



**PROJECT 'MODERNIZATION OF LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICES IN
THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA'**

**Participatory planning: Energy Efficiency in Public
Buildings**

Lessons Learned

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Author:

Ion Muntean

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Abbreviations

DR	Development Region
EE	Energy Efficiency
EEA	Energy Efficiency Agency
EUREM	European Energy Manager Training
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
LEEAP	Local Energy Efficiency Action Plan
LPA 1	Local Public Authorities of first level
LPA 2	Local Public Authorities of second level
MLPS	Modernisation of Local Public Services
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
RDA	Regional Development Agency
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

Executive summary

The Local Public Authorities of second level (LPA) in the Republic of Moldova are obliged to elaborate Local Energy Efficiency Action Plans (LEEAP).¹ Although this has been a legal provision since 2010, until 2017 no LPA managed to elaborate such plans due to low technical knowledge and financial capacities. The first LPA that elaborated LEEAP were those that benefited from the support of the Modernization of local public services (MLPS) project, implemented by German Development Cooperation through GIZ. Due to the mandate of the project, the support focused mainly on the public buildings chapter of the plan.

The approach used in the strategic planning process was based on the following steps: creation of a working group, data collection, elaboration of the LEEAP, approval of the LEEAP by the working group, public consultations, endorsement of the plan by the Energy Efficiency Agency (EEA) and approval of the plan by the LPA' councils. The planning process was thereby built on a set of principles as follows: compliance with relevant policy documents; participatory process; planning based on a need analysis; contribution shared between all parties involved; involvement of expertise in the field.

Analyzing the implementation of the planning process, this paper reveals rather weak capacities of the LPA in strategic planning, starting with data collection and ending with the organisation of the public consultations. Moreover, the lack of finance for implementation of the investment projects constituted a big challenge for the LPA in order to achieve the energy efficiency targets in the building sector. Territorial-administrative particularities related to the status of some public buildings and the existing financing mechanism of LPA 1 and LPA 2 further complicated the planning process. The civil society has an important role in the establishment of priorities at local level. However, the lack of tradition and culture of being involved made their representation difficult. Not less important is the role of the central authority in providing targeted support to LPA in the strategic planning process. However, their existing capacities in terms of consultancy, informational and methodological support do not succeed to meet all LPA needs.

The main lessons learned from the strategic planning exercise highlight the need for further capacity development of LPA for the elaboration of the LEEAP and the need of technical expertise in this regard. The role of the working group is very important, not only with regard to the elaboration phase, but also in view of the implementation and monitoring of the plan. The involvement of civil society in strategic planning exercise is important and needed, however difficult without the support of a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO).

¹ Law no. 139 of 19.07.2018 on Energy efficiency, art. no. 13

1. Introduction

During 2018, the project „Modernisation of Local Public Services in the Republic of Moldova (MLPS)” implemented by German Development Cooperation through GIZ provided assistance to 7 LPA in the development of Local Energy Efficiency Action Plans (LEEAP) for public buildings. Supported LPA included Balti and Sangerei (North Development Region (DR)), Ungheni, Soldanesti, Straseni and Dubasari (Centre DR) as well as Basarabeasca (South DR). The actions were undertaken in line with the aim of the MLPS project to strengthen the capacities of LPA in participatory planning processes with the objective to improve local governance and access to qualitative public services that meet the needs of the citizens. Moreover, support was provided to increase the participation of citizens and interested parties in planning and decision-making processes.

According to the national legislation, the LPA of second level have the obligation to ensure the development, coordination and approval of local energy efficiency action plans. The LPA of first level can also develop LEEAP. The importance for LPA to have a LEEAP is not revealed only by the law, it has a very important role in the development of the sector, being the road map towards an energy efficient building infrastructure. It is also the key instrument in the dialog with donors and financing institutions.

The aim of this paper is to document and share the lessons learned and experience accumulated by the involved actors during the strategic planning exercise in the Energy Efficiency sector of public buildings. The paper intends to provide useful information for the organizations and individuals to facilitate the strategic planning process at LPA level and identify lessons learned that can be of help when applying strategic planning in other energy intensive sectors such as street lighting, public transport, district heating, water supply and sewerage etc.

