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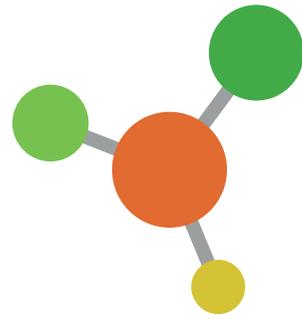


SUITE

SCALING UP INNOVATION  
TOGETHER FOR ENERGY  
VULNERABILITY



This project has been supported by the European Social Catalyst Fund which has been established and co-funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme, Genio, the Robert Bosch Stiftung and the King Baudouin Foundation



# SUITE

SCALING UP INNOVATION TOGETHER  
FOR ENERGY VULNERABILITY

**PLAN WITH A NATIONAL COVERAGE**

# ITALY



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## NATIONAL COVERAGE PLAN

# ITALY

### **ASSIST Scalability Plan & Delivery model**

**Analysis of the Local context** PAGE 4

**Delivery Model** PAGE 6

**Stakeholders consultation** PAGE 14

**Economic viability of the scalability plan** PAGE 17

**Dissemination Strategy** PAGE 19

**Communication and Branding** PAGE 19

**Planning and Monitoring** PAGE 20

**Risk Management** PAGE 26

# Analysis of the Local context

In Italy there is no official definition of energy poverty. Energy poverty was mentioned in official documents in the National Energy Strategy<sup>1</sup> in 2017. Since then, in line the European directives, several formal documents and reports have been published in Italy including energy poverty. The most recent is the second report on energy poverty (2020) published by the academic observatory OIPE (Osservatorio Italiano Povertà Energetica<sup>2</sup>). The report illustrates the situation of energy poverty in Italy in 2020 and shows that 8.8% of the Italian population suffers from energy poverty and that the number has shown an increasing trend by 0.1% every year since 2016 (equivalent to 40 thousand families every year). The report also shows that the percentage is higher in the South of Italy where the percentage varies between 13 to 22%.

OIPE has calculated these data according to an objective-relative measurement, based on the English low income-high cost (LIHC) approach with two substantial differences: actual expenditure data is used (national statistical source - Istat) and families in a condition of deprivation and with zero heating costs are included. According to this measure, a family is in energy poverty if:

1. Its equivalent energy expenditure is more than double the average expenditure and, together, its total expenditure, net

of energy expenditure, is below the relative poverty line, as identified by Istat.

2. A household with equivalent total expenditure below the median also has zero heating expenditure.

## Existing regulations

In Italy, following the indications of the European Commission, energy poverty has been included in the National Energy Strategy (SEN) in 2017 and then in the Integrated Energy and Climate National Plan (PNIEC<sup>3</sup>) in 2020. These documents describe the problem in the national context and provide a definition of people suffering from energy poverty as those not able to buy the minimum amount of needed energy.

## How Energy Poverty is currently being tackled in Italy

In Italy there is no specific energy poverty mitigation strategy or mechanism.

Energy poverty is tackled in Italy through a **fiscal tool** addressing low income households; the energy fiscal bonus (both for electricity and gas) provides financial help (approximately 100 euro per year)

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1 <https://www.mise.gov.it/images/stories/documenti/Testo-integrale-SEN-2017.pdf>

2 <http://oipeosservatorio.it/>

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3 [https://www.mise.gov.it/images/stories/documenti/PNIEC\\_finale\\_17012020.pdf](https://www.mise.gov.it/images/stories/documenti/PNIEC_finale_17012020.pdf)

to people with a low income. The bonus will now be provided in an automatic manner and there will be no more to fill the request.

Further to the above-mentioned financial help, there are several actors providing financial or non-financial support to people facing energy poverty. **Financial support** is provided by charity organisations such as CARITAS who pays the energy bills of people in need. **Non-financial support** is provided mainly by consumer associations which, through their local helpdesks, provide support and advice to consumers.

Not specifically addressing energy poverty, but on a wider social basis there is some financial support addressing vulnerable, poor or low-income citizens. These financial tools are managed by the Ministry of Social policies at National level or by social departments at municipality level.

## Innovation scalability proposal

The ASSIST model based on the training - networking - action of operators already active on the ground (so as to avoid identification and trust issues) with a holistic approach (so as to consider the multidisciplinary nature of energy poverty) would be highly innovative in the Italian context. As mentioned above, energy poverty has been recently included in the energy policy frame, however there is no mechanism to provide support to people in energy poor conditions - be it financial or non-financial support. People facing energy poverty in Italy have no ways / channels to seek advice or support.

The implementation of the ASSIST model - empowering operators already active on the ground - will enable to fill in a societal gap related to energy poverty. The ASSIST model would build on the already existing context (social and technical) by integrating and empowering competencies and services offered. The implementation of the ASSIST model would provide a mechanism for citizens to seek

advice and support when facing energy poverty related issues and would create a link between the different operators (through the network) and facilitate the transfer of best practices.

### Private sector potential

Similar to the situation in other European countries, energy poverty needs to be addressed from a systematic and structural perspective, involving different sectors towards a common goal. Nowadays one of the key identified challenges is funding and the collaboration between the public and the private sector is considered to be essential.

The private sector would get the following benefits by getting involved in the scalability plan of the ASSIST model:

1. Increase their visibility and improve their reputation. It would give them some assets and knowledge to explain to their stakeholders and their consumers/clients.
2. Economic incentives opening the possibility to new contracts (commercial action)
3. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) mechanisms. On one hand, bigger companies are involved in some kind of social activities and, on the other hand, small and medium companies may have some interest in social impact.

However, the work done on the interviews and organization of focus groups has shown that reaching private companies is not an easy task. In general private companies are always more reluctant to finance external initiatives (even if with a social objective) and more specifically they have not been involved in initiatives addressing energy poverty as the topic is still not widely known and remains a niche sector and is not a first goal for any private company. Furthermore after the economic crisis (post Covid19), the financial

# Delivery Model

availability of big companies is not favourable (even though big companies such as energy companies have not really been affected by the crisis)

The Italian proposed model to scale the ASSIST model envisages the support of the private sector, either developing a public-private collaboration (similar to the existing initiative named RAPPEL network in France) or building two separate models (one for the public sector addressing municipalities and being self-funded by them, and one addressing operators on the ground financed by the private actors – see description below). The latter option (i.e. two separate implementation models) is the one pursued within the SUITE project which has led to the **two-fold scalability model**:

1. **Rete ASSIST-TED** (HEAs Network, where TED is the Italian acronym for HEA) – being a non-profit association managing the network of the HEAs in Italy.
2. **ASSIST-PA** (ASSIST model for Public Administrations) - being a non-profit association of municipalities to share and work together on the problem of energy poverty implementing the ASSIST model.

