

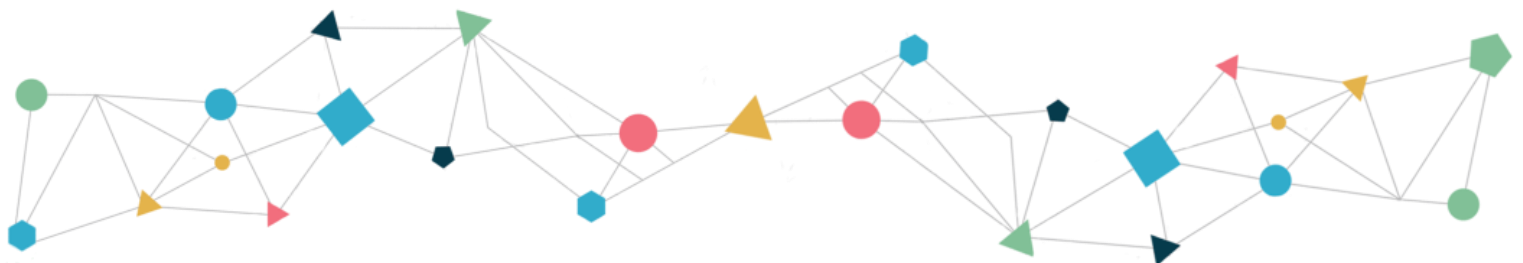


Energy Poverty Advisory Hub

***“Call for
Technical Assistance to
Tackle Energy Poverty”***

Description document

(TA/2022/01)



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1. INTRODUCTION

The present document is intended to provide additional support to organisations looking to apply for the technical assistance provided by the Energy Poverty Advisory Hub (EPAH). Full documentation and information about the call are available on the website at the specific section for the [Call for Technical Assistance](#).

[Chapter 2](#)

provides information about the Energy Poverty Advisory Hub and the different tools already available to develop local actions to tackle energy poverty.

[Chapter 3](#)

defines the basic concept of energy poverty in order to facilitate the reading of the whole document. In the same chapter there are various links to additional resources that can be consulted in order to acquire a wider understanding of the concept.

[Chapter 4](#)

enters into details of the application process and provides important information about deadlines, expected timelines and the technical assistance provided.

[Chapter 5](#)

focuses on the format of the **application form** and provides supporting information on how to complete the different sections. For better performance it is recommended to read this chapter carefully and review it during the whole writing process.

[Chapter 6](#)

provides additional information about the evaluation.

[Chapter 7](#)

mentions how your data in the proposals will be processed (GDPR).

[Chapter 8](#)

presents how it is possible to submit additional questions about the call and the related deadlines.

To prepare a successful proposal it is advisable to [download all the documents in advance](#) from the website.

The estimated time to complete the application form is **two working days**.

2. ABOUT THE ENERGY POVERTY ADVISORY HUB

The Energy Poverty Advisory Hub (EPAH), the leading EU initiative run by the European Commission at the request of the European Parliament, is a collaborative network of stakeholders aiming to eradicate energy poverty and accelerate the just energy transition of local governments in Europe.

Our mission is to be a centre of energy poverty expertise in Europe for local governments and all stakeholders interested in taking action to combat energy poverty in Europe.

On the [website](#), different resources are available to guide stakeholders in implementing concrete actions and tackling energy poverty in their local context:

- The report “[Tackling energy poverty through local actions – Inspiring cases from across Europe](#)” is a useful instrument to start understanding the types of actions that can be implemented.
- The [EPAH ATLAS](#) is an online database of local and international projects as well as measures addressing energy poverty across the world.
- The “Introduction to energy poverty and the EPAH – Introductory course” is a 1-hour short course open to all interested in addressing energy poverty. It provides an overview of energy poverty from a practical-political perspective and it can help you draft your proposal.