The methodology applied in the preparation of the paper was based on the following instruments: data collection, desk research, interviews and observations. Data collection included all relevant information from key stakeholders accumulated during the strategic planning process such as reports, work deliverables of involved teams, minutes of the meetings/events etc. The desk research, besides the collected information, analysed the existing guidelines on strategic planning such as the “Practical guidelines for elaboration of Rayons’ strategies on socio-economic development”² elaborated by IDIS Viitorul in 2014, “Strategic planning guide for local socio-economic development based on the principles of gender equality and human rights”³ elaborated by UNDP in 2007, Training program "Integrated strategic planning on local and regional level" elaborated by GIZ in 2013⁴.

Interviews with the respective stakeholders were thereby chosen as the main method of data collection due to the possibility to assess the process from different perspectives. In this regard, a questionnaire was developed with questions divided into 4 categories: relevance, effectiveness,

²<http://www.serviciilocale.md/download.php?file=cHViibGllL3B1YmxpY2F0aW9ucy84NTcxMTBfZW5fZ2hpZF9wcmFjZGljX2VuLnBkZg%3D%3D>

³ http://descentralizare.gov.md/public/publications/942268_en_strategic_plann.pdf

⁴ <http://serviciilocale.md/pageview.php?l=en&idc=52&id=783&t=/News-Photos/Projects-News/GIZ-supports-the-training-of-local-public-authorities-in-strategic-planning-project-development-and-regional-development/>

efficiency and sustainability. The interviews were organised with representatives of 5 out of the 7 LPA, the EEA, NGOs and experts involved in the process.

2. Approach to EE sector planning

The elaboration of local planning documents on energy efficiency, including public buildings is an obligation from the previous law on energy efficiency adopted in 2010 and was taken over in the new law from 2018. The GIZ MLPS support for LPA in strategic planning was based on the needs of the LPA and on the provisions of the current legislation obliging LPA 2 to have a LEEAP. Until 2017, no local energy efficiency programs and action plans were elaborated at LPA level according to the provisions of the national legislation in energy efficiency.

The following principles were applied during the strategic planning process:

- **Compliance with relevant policy documents:** The elaborated documents were in line with the local socio-economic strategies which include some priorities on energy efficiency. At regional level, the Regional Sector Programs on Energy Efficiency in public buildings⁵⁶⁷ provided the frame of the objectives and actions at local level. In addition, the plans have to be in line with the National Energy Efficiency Program⁸ and Action Plan⁹. That way, the objectives established in the LEEAP (EE in public buildings) have a direct contribution to the achievement of the national targets in energy efficiency.
- **Participatory process:** The involvement of the local citizens in the strategic planning exercise has an important role from different perspectives. First of all, it ensures the transparency of the planning process. It offers the possibility for the community representatives to be informed and to take part in the decision-making process as part of the working group. The LPA and in particular the rayon energy managers were supported in organizing public consultations to ensure broader participation in the planning process and elaboration of plans. Special attention was paid to the equal inclusion of women and men in the process and people with disabilities. In some cases, young people were involved in the planning process, for example the students of the schools of the EE projects which are financed by EU and implemented with GIZ MLPS support.
- **Planning based on need analysis:** Before starting the planning process, a thorough analysis of the needs at local level was conducted based on the information collected. Specific for EE in public buildings was the identification of the priority investment projects and the complementary information and awareness raising actions.
- **Division of tasks and responsibilities between all involved stakeholders:** All involved stakeholders had a clear role in the strategic planning process. The members of the working groups were involved in data collection, provision of relevant information,

⁵ http://www.serviciilocale.md/public/files/prs/2014_06_30_EE_RSP_DRN_FINAL_EN.pdf

⁶ http://www.serviciilocale.md/public/files/prs/2014_06_30_EE_RSP_DRC_FINAL_EN.pdf

⁷ http://www.serviciilocale.md/public/files/prs/2014_06_30_EE_RSP_DRS_FINAL_EN.pdf

⁸ <http://lex.justice.md/index.php?action=view&view=doc&lang=1&id=340940>

⁹ <http://lex.justice.md/index.php?action=view&view=doc&lang=1&id=369635>

dissemination of information, review of the documents, etc. This was important in order to increase the ownership of the community/beneficiaries on the final document.