The support of the private sector, both in terms of financial and non-financial resources, will imply the possibility of increasing the project impact, both in quantitative terms - operators trained, and in qualitative terms - available offered services.

This Scalability and Delivery model will be focused in Italy, having a national coverage, consisting on the scalability of the already developed National Network of HEAs by the ASSIST project and this scalability is conceived as a two-legged system designed to work either independently or in synergy.

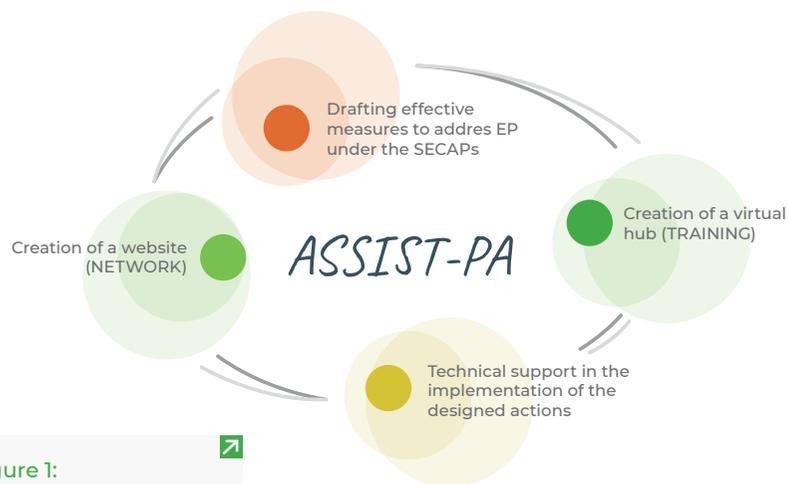
## ASSIST model for Public Administrations such as municipalities (ASSIST-PA)

The first leg of the proposed model addresses municipalities and aims to support them in increasing knowledge and capacity in drafting and implementing effective measures addressing the energy poverty problem within their Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAPs). Moreover, the involvement of public institutions and research bodies (such as Enea) will be strategic to achieve the integration of the ASSIST model in the SECAPs.

The model aims at **creating a virtual hub of municipalities** (an association) which will offer to the adhering municipalities the training (100% online) and the working resources and technical support for the design and the implementation of the energy poverty actions within the SECAPs. The hub will consist in the creation of a website with open information and resources and a reserved area (accessible only to the members) to gather the participants, share news and information (the website, is in its preliminary design phase at the moment and will follow the structure of the future Energy Poverty Advisory Hub – EPAH<sup>4</sup>).

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<sup>4</sup> [www.energypoverty.eu](http://www.energypoverty.eu)



**Figure 1:** General idea on how the ASSIST-PA will work.

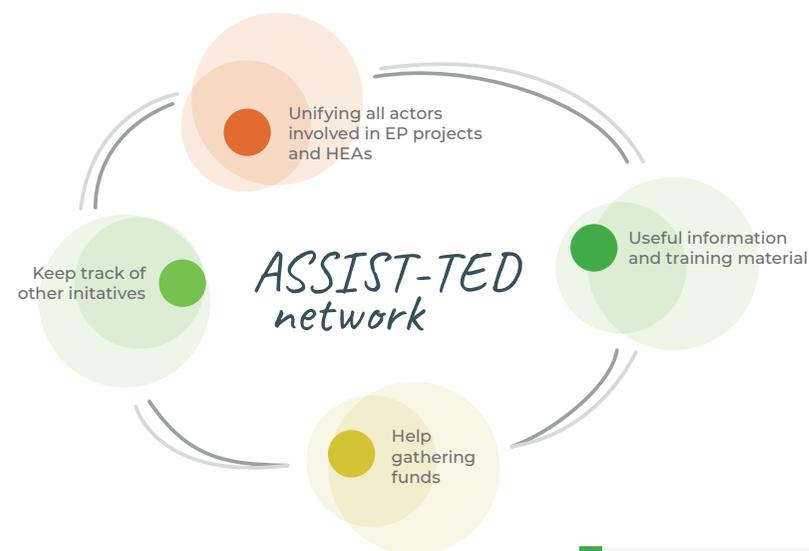
The delivery model has been defined within a series of focus groups organised specifically for municipalities. These focus groups have been organised with 2 Italian associations of cities (Climate Alliance Italy and Coordinamento Agenda21). Within the focus group participants have shared the need to do something to address the problem of energy poverty and also the need to have best practices. The details of the mechanism and the participation fee have also been discussed.

The financial mechanism of the **ASSIST-PA hub** would be an “energy poverty association of municipalities”, based on a participation fee to be paid by the municipalities adhering to the hub.

### ASSIST – Household Energy Advisor (HEA) Network (RETE ASSIST-TED)

The second pillar consists of the creation of a wide **network unifying all actors** and operators (the HEAs, called TED in Italian, Tutor per

l'Energia Domestica) interested and involved in projects on energy poverty. The network would be open and freely accessible to all interested actors and will provide to its members useful information and training material as well as organise working groups, exchange opportunities and networking events. Moreover, the network would help gather funds to carry on initiatives aiming at tackling the problem of Energy Poverty. The stakeholders, the HEAs, and other interested actors will be able to keep track of the activities, initiatives, and any other action taking place also through a website (following as an example the Rescoop website <https://www.rescoop.eu/>)



**Figure 2:** General idea on how the RETE ASSIST-TED will work

The delivery model of the ASSIST-TED network would be mainly through **private sponsorship** interested to financially support the work of the association within their CSR policies. Further collaboration with other actors to carry out part of the work of the ASSIST-TED network is also being sought.

