



Sustainable energy management for cities

Cities in developing and transition countries are facing enormous challenges in energy management, in terms of costs, greenhouse gas emissions and air quality. SECO supports cities to establish interdisciplinary planning approaches and to implement concrete measures for sustainable energy management cutting across different municipal sectors such as spatial planning, mobility and public buildings. The approach and its implementation are rich of Swiss expertise.

Challenges cities are facing

Today, half of the world's population lives in urban areas. Cities are at the heart of economic development, but leave an enormous footprint in terms of energy consumption and climate impact. Indeed, cities consume over two-thirds of the world's energy and account for more than 70% of global CO₂ emissions. With rapid urbanization, these numbers are likely to rise even further. This highlights the increasing relevance of the nexus cities and energy as well as the potential of cities to take a lead in addressing climate change.

SECO's approach

SECO is very active in promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency in developing and transition countries, putting an emphasis on energy-efficient cities. SECO's portfolio in the energy sector clearly aims at contributing to low-emission and climate-resilient economies, and is therefore



fully in line with SDG 7 "affordable and clean energy". It also contributes to SDG 11 "sustainable cities and communities".

How is SECO concretely supporting cities to make use of their potential? SECO supports cities for instance in their energy planning and management based on the Swiss approach and label “Energy City”, a structured and participatory approach, promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy.

Longstanding Swiss experience

Indeed, Switzerland has a longstanding experience in sustainable energy management and planning at municipal level. The label “Energy City” was established in Switzerland in the early 1990s and is now used under the umbrella brand “European Energy Award” in eight European countries. Today, approximatively 48 million people live in one of the 1500 municipalities participating in the process.

The “European Energy Award” is a quality assurance and labelling tool. It provides guidance and support to local authorities in establishing interdisciplinary planning approaches and implementing effective energy and climate policy measures through the rational use of energy and the promotion of renewable energies. It offers advice, evaluates performance and awards local authorities with a label upon achievement of targets.

SECO’s role

SECO supports various partner countries to introduce the approach “Energy City”/“European Energy Award”, namely in Ukraine, Romania, Colombia, Serbia, Tunisia and Albania. In doing so, SECO does not only support selected cities in identifying effective energy and climate policy measures, but also in adopting participatory planning approaches, thus improving the energy governance at local level. Throughout the process, a team of qualified consultants support national and local stakeholders. Know-how transfer and capacity-development are key components of the approach.

Through the labelling, cities get acknowledged for their achievements in sustainable energy management and climate protection. Comparison among peers is also a stimulating factor. The label helps cities to improve their image, gain visibility and attract investors for future projects. Cities indeed embark on a long-term, sustainable energy management process that continues with regular reassessments.

An external evaluation conducted in 2018 confirmed the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of SECO’s approach in the field of energy-efficient cities, including the promotion of the “Energy City”/“European Energy Award”.

European Energy Award in Ukraine

Ukraine is one of the least energy-efficient countries in Europe. Its energy intensity is around three times higher than the average of OECD countries, which is a constraint to economic development.

SECO is providing support to two pilot cities in Ukraine, Vinnytsia and Zhytomyr, to improve their energy management through enhancing energy efficiency and renewable energy. Both cities have been awarded the label “European Energy Award”. With SECO’s support, the cities have established an interdisciplinary energy team, analyzed their current energy consumption, elaborated and adopted a concrete action plan and implemented energy efficiency measures in the fields of energy supply, spatial planning and urban mobility. Vinnytsia for instance developed a spatial plan aiming at a compact city development, promoted the public transport system, developed bicycle infrastructure and rehabilitated the municipal district heating system. SECO has contributed to capacity development of local partners, awareness raising and targeted catalytic investments, supporting a holistic policy approach.

Due to the positive experiences in the two pilot cities, other Ukrainian cities have shown interest in implementing the approach and getting the award. It is foreseen to replicate the project in other cities in Ukraine as well as at to establish a national structure with the support of the Ministry of Regional Development and potentially other partners to foster sustainability. The introduction of EEA at national level combined with other initiatives thus contributes to better energy management in Ukrainian cities.

For more information and contact details

Website: www.seco-cooperation.admin.ch

E-mail: info.wein.cooperation@seco.admin.ch