- **Involvement of expertise in the field:** The existing capacities of LPA did not allow them to elaborate a LEEAP by themselves. Although the law on energy efficiency states that each LPA 2 has to employ an energy manager (responsible for the strategic planning at local level as well), in the majority of cases, the responsibilities of this position are covered by other specialists from the LPA administration which do not necessarily have an energy related background. It is important to note that no methodological support existed at the beginning of the planning process. In this case, it was needed to involve external expertise.

The strategic planning exercise applied to energy efficiency sector was also analysed based on the activity reports, minutes of the working groups meetings, terms of reference of the experts, information placed on the LPA' web pages and interviews. As a result, **seven key steps of the planning process** were identified, as presented in the figure no. 1.

Figure 1. Steps of the planning process in the energy efficiency sector



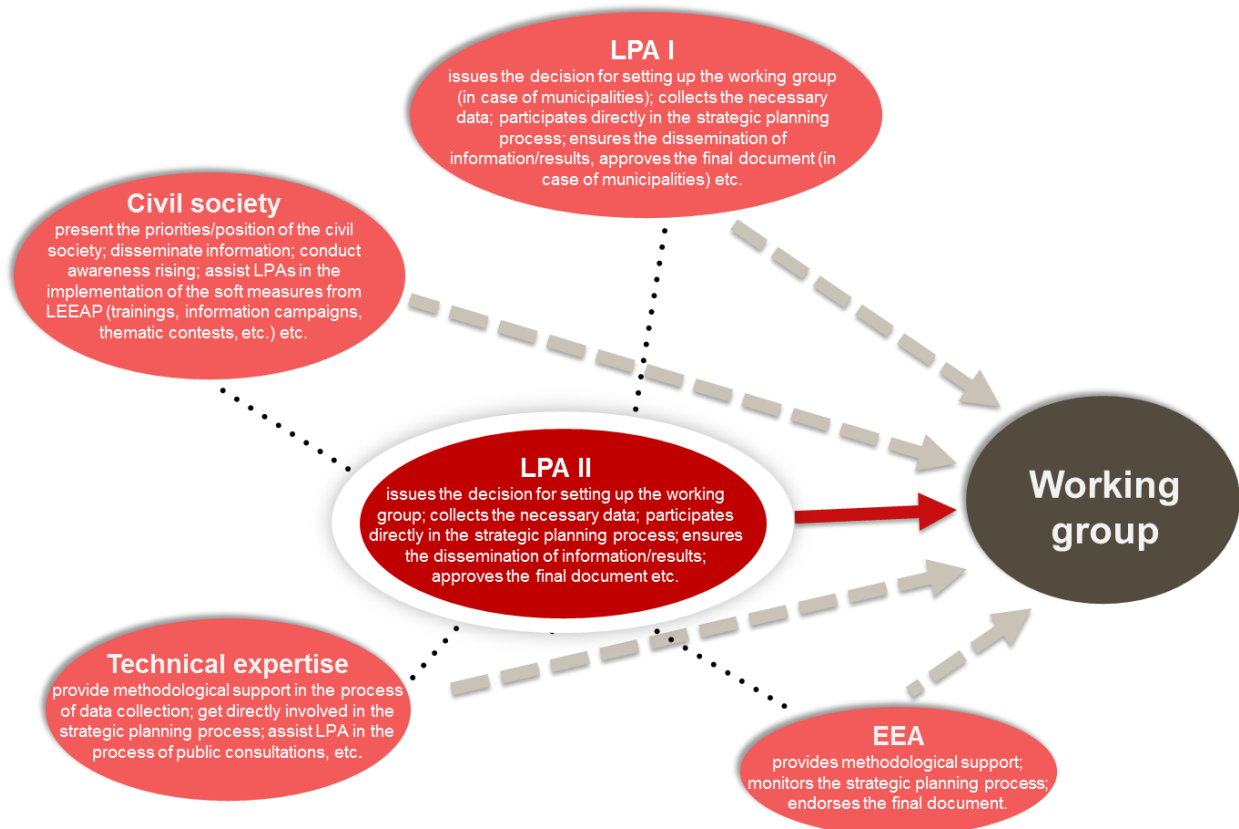
The **first step was the creation of the working group** in each LPA by an official decision of the Rayon president.¹⁰ The working group was coordinated by the president of the working group, who was delegated by an official decision of the Rayon president. The composition of the working group included representatives of LPA 2, the energy manager of the Rayon as well as representatives of the EEA, LPA 1 and civil society. In average, the working group consisted of 9 persons. However, not all LPA had employed an energy manager for different reasons. In some cases, the real composition of the working group was thus slightly different. Sometimes the working group meetings were attended by representatives of RDAs. In other cases, the working group meetings were attended by representatives of the parents' association from the school

¹⁰ In case of Balti municipality, the decision was signed by the mayor.

where energy refurbishment projects are implemented financed by EU with GIZ MLPS support. They played a very important role in the identification of the LPA's energy manager.