Technical support is provided in the form of an active helpdesk reachable at info@energypoverty.eu and two dedicated calls where proposals will be awarded dedicated specific assistance to support them in their process to tackle energy poverty.

Consult the [website](#) and explore all the resources available.

3. ENERGY POVERTY (EP)

According to the European Commission: “energy poverty is a situation in which households are unable to access essential energy services.”¹ Estimating the level of EP in the European context and the correlated effect on the wellbeing of the citizens is complex. EP can be present in different forms, from difficulties keeping houses warm during winter and comfortable during summer, to the incapacity to pay energy bills for many different reasons. In most cases, energy poverty occurs due to a combination of different factors. The implications of EP are serious and involve the health, wellbeing, social inclusion and quality of life of citizens.

The European Commission has proposed multiple measures to tackle this issue requiring Member States to take appropriate actions to address it wherever it is identified. In 2020, the [European Commission Recommendation on Energy Poverty](#) was released. All levels of administration are invited to develop policies, measures and actions to tackle EP. Local governments can provide detailed and insightful perspectives, enabling the unpacking of vulnerability situations that are particular to specific contexts and groups.

Facing energy poverty is a priority for many authorities. Notwithstanding their ability and resilience to face complex social, economic, and institutional issues, it still presents complex challenges at different levels, from identifying energy poverty conditions (diagnosis), to preparing effective responses (planning) and implementing concrete actions (implementation). Different contexts may present different energy poverty configurations and also affect different parts of the population. For this reason, tailored actions and policies, based on the accurate identification of vulnerable consumers, are needed.

¹ European Commission, “Commission recommendation of 14.10.2020 on energy Poverty”, Oct. 2020, URL:https://ec.europa.eu/energy/sites/ener/files/recommendation_on_energy_poverty_c2020_9600.pdf

4. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

In order to support a wider range of local authorities in starting and/or proceeding confidently in their energy poverty actions, EPAH will throughout the coming 3 years provide technical assistance through a series of calls, this being the first call for applications. The goal is to produce effective local results that can serve as further inspiration for other local governments aiming to undertake similar processes. At the end of the selection process, the proposals awarded will receive online or in-person assistance. Further details are available in the following chapters.

THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROCESS

The call for technical assistance is designed to support local governments in the development of their actions to tackle energy poverty. The figure 1 below summarises the different steps local government should take during the whole technical assistance process and the estimated duration of each phase.