Several focus groups have and are being organised to build the scalability plan of the RETE ASSIST-TED model in Italy. Thanks to the input collected within these focus groups and the initial interviews, the final definition of the roles and responsibilities will be assessed after understanding who will be the actors committed in the project.

At the moment, prior the official launch of the RETE ASSIST-TED (following the definition of the financial agreements with private actors and other sponsors) AISFOR will be responsible of updating the training material and uploading it on the Moodle platform so as to open the ASSIST-TED course as soon as possible and set the ground for the enlargement of the network. The revision of the course will be carried out with the support of the previous Italian ASSIST partner (RSE and AU) and of potential future members of the association (such as Banco dell'Energia). AISFOR is in fact already collaborating with Banco dell'Energia for the building and implementation of a local project to support 100 families to pay their energy bills. Within this project, volunteers of the church involved in the project will undertake the ASSIST-TED training (therefore the ASSIST-TED training needs to be updated prior to the project launching).

Once the association is formally launched AISFOR will remain responsible for the preparation and updating of the training materials as well as other resources, together with the running of the platform and the general management of the network. Potential future members have expressed their interest / availability to analyse data collected so as to assess impact, or to promote the training course and to network with other social actors.

## Objectives and functions

The Italian Scalability and Delivery model will be a **two-legged model** designed to work in synergy but with specific objectives, targets and activities:

1. **ASSIST-PA:** a non-profit hub (association) of municipalities with a public financial mechanism. It is intended to have national coverage, trying to insert the ASSIST model within the SECAPs as a ready-to-use model, to facilitate its implementation.
2. **RETE ASSIST-TED:** a non-profit association of operators with a public-private financial sustainability plan. It is intended to provide the training resources and working tools to all operators interested in deepening the problem and working on a ground level to provide support.

In both cases, the delivery plan will foresee the taking-up of the entire ASSIST model, i.e. training - networking - action of operators with empowered competencies and knowledge on energy poverty able to provide support and advice in situations of vulnerability and/or energy poverty.

Additionally, both models will have a dedicated area on Moodle (an online training platform already adapted within the ASSIST project. The Moodle will allow for future HEAs (be them civil servants for the ASSIST-PA model or operators on the ground for the RETE ASSIST-TED model) to undertake the online training, to access to prepared working resources, to access to news and events on energy poverty and will be an environment to network amongst the HEAs. As for the updating of the training resources of the ASSIST course, AISFOR is already working on building and structuring the Moodle area. In line with AISFOR training growth strategy, a unique Moodle area has been created ([www.aisforacademy.eu](http://www.aisforacademy.eu)) which will contain two separate and distinct areas, one for each of the implementation models accessible ONLY to the relative HEAs (this structure will

enable to build specific resources according to the different target of the implementation models).

## Procedure and offered services

In both the Italian delivery plans of the ASSIST model the first step is represented by the **setting up of a non-profit association**. This further step is needed as AISFOR is formally a for-profit organisation and even if it works with a non-profit logic (with no distribution of revenues) it may not have access to many social opportunities (such as calls of foundations). The focus groups carried out within SUITE have aimed to define the best ways to start the association.

For each of the Italian plans, the activities to be implemented are reported below:

**ASSIST-PA - Creation of a hub** (association) for municipalities with the specific scope to join forces on energy poverty. The association would combine and reunite municipalities and guide them in the implementation of energy poverty activities (to be included within their SECAPs). The creation of an association will require the identification of the 3 members of the Assembly and a significant number of municipalities adhering to the hub. The hub would provide the following **services**:

- **Training resources** open and accessible to all municipality members' staff through the specific Moodle area. The training resources initially will include the "basic" ASSIST course, during the lifetime of the hub (starting from the beginning) new training resources will be built to respond to the training needs identified amongst the hub members and shared during the networking events (possible future topics for the training may be financial schemes, European policies, One Stop Shop, etc.)

- **Working resources** (templates, guidelines) open and accessible to all municipality members' staff.
- **Networking events** to discuss and share experiences by municipalities on energy poverty.
- **Best practices and a map of identified initiatives** carried out by municipalities to tackle energy poverty (both at National and at European level, in synergy with the European Energy Poverty Observatory).
- A unique repository of **energy consumption and social data collected** by the municipality staff trained as HEAs.
- **Workshops** and other events on the theme with National and European experts - linking also with national and European projects/initiatives.
- **Political lobby** to push energy poverty on the national and European political agenda.

In order to build the hub and delivery the above-mentioned services, the following **steps** will be implemented:

1. Creating the ASSIST-PA hub - formally create the association (or include the hub in existing associations) of municipalities interested in energy poverty (definition and signature of agreements)
2. Structuring the Moodle area and updating the training and working resources.
3. Building and publishing a website to act as the main communication means to inform on the existence of the hub and invite new members to register. The website will be connected to social accounts on Twitter and Instagram.

4. LAUNCH the ASSIST-PA hub.
5. Building and growing of the hub - further to the municipalities engaged in the focus groups, the newly formed hub will be disseminated through the mailing list of existing networks to Italian municipalities inviting them to join the hub. It is expected that the hub will include a minimum of 15 municipalities at the start and after the first year will count on 50 municipalities.
6. Continuous updating of the ASSIST training course, the resources prepared within the ASSIST project will be updated and adapted to the target of municipality staff and will be made available through the Moodle area of the ASSIST-PA hub. It is expected that at least 1 person per municipality member (i.e. 50 people will undertake the ASSIST training course) by the end of the first year. Within this action, the municipality will be responsible for defining how energy poor citizens will be identified and addressed and engaged and what services will be offered to them.
7. Updating and integrating ASSIST working resources so as to provide the members with useful and practical documentation on how to implement actions addressing energy poverty.
8. Supporting municipalities in the design / implementation of energy poverty actions: Each municipality will decide what actions to implement to tackle energy poverty and the hub will provide support to the municipality in designing / implementing / monitoring the action. It is expected that at least 10 municipalities will have designed an energy poverty action by the end of the first year.
9. In the first year, the organisation of at least 1 event (networking or workshop) only for the hub members with a participation of at least 10 municipalities (1 or 2 people per municipality).
10. In the first year, the organisation of at least 1 external event on the fight against energy poverty and the role of municipalities to promote the hub and to invite new members to adhere with the participation of at least 50 people representing at least 30 municipalities.
11. At the end of the first year, the publication of a report on the initiatives by Italian (and non-Italian) municipalities to tackle energy poverty (links and synergies with the EPAH publications will be created).
12. At the end of the first year, an assessment of the goodness of the services offered by the hub will be carried out to decide if and how to integrate (modify the services to be more compliant to the needs of the municipalities). A possible new service to be launched during the second year may be the building of a unique database for the collection of energy consumption data so as to provide all municipalities with a unique and common database which can be accessed and integrated by all civil servants (HEAs).

