

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

### for providing research assistance

### to the REELIH (Residential Energy Efficiency for Low Income Households) project

#### 1. Introduction and background

The Residential Energy in Low Income Households (REELIH) project is about the transfer of a successful approach to improving lives through improving buildings, which Habitat for Humanity began in 2009 in Macedonia. The project objective is to tackle poverty and improve the quality of life of low income homeowners. This is achieved by improving the energy efficiency of homes by retrofitting (carrying out work on existing buildings). After the approach proved successful in Macedonia, in 2012 Habitat for Humanity started to transfer the approach to Armenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The project, which receives funding from the United States Agency for International Development, supports individual homeowners living in multi-apartment blocks to form Homeowner Associations to collectively manage their buildings. These resident-led groups are able to get access to technical expertise through the project so they can make their buildings more energy efficient. As a result, residents spend less on energy and also benefit from improved air quality, which has a positive impact on people's health.

A significant feature of the project is the work that Habitat for Humanity carries out in each country to develop financial models so the improvements can be funded. One of the ways that this is achieved is through mediation carried out between residents, the public sector and the private sector. This has really helped increase the funding available for this type of work and has made it much easier for people from different backgrounds and organisations to work together to achieve improvements for residents and the wider community.

The project - currently delivered in Macedonia, Armenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina but of relevance to many countries across Eurasia<sup>1</sup> - works by:

- Raising awareness about energy efficiency as a way of tackling poverty and reducing carbon emissions
- Providing technical expertise to residents living in multi-apartment buildings to help them form Homeowner Associations
- Helping residents to plan and organise energy efficiency work to be carried out on their buildings
- Helping to develop trust between residents, lenders and local governments

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<sup>1</sup> Eurasia is a combined continental landmass of Europe and Asia. The REELIH project is applicable in particular in countries that were formerly part of the Soviet Union, where there has been very high subsidy and nationalisation followed by economic decline and rapid privatisation.

- Developing and testing replicable models of collective borrowing which help residents access funding
- Improving the health of residents through improved heating and air quality in their homes

Through the Residential Energy Efficiency project, Habitat for Humanity demonstrates the case for public and private investment in residential energy.

The work is helping:

- to establish and develop an investment market for retrofitting
- to secure the financial and political support of governments
- to place an increased focus on improving existing buildings.

For more information, visit: <https://getwarmhomes.org/>

## **2. Purpose, objectives and audience**

The current research should focus on study on the connection between energy poverty alleviation, and energy consumption reduction in Central and Eastern Europe. Through the REELIH project we claim by carrying out energy efficiency renovations of multi-unit buildings one can reduce the energy poverty of home-owners. We need evidence to justify this claim and we need to understand the discussion around energy poverty in the broad context.

The primary audience for the final study will be the larger residential energy efficiency and energy poverty community in Europe: policy makers, practitioners and academia.

## **3. Key questions**

- What common definition of energy poverty should be used in the REELIH project countries of Armenia, Bosnia and Hercegovina, and Macedonia?
- How to quantify the number of people living in energy poverty by current definitions?
- To what extent large scale renovation programs in Central Europe contributed to reducing energy poverty?
- What income groups benefited mostly from these programs?
- What are the conclusions for the connection between energy poverty alleviation and energy consumption reduction by comparing these programs?
- What is the status of energy poverty in the REELIH counties: Armenia, Bosnia and Hercegovina and Macedonia?

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- How residential energy efficiency programs contributed to energy poverty alleviation in these 3 countries?
- Are there best practices for renovation programs in Eastern Europe for energy poverty alleviation?
- What could governments do in the 3 countries to ensure that renovation programs contribute to energy poverty alleviation?
- Who are the main stakeholders for energy poverty in the EU?
- Who are the main stakeholders for energy poverty in Eastern Europe?

#### **4. Methodology and process**

##### **Methodology**

Exact methodology to be determined based on consultant's recommendation and final decision of designated REELIH staff. We expect that the job will entail desk research, field interviews, focus group discussions, analysis of findings and recommendations.

##### **Process**

Designated REELIH staff will work with the consultant to foster the process.

The consultant will present an inception report with early findings as well as draft reports to designated REELIH staff to ensure that the final study fully meets REELIH team needs, and that any methodological adjustments that may be warranted are identified early on in the process.

First draft of the reports will be presented at a workshop where stakeholders will be invited to give feedback to the consultant.

The final deliverables will be delivered after the draft findings have been reviewed and commented on, responding to any remaining questions or data analysis needs identified, and that can be accommodated within the established timeframe and budget.

Regular and as needed project management meetings with designated REELIH will be held.

##### **Timeframe**

The research should last 7 months before the inception report to present preliminary findings and to check with external experts and then there is additional 3 months to finish the research. The timeframe is flexible and negotiable; the final deliverable should be ready for the regional conference that will happen around April/Mai 2019.