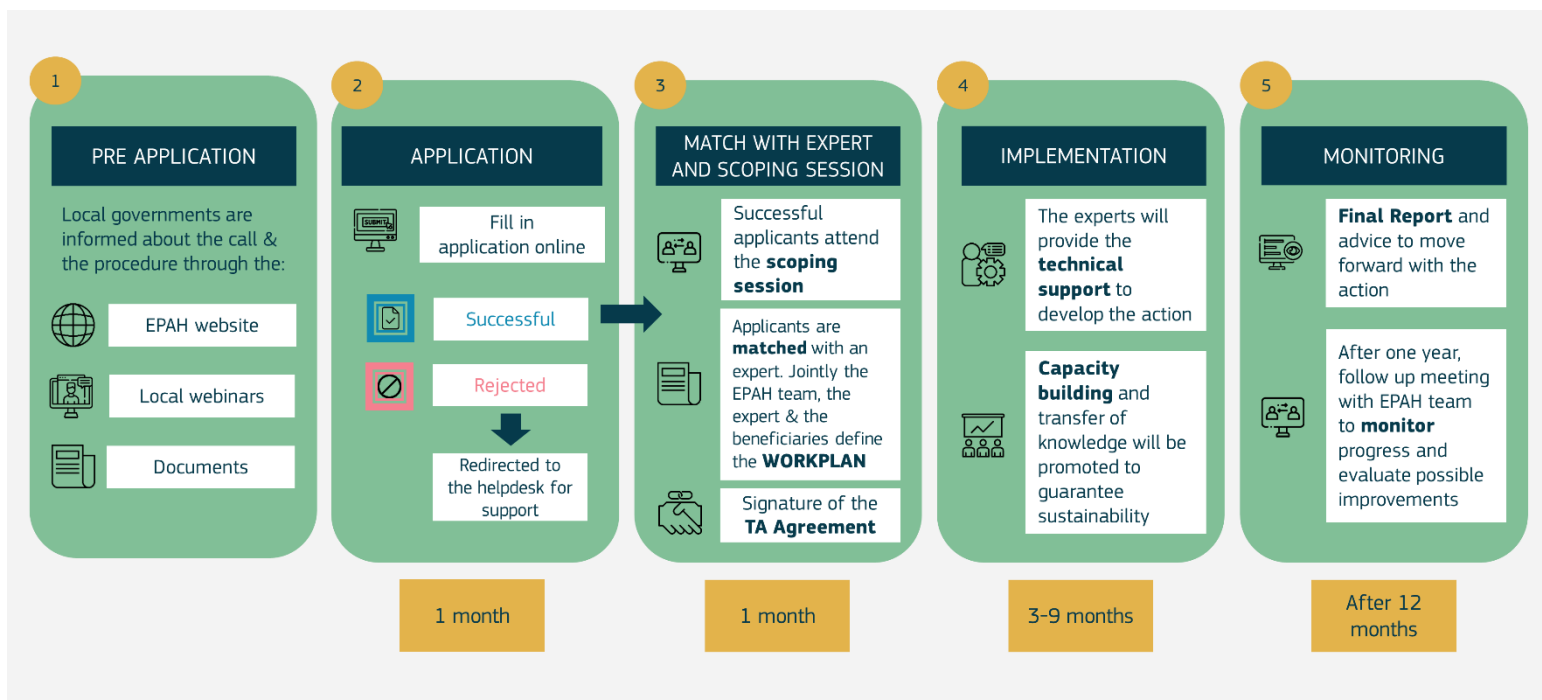


Figure 1 - Application process

1. Pre-applications

Potential applicants can collect information about the scope of the call for technical assistance on the [EPAH website](#). The EPAH team advises all applicants to navigate the different tools available; for example, the EPAH ATLAS, the report “Tackling energy poverty through local actions – Inspiring cases from across Europe,” and specially to take the “Introduction to energy poverty and the EPAH – Introductory course”.

Different webinars are scheduled across Europe and in various languages to provide information about the application process. Please check the updated calendar of the webinars.

Moreover, additional documents are available for you to download on the website.

All the resources mentioned above will be accessible at any time both before the deadline for submission and afterwards.

2. Application phase

After registering, the applicants will have access to the online application form and be able to complete the application online from 1 February 2022 at 9:00 am till the **deadline**:

15 March 2022, 6:00 pm CET
(GMT+1, Brussels time)

After the deadline has passed, it will not be possible to submit or update an application. It is advisable to transfer all the content online and submit the proposal well in advance of the deadline in order to have time to contact the helpdesk in case of any unexpected issues during the submission process.

The application has to be submitted online but, to facilitate the process, you can download the different formats available, complete them offline and copy and paste the content online when finalised.

The proposals will be evaluated by external evaluators based on the criteria described in [Chapter 5](#) and available as an external file at this link.

Around 35 proposals are expected to be awarded within this first call based on the total scoring. The EPAH team reserves the right to not award exactly 35 proposals in case the quality of the proposals received is insufficient to guarantee a successful implementation of the activities and the fulfilment of the objectives.

Local governments from all 27 Member States can submit proposals. To guarantee a wide geographical balance of local actions, a minimum number of awarded proposals per main area is set. Additional information is available in [Chapter 5](#).

Applicants of successful proposals will receive a confirmation email no later than 1 month after the deadline has passed and will be invited to the next step. Unsuccessful applicants will receive constructive feedback that can be useful to improve their proposal for the future call and will be invited to contact the helpdesk to receive additional support.