The interaction between the members of the working group is presented in the figure no. 2. In general, each member of the working group had a specific role as described in the chart.

Figure 2. Roles, responsibilities and interaction between members of the working group in the planning process



Although the RDAs were not part of the working group, in some cases their involvement was important for the facilitation of the planning process and to ensure the involvement of civil society. The RDAs experience to work with NGOs is important and helpful for LPA which are not in contact with local/regional NGOs. In the future, RDAs have to consolidate their role as a focal point in regions in order to facilitate the communication between the EEA, NGOs and LPA, as well as the exchange of experience between LPAs.

The **second step was the collection of needed information for the planning process**, coordinated by the energy manager. The collected information included general data about LPA, the financial situation at LPA's level, information about the existing capacities of LPA in energy efficiency, the previous projects implemented and data about public buildings. The data about public buildings were collected based on questionnaires which were sent to representatives of public institutions and mayors from LPA 1 by the energy manager. Two types of questionnaires were used by the LPA. Several LPA used a questionnaire with shorter list of questions, others used a questionnaire with longer list of questions, requiring more detailed information. The quality

of the collected data was better in the cases with shorter questionnaire as it was easier to understand and required fewer efforts to collect the data. In the case of the questionnaire with a longer list of questions, a lot of information useful for more detailed analysis and calculations such as energy audits was collected. However, this was not needed for the elaboration of the LEEAP.

The **third step was the elaboration of the first draft of the LEEAP on EE in public buildings**, based on the information provided by the working group members. The involvement of external experts was needed during this step as the existing capacities of LPA did not allow them to elaborate the LEEAP by themselves. The main difficulty the LPA faced referred to missing technical expertise in energy efficiency (buildings, transport, lighting etc.). Also, many LPA did not have sufficient experience in organising a participatory planning process. The prioritization of the investment projects to be included in the action plan was a very important element. In this regard, a set of technical, economic and social criteria was applied similar to the ones used for the elaboration of the Regional Sector Programs on Energy Efficiency in public buildings:

- Public buildings with different destination (medical, education, culture etc.);
- The size (heated surface) of the buildings;
- Substantial demand for thermal refurbishments;
- The buildings should not be a monument of architecture;
- The degree of utilisation has to be higher than 50% from the total number of places (in case of schools and kindergartens) etc.

In some cases, the criteria were slightly adjusted by the working group by applying different weights to different criteria as shown in the table below:

No.	Criteria	Comments	Weights
1	Specific energy consumption of the building	kWh/m ²	30 %
2	Total primary energy consumption	kWh	20 %
4	The degree of use of the maximum capacity of the building		10 %
3	Occupation of the building	Buildings with occupancy greater than 75% will be given priority	10 %
5	The building has been rebuilt for the last 3 years	Yes No	10 % 0 %
6	Building with an area of over 250 m ²		10 %
7	Visibility of the building		10 %
	Total score - sum	Max	100 %

The **fourth step was the approval of the plan by the working group's members** after consultation within the working group. The decision was documented in the meeting's minutes.

The **fifth step were the public consultations** on the draft document. The public consultations were organised according to the provisions of the government decision no. 967 of 09.08.2016 on the public consultation mechanism with civil society in the decision-making process¹¹. In practice,

¹¹ <http://lex.justice.md/md/366274/>

an announcement about launching public consultations and the draft document was published on the official web pages of LPA and a public hearing event was organised within LPA's premises. For broader dissemination of the information, LPA used the e-mails they had in their data base. In other cases, social media was used to share the information about the public consultations. In this regard, the role of involved NGOs was very helpful, since they used their communication

“Using local media such as radio and newspaper was a very efficient approach in dissemination of the information about the planning process. Sometimes due to the multitude of activities and lack of communication instruments the local administration do not manage to disseminate all relevant information.” the representative of one LPA said.

platforms for dissemination of the information. In almost all cases, the procedure had a more formal character and the recommendations received from civil society were very few.

