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BETTER ENERGY

Better Energy is a five-year activity that works to improve energy efficiency and increase the use of renewable energy resources at the municipal level. Specifically, the activity is working to increase incentives and investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency, encourage the efficient use of energy resources, and expand the use of renewables in the energy mix. By improving Serbia's ability to respond to external stressors, thereby increasing its resiliency, the activity contributes to USAID's overall goal of a more prosperous and democratic Serbia committed to European integration and self-reliance.

ACTIVITIES

- Assist in the design and implementation of technological upgrades in district heating plants and multi-unit apartment buildings to improve their energy efficiency.
- Work with national and municipal governments to address obstacles to, and investments in, energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements and installations with special focus on multi apartment buildings.
- Support the expansion of net metering to allow consumers who generate some or all of their own electricity to use that electricity anytime, instead of only when it is generated.
- Provide legal and regulatory support to increase the use of renewable energy sources and installation of energy efficiency measures.
- Support workforce development in the areas of photovoltaics, storage, and energy efficiency-related initiatives.

RESULTS

- Carried out energy efficiency projects with district heating plants and apartment buildings in four towns/municipalities: Substations were automated to increase efficiency in Knjaževac and Sombor; sensors for leak detection were installed in Niš and four apartment buildings were retrofitted in Valjevo. The retrofitting of apartment buildings has already led to energy and monetary savings of 30%, improved living conditions, and decreased greenhouse gas emissions. The project's work with district heating plants has resulted in savings of 15-35% in thermal energy as well as \$150,000, or 363 tones Carbon Dioxide/equivalent.

- The activity has piqued the interest of commercial banks in Serbia which have now expressed interest in piloting loan programs to homeowner associations for energy efficiency interventions in their buildings. The first to have launched a product is the Postal Savings Bank. The Ministry of Finance is interested in working with the project on setting up pilot guarantee schemes that would support commercial lending to multi apartment buildings. Meanwhile, other donors and international finance institutions (IFIs) have picked up on the potential of energy efficiency programs and provided loans and programs (EBRD, GIZ/KFW, EU) for similar projects.
- The Ministry of Mining and Energy has adopted recommendations that were made by the project on the position of prosumers (households and industry) that resulted in an increased use of renewable energy in the country.
- A national public awareness campaign to help Serbian citizens to understand the importance of conserving energy, realized in collaboration with the Ministry of Mining and Energy, generated more than 8 million impressions on social media platforms during the first two months of the campaign. This campaign continues to attract attention on electronic, and digital media.
- Better Energy together with the Chamber of Commerce has trained over 400 homeowner association managers about the benefits of energy efficiency and financing opportunities.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

PROJECT FUNDING

U.S. Agency for International Development
(USAID/Serbia)

PROJECT DURATION

November 2021 – September 2026

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Chemonics / E3 International

TOTAL AMOUNT

\$10,000,000

WHERE WE WORK

Nationwide in select municipalities

CONTACT

Lena Bratić
Dubljanska 8, 11000 Belgrade
E-mail: office@serbiabetterenergy.com