3. Scoping session and matching with an expert

The successful applicants will be invited to a **scoping session** with the EPAH team in order to jointly elaborate on the application and refine the technical assistance needed for the fulfilment of local needs.

Based on the content of the proposal and the additional information gained during the scoping session, the local government and EPAH will find a **match** with a relevant expert organisation in the

EPAH network taking into consideration the expertise needed, the geographical area and the main language of communication.

A second meeting will be arranged jointly with the beneficiaries, the expert, and EPAH team to design the **workplan** that will guide the technical assistance process and to identify the **final result** expected (e.g. reports, data collected, strategies drafted, market analysis etc).

The estimated duration of the technical support can range **from 3 up to 9 months**. The final number of hours and type of resources needed will be discussed during the scoping session.

4. Implementation

The technical assistance will be provided according to the work plan established and in line with the expected final outcome. During the implementation phase particular attention will be given to involve the beneficiaries into the process and transmit the knowledge to keep developing on it. Local governments are expected to allocate resources to actively contribute to the achievement of the expected results in a joint manner with EPAH and the involved expert organisation. Local governments and their support organisations will lead the project and make use of the expert organisation as technical assistance and EPAH team as support for capacity building and coordination to jointly succeed with the work plan.

5. Monitoring

The EPAH team will monitor the advancement of the technical assistance and provide additional support as needed to re-evaluate the development of the assistance. At the end of the technical support, a final report will be compiled specifying the expected future actions to be developed and a medium period outcome to be achieved in the maximum period of 12 months. The EPAH team will stay in contact with the different beneficiaries through the helpdesk and perform an additional monitoring session after 12 months to evaluate the autonomous progress reached by the beneficiaries.

5. APPLICATION

The applications need to be submitted online by **15 March 2022 at 06:00 pm CET (GMT+1, Brussels time)**.

The first step is to visit the [homepage of the call](#). From the homepage it is possible to open an account and register.

The lead local government should proceed with the registration. Each organisation registered can submit more than one proposal (as long as separate proposals are not chronologically connected). However, it is important to notice that priority will be given to geographical diversity and variety of local governments.

Once registered, the organisation will have access to the online application form to submit the proposal.

To facilitate the application process, it is possible to download the template of the application form. It is advisable to first download and complete the form offline and then proceed by completing the

online version (copy and paste). It is also advisable to download a dedicated *letter of commitment* to include in the proposal.

To self-assess the proposal, the applicant can refer to the external document *Evaluation Matrix*.

Finally, to make the application process easier, applicants can use the *checklist* and *how to start* documents.

LANGUAGE

English is the official language of the call and will be the language used for communications with EPAH. Submissions written in other EU languages are also accepted. They will be evaluated only after a professional translation into English. Neither EPAH nor the experts will be responsible for issues or misunderstandings arising from the quality of the translation. To mitigate this risk, it is advisable to ask for help from colleagues or relevant organisations that can provide linguistic support in English.

APPLICATION FORM INSTRUCTIONS

This section provides additional details about the application form and the different sections to be completed.

ADMINISTRATIVE SECTION

This section focuses on the general administrative data of the local governments and the co-applicant organisation and/or other organisations that will benefit from the technical assistance.

The lead organisation should be a local government. It is possible to have the support of a co-applicant organisation in the application process and the further implementation. The co-applicant organisation could be of any type (Local governments; Civil society organisations; Non-profit NGOs; Governmental Institutions; Research centres; Private companies; Energy/environmental agencies). The EPAH team advises applicants to partner with organisations that can provide additional assistance in implementing the activities in the medium-long term and that can support the writing of the proposal and reduce the language barriers (as needed).

Other involved organisations refer to additional organisations that will support the development of the actions and can indirectly benefit from the technical support provided.