**Rete ASSIST-TED (Household Energy Advisor Network)** - Creation of a non-profit association open for all on the ground operators interested in energy poverty. The association will be free and open to all operators (independently from their working context and background) interested in energy poverty with a bottom-up and holistic approach. The concept of the association is that the wider the context and background of the members the better as the multidimensionality of energy poverty can be taken into account. The association will be composed of stakeholders divided into members; the creation of an association will require the identification of the 3 members of the Assembly. Further stakeholders will be invited to act as sponsors, co-funding the activities of the association. The association would provide the following **services**:

- **Training resources** open and accessible to all members. The training resources can start off with the “basic” ASSIST course and new resources can be built progressively on other topics (such as financial schemes, social support measures, political frame for energy poverty, etc.)
- **Working resources** (templates, guidelines) open and accessible to all members.
- **Networking events** to discuss and share experiences of members on energy poverty.
- **Workshops** and other events on the theme with national and European experts - linking also with national and European projects / initiatives.

In order to build the association and delivery the above-mentioned services, the following **steps** will be implemented (the updating of the training course and the Moodle area have been already done within the SUITE project):

1. Identifying the financial sponsors of the association and quantifying the available budget (a possible financial plan is being discussed with some stakeholders).
2. Creating the RETE ASSIST-TED association - drafting and formalising the statute of the association, assigning roles and responsibilities and democratic mechanism, etc. The pre-feasibility study for this step has already been carried out.
3. Building and publishing a website to act as the main communication means (the quotation for the website has already been asked for and also the structure of the website has been prepared in the mock version). The website will have a structure to provide information on energy poverty and more specifically on the network and will be the access point to the network itself, by which network operators will request access

to adhere to the association. The website will be connected to social accounts on Twitter and Instagram.

4. LAUNCH the RETE ASSIST-TED Association - September 2021. A paper has been submitted and accepted within the Sustainable Places<sup>5</sup> event which will be held in Italy at the end of September for the launch of the Italian RETE ASSIST-TED network.
5. Building and growing the association - the association of HEAs would initially include all the HEAs from the ASSIST project and the ones which will be formed in the coming months (within SUITE training courses are being revised and 10 HEAs will be trained in the coming months. The target is to train 70 HEAs by the end of the first year of the association). As mentioned above, the training of new HEAs will start prior to the launch of the ASSIST-TED network thanks to the collaboration on a project of Banco dell'Energia.
6. Further to the update of the ASSIST training course (carried out within SUITE), further training resources will be prepared on different energy poverty related topics (such as financial mechanisms for renovations to increase the energy efficiency, social financial support, impact on health, etc.).
7. The update and integration of the ASSIST working resources will be carried out so as to provide the HEAs with useful and practical documentation on how to implement actions addressing energy poverty.
8. A unique monitoring and data collection mechanism will be developed to be used by all HEAs to build a database (in an anonymous manner and compliant with the GDPR) of energy

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.sustainableplaces.eu/>

consumption data combined with social data and households' characteristics data.

9. In the first year, the organisation of at least 3 events (networking or workshop) only for the HEAs with a participation of at least 10 HEAs.
10. In the first year, the organisation of at least 1 external event on the fight against energy poverty to either launch (at the beginning) or illustrate the progress (at the end of the first year).
11. A working group on a specific topic related to energy poverty will also be created where HEAs can participate on a voluntary basis.
12. At the end of the first year, the publication of a report on the initiatives by Italian (and non-Italian) actors to tackle energy poverty (links and synergies with the EPAH publications will be created).

## Training and accompaniment

As for the training, it will be **100% online** and will be built from the existing tools, resources and materials from the ASSIST project. This training will be addressed to social all operators (respectively civil servants and on the ground operators for the two implementation models) through an online platform as part of the ASSIST-PA leg and as part of the ASSIST-TED network. As mentioned above the training course will be set-up on specific areas of the AISFOR Moodle area already online (within [www.aisforacademy.eu](http://www.aisforacademy.eu))

The two training courses - even if both related to energy poverty - will be built in order to address the different target groups (on one side civil servants and municipality staff and on the other on the

ground operators). The standard training will be of about 20 hours and will be complemented with other training resources to illustrate in depth specific aspects of the energy poverty problem.

In both models (ASSIST-PA and ASSIST-TED) additionally resources will be prepared to support the implementation of the actions (such as guidelines, templates, best practices, etc.), and events will be organised to discuss and share experiences on the design and implementation of the ground actions.

Both the training and the working resources will be accessible online through the platform (each model will have its specific platform).

## SWOT matrix

The following SWOT matrix is drawn taking into consideration the local context of Italy, the expertise and lessons learnt from the implementation of ASSIST and all the input provided by the different actors participating in the focus group and interviews. It consists in the identification of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats that will be included in the further overall analysis to help to determine different strategies to follow in the decision-making process.

## Strengths

- Possibility to use the ASSIST network and knowledge to scale up the project.
- The knowledge and tools AISFOR already has in the training field.
- Growing cultural interest in sustainability and social issues related to energy transition (and subsequent political attention).
- Existence of similar successful models in other European countries.

## Opportunities

- Possibility to develop and spread the concept of Energy Poverty as a 360° social problem requiring an integrated action with the other social operators.
- Lack of an already established network to support energy vulnerable people in Italy, ASSIST model can be the first to "enter the market".
- Growing cultural interest in sustainability and social issues related to energy transition (and subsequent political attention).
- The development of a pillar of the project untied to public bodies could preserve it from political changes of vision and priorities.
- The Covid19 pandemic has brought attention to the energy poverty problem (smart working, online schooling and the related increase of power needed in the houses).

