

Work Package 2: International collaboration and knowledge creation

- ***Case studies per project city***

ICLEI

Version	1.0
WP	WP2: Local Implementation
Name	Baseline Assessment
Date	June 2024
Dissemination level	External
Authors	Daniel Botha & Emily West
Reviewers	Olga Horn, Maria Alonso Martinez, Tim Marxen, & Rebecca Wessinghage
Abstract	<i>Case studies per project city reflecting on the individual process, the applied support methodology and the monitoring of outcomes. These [...] 5 case studies will be set up in a modular way, starting with content on the selected local climate actions and the social equity assessments as available. The case studies will be expanded with additional sections in parallel to the work in the cities.</i>
Keywords	Analysis; Case Study; Climate Measures; Social equity outcomes



Case study: Heidelberg

1. Climate measure

Heidelberg's climate measure for INCLU:DE focuses on its subsidy scheme for balcony solar modules, which is part of their overarching "Rational Use of Energy Subsidy Program" (Förderprogramm Rationelle Energieverwendung). Heidelberg seeks to enhance the access of low-income households to take advantage of this municipal subsidy scheme, with a specific geographic focus on its Hasenleiser district.

Compared to other districts, the Hasenleiser district is faced with a high percentage of unemployment and residents with low socio-economic status and migration backgrounds. From an architectural standpoint, Hasenleiser is primarily made up of multi-family apartment buildings that were constructed in the 1970s. Only a few of these have been renovated since. The district has a high energy savings potential, with a potential CO₂ emissions reduction of 96% through the installation of solar panels, district heating, and refurbishment of the existing building stock.

At present, Heidelberg's balcony solar module scheme is designed in a way that holders of the Heidelberg-Pass (HD-Pass) Heidelberg-Pass PLUS (HD-Pass+)¹ are only required to pay 50 € for the module. However, they need to cover the upfront costs and only receive the reimbursement after it has been approved. This likely constitutes a major financial barrier for households already struggling. Further barriers might arise in terms of awareness of balcony solar modules in Hasenleiser, since they are not yet commonly adopted. There might also be challenges stemming from an insufficient understanding of the subsidy program in general and low application rates among eligible low-income households for the HD-Pass(+). Additionally, the requirement to provide written approval from the landlord can pose a hurdle. Thus, a diverse set of economic, cultural, and educational aspects need to be considered in light of the overall goal.

2. Support measures

The INCLU:DE project, in collaboration with the city of Heidelberg, has identified a set of support measures, aiming at rendering the city's subsidy schemes more socially just. With a special focus on engaging residents in the Hasenleiser district, the primary goal is

¹ Eligibility for holding both the HD-Pass and HD-Pass+ is based on residency in Heidelberg, income levels below a specific threshold and affiliation with specific groups. The HD-Pass is primarily intended for those receiving Unemployment Benefit II (ALG II), social allowance, basic security, subsistence aid, housing allowance, child benefit supplement, or asylum seeker benefit. The HD-Pass+ is available to families with children, citizens aged 65+, and pensioners who do not receive the aforementioned benefits.



to develop an inclusive communication strategy to strengthen the participation of low-income households. The identified measures include:

Measures in progress:

1. **Updating the benefits** of solar balcony modules on the Heidelberg-Pass website and in the Heidelberg-Pass booklet by complementing the online list and flyer.
2. Accessibility Assessment: Development of an **application add-on** to evaluate how participants experienced the application process in terms of the communication of the program (e.g. how the applicants got aware of the program).

Further measures to be conducted:

3. The installation of **balcony solar modules** in high-visibility locations (e.g. Hasenleiser district management) and their public display at events aims to raise awareness and make topics such as photovoltaics, balcony solar panels and related subsidies more tangible.
4. Through an **in-depth exchange with local multipliers**, the aim is to decide on the most suitable next steps and actions relevant to the target group, which is scheduled high priority. The multipliers will be presented with previously discussed and prioritised support measures, which they will assess for relevance and feasibility based on their knowledge of the target group. A further goal of this exchange is to inquire whether the multipliers would be willing to continue their involvement as points of contact for the target group, such as for disseminating information. To foster this exchange, the city intends to facilitate separate bilateral meetings with multipliers. This approach aims to mitigate the risk associated with assembling a large and potentially ambiguously defined group of stakeholders with potentially divergent interests.
5. Promoting awareness of the funding program for balcony solar systems in the Hasenleiser district through piloting a targeted **multifaceted communication and outreach strategy**. To achieve this, existing **events** in Hasenleiser - including the upcoming installation and public display of showcase balcony solar modules in high-visibility locations - will be leveraged to disseminate information to event attendees. Ideally, events that effectively reach the target group will be selected. The exchange with relevant multipliers (*see No. 4*) will hopefully provide further insights into which events should be chosen, who should promote the funding program at these events and in what manner. If necessary, **flyers** will be designed to promote the funding program at the events and beyond.



3. Interim project learnings

The INCLU:DE project is still ongoing at the time of writing. An overview of *interim* learnings for the project as a whole can be [found here](#).

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Cities' climate initiatives and ambitions need to be socially just and consider vulnerable populations, to ensure that no-one is left behind.

Through the INCLU:DE project, the Mercator Foundation is supporting ICLEI to undertake a two-year project that seeks to support local inclusive transformations and foster dialogue exchanges to generate positive equity outcomes for all citizens involved.



This project is supported by the Stiftung Mercator.