Both applicants and co-applicants shall not have any actual or/and potential conflict of interest with the selection process or be associated with any of the selection members.

CONTEXT ANALYSIS

This section is designed to provide additional information about the local context and specifically the area for which the technical support is needed. Energy poverty is often influenced by very different specific conditions. In this section it is possible to provide additional general economic and geopolitical information (e.g. status of dwellings, weather conditions, effect of climate change, distribution of population such as small villages, remote areas, discontinuities of connections etc.) and more social information about the target population (e.g. low income, vulnerable people, elderly etc).

ENERGY POVERTY PHASES AND KEY COMPONENTS IDENTIFICATION

This section is designed to provide an understanding of the type of technical assistance needed in relation to energy poverty.

The way to approach energy poverty and related activities follow a cyclical sequence that can be divided into **three main phases**. Each phase requires specific inputs and should end with relevant results. These elements are of primary importance to assure the sustainability of the whole chain. The way actions are delivered is related to a sequence of **diagnosis, planning** and **implementing**. The different phases (Figure 2) are required to ensure the social aspects of energy poverty are covered in local climate and energy planning resulting in a just local transition.

The diagnosis phase focuses on refining the understanding of local energy poverty in the municipality. This relates to qualitative and quantitative assessment of the situation meant either as the initial starting point or monitoring and impact assessment of previously implemented actions. Key activities are for instance: data collection, mapping, metrics and the definition or updating of indicators.