The **sixth step was the endorsement of the LEEAP by the EEA**. The LPA 2 sent an official request to the EEA to endorse the plan. This is a mandatory step according to the provisions of the law on energy efficiency. No specific comments to the documents were received from the EEA, just a reminder that LPA need to develop the rest of the chapters from the LEEAP template.

The **seventh step was the approval of the EE in public buildings chapter of the LEEAP by the LPA' council**. The document was sent to the members of the council by the energy manager one week in advance to the council meeting so that the members could get acquainted with it. No specific questions/comments appeared during the presentation of the document to the council and the document was approved.

“The experts involved in the planning process are well enough qualified and the document reflects the priorities of the Rayon. The remaining challenge is the availability of financial resources.” a representative of LPA 2 said.

3. Key findings of the strategic planning exercise

The planning process described in Chapter 2 was assessed through interviews based on a set of questions structured in four categories: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. The main findings are presented in the table below.

Relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All elaborated documents are in line with local, regional and national relevant policy documents. • Although the elaboration of the LEEAP was mandatory by law, no LPA managed to develop a LEEAP individually without an external support. • LPA do not fully see the real relevance of the local planning document, even though it is intended to reduce the energy expenses in the local budget.
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Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The limited level of knowledge and experience of public servants in strategic planning became apparent during the interviews with different stakeholders. • The energy manager at LPA level plays a central role in the strategic planning process in energy efficiency. Despite the legal provision which requires each LPA level 2 to employ an energy manager, in the majority of cases this position is cumulated by another employee from LPA's administration. As a result, less attention and importance are given to the EE sector. • The majority of the energy managers at LPA level do not have the relevant education and professional background for this position. As a result, the quality of the planning process was in general rather poor, external support was needed. • LPA have limited experience in the involvement of civil society in the planning process.
Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data collection is a very important stage in the planning process. Poor quality of collected data was one of the main reasons in delaying the planning process and affected in all cases the quality of the document. • One of the reasons for the poor quality of the collected data was that the persons involved in the process of data collection were not sufficiently trained on how to fill in the provided questionnaire. • The prioritisation of the investment projects in the process of elaboration of the LEEAP on EE in public buildings is a sensitive process, which is often influenced by politics. • Only few comments/proposals were received during the public consultations. They had more of a formal character and did not bring enough added value to the plan as hoped. However, the public consultations made the planning process more transparent and informed the public about the opportunity to contribute. • The number of active NGOs at community level, which could add value during the planning process, is very limited and their profile is far from the subject in majority of cases.
Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In many cases the implementation of the LEEAPs has not started yet, although more than half a year passed after the approval by the LPA. The budget constraints represent the main barrier for the implementation of the LEEAP. • In some cases, it was decided to implement other investment projects than those included in the LEEAP. • Currently the EEA is not able to provide the needed support to LPA during the planning process as it is stated in the law on energy efficiency. • Part of local councillors and citizens still remain indifferent and do not believe that the LEEAP will help them in getting finance for implementation.

4. Lessons learnt and recommendations

1) The role of the LPA and its energy manager in the strategic planning process is a central one and, where missing, a specific approach is needed.

The LPA has the central role in the planning process, which is exercised through the energy manager. Almost all LPA highlighted the problem of missing an energy manager with appropriate professional background and experience. There were different reasons why LPA have not employed an energy manager fully dedicated to this task, but the main one is the difficulty to find a specialist with a relevant professional background. In many cases, the role of the energy manager is thus taken on by one of the specialists from the construction or economic department of the rayon, who has to devote the most part of his/her time to other tasks. Considering that the energy payments of the LPA are quite high compared to other expenses and the opportunities they have in attracting financing, the role of the energy manager is somehow underestimated by LPA. In addition, the energy savings are one of his/her duties. In this sense, additional effort was needed to explain to LPA the real role of the energy manager and additional resources were mobilised in order to train and to help the energy managers to exercise his/her role within the planning process. In some cases, the participation of energy managers in the EUREM training program was supported. Moreover, study visits were organised to learn from other experiences and best practices in strategic planning.

Recommendation: (1) Proper staffing for the position of the energy manager should be ensured by LPA. (2) Specialized trainings for energy managers, preferably by applying the learning by doing method should be available. (3) Strengthening the capacities of the EEA to better support the LPA.