## Weaknesses

- Lack of clear understanding of Energy Poverty at a cultural level.
- Lack of financial stability if the project will be dependent on public/private funds and donations.
- The for-profit nature of AISFOR could bring a negative perception from the other stakeholders.

## Threats

- The partnerships with municipalities could undermine the development of the project in the long term due to political twists.
- The lack of a cultural knowledge of the Energy Poverty problem could bring to a reductive definition of the problem leaving aside its social impact.
- The reluctance of private entities to commit financially (in the medium/long term).
- Negative perception of social operators and organizations (falsely perceived competition).

## Potential Users

Both models (ASSIST-PA and RETE ASSIST-TED) aim to contribute to tackle energy poverty by empowering municipalities (and other public actors) and on the ground stakeholders / operators on the causes / impact of energy poverty in order to enable them to be effective in addressing the final target, which mainly consist of citizens living in energy poor conditions (including also citizens at risk of energy poverty) and citizens being energy vulnerable, being not aware of the energy market and not being in a position to have the benefits from the market. Through the project it is intended to reach between 750 and 2.000 people.

# Stakeholders Consultation

The aim of having a focus group session and interviews with different actors, representing different sectors that may have a role in the overall proposed model was to validate its viability. As already stated, the two models pursue a **national coverage** and are synergistic to each other - combining collaboration between the public and the private sector in order to guarantee its economic sustainability in the long run.

With this purpose, interviews were held in April and May, and several focus groups have been planned in the following weeks (between end of May and beginning of July). The strategy adopted in Italy was to organise more than 1 focus group in order to address individually the various targets related to the two models:

1. **ASSIST-PA:** in collaboration with Alleanza per il Clima (Climate Alliance Italy) and Coordinamento Agenda21, a series of focus groups meetings were organized to collect inputs from municipalities. The first one was held on the 27<sup>th</sup> of May, the second on the 17<sup>th</sup> of June and the last on 7<sup>th</sup> of July. These events have introduced the ASSIST-HEA model and the work done on the ASSIST project, collected inputs on the need to implement actions on energy poverty by municipalities and shared the work done and have discussed the proposed implementations models.

The output of the focus groups with municipalities is that indeed there is the interest on the topic and that there is the need/interest to implement actions but there is a lack of knowledge and competencies to be able to do something on energy poverty. Municipalities have welcomed the idea of “using” the resources and outputs of the ASSIST model,

especially the idea of having trained staff (HEAs figures). Therefore, in this line, the possible implementations plans are:

- A) Hiring as external staff HEAs combining the activity with the work of the social department (usually carried out through external tenders) - this model may lead to combining the two Italian models in a unique energy poverty network.
  - B) Delivering the ASSIST services (training on energy poverty and support in the design and implementation of the actions) as to-pay for services according to the needs (and demands) of the municipalities.
  - C) Introduction of the ASSIST model (in terms of services on energy poverty) within existing associations.
  - D) Creation of an association specifically on energy poverty with an entry fee, in line with the model suggested.
  - E) Enlargement of the scope of the ASSIST model to address the need of municipalities to implement One Stop Shops (OSS) as requested by the European Commission.
2. **RETE ASSIST-TED:** focus groups addressing only social actors will be held on the 5<sup>th</sup> of July and focus groups addressing private actors will be held in mid-July (the date still is to be confirmed). The idea of splitting the focus groups came from the interviews with some social actors who suggested having a preliminary meeting only amongst social peers to be able to speak more openly and freely. These two focus groups will allow presenting the work done on ASSIST and introduce the implementation plan of the Associations of HEAs (already shared individually during the interviews) and collect the

interest of the social actors not only on being members of the association but more specifically on the role they could play.

As the table below shows, the Scalability and Delivery Plan was improved and validated by representatives of both the public and the private sector. Through the focus group sessions it was possible to contact different points of view from the economic, the public and the social perspective, allowing to shape a plan that not only foresees for its sustainability but it addresses in the best possible way the existing needs of vulnerable people in Italy.

**Table 1:**  
List of participants to the Focus  
Group Sessions and interviews

Municipality series of Focus Group Participants (27/05 - 17/06 - 08/07)	Social Focus Group Participants (07/07)	Interviewed actors
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Alleanza per il Clima</li> <li>2. Coordinamento Agenda21</li> <li>3. AGENA (Agenzia Energetica Teramo)</li> <li>4. Associazione Borghi Autentici</li> <li>5. Ates, Agenzia Territoriale per l'Energia e la Sostenibilità di Parma</li> <li>6. Sipro, Agenzia per lo Sviluppo della Provincia di Ferrara</li> <li>7. Comune di Martinsicuro</li> <li>8. Comune di Pesaro</li> <li>9. Comune di Sissa Trecasali</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Amici della Terra (tbc)</li> <li>2. ASHOKA</li> <li>3. Banca Etica (tbc)</li> <li>4. Banco dell'Energia</li> <li>5. CARITAS</li> <li>6. Cittadinanzattiva</li> <li>7. Croce Rossa Italiana (tbc)</li> <li>8. Federconsumatori (tbc)</li> <li>9. Fondazione CARIPLO</li> <li>10. Fondazione di Vittorio</li> <li>11. Fondazione SNAM</li> <li>12. Legambiente</li> <li>13. Unione Nazionale Consumatori</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. ANCI-ER</li> <li>2. Acquirente Unico (AU)</li> <li>3. Banco dell'Energia</li> <li>4. CARITAS</li> <li>5. Coordinamento Agenda21</li> <li>6. Comune di Roma</li> <li>7. Climate Alliance Italia</li> <li>8. ENEA (Italian National Agency for Energy and Environment)</li> <li>9. ENI Gas &amp; Luce</li> <li>10. GSE</li> <li>11. IRE - Agenzia Energetica Ligure</li> <li>12. RiEnergia</li> <li>13. Ricerca per il Sistema Energetica (GSE)</li> </ol>

According with the **two pillar-based model** two types of involvement are envisaged:

- On one hand, private companies and foundations will be involved in the funding of the ASSIST-TED network, the practical implementation of the training courses and the subsequent network operations. Social operators and other interested actors will become active participants in the network.
- On the other hand, municipalities and eventually Public Institutions such as ENEA (National Agency for New Technologies, Energy and Sustainable Economic Development), GSE (Managing Body of Energy Services), and MISE (Ministry of Economic Development) will participate in funding the training courses and the assistance operations.