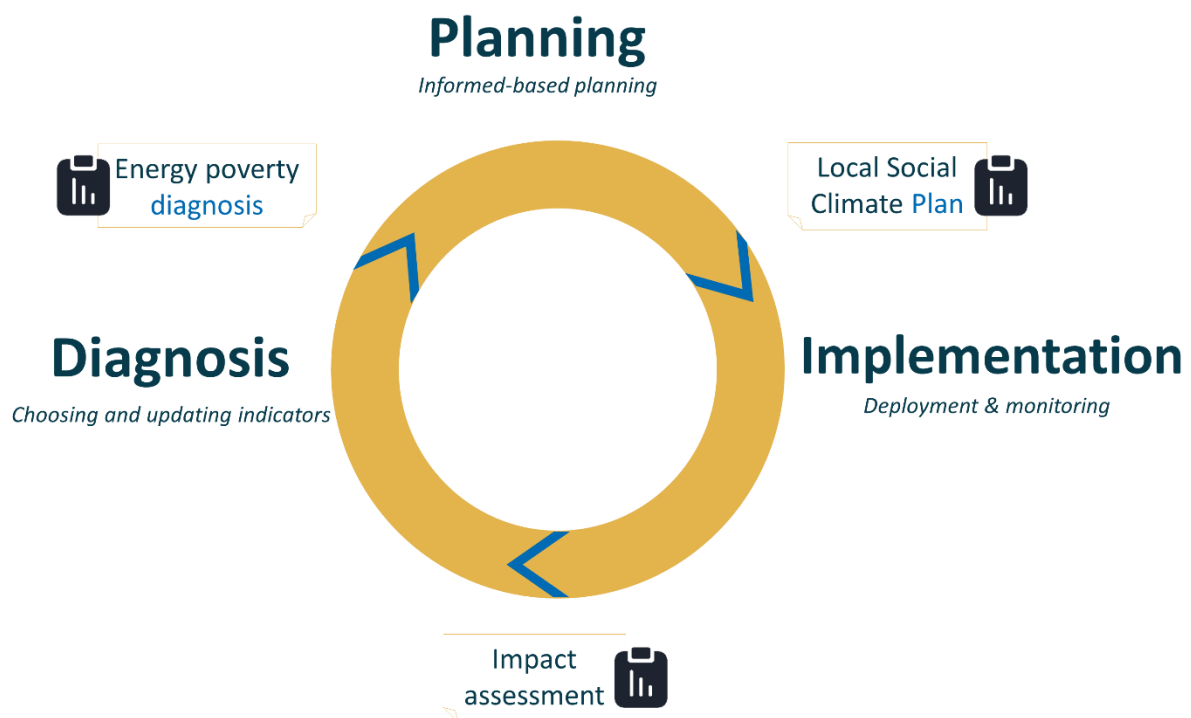


Figure 2 - Energy poverty phases

The main output of this phase is the *Energy Poverty Diagnosis* document. This diagnosis can be considered the base-line scenario of energy poverty in a specific time and location. The evidence collected and documented in the diagnosis phase constitutes information about challenges and opportunities and an important start to the planning process.

The planning phase focuses on planning actions for tackling the local challenges based on the structured understanding from the energy poverty diagnosis. The information collected and updated in the Energy Poverty Diagnosis document is critically analysed and used to design the *Local Social Climate Plan*. This exercise is important to align with existing energy and climate planning practice in order to integrate the social aspects without creating an isolated plan.

The implementing phase constitutes the actual deployment of the Local Social Climate Plan. This phase leads to finalising tangible projects. The written outcome is the *Impact Assessment*. The Impact Assessment should reflect both positive results as much as constructive feedback to guide the next steps.

Based on the information provided on the Impact Assessment, a new diagnosis phase can be implemented with the aim of understanding how the scenario changes and updates the information in light of the actions taken.

For an easy overview, EPAH has divided specific actions into **three main components**. These components are meant to facilitate the process of identifying the type of technical assistance needed. The three main components identified are:

- Soft Components that include the development of soft skills as data collection, stakeholder interviews, capacity building, awareness raising, communication etc.
- Hard Components connected with very specific technical elements to do with technologies, equipment, instruments, etc.
- Finance, Administration and Legal Components that relate to funding, regulations, data protection, accountability and transparency, sustainable tender etc.

As guidance to better understand the different phases and key components, it is possible to use the examples in the Figure 3.