2) The development of the LEEAP requires the involvement of technical expertise in case LPA do not have sufficient internal capacities.

The process of developing the Local Action Plans in the EE sector is a very complex one, requiring appropriate knowledge, capacities and skills that many LPA do not currently have. According to the template elaborated by the EEA, the LEEAP has to include different sectors such as buildings, street lighting, transport, energy facilities, etc. in the document. In order to get a qualitative LEEAP, the LPA have to involve specialists with deep knowledge in all mentioned sectors which was a very difficult task without the involvement of external expertise. Some LPA invested in developing their capacities in strategic planning, but employee fluctuation exceeded the efforts of the LPA to maintain a good specialist in the position of energy manager. The EEA has an important role for supporting LPA in the elaboration of the LEEAP, but currently the Agency is not in the position to provide consistent support due to missing capacities. At the end of 2018, the EEA, supported by the MLPS project, elaborated a template of the LEEAP with guidelines which intends to facilitate the strategic planning process on energy efficiency at LPA level. However, this does not solve the issue of LPA needing trained specialists to elaborate, monitor and evaluate the implementation of the LEEAP.

Recommendation: (1) The EEA should increase its capacity to support LPA, when required. (2) For the elaboration of planning documents such as the LEEAP, LPA have to consider involving external technical expertise in case they do not have sufficient internal capacities.

3) The data collection process has to be conducted well with sufficient allocation of appropriate time and resources.

This refers mainly to the data collection about buildings for which two types of questionnaires were used. During the interviews with energy managers, the poor capacities and lack of interest from LPA 1 to collect data was mentioned. The poor quality of data has a negative impact on the quality of the planning process in view of time and priorities to be established. The problem with the data collection generated in some cases a delay of several months in the elaboration and the approval of the LEEAP. The situation could be much better if the persons involved in the data collection process were trained on how to fill in the questionnaires. Another source of relevant information are the energy audits which were elaborated in the last years at the level of the LPA. It is well known that many energy audits were elaborated and applied for financing from the Energy Efficiency Fund. The interviews with LPA and the EEA confirmed that no centralised information exists on the energy audits which were elaborated in the last years. This information is relevant in order to ensure the continuity of the efforts in identification of the financing sources and implementation of projects. Otherwise the money spent for the energy audits are lost in two years as this is the maximum validity term.

Recommendations: (1) Simple questionnaires that are strictly related to the planning process should be used. (2) The involved persons in the data collection process should be trained in advance. (3) The EEA should keep an official register of all energy audits elaborated with public money and for public institutions. (4) The LPA should develop and keep updated database with information about public buildings.

4) The strategic planning exercise has to be synchronized with the budget-planning period for the following year in order to reflect investment priorities.

According to the law no. 139 of 19.07.2018 on energy efficiency, the LPA have the obligation to ensure the elaboration, coordination and approval of the local energy efficiency action plans by September 30th of the year preceding the beginning of their implementation. During the interviews held with representatives of LPA, situations were identified where the LEEAP and in particular the public buildings chapter were approved only in November or December. As the budget planning process for the next financial year usually starts in September-October, in these cases the developed LEEAP did not have any financial coverage. As a result, no real implementation of the LEEAP with local resources could be expected. This explains why some of the LPA have not registered any implementation progress of LEEAP in the first half of the year. There are examples of LPA where responsible persons for budget planning were members of the working groups and funding sources have been planned for implementation the LEEAP. As a result, real progress in implementation of the LEEAP could be achieved.

Recommendations: (1) The LEEAP should be approved in the timeline of the budget planning process for the next financial years. (2) A responsible person for budget planning should be included as a member of the working group for the elaboration of the LEEAP to ensure a financial coverage of the implementation of the plan.

5) The participatory approach is important in the planning exercise and can be facilitated through involvement of civil society organisations and media actors in the process.

