

# MAE: citizen actions for sustainable energy



## **1. The Company**

Mazovia Energy Agency Ltd. (MAE) was established in 2008 to set up the regional energy policy in Mazovian Voivodeship and provide practical solutions for citizens. Therefore the geographical scope of its activities is Mazovia - the largest and central region of Poland.

## **2. Sustainability Innovation**

Providing 'consumers' with the individually adjusted energy management plans is a part of an overall strategy of effective energy consumption in the Mazovia region. An individually adjusted and a complex energy plan to each user enables to reduce costs and invest in more sustainable energy solutions, helping reducing the impact on the environment and maintaining energy security in the Mazovia region. As a result, each end-user becomes more independent and aware on effective energy management solutions.

The energy plan is based on three-phase service: conceptual, financial and implementation. A combination of different actors and experts in the design, obtaining financing and implementation of the energy plan, also makes the design flexible. These individual elements are constantly adapted to the market needs and funding possibilities as well as to the end-users expectations. The company responds to particular needs, mostly related to the cost optimization of energy consumption, that are expressed by the end-users over the course of individual meetings or group meetings, organized by the company, often with the help of municipalities. The main end-users are the producer groups, such as fruit and vegetable producers - energy is a serious costs burden for them. So the starting point is the cost optimization.

### **Sustainability Impact:**

- Reduced costs of energy (energy bill is managed in more effective way)
- Economical inclusion of local small energy providers
- Diversification of energy suppliers in the region
- Awareness building about pro-ecological solutions and sustainable lifestyle
- Cooperation on a local level and social trust development

### **3. Engagement of End Users and Other Stakeholders**

MAE considers itself to be a constantly learning organization, so the service process is being constantly developed. The user innovation process starts with a series of **individual face-to-face meetings** that are to design a complex plan of energy management for its end-users (families, small entrepreneurs). The energy management plan is being adjusted and modified individually to each client and his particular needs, specificity, budget. MAE is implementing a sound and **practical training for users** (municipal workshops), providing them with a know-how on existing financial schemes. It provides support for municipal energy managers, equipment manufacturers, installers, investors as well.

#### ***End-users and Stakeholders:***

- ***End-user:*** MAE expects broad cooperation with an end-user, especially in the first stage during the meeting, that is help with the proper general audit, which is in clarifying end-user needs. It is end-users themselves, that need to determine: firstly their development plans, secondly their expectations, and the exact level of these expectations. Furthermore, after the implementation of the plan, MAE expects its end-users to report on the used equipment/technology to be able to estimate the best contractors in future.
- ***Experts on energy technologies and solutions:*** MAE cooperates only with the energy providers offering the highest quality of solutions that are proposed to end-users. The experts need to estimate the best solution to each individual end-user and his environmental, social, and economic conditions.
- ***Municipality:*** MAE organizes meetings, workshops and other ways of close dialogue with end-users from the Mazovia district. MAE organizes workshops, conferences and meetings via communes and municipalities. During such contacts information about energy technologies and effectiveness is being exchanged, so MAE can find out about needs and expectations of the end-users.
- ***Regulatory bodies – government:*** MAE actively cooperates with the government circles to dynamically adapt the service to the legal requirements for the benefit of end-user. Being an active participant in opinion-making bodies or the legislative bodies, MAE can see in what direction the legislation aspects are going, also what types of assumptions are being made. Hence, MAE is able to give recommendations.
- ***Regional Fund for Environmental Protection and National Fund for Environmental Protection:*** the energy plan assumes approximately 40% - 50% of the project funding (mainly funds for rural development: loan funds, or mixed loan - grant ones). After the acceptance of the plan by the end-user, MAE applies for funding from the available funds, such as the National Fund for Environmental Protection. If it is accepted, MAE assist in choosing a contractor. Cooperation with the financial institutions allows MAE to find co-finance possibilities for the end-users' energy plans. MAE assists in filling applications. The Regional Fund for Environmental Protection co-financed the educational website on energy effectiveness.
- ***Financial experts from BGK Bank:*** assist in choosing the best financial solution for

each end-user, taking into account his internal conditions, as well as external available funds from NFEP and/or RFEP.

- **Research Institutes & Scientists:** cooperation with research institutes allows MAE for empirical verification of all the technology, e.g. the Institute of Power Engineering, and the Institute of Electrical Engineering. It helps MAE to keep the highest quality while choosing the companies that realize the implementation part of the process. It also allows MAE to be a verifier, to build credibility and the position of a trendsetter; and to build leadership position in the advisory services market.

#### **4. Multi-stakeholder Collaboration for Sustainable Energy in the Mazovia District**

The company management believes that MAE is a trendsetter, a missionary organization that tries to place certain ideas, whether in the field of renewable energy or the energy efficiency, in the thinking of not only end-users, but also other stakeholders, including local governments.

The idea to develop the newly established prosumers market stems from MAE's mission of awareness raising, acting towards energy efficiency. The comprehensive service, offered by MAE is a response not only to the needs of end-users - individual growers in the Mazovia voivodeship, but also to the possibilities created in the market by new prosumer legislation. Due to the low awareness of users about the technological possibilities and legal matters related to energy, MAE fills this space and therefore is not only an advisor of efficient and environmental energy solutions. MAE also has the role of an educator, who creates certain need, creates awareness of the users, and shows them existing possibilities.

The added value and market advantage of MAE is its impartiality. The company has public affiliations, which it constantly takes care of, among others through constant dialogue and cooperation, educating the public sector (that is municipalities' employees through trainings and workshops). The fact that MAE is a company-platform owned by public (90%) actors, builds confidence towards its services on innovative approach to energy and deep knowledge of the energy market itself. MAE creates its business model on the need to serve the citizen in the field of energy and its effective management. It is a platform to maximize the benefits; it is aimed at the energy effectiveness at minimized expenditure allocated to it.

The fact that the company co-operates tightly with research institutes, international agencies, and local government, helps MAE to be updated regarding to the technologies offered to the end-users by suppliers. MAE in fact is an initiator, advisor, educator, and verifier of implementation process to attain sustainable living in the field of energy use.

According to MAE's experts, instead of offering the service, coming with a ready solution, it is better to listen to the needs, talk to the end-user of power engineering and energy consumption, and quite naturally such conversation would develop client's curiosity about where can there be introduced solutions to reduce energy consumption.