



Creating a regional framework for renewable energies

Activity	Supporting the development of the Arab Renewable Energy Framework (AREF)
Area	Policy
Country	Arab Region
Project title	Support for the Mediterranean Solar Plan and Union for the Mediterranean initiatives
Duration	03/2012 – 12/2014
Partner institution	League of Arab States (LAS)
Implementing organisation	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH
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Summary

At the beginning of the project in 2012, despite visible progress, the use of renewable energy (RE) in the MENA region was far behind its possibilities. Therefore the League of Arab States (LAS) sought to advance the deployment of RE in the region. In the context of the International Climate Initiative, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), in cooperation with the Regional Center for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (RCREEE), supported LAS in the development of a regional RE framework. In 2014, the Arab Ministerial Council of Electricity at LAS officially adopted the Arab Renewable Energy Framework (AREF) and the template for National Renewable Energy Action Plans (NREAP). Improved framework conditions such as these can contribute to RE deployment and greenhouse gas mitigation in the long term.

Initial situation

The countries in the MENA region face the challenge of ensuring their energy supply under the conditions of a foreseeable drastic increase in population and stable economic growth. Although many of these countries possess particularly cost-efficient potentials to generate electricity from RE sources, in the beginning of the project these were hardly used. Reasons for this were insufficient RE incentive systems and barriers for RE deployment.

Already in 2010, LAS had animated its member states to develop National Energy Efficiency Action Plans (NEEAP) similar to those of the European Union (EU). In this process, LAS was supported by two different projects: MED-EMIP (financed by the EU), and RCREEE. The foundation for cooperation between LAS and GIZ was therefore already established. As a regional organization, LAS is primarily interested in regional concepts. The EU, also being a regional organization, was already experienced in this area, which is why cooperation on the project level was sought with an EU member state. Germany was a suitable partner due to its extensive experience in the promotion of RE technologies.



On behalf of



Federal Ministry for the
Environment, Nature Conservation,
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Contribution to GHG mitigation

LAS was supported in improving the political structures for the deployment of RE. To this end, a consultant was posted in the energy department of LAS and additionally an experienced external consultant provided. They supported the process to draft the AREF including the template for the development of NREAP, based on the EU Renewable Energy Directive 2009/28/EC. With AREF, a regional planning and monitoring process for RE deployment was introduced. This process complements the Pan-Arab Renewable Energy Strategy, which was adopted by the Arab Socio-Economic Summit in 2013 in Riyadh. In addition, national decision makers from the LAS member states were trained for the implementation of AREF and long term energy planning.

If implemented consequently, AREF and the relevant reporting formats can contribute to benchmarking of RE policies and to knowledge exchange in the region. Thus, in the long term the deployment of RE in the region will be supported and a mitigation of greenhouse gases (GHG) can thereby be achieved. Due to the regional scope and the favourable solar irradiance and wind conditions in the MENA region, a large potential for GHG mitigation through RE deployment can be assumed.

Success factors

The cooperation with the LAS and the adoption of the AREF as an orientation for drafting RE policies promise a great multiplier effect for the improvement of the framework conditions for RE in the region. Although LAS unlike the EU cannot adopt binding targets, it can create political pressure by introducing planning and monitoring tools (NREAP and progress reports) and a regular exchange between member states. The adoption by the Ministerial Council of Electricity gives a strong legitimacy to any approved document.

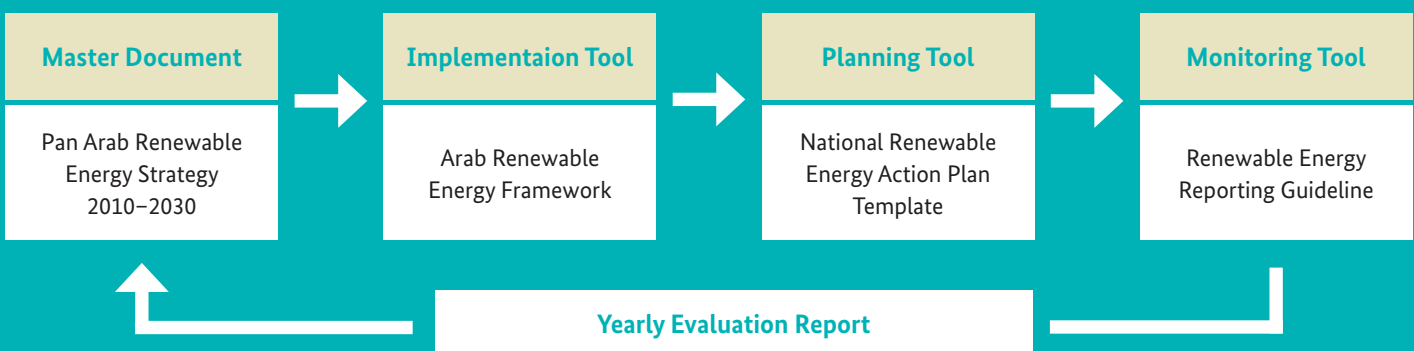
In the context of direct consultancy, the provision for the ownership principle of LAS was received very positively, since LAS itself was responsible for the final choice of the consultants. This approach is also transferable to other regions with similar institutional structures.

Lessons learned

The development of a standardized reporting framework was complicated by the diverse conditions of the LAS member states concerning energy matters in general (some countries have abundant fossil fuel resources, others are energy importers). Therefore, the possibility to account for already existent efforts was considered necessary. The quantification and verification of the impact of the action plans still presents a challenge. Active involvement of the Ministerial Council of Electricity will be required to urge member states to adopt and implement the NREAPs.



The Regional RE Policy Development System of LAS-Energy Department



This project has been selected as a good practice by the GIZ project “Policy dialogue and knowledge management on LEDS in the MENA region”. Within this framework, ten projects of the International Climate Initiative have been selected in total.



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