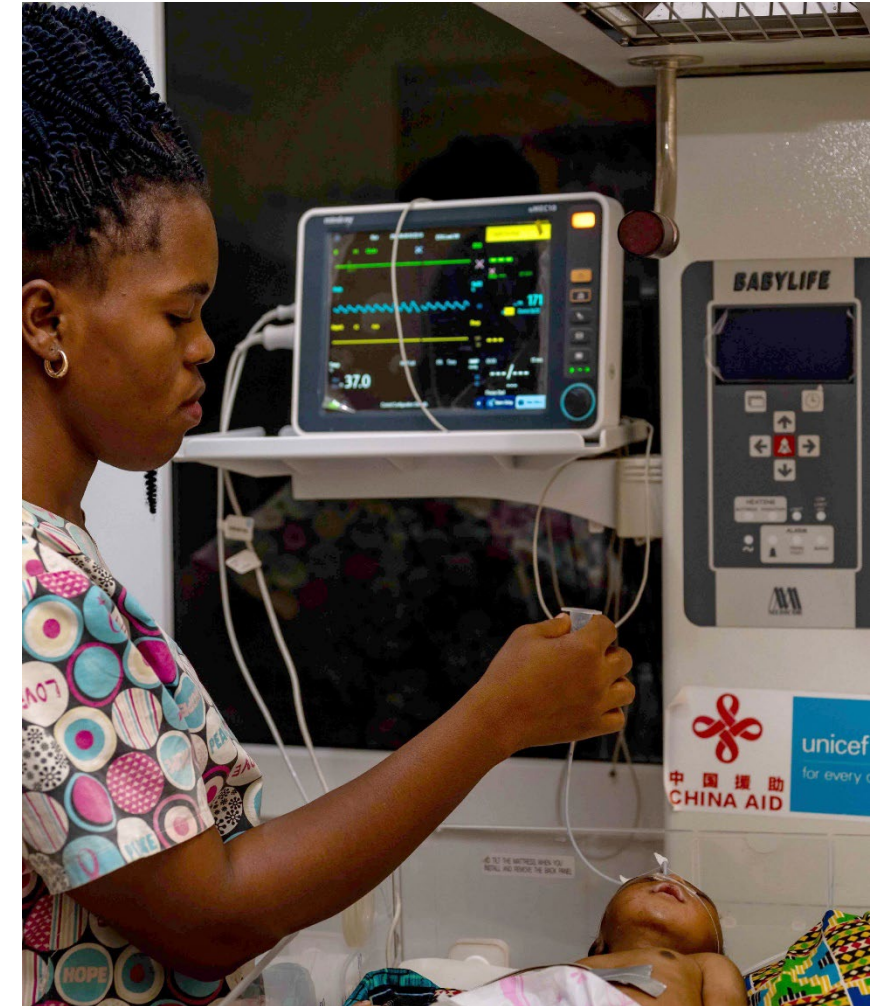


Recommendations

R3 (continuation)

SEforALL would benefit from improving project design and MEL, so clear linkages are established across the different intervention levels (project/workstream – programme – organizational ToC).

- Establish a clear baseline for evaluation stage and facilitate course correction during implementation
- Ensure alignment with SEforALL's organizational ToC 2020–2030 and applicable business/strategic plans
- Facilitate the quantification of impact and progress against targets of individual interventions
- Simplify aggregation of project benefits across countries or sectors (e.g., total installed renewable capacity across healthcare facilities, in MW)
- Ensure inclusion of only indicators/targets falling under the implementation responsibility of SEforALL and project partners
- Incorporate project KPIs to connect the interventions with the SEforALL programme KPIs and organizational-level KPIs that respond to SDG7 ones
- Streamline the MEL process and reporting against organizational targets, SDG7 impacts and other co-benefits, e.g., contributing to improving community well-being
- Enhance SEforALL's future planning efforts



Recommendations

R3 (continuation)

- Provide recurrent training to project coordinators/managers on MEL, covering aspects of reporting, including how, what, when and where they should report upstream on project implementation
- There is opportunity to improve how gender and youth topics are mainstreamed into project design as well as MEL, since the topic is at the core of SEforALL's ToC 2020–2030 as well as part of the just and equitable energy transition clearly captured in the SEforALL Strategic Plan 2024–2026. SEforALL would benefit from:
 - Adopting and communicating at organizational level, a gender action plan and/or strategy to mainstream the topic at project design (the ET has knowledge of guidance for mainstreaming the topic at project design that has been recently developed), which would need to be discussed with the SEforALL gender focal point and P&D
 - Including sex- and age-disaggregated indicators and targets
 - In project design: explaining actions taken by the project towards gender and youth mainstreaming, and describing the direct/indirect benefits for women, youth or other vulnerable groups that the project is expected to achieve
 - Providing capacity building to project and programme managers on how to mainstream this topic into their projects and how to monitor progress would provide coherence across projects/countries and enable for aggregation of benefits at organizational level.



Recommendations

R4

SEforALL should consider monitoring the evolution of Betmai HPP through the country manager to identify potential areas for future collaboration or to support a potential future evaluation of its impact.

- Betmai HPP, once built and once it starts operations, has the potential to benefit a significant part of the Sierra Leonean population. The impact of such a project can be varied especially in a context where there are not many similar projects in the country, and it would be interesting to understand what the actual impacts are versus what was expected. SEforALL should continue in communication with the parties involved to identify potential areas for collaboration or to identify an evaluation funding plan and potential future evaluation.





06

Lessons Learned

Learnings

L1

The importance of involving different stakeholders in project implementation from the start and doing it using an approach that adapts to the local scenario.

- Actively pursuing stakeholder engagement from the beginning, even before a project is designed, is key to the alignment of the future project with beneficiary needs, ensures stakeholders' participation and buy-in, and fosters ownership of the project and its results, streamlining handover processes at the end and giving a solid base for replication and sustainability.
- The engagements and meetings conducted locally enable SEforALL to witness first hand and participate in how things are discussed and prioritized in Sierra Leone. Such platforms allow for an open dialogue that stakeholders can take advantage of to better shape interventions, particularly in the renewable/clean energy and energy access space.
- Having a country manager directly on the ground to conduct meetings and engagements and ensure frequent and transparent communication with the government was relevant to identify areas of collaboration and to support advancement of the different workstreams active in Sierra Leone such as the UEF, PRF, Powering Sierra Leone's Hospitals Programme and Betmai HPP.

L2

Verify that the necessary studies have been completed before the project starts executing its activities.

Before the Betmai HPP project had commenced, it would have been important to verify that the necessary external dependencies (e.g., ESIA studies) were completed to avoid delays in execution.

L3

Creating awareness, sharing knowledge and communicating about the importance of energy access to drive growth continues to be important to identify areas of action and ensure stakeholders' buy-in and commitment.

Although the concept of energy being a key driver of development is very much embedded in the "glossary" of international development assistance, the energy sector and particularly within SEforALL as the organization with the mandate for advancing SDG7, it is always advantageous to remind stakeholders about the importance of sustainable energy access in relation to the social, environmental and economic benefits it brings, as well as what that means for the achievement of many other SDGs. This is particularly important for concrete generation projects whose main goal is to install renewable energy generation, such is the case for Betmai HPP, the UEF and the Powering Social Infrastructure workstreams, as well as for those workstreams that work on supporting an enabling environment for those generation projects to occur, such as is the case for the PRF workstreams.