The general outcome of the interviews was a **widespread interest** in the project. The Italian stakeholders showed interest in the creation of the HEA network; the municipalities (mostly in the north of Italy) and the foundations supported the possibility of being directly involved in funding the operator's training. Moreover, as emerged from the interviews, many stakeholders showed interest in being engaged in the spreading of knowledge regarding criticalities and problems emerging from Energy Poverty (EP) situations.

Regarding **private actors** a general interest was reported but the definition of a practical (and financial) involvement seems more difficult to be defined. Many stakeholders (Anci-ER, Agenda21, Rlenergia, Climate Alliance Italia and Banco dell'Energia) are willing to extend the discussion on Energy Poverty with further Focus Groups or through the information channels within their organizations.

The other topic arising from the interviews was the involvement of the municipalities (Agenda21) and the media (Rienergia) to tackle

Energy Poverty. Few stakeholders (CNR-ITAE and ANCI) raised questions and highlighted synergies with energy communities. The idea is that the trained HEAs may be also responsible for supporting and promoting the creation of energy communities which in Italy are just starting off following the very recent publication of the law on the topic.

Finally, as in the great majority of cases, the main barrier arising from the interviews is the financial sustainability of the take-up of the ASSIST models in both implementation models, ASSIST-PA with municipalities and ASSIST-TED Network addressing all operators and funding partners.

The following public and private actors have shown their interest and willingness to collaborate or to enter into further collaboration discussions for the implementation of this Scalability and Delivery model in Italy. (See **Annex 3**)

It is worth noting that some of the interviews were done with other existing national initiatives (such as the French Rappel Network and the UK Warm&Well programme) to verify the interest in the creation of a European Secretariat. In order to verify this opportunity a European co-creation event is planned for the 5th of July. The creation of a European Secretariat would provide a European frame to the Italian models giving more strength to the models themselves and therefore increasing their growth opportunities.

## Economic viability of the scalability plan

To carry out the project, the corresponding resources will be needed, both for the ASSIST-PA and the ASSIST-TED Network and also for covering the necessary human resources:

### ASSIST-PA

Cost	Initial / Annual	Staff	Other costs	2 year	Total costs for the 1 <sup>st</sup> year
Creation of the hub (association - legal support)	Initial		1.000,00		3.000,00 EUR
Financial management of the association	Annual		1.000,00	1.000,00	
Online platform for the association (hosting)	Initial		3.000,00		4.000,00 EUR
	Annual		500,00	500,00	
Creation and update of training resources	Initial	2.800,00			9.800,00 EUR
	Annual	5.000,00	1.000,00	1.000,00	
Creation and update of training resources for intermediary figures	Initial	2.800,00			9.800,00 EUR
	Annual	5.000,00	1.000,00	1.000,00	
Creation and content management of the website (site + hosting)	Initial	8.000,00	4.000,00		20.000,00 EUR
	Annual	4.000,00		4.000,00	
Management of the Hub (event organisation, networking, etc)	Initial				48.000,00 EUR
	Annual	24.000,00		24.000,00	

**TOTAL: 94.600,00 EUR**

### RETE ASSIST-TED (ASSIST\_HEA NETWORK)

Cost	Initial / Annual	Staff	Other costs	2 year	Total costs for the 1 <sup>st</sup> year
Creation of the Association as a legal body	Initial		1.000,00		3.000,00 EUR
Financial management of the association	Annual		1.000,00	1.000,00	
Management and hosting of the online platform of the for the HEAs	Initial		3.000,00		4.000,00 EUR
	Annual		500,00	500,00	
Creation and updating of training resources for HEAs	Initial	2.800,00			14.800,00 EUR
	Annual	10.000,00	1.000,00	1.000,00	
Creation and updating of working resources for HEAs	Initial				12.000,00 EUR
	Annual	10.000,00	1.000,00	1.000,00	
Publication and content management of the website (site + hosting)	Initial	1.000,00	4.000,00		13.000,00 EUR
	Annual	4.000,00		4.000,00	
Management of the network – organisation of events / working groups / publications / webinar, etc.	Initial				100.000,00 EUR
		50.000,00		50.000,00	

**TOTAL: 146.800,00 EUR**

 **Table 2:** Estimated costs for the implementation of the ASSIST-PA model in Italy

 The necessary **financial resources** amount to **241.000,00 EUR** for the first two years (initial costs + annual), from which it is expected to be fully financed both by the public and the private sector

**Table 3:**  Estimated costs for the implementation of the ASSIST-TED Network model in Italy

## Steps to reach the financing and set up the model

In order to guarantee the necessary financial resources for the proper implementation of the scalability and delivery model, the following steps will be followed:

- Keep in constant update to the interested stakeholders to reach their commitment with the project.
- Identify and contact new potential stakeholders, public and private to ensure sustainability beyond 2024 and scalability in other areas in 2-3 years' time once the model is consolidated.
- Set further meetings and focus group sessions, if necessary, with the interested stakeholder for discussing more concrete contractual and collaboration issues.
- Negotiate and reach new collaboration agreements, setting requirements, justification material and defining responsibilities.
- Have a common meeting with the committed stakeholders (public and private) for defining rules and obligations in order to avoid any misunderstandings.

The Gantt chart on [page 23](#) plans the different tasks to ensure the financing of the initiative.

## Sustainability of the model

The business model is conceived as a mixed one foreseeing the cooperation of both public and private actors. As already stated, the

Italian model is conceived as a two-leg system designed to work in synergy but with existing differences.

- For the **ASSIST-PA**, the public sectors would be represented by municipalities financing the project under their SECAPs actions or with social actions willing to end Energy Poverty (the option of an annual fee to be paid to join the program is being analysed).
- For the **ASSIST-TED Network**, companies already operating in the energy field and foundations would provide financial and non-financial resources in view of Corporate Social Responsibility or philanthropic initiatives. At the moment, there are highly interested actors such as Banco dell'Energia and Caritas.