The involvement of the civil society in the planning process is important to ensure its transparency, increase access to information and improve the opportunity for citizens to participate in planning and decision-making processes. It also increases the credibility of the plan and makes it easier to disseminate the information and achieve acceptance of the results. In this regard, three NGOs were involved in the planning exercise which among others had the responsibility to mobilize the community. The interviews with NGOs revealed that it was very difficult to mobilize citizens in local activities, as many of them appeared to be disinterested. This was explained with very low civic spirit and lack of previous similar experience. It took some time and efforts to explain why it is important for a citizen to be involved in the planning process at local level. It became even more difficult to do that in case of LPA 2 where there are 30-40 LPA with different preferences to be included in the LEEAP. In order to increase citizens involvement, there is a need for real examples of results achieved through participation, to show citizens how they can influence the situation at the local level. An important role in increasing the civic spirit has the local media such as TV, radio, newspapers, etc. Moreover, if the civil society participation only has a rather formal character, then the importance of the planning process at local level will be disgraced.

Recommendations: (1) The LPA should involve the civil society in the planning process, for example with the help of a NGO (preferably local one) to increase the transparency and the inclusiveness. (2) Local media should be involved at maximum to inform and stimulate the involvement of citizens.

6) The real commitment of the LPA to the implementation of the LEEAP has to be ensured during the planning process.

The interviews showed that seven months after the approval of the LEEAPs, in 5 (out of 7) LPA no actions mentioned in the plan were implemented except the pilot project financed by EU implemented with GIZ MLPS support. One of the most commonly used argument was that no further funding was available to implement the actions outlined in the plan. At the same time, the LEEAP foresees that funding sources have to be identified to implement this plan. In some cases, energy efficiency projects not included in the LEEAP priority list were implemented. Against this background, it does not come as a surprise that both LPA representatives and citizens lose interest to participate in the planning process, as they do not see the relevance of it and do not see that the plan is implemented in reality.

Recommendations: (1) The LPA should proactively identify and apply for financial resources to ensure the implementation of the LEEAP (2) A general rule should be established that only projects included in the LEEAP could be financed with public sources at national level.

7) The activity of the working group has to go beyond the strategic planning process and cover the monitoring and evaluation of the LEEAP implementation as well.

The role of the working group in the planning process was important to ensure the participatory approach and the representativeness of different stakeholders in the process. The working groups were created for the period of elaboration of the LEEAPs. The importance of the working group format for the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the LEEAP and the dissemination of the results was mentioned during the interviews with experts and the NGOs involved in the planning process. In order to increase the credibility in the working group, the

NGOs can take over the coordination role and to convene regular working meetings. This could create a more permanent attention on the progress of implementation of the LEEAP and increase the accountability of LPA. In case there are real reasons for lack of progress, the civil society and other stakeholders can better understand the situation. This could decrease the public pressure on the LPA. Furthermore, a deeper involvement of local councilors and civil society representatives in the information and awareness campaigns is needed. When any progress in the implementation of the LEEAP is achieved, the working group has to play an important role in dissemination of the information using different tools such as web pages, social networks, site visits, round tables, meetings, leaflets.

Recommendations: (1) The format of the working group should be maintained for the monitoring and evaluation of the LEEAP implementation. (2) Capacity building for the members of the working group on project monitoring and evaluation, citizen participation, public consultations, etc. should be provided.

8) Different planning approaches are needed at LPA 1 and LPA 2 levels.

LPA1 and LPA2 have different competences in relation to public buildings. For example, gymnasiums are in the administration of LPA 2, while the buildings of the gymnasiums are the property of LPA 1. In case of kindergartens, both administration and building are in the competence of LPA1. In fact, LPA2 does not have direct responsibilities for maintaining of public infrastructure as these are in the property of LPA1. Moreover, one can see a difference in the planning process of LPA level 2 as some of them have more LPA 1 than others. For example, the data collection and elaboration of LEEAPs at level of municipalities (as in the case of Balti LPA) appeared to be easier, as less LPA 1 were included, and the number of involved stakeholders was thus lower. In case of LPA 2 which administratively includes more than 30 LPA 1, the elaboration of the LEEAP was more difficult and complex due to the high number of stakeholders involved in the process. The higher the number of involved stakeholders, the more difficult it was for example to prioritize the investment projects for the plan. Despite the strict set of technical, economic and social criteria for the prioritization process, the political reasoning remained a challenge. Political support for the prioritized investment projects is essential as otherwise the projects run the risk to be included in the plan, but never be implemented in reality. Moreover, the public consultations were a challenge for LPA 2, which sometimes failed to provide enough representativeness in the planning exercise.