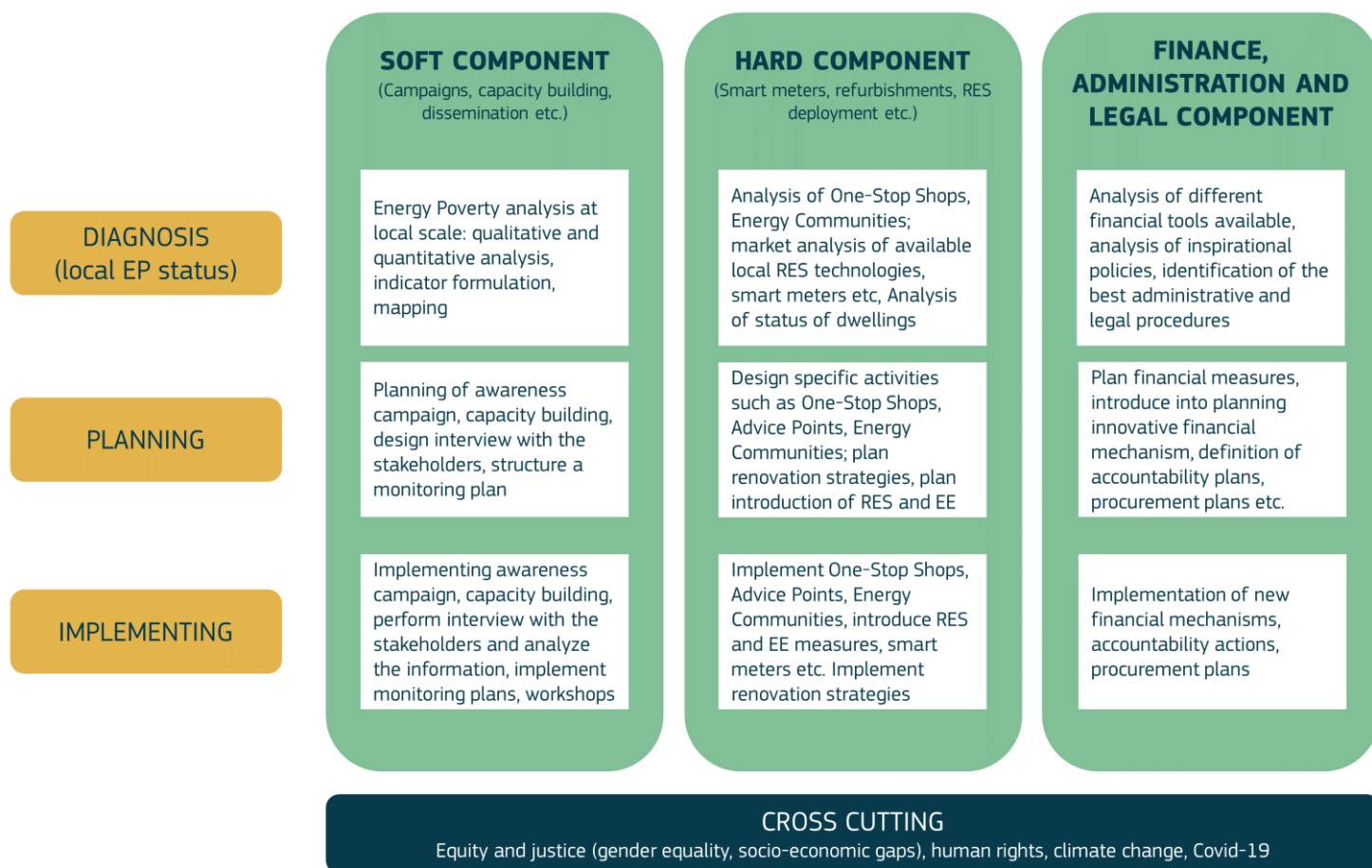


Figure 4 - Energy poverty phases and key components

Moreover, the three projects below, selected from the [EPAH ATLAS](#), are presented in relation to the associated phases and key components of the main activities implemented.²

The activities of the project “[Energia su Misura](#)” include (among others): Identifying energy poor and vulnerable families (diagnosis, soft component); monitoring energy consumption and providing personalised advice according to consumption habits (planning, soft component); after the analysis of consumption patterns, households are given feedback on how to optimise their energy consumption through behavioural and low-cost energy efficiency measures (implementing, soft component). In this case the project addresses the whole soft component column and develops actions that span from diagnosis to implementation.

The activities of the project “[Green Doctors](#)” include (among others): Identifying causes of heat loss in the home (diagnosis, hard component); helping identify and tackle damp or mould problems (diagnosis, hard component); installing small energy and water efficiency measures, such as draft excluders (planning-implementing, hard component); facilitating access to support, such as emergency heating, government subsidies or grants, advice on energy or water debt (diagnosis-

² to provide an example only part of the activities of the projects have been reported. For a full understanding of their main goal refer to the links to the EPAH ATLAS.

planning, financial administrative and legal component). The project focuses on the diagnosis and planning phases across hard components and financial, administrative and legal components.

The main goal of the project “[Household in the context of energy transition](#)” is to create a system to assess energy poverty in Lithuania and evaluate state interventions in the field of household energy. It focuses on the whole diagnosis phase and analyses the situation from the perspective of all the different key components (soft, hard, financial administrative and legal).

In the application form, it is possible to ask for technical assistance covering multiple phases OR multiple key components at the same time as far as the estimated timeline is suitable with the expected duration of the technical assistance (maximum 9 months).