The gathered funds will be used to both sustain the network and finance the training courses and the technical assistance activities.

## Dissemination strategy

The main **channels** envisaged for the dissemination of the model are:

- The **Moodle platform** used for the training, which will be used also to share informative content
- The already **existing network** of social workers and charity institutions, which could be strategic in identifying vulnerable people.
- The creation of a **website** that will work as the Italian Energy Poverty Hub to disseminate both European and national networks and initiatives.

Moreover, the **ASSIST website** ([www.assist2gether.eu](http://www.assist2gether.eu)) and **Social Media accounts** ([twitter](#)) will be used to spread the word and inform the participants. These existing channels already count with a significant number of followers and the ASSIST name is already known in the sector at EU level.

Moreover, the **AISFOR website and Social Media** will as well give adequate visibility to the project.

It is intended also to count with the communication channels of other involved stakeholders, such as the Municipalities, private companies and other entities participating in the project, in order to gain visibility in a cross-sectorial manner.

## Communication and Branding

The communication will address different actors, either as members of the networks and as end-users of the services of the network.

For the **ASSIST-PA model** the direct target will be municipalities and associations of municipalities. The communication will aim to inform them of the existing energy poverty hub and of the services offered by the hub to adhering municipalities. The communication will aim to increase the number of municipalities adhering to the hub so as to have a more budget available and be able to offer more quality and quantity services. In this case the communication will not address the final user of the services as it will be a communication carried out by the municipalities however the hub will provide support to the municipalities in building and delivering the communication towards the final target.

The communication of the **RETE ASSIST-TED** will address mainly all operators on the ground working to support citizens / consumers in need in different sectors (from social to health, to financial, etc.). As for the previous case, the communication will aim to inform the target of the existence of the network and to invite them to join it. The communication will not include financial issues as the network is free for the operators.

In parallel to the communication addressing operators, the communication for the RETE ASSIST-TED will also address potential sponsors to inform them of the results of the HEAs and of the network inviting them to provide for funding.

# Planning and monitoring

## Specific objectives

As already stated, each local scalability plan will count with specific objectives and indicators to be accomplished along the implementation of the plan for the next 2 years, from 09/2021 to 08/2023. This Scalability plan aims to:

1. Scale at **national level** – more specifically by covering all National regions – through two models, which will have a full geographical coverage.
2. **Train between 75 and 100 operators** having different backgrounds and operating in different sectors (according to the holistic approach already tested with ASSIST).
3. **Support between 10 and 20 vulnerable people per HEA**, which means between 750 and 2.000 people. The reaching of people and households in need should be facilitated thanks to the bridges and contacts created with the ASSIST project.
4. **Count with the support of local, regional, and national entities** as possible institutions to join the network (both from the public and the private sector) to create a differentiated and sustainable network. The ideal objective is to reach around 20-50 municipalities and a smaller galaxy of other public institutions. And regarding private entities, the ideal will be to engage 15 among associations and companies.
5. **Find the necessary financial resources** for the proper implementation of the scalability plan. The project aims

to count with a public-private collaboration in terms of both financial and non-financial resources for the different proposed models. As stated above, for finding the necessary financial resources, more meetings and further negotiations will be held with key stakeholders, to find a perfect balance collaboration point, which will guarantee the necessary financial resources for the implementation of the plan.

6. **Secure the sustainability of the project in the long run** mainly by securing the financial resources. This objective goes in line with the fifth objective; therefore, similar actions will be done such as constant stakeholders mapping and negotiation with the most interested ones in order to set collaboration agreements. Moreover, always high-quality training material and assessment will be done and satisfaction questionnaires will be fulfilled by the end-users in order to show the real importance and impact the project generates.

For this Scalability plan and delivery model, different private actors have participated and provided their perspective both in the topic and in how to address it. However, more companies are needed on board for financing purposes. It is worth noting that Italian companies trust some projects more if they have been executed abroad or if they get in contact with someone from abroad, something that is an opportunity for the Italian model.

Once the project is operative each stakeholder will receive adequate **benefit for its commitment.**

- **Public Institutions** (municipalities and research bodies) will be able to increase their knowledge and capacity in defining and implementing Energy Poverty strategies to deliver more accurate, efficient and people-centred solutions through professional training and follow up.
- **Social Service Associations** will obtain a substantial reevaluation of their work by being provided with the knowledge to support energy vulnerable users and the possibility to become active actors in the society.
- **Actors from the private sector** (mainly companies and foundations) will obtain the possibility to enhance their CSR activities by participating in projects with a concrete positive impact on communities with a longer time perspective. The return in terms of gain of image and visibility for companies having a social commitment on a delicate and actual topic as energy poverty should also be considered.
- **Professional organizations** will offer their experience in a peer-to-peer learning system additional to the standard training system and evaluation actions. Moreover, they will gain benefit from the networking activities.
- **Vulnerable users** will gain a more comprehensive social support through the action of more equipped workers able to provide both essential insights on their real needs and knowledge regarding their energy rights for a subsequent quality of life's improvement.

## Indicators and evaluation mechanisms/strategies

The following indicators and evaluation mechanisms will be followed in order to (1) guarantee the correct implementation of the proposed plan, together with the accomplishment of the expected objectives, and (2) for influencing both the policy makers and the people accessing the services in order to catalyse change and action.

**Table 4:**  
Indicators and evaluation mechanisms



Expected Objectives	
Geographical coverage	National
Number of trained advisors	70 – 100 social operators
Attended users	750 – 2.000 people
Number of stakeholders involved (private and public)	20 public (for ASSIST-PA model) and 20 private and social (for RETE ASSIST-TED)
Municipalities commitment level (none – promised to have a look - just dissemination – implementation – policy adaptation)	Policy adaptation
Private sector commitment level (none – promised to have a look – just dissemination – non-financial – financial)	Financial and non-financial

*Continues on next page*

### Environmental and social factors

Reduction in energy consumption (kWh)	Not applicable
Reduction in CO <sub>2</sub> emissions (CO <sub>2</sub> tons)	Not applicable
Comfort level	Medium – High
Operators' empowerment	High
Increased users' empowerment (i.e., decreased vulnerability to the energy market) (qualitative)	High
Public acceptance of the model (qualitative)	High
Social operators' satisfaction (qualitative)	High
Training material usefulness (qualitative)	High

Indicators will be checked in a constant manner in order to identify possible deviations and apply the necessary corrections with time and in an effective way. It is worth noting that some of the indicators, the social ones, will be measured through the elaboration of questionnaires that will be fulfilled by the end-users and also by the social operators who receive the training and do the assessment actions.