Recommendations: (1) The role of the working group should not be limited only to the identification and approval of the prioritization criteria. (2) The prioritization of projects should be done strictly according to the approved criteria avoiding political implications.

5. Conclusions

The participatory strategic planning process is a very complex one and requires appropriate capacities of the concerned authorities and awareness and readiness of the citizens and other stakeholders to take active part in it.

This paper could help decision makers and other interested parties to better understand what the challenges in the planning process are and how they need to organise themselves in order to

overcome the potential difficulties. The lessons learned and the recommendations provided in this paper target all stakeholders from the energy efficiency sector who are involved in strategic planning. This experience can also be used by other areas in the energy efficiency sector. Their active involvement and synchronisation of the efforts is needed to improve the existing situation in the sector in an efficient and sustainable way.

References

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6. GIZ 2013: Training program "Integrated strategic planning on local and regional level"
7. UNDP 2007: Strategic planning guide for local socio-economic development based on the principles of gender equality and human rights;
8. Regional Sector Program on Energy Efficiency in public buildings for North DR;
9. Regional Sector Program on Energy Efficiency in public buildings for Center DR;
10. Regional Sector Program on Energy Efficiency in public buildings for South DR.

Annex 1: Questions for the interviews

Criteria	Questions	Methods
Relevance	<p>What were the objectives of sector planning?</p> <p>Was the approach consistent with the regional development strategies and national sector strategies?</p> <p>Is the approach consistent with the actions of other development partners?</p>	<p>Interviews</p> <p>Focus group discussions</p> <p>Review of documents</p>
Effectiveness	<p>Was the use of the WGs an appropriate method for developing the EE chapter?</p> <p>What was the role of your institutions in this process?</p> <p>Was the WG composition appropriate? (More or less people? Other institutions to be included?)</p> <p>Were there enough meetings of the WG? (Need of more, less or there were enough?)</p> <p>The institution that has the ownership of the document was active enough?</p> <p>How appropriate was the formal process (i.e. the series of working groups) for developing EE chapter?</p> <p>Did the approach provide sufficient opportunities for the district council, municipal enterprise, CSOs, city halls to participate?</p> <p>Was the approach gender sensitive? Were the needs of the socially vulnerable groups and men & women' taken into account?</p> <p>Was the method of consultation appropriate?</p> <p>What are the strengths and weaknesses of the approach?</p> <p>What was the quality of EE chapter, including their use of evidence, links to national strategies, and the logic of the proposed interventions?</p> <p>Was the process participative? Did the WG members involve to the same extent?</p> <p>Did the TA team take into account the proposals of the WG members?</p>	<p>Interviews</p> <p>Focus group discussions</p> <p>Review of documents</p> <p>Questionnaire survey of WG participants</p> <p>Questionnaire survey of participants at final consultation event</p>
Efficiency	<p>How well was the planning process organised?</p> <p>Did it deliver specific out-puts on time?</p>	<p>Interviews</p> <p>Focus group discussions</p>

	<p>The time allocated for the strategic planning process was enough?</p> <p>Was the sector planning process an efficient way of identifying actions for the Action Plan?</p> <p>Did the public consultations improve the quality of the document? How many recommendations/comments did you receive and how many of them were accepted?</p>	Review of documents
Sustainability	<p>To what extent have the district/local council been enabled to facilitate sector planning?</p> <p>What did you learn from the planning process?</p> <p>What changed since the approval of the EE chapter from LEEAP? Is there any monitoring in place?</p> <p>Can this chapter be elaborated in the future by the local/district council without the help of the technical assistance team and experts?</p> <p>To what extent have the local/district council been enabled to support the elaboration of the Action Plan?</p> <p>What is the future role of the sector working groups?</p> <p>To what extent has regional sector planning improved sector governance in EE?</p> <p>What are the lessons for the roll out of sectoral planning to other sectors?</p>	<p>Interviews</p> <p>Focus group discussions</p> <p>Review of documents</p>
Conclusions	<p>What are the main lessons learned?</p> <p>How do you evaluate the quality of the elaborated document?</p> <p>Do you consider the final result a good one and according to your expectations?</p> <p>Are there any workshops or training needed to strengthen some useful capacities in the planning and implementation process? If yes, which are they?</p> <p>What refinements need to be made to the method?</p> <p>Can the approach be extended to sectors not covered within the MLPS project?</p>	