



Request for Proposal (RFP)
Assessment of Communication Capability of Southeast
Asia Energy Transition Collaborative Network (SETC)
Partners

Institute for Essential Services Reform

Tebet Timur Raya No. 48b
South Jakarta
Indonesia

July, 2025



1. BACKGROUND AND PROJECT SUMMARY

Communication is a critical enabler of Southeast Asia's just and inclusive energy transition. As countries across the region work to shift from fossil fuels to renewable energy, the role of public narratives—shaped through communication—is becoming increasingly central. Narratives influence how societies perceive challenges and solutions, shaping public discourse, political priorities, and market behavior. As noted by Hermwille (2015), narratives embedded in communication efforts help people make sense of complex issues and foster collective understanding and action. Without effective communication strategies, even the most progressive energy policies and innovations risk being misunderstood, contested, or ignored.

Therefore by this intervention, the urgency of a strategic communication approach is especially clear. The region continues to rely heavily on coal and other fossil fuels, despite the growing economic viability and environmental necessity of renewable energy. At the same time, energy transition policies often face resistance due to economic, social, and political considerations. In this context, communication is not just about raising awareness—it is about building trust, shifting mindsets, fostering inclusive dialogue, and inspiring action across a wide range of stakeholders, including policymakers, business leaders, investors, journalists, and the broader public. Effective communication can also help counter misinformation, build support for reform, and strengthen the legitimacy of energy transition pathways.

The Southeast Asia Energy Transition Collaborative Network (SETC) was established as a multi-stakeholder platform of think tanks and civil society organizations dedicated to supporting a cleaner, more equitable energy future in the region. With members in Singapore (2), Malaysia (2), the Philippines (1), Cambodia (1), and Thailand (1), the network brings together diverse policy expertise and on-the-ground knowledge. While SETC partners are well-regarded for their research and policy engagement, there remains a gap in understanding the depth and strategic integration of their communication work, especially in terms of influencing public narratives, amplifying energy justice perspectives, and reaching target audiences beyond policy circles.

Recognizing this need, the **Institute for Essential Services Reform (IESR)**, on behalf of SETC, is commissioning a regional communication assessment. This assessment will review the existing communication capabilities of SETC member organizations, including their tools, strategies, audience engagement methods, media relationships, and digital presence. It will also identify strengths, gaps, and opportunities to strengthen their impact through improved coordination, more consistent messaging, and capacity-building efforts tailored to each partner's needs. The assessment will further help align the network's communication strategies with the region's dynamic policy and media landscapes.

Ultimately, the goal is to enhance the visibility, coherence, and influence of SETC's collective voice in the regional energy transition discourse. With more strategic and coordinated communication efforts, the network can more effectively advocate for clean energy, promote inclusive transition narratives, and shape policy dialogues at national and regional levels. The findings of this assessment will guide the design of communication support programs and collaborative campaigns, contributing to a stronger, more unified presence for civil society and think tanks in shaping Southeast Asia's energy future.

2. Objectives

This intervention aims to:

- Assess the institutional communication capacity of SETC partners in terms of strategy, staffing, tools, content, audience reach, and influence.



- Identify communication gaps, strengths, and needs specific to energy transition discourse in their national and regional context.
- Provide practical recommendations for capacity enhancement and coordination within SETC to support collective communication goals.

3. PROJECT DELIVERABLES AND DESCRIPTION

The selected consultant is expected to deliver the following:

- **Communication capability assessment framework**
 - Develop a qualitative and/or quantitative framework to assess partner capacity across dimensions such as strategy, personnel, tools, audience segmentation, channel use, and impact.
- **Partner assessment report**
 - Conduct interviews, surveys, and desk review to assess communication capacity of each SETC partner organization.
 - Map each partner's communication strategy, human resources, tools/platforms, past campaigns, media engagement, and collaboration practices.
- **Regional landscape summary**
 - Provide an overview of communication trends and constraints in Southeast Asia related to energy transition.
- **Recommendation report**
 - Deliver actionable recommendations for strengthening SETC's collective communication capabilities, including training priorities, resourcing needs, content collaboration, and campaign strategy alignment.

4. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Proposals must not exceed **10 pages** (excluding annexes) and must include:

1. Cover letter
2. Statement of institutional/team expertise
3. Understanding of project context
4. Research methodology and workplan
5. Timeline and milestones
6. Budget breakdown (in IDR)
7. Team composition & key personnel resumes (in Annex)
8. Relevant experience or portfolio (in Annex)

All bidders are also required to submit administrative bid documents, which can be downloaded via this link (<https://s.id/rfpcomssea>)

Terms and conditions;

- If the organization submitting a proposal must outsource or contract any work to meet the requirements, this must be clearly stated in the proposal. Additionally, costs included in proposals must include any outsourced or contracted work. Any outsourcing or contracting organization must be named and described in the proposal.
- Please describe the limitations and assumptions potentially used in the work.
- Please itemize all costs and include a description of associated services. Contract terms and conditions will be negotiated upon the selection of the winning bidder for this RFP.

5. REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL AND PROJECT TIMELINE

RFP Timeline:

- Proposals and all required documents will be accepted until **10:00 p.m.** Indonesian Western Standard Time (WIB, GMT+7) on **07 July 2025**. Any proposals received after this date and time will be regarded as inadmissible. An expert, official, or company representative who submits the proposal must sign it.
- The evaluation of proposals will be conducted from the time of submission up until **09 July 2025**.
- The selection decision for the winning candidate will be made by **10 July 2025**.

Upon notification, the contract negotiation with the winning bidder will begin immediately and must proceed extremely quickly to meet the project timeline.

Project Timeline:

The project will run from **11 July**. A draft timeline is presented below. Internal changes may be made if mutually agreed upon:

Deliverables and/or Milestones	Timeline
<i>Kick-off and final methodology presentation</i>	<i>11 July 2025</i>
<i>Partner interviews and data collection</i>	<i>12 – 26 July 2025</i>
<i>Preliminary report presentation</i>	<i>22 July 2025</i>
<i>Final report submission</i>	<i>29 July 2025</i>

A regular coordination and report meeting would be conducted between IESR and the selected consultant. Unless otherwise noted, work should be completed by the date identified above.

6. BUDGET

All proposals must include proposed costs (in Indonesian Rupiah/IDR) to complete the tasks described in the project scope. Costs should be stated as one-time or non-recurring costs (NRC). A more detailed proposal is encouraged to ease the selection process.

The budget range of this assessment is between **450 - 500 Million Rupiah (inclusive VAT)**. IESR will facilitate communication with SETC partners but will not bear travel costs (if included).

All costs and fees must be clearly described in each proposal and should be separated into each item and scope of work.

7. BIDDER QUALIFICATIONS

Bidders should provide the following items as part of their proposal:



- A description of experience in media analyses, public relation, and communication strategy (preferably having previous experience working with energy transition Issues)
- Knowledge of Southeast Asia's energy transition context (preferred)
- Strong qualitative and/or mixed method research capacity
- Anticipated resources you will assign to this project (total number, roles, titles, experience)
- Examples of two or more similar projects
- Availability within the timeline and capacity to deliver

Bidders must submit a digital copy of their proposal and all required documents via email to:

- Marlistya Citraningrum, Sustainable Energy Access Program Manager (citra@iesr.or.id)
- Uliyasi Simanjuntak, Communication Manager (uliyasi@iesr.or.id)
- Agung Marsallindo, Coordinator for Southeast Asia Energy Transition Project (agung@iesr.or.id)
- Turas Nur V., Sustainable Energy Access Program Officer (turas@iesr.or.id)

Any inquiries about this RFP can be sent to the same email addresses.

Please include “*RFP Response - Assessment of Communication Capability of Southeast Asia Energy Transition Collaborative Network (SETC) Partners*” in the subject line.