Table 11:

Gantt for the Scalability Plan in Italy (ASSIST-TED network)

**Gantt for the Scalability Plan of Italy**

ID	Activity for ASSIST-TED network association	Preparatory work September 2021	YEAR 1												YEAR 2											
			Sept 2021																							
			MONTH 1	MONTH 2	MONTH 3	MONTH 4	MONTH 5	MONTH 6	MONTH 7	MONTH 8	MONTH 9	MONTH 10	MONTH 11	MONTH 12	MONTH 13	MONTH 14	MONTH 15	MONTH 16	MONTH 17	MONTH 18	MONTH 19	MONTH 20	MONTH 21	MONTH 22	MONTH 23	MONTH 24
A	Preparation of a briefs and presentation document																									
B	Focus Groups with target groups (social actors and potentially interested private actors)																									
C	Feedback sessions + scalability plan for ASSIST-TED network association																									
D	ASSIST-TED network website publication																									
E	ASSIST-TED training course update																									
F	Revision of working resources for HEAs																									
G	Agreement with financial partners																									
H	Founding of a non-profit association as a legal body (Rete ASSIST-TED)																									
1	Launch of the ASSIST-TED network association																									
2	Network management and communication/promotion activities																									
3	Semi-annual quantitative managerial milestones																									
4	Preparation of new training resources																									
5	Revision and updates of all training resources																									
6	Training of new operators																									
7	Revision and updating of the working material																									
8	Supporting new HEAs to deliver actions																									
9	Creation of a unique system and database to collect energy consumption data from																									
10	Collection of data from the HEAs work on the ground																									
11	Analysis of data																									
12	Publication of annual report																									
13	Organisation of networking events																									
14	Organisation of working groups																									
15	Organisation of annual meeting																									
16	Network communication/promotion activities																									

## Milestones

The Italian Scalability and Delivery model has established the following milestones:

1. Obtain the necessary financial resources
2. Set a non-profit association
3. Reactivate the existing National Network of HEAs
4. Inclusion of Energy Poverty actions in the SECAPs
5. Launch website and all updated training material
6. Successfully attention of the end-users
7. Ensure the sustainability of the project

## Controlling strategies

It is intended to keep a constant control of the overall project along its lifespan, in order to foresee any possible deviations and correct them in a timely manner, following the continuous improvement principles. Therefore, the following controlling strategies will be followed:

- **Managerial follow-up:** monthly meetings will be held with the project stakeholders for general financial and managerial issues. Independently, internal meetings will be held with the social operators, in case things are unclear or suggestions arise.
- **Indicators check:** some milestones will be set at the beginning of the project regarding the expected achievement of the project indicators, so every 6 months; indicators will be checked to see how the implementation is going. The idea is to follow the Earned Value methodology.
- **Reporting activities:** every 6 months a project status report will be done, concerning all different aspects of the project.
- **Reviewing the identified risks:** every time a new risk is identified the risks table will be updated. On Managerial monthly meetings, participants will be asked if they have identified any risk or foreseeable risk. Risks will be monitored and controlled along the project's lifespan, especially the high severity risks.
- **Apply preventive and corrective measures:** in case any risk is materialized the corresponding corrective or preventive strategy defined will be implemented.

# Risk Management

Table below summarizes the identified risks, and details a response strategy for each of them. From the 5 identified risks, 3 of them are considered of medium severity and 2 of low severity, this categorization will determine the prioritization of the risk both in terms of controlling and monitoring and in response.

**Table 6:**  
Risk analysis and  
management



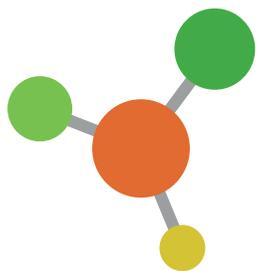
Risk Qualitative Analysis						Response Plan				
ID	Risk	Probability	Factor	Impact Factor	Severity	Name of the response	Description of the response	Strategy	Action	
01	The nature of AISFOR, being a private entity working-as an NGO could be negatively perceived as a company willing to make profit	10%	1	1	1 Low	Creation of an Association.	Creation of an Association being the legal representative of the Italian Network	Avoid	Preventive	
02	Negative perception of the network from social operators and associations which could consider HEAs as "competitors" in their assistance activities.	40%	2	2	4 Medium	Strong and clear communication.	Develop necessary communication materials to avoid misunderstanding	Accept	Corrective	
						Include existing social operators.	Try to form synergies and work together with existing social operators in a collaborative manner.	Mitigate	Preventive	
03	Existing legal obligation between ASSIST project partners if the ASSIST "image" will be readopted.	10%	1	2	2 Low	Seek for an agreement with ASSIST project partners.	Talk with ASSIST project partners in advance to look for a solution beforehand and avoid any further legal problems.	Avoid	Preventive	
04	Lack of financial stability if the project will be dependent of public/private funds and donations	60%	2	2	4 Medium	Strong and continuous monitoring and communication with possible financial actors	Develop necessary monitoring and communication tools	Avoid	Preventive	
05	Political twists could undermine the development of the project.	40%	2	2	4 Medium	Maintain the implementation models independent and not linked with political parties.	Work with non-politically parties	Avoid	Preventive	

## Impact – Probability matrix

Through the use of the impact- probability matrix, it will be possible to identify the existing priority risks throughout the project through Severity, which is calculated by multiplying the corresponding probability and impacts defined for each identified risk. This matrix allows having a more visual image of the identified risks, making it easier to have a special focus on the high severity risks.



Figure 3: Impact – Probability matrix



# SUITE



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This project has been supported by the European Social Catalyst Fund which has been established and co-funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme, Genio, the Robert Bosch Stiftung and the King Baudouin Foundation