SPECIFIC REQUEST FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

This section is the central part of the proposal. In this section it is fundamental to provide an exhaustive description of the technical assistance requested. The section is open to the inclusion of information about *the reason* behind the request, and the *expected outcomes/results*. It is useful to integrate the information provided in the energy poverty identification section with further insight. In addition, more specific aspects are useful, such as: the expected *timeframe*, if there is *synergy* with other on-going actions or other organisations, what the specific role of the expert will be, and how internal staff will be allocated. Special attention should be paid to specify if there are different *cross cutting objectives* (e.g. equity and justice, climate change, covid-19) that will be addressed. In this section it is also possible to suggest relevant national expert organisations that could contribute with the required technical assistance.

EXPERIENCE

This section can be used to describe previously implemented activities, data collection or analysis, or if support for existing projects is being requested. The experience section should also describe the resources that will be allocated by the applicant. The expected time and resources co-invested by the applicant should be presented in as much detail as possible.

SUSTAINABILITY

The aim of the assistance is to trigger actions that can constitute the basis for continuous improvement to tackle Energy Poverty. For this reason, the medium to long-term sustainability of the proposal is particularly important. In this section it is possible to specify how the organisations will proceed after the end of the technical assistance. The section should include any support document (as an **attachment**) where there is a clear commitment to address energy poverty (e.g. roadmaps, signatory of the Covenant of Mayor, SECAP/NECAP plans etc).

The Letter of Commitment properly completed and signed by a representative of the Local Government should be uploaded in this section.

6. EVALUATION

Each application is evaluated by at least two evaluators with expertise on energy poverty. Only the applications submitted before the deadline will be considered. If applications are presented in a national language other than English, the proposal will be translated into English. All the proposals will be evaluated in English. Neither the EPAH team nor the experts will be responsible for issues or misunderstandings arising from the quality of the translation. To mitigate this risk it is advisable to partner with organisations that can reduce language barriers.

According to the statistics collected by Eurostat on energy poverty and social exclusion, three main geographical areas (**Pools**) have been identified. Based on an analysis of the primary EPOV indicators, the European Energy Poverty Index EEPI³ and the population, a minimum number of awarded applications has been defined for each pool (see table 1).

Pools	Countries	Awarded proposals
Pool 1 Central – and Eastern Europe	Slovenia, Slovakia, Romania, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Hungary, Estonia, Czech Republic, Croatia, Bulgaria	6
Pool 2 Western and northern Europe	Sweden, Netherland, Luxembourg, Ireland, Germany, France, Finland, Denmark, Belgium, Austria	5
Pool 3 Southern Europe	Spain, Portugal, Malta, Italy, Greece, Cyprus	6
From all 27 Member States		18
TOTAL		35

Table 1 - Geographical distribution

The minimum number of awarded proposals per pool (3) aims to guarantee the geographical balance of local actions. After the minimum amount is selected per pool, the remaining 18 slots will be awarded according to a common ranking.

Each section of the application form will be evaluated with a score from 1 to 3 or 1 to 10 and properly weighted to reach the final score. The maximum score is 100.

The complete evaluation matrix that includes the criteria and score range per section is available as an external file. It is advisable to use it to self-evaluate the proposal before the submission. It is a support document that should NOT be uploaded with the proposal.

³ <https://www.openexp.eu/>

7. DATA PROTECTION

In agreement with the European Regulation 679/2016 that protects the fundamental rights and freedoms of individuals, the EPAH team will use the data provided in the proposal only for the objective of the present call for technical assistance and in accordance with the principles of confidentiality, integrity, availability and authenticity. The data can be shared with third parties that will manage it for the fulfilment of the purpose of the mandate of the call.

8. QUESTION AND ANSWERS

A specific section is available on the website to submit questions and answers. Questions can be addressed until the deadline of the open call, but the EPAH team does not assure a timely response to questions submitted after the 18 February 2022 at 6:00pm CET Brussels time, GMT+1.

For a fair and equal competition, all relevant questions received by applications will be replied through the Q&A section so everyone can see the answers.

Any questions/complaints on the outcomes of the final results can be raised within 10 working days from the date that the notification email is sent. The EPAH team will evaluate the complaint and give a response within another 10 working days.