TOOL Configuration tables

WHAT?

Describe the current configuration of the project or initiative, addressing all relevant aspects – in line with the configuration table categories presented below.

WHY?

An overview of the current situation is helpful to gain a clear understanding of the starting situation of the energy community – against which the future vision will be developed.
It helps to discuss the current and future configuration in terms of all relevant categories.

HOW?

CONFIGURATION TABLE

This tool is used in steps 1 and 3 of the backcasting process.

Configuration tables

Values — Economic, environmental and social values

Practices — Ways of doing; organisational structure; governance

Technologies and physical elements — Generation, storage and controllable appliances

Infrastructures — ICT and electricity network

Policy — Policies, legislation and support schemes

Resources — Relational, knowledge and financial resources

The next slides provide elaborate descriptions in the form of questions to be answered, either by the participants or by the process moderator based on discussions and background information. The **configuration document** that can be downloaded and filled in, contains the same elaborate descriptions.

Configuration tables

Task: Describe and characterise:

Values:

- ☐ **Economic benefits**:
  benefits that either flow back to individual members or that are reinvested in collective community goals.
  Underlying values: local economic regeneration through local value creation and retention.

- ☐ **Environmental benefits and decarbonisation of our energy system**:
  ensure local consumption that is CO2 neutral by means of: optimising between local storage, self-consumption and grid-supplied energy consumption (increase local demand when RES production is high; decrease local demand when RES production is low).
  Underlying values: decrease dependence on fossil fuels; support grid stability (to enable more RES to be connected to the grid)

- ☐ **Social benefits related to the community:**
  strengthening social resilience; enhancing social cohesion; improving collaboration, self-reliance and autonomy; e.g. maximizing local self-consumption of locally generated energy, using local individual or collective storage options.
  Underlying values: community well-being; self-control; achieving local CO2 neutrality; supporting local value creation via local self-reliance

Configuration tables

Task: Describe and characterise:

Practices:
Ways of doing; community organization; community governance; financial governance; relations and interactions with other stakeholders.

- ☐ How is the community organised?
- ☐ In case there a formal organizational structure, what does is look like (cooperative; foundation; company; other)? Since when does it exist?
- ☐ What does the governance look like?
  - ☐ how often do all members meet;
  - ☐ how do they decide on matters;
  - ☐ who is in charge of day-to-day management;
  - ☐ what are the channels through which regular interactions are facilitated (e.g. email, meetings,)
- ☐ Wat is the size (nr. of people/households) of the community and how has it evolved over time?
- ☐ How are community members involved in the current community project/activities.
- ☐ What (project related) activities are performed by the community?
- ☐ In terms of energy-related activities, how do these affect household or community level energy generation, storage, consumption

Configuration tables

Task: Describe and characterise:

Technologies and physical elements:

- ☐ The homes and other types of buildings that are part of the project
- ☐ Appliances at household level that can be controlled (turned off or on to change demand patterns)
- ☐ Appliances at community level (e.g. local industry; shared heat pump) that can be controlled (turned off or on to change demand patterns)
- ☐ Installed capacity of renewable energy (PV; solar thermal; wind; biomass) at household or community level
- ☐ Storage options at household or community level
- ☐ Electric vehicles

Infrastructures :

- ☐ Does your current project affect the energy distribution or transmission network?
- ☐ What sort of (connections to) energy infrastructures are in place at household and community level?
- ☐ Do the participating households have smart meters?
- ☐ Are energy management systems or user interfaces being used currently in relation to current project activities?
- ☐ What ICT-related infrastructure is available (e.g. internet connections to enable cloud-based systems)?

Configuration tables

Task: Describe and characterise:

Policy :

- ☐ To arrive at the current state of the project/activities, which subsidies or support schemes have been used? Please distinguish between EU, national and local schemes.
- ☐ How does current policy and legislation affect the project/activities?

Resources:
Relational resources; knowledge resources (know-how, skills); financial resources.

- ☐ With whom do you work together currently and to what aim?
  - ☐ Do you have partners (e.g. other community-level organisations, companies)?
  - ☐ Do you work together with an energy supplier, a DSO or TSO?
  - ☐ Do you work together with (local) government?
- ☐ What knowledge is present within the community?
- ☐ What about know-how and skills?
- ☐ Has external knowledge been used for the current activities?
- ☐ What is your financial situation? (characterization in terms of financial feasibility/viability of the current project – including challenges and resources)

TOOL

Configuration tables

The filled-in configuration table provides a reference situation and an improved understanding and agreement on what the starting situation is for this particular community energy initiative (the current configuration). At a later moment, ideas for the future configuration are also developed using these categories, thereby addressing all relevant 'system' aspects.