LEAP-RE

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan (MEL Plan)

Preliminary Findings

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Long-Term Joint EU-AU Research and Innovation Partnership on Renewable Energy

The LEAP-RE project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Program under Grant Agreement 963530.

LEAP-RE PILLAR 1 AND 2

Challenges & Lessons Learnt

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Introduction Pillar 1

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Scope: 23 LEAP-RE Pillar 1 projects data and a deep-dive on **14 interview-based cases** (**2** co-funded calls, multi-country AU-EU R&I projects advancing renewable energy)

Goal: find surface **cross-cutting challenges**, solutions, and actionable recommendations

Structure: aligns and mirrors Pillar 2 report focusing on Pillar 1 specifics

Output : report plan, early findings, recommended next stepss:

Interviews with 14 projects conducted in September - October 2025 as a **core novelty** → authentic coordinator insights

Timing: nearing the program ending → capture learning to inspire future AU-EU calls

Inroduction Pillar 2

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Scope: 8 strategic projects (internal R&I + capacity building)

Goal: Capture **achievements, challenges, lessons** for future AU–EU renewable energy collaboration calls

Method: 7 project lead interviews (April–July 2025) + CCSE KPI assessment framework

Output today: Draft findings, cross-cutting themes, recommendations

Methodology

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Semi-structured interviews with project leads

5 thematic lenses applied:

- Project management effectiveness and coordination
- Technical Innovation and Development outcomes
- Stakeholder engagement and community participation
- Capacity building and knowledge transfer
- Impact measurement and sustainability planning

✓ **KPI scoring framework:** Business/Economic (50%), Social (25%), Environmental (25%)

✓ **Mixed-methods approach:** Qualitative insights from interviews integrated with quantitative performance metrics

✓ **Validation process:** Cross-verification of findings through multiple data sources and stakeholder feedback

Portfolio Performance Analysis – Pillar 2

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Top Performers (KPI Scores)

- **PURAMS:** 80% – business & market readiness (solar EPC Development)
- **Energy Village:** 76.7% – social/community impact
- **RE4AFAGRI:** 73.3% – environmental benefits in agricultural applications

Overall mean: **72.0%** – consistent solid performance, no low performers

High-performing KPIs: energy access, capacity building, climate resilience

Key Achievements & Major Challenges

Technical innovation: Geothermal mapping technology to solar appliance integration solutions

Strong capacity building: training, summer schools, internships

Community-centered approaches

Cross-continental academic outputs: publications, policy briefs

Professional networks and institutional ties sustained beyond project life

- **Large consortiums** (15–20 partners) → management & comms strain
- **Data dependencies**: utilities, ministries, incomplete/sharing gaps
- **Cultural adaptation**: local skepticism, traditional practices
- **Private sector uptake**: weak links between research & business
- Sustainability planning often left too late in the project cycle

Lessons Learned

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Effective Project Management Approaches:

- Monthly and bi-weekly coordination calls essential for project cadence and timely communication.
- Structured communication protocols facilitated information flow.
- Regular milestone reviews enabling proactive challenge identification and resolution

Successful Partnership Models:

- EU-AU coordination structures promoting balanced leadership and decision-making.
- Bilingual bridge roles facilitating cross-cultural communication and understanding.
- Shared leadership approaches distributing responsibilities and expertise across consortium members.
- Collaborative decision-making processes ensuring inclusive participation.

Agility and Adaptive Management:

- Task re-ordering enabled flexible responses to unexpected challenges
- Work redistribution mechanisms valuable when partners face implementation difficulties
- Timeline adjustment protocols providing controlled relief for critical activities
- Resource reallocation strategies optimizing project outcomes within budget and time constraints.

Recommendations (Program & Projects)

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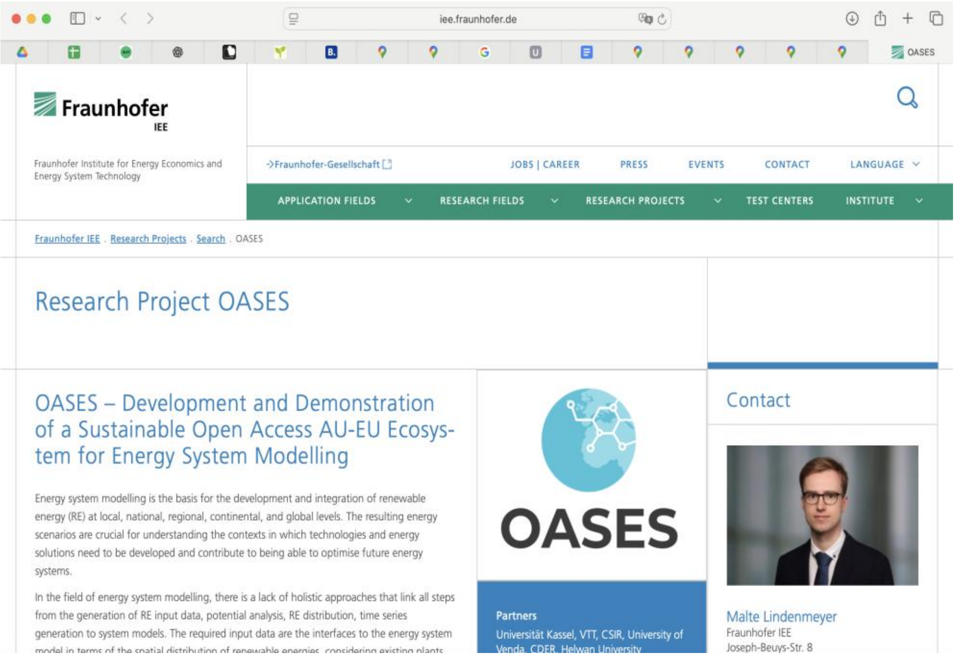

- **Funding & admin**: synchronize **starting dates and first payments**; harmonize reporting; fast-track extensions
- **Travel & exchange**: **budget annual in-person workshops** (especially for AU partners); short staff secondments
- **Stakeholders**: build **formal** community engagement & gender-inclusion work packages
- **Data**: secure MOUs early (geological, utility, policy); shared repos & data stewards
- **Logistics**: plan for customs and visa issues; favor local suppliers; central guidance on imports
- **Sustainability**: light-touch bridge-to-market (showcases, seed follow-on, policy links)

Lessons Learned & Strategic Insights

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Optimal consortium size = 8–12 partners (balance diversity & feasibility)

Partner pre-qualification needed (EU admin familiarity, capacity)

Policy translation requires **dedicated partners** for impact

Hardware innovation needs longer cycles & more resources

Open-source outputs ensure sustainability & broader uptake

Early sustainability planning and follow-up proposals are key

Partnership model evolving: **bidirectional knowledge transfer** is crucial

Innovation ecosystem: tech + business + policy + capacity = impact

Institutional capacity in Africa must be strengthened for long-term effect

Regional hubs could support continuity & coordination post-2025

Need for **simplified EU admin procedures** for African partners

Bridge-to-market mechanisms required (IP, business dev, financing)

THANK YOU

CONTACT US FOR MORE INFORMATION

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