#### **5. Required competencies and experience**

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The consultant should have the following skills and competencies:

- Experience conducting comparative research in several countries
- Previous research experience in energy poverty and residential energy efficiency
- Experience in research publication
- Experience working with international NGOs focusing on poverty related research
- Understanding of national, regional and international policy processes, preferred
- Knowledge of languages other than English might be required to have access to in-country information

## **6. Schedule, deliverables and budget**

We will entertain recommendations on project schedule and budget from consultant. Additionally, we will entertain suggested amended deliverables, but we would expect to receive the following:

- Brief literature review on energy poverty by desktop research and recommending working definition
- Comparative study in 4 countries in Europe with conclusions on energy poverty
- Comparative desk research on connection between residential energy efficiency programs and reducing energy poverty in Central Europe
- Evaluation of REELIH programs in 3 countries based on the available data to be provided by the project partners
- Paper on connection in 3 countries including lessons from Europe, mapping stakeholders
- Policy recommendations

## **7. Submission process and guidelines**

### **Submission process:**

REELIH invites proposals from consultants with the experience and skills described above. Please send the following to Zita Kakalejckikova, Advocacy Officer, HFH EMEA at [zkakalejckikova@habitat.org](mailto:zkakalejckikova@habitat.org) by **February 28**.

Please limit responses to a maximum of 10 pages. Consultants must submit the following information to be considered:

- Corporate overview (Legal name, year of incorporation, number of employees, income statement if available, etc.) or, for independent researchers or research teams applying, a CV detailing relevant skills and experience of no more than 4 pages, including contactable references (If a group, a CV should be submitted for each member of the research team.)
- Description of any past work or knowledge of Habitat for Humanity

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- Description of all products and services supplied
- Client references (3)
- Description of proposed methodological approach
- Description of deliverables
- Estimated budget breakdown and resources required (costs include, but are not limited to, fixed pricing & deliverables, billable hours, travel expenses, etc. )
- Project schedule & work breakdown structure, which identifies timelines, key milestones, project phases, or other project plan information.

#### **Request for proposals (RFP) reception:**

By responding to this RFP, the consultant agrees to be responsible for fully understanding the requirements or other details of the RFP, and will ask any questions to ensure such understanding is gained. Habitat for Humanity International retains the right to disqualify consultants who do not demonstrate a clear understanding of our needs. Furthermore, the right to disqualify a consultant extends past the contract award period and HFHI will be at no fault, cost, or liability.

#### **Good faith statement:**

All information provided by HFHI is offered in good faith. Specific items are subject to change at any time based on business circumstances. HFHI does not guarantee that any particular item is without error. HFHI will not be held responsible or liable for use of this information or for any claims asserted therefrom.

#### **Communication and proposal submission guidelines:**

Communications shall not be effective, unless a specified employee who is responsible for managing the RFP process formally confirms these communications in writing. In no case shall verbal communication govern over written communications.

### **8. Selection process and criteria**

Phone interviews with eligible candidates will be held the week of March 1. Final selection will be determined by March 15.

All proposals will be evaluated systematically, based on the following key criterion. The purpose of this section is to identify suppliers with the interest, capabilities, and financial stability to supply consulting services, as defined in this RFP. Following is a prioritized list of our key evaluation criteria:

- Quality of the methodological proposal: aspects that will help us to assess their suitability for that which is proposed in the RFP, quality of the proposal, feasibility, etc.
- Profile and competencies of the evaluator or evaluation team: knowledge, experience, composition and other necessary competencies.
- Suitability of the financial proposal: for the activities laid out in the methodology, within the financial possibilities of the project, etc.

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**Short-list Selection:**

Consultants who have demonstrated their capacity to meet our needs will be contacted via phone and/or email to be notified of their selection to move forward in the RFP process. Consultants, who have not been selected, will not be contacted.

**9. Other provisions**

**Waiver Authority:**

HFHI reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to waive minor irregularities in submittal requirements, to request modification of the response, to accept or reject any or all responses received, and/or to cancel all or part of this RFP at any time prior to awards.

**Disclaimer:**

This RFP does not commit HFHI to award any funds, pay any costs incurred in preparing a response, or procure or contract for services or supplies. HFHI reserves the right to accept or reject any or all responses received, negotiate with all qualified Respondents, cancel or modify the RFP in part or in its entirety, or change the response guidelines, when it is in its best interest.

**Changes/Amendments to RFP:**

This RFP has been distributed electronically using HFHI's email system. Any update and/or changes will be communicated by this process.

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**About HFHI:**

Habitat for Humanity International (HFHI) is a nonprofit organization that seeks to eliminate poverty housing and homelessness from the world and make decent shelter a matter of conscience and action worldwide. Since its founding in 1976, Habitat has built or renovated more than 800,000 homes around the world, providing more than 4 million people with safe, decent, affordable shelter. Habitat for Humanity works in 80 countries worldwide in Africa, Central and Eastern Europe, Middle East, Asia and Latin America.

**About USAID:**

USAID is the lead U.S. Government agency that works to end extreme global poverty and enable resilient, democratic societies to realize their potential. USAID extends help from the American people to achieve results for the poorest and most vulnerable around the world. USAID's mission statement highlights two complementary and intrinsically linked goals: ending extreme poverty and promoting the development of resilient, democratic societies that are able to realize their potential.

**About REELIH:**

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Habitat for Humanity and USAID established the Residential energy efficiency for low income households (REELIH) project in 2012 and implement it in Armenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Habitat for Humanity and USAID REELIH project aims to improve living standards in multi-unit apartment buildings in Eurasia. It focuses on developing a regional effort, resources and networks to address the impact of rising energy prices on collective housing. REELIH project with the financial help of [USAID](#) seeks to demonstrate that integrated efforts at the regional as well as the national level, addressing market, capacity and knowledge gaps, will bring significant improvements to the living conditions of low-income families in the Eurasian region, reduce energy costs, reduce carbon emissions, and thus overall, contribute with tangible changes to the ongoing dialogue and reform process.