Tackling Social Problems for Projects in Energy

- Ekaterina Lazarenko

- Soso Mindiashvili

- Nikoloz Sumbadze

- Luka Garibashvili

General Overview of Social Problems

Disinformation and lack of awareness of the project

- False information spread mostly on social media (trolls, bots, etc.);
- Lack of awareness regarding benefits of the project;
- Scamming and false/underdeveloped projects, resulting in general distrust

"Not in my backyard" approach to project development

- Opposition to all projects regardless of benefits;
- Reluctance to change.
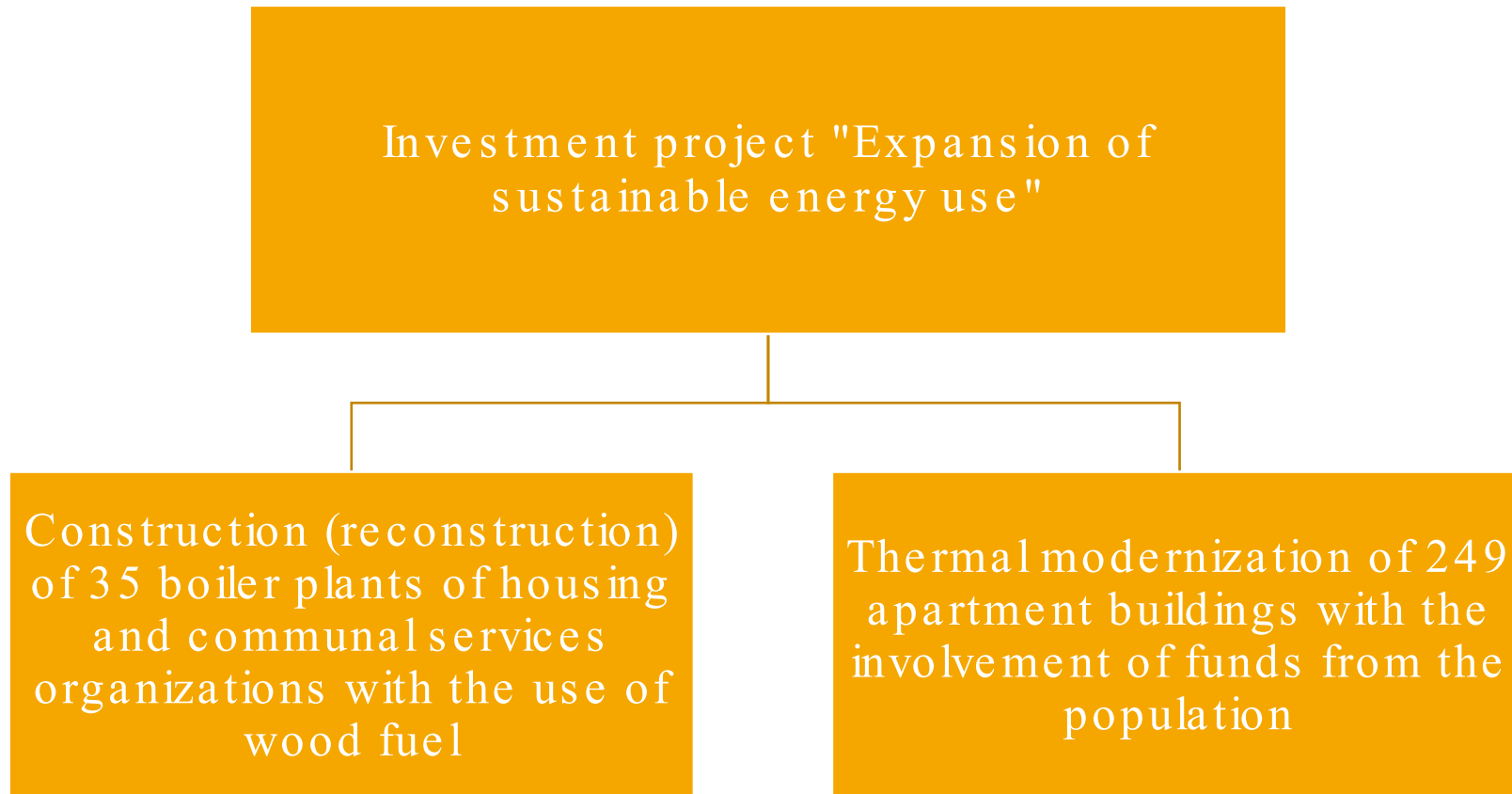
Unwilling to spend own funds

- Dependance of government grants and subsidies;
- Reluctance to provide funding even during co-financing schemes.

Lack of professional understanding regarding projects

- Lack of expertise and knowledge from the general public;

Case example – Lack of Interest

Investment project "Expansion of sustainable energy use"

Construction (reconstruction) of 35 boiler plants of housing and communal services organizations with the use of wood fuel

Thermal modernization of 249 apartment buildings with the involvement of funds from the population

Effect of Disinformation of Projects

88 projects suspended in total

62% of projects were suspended due to social protests

4 billion USD and 20000 jobs lost

Claims range from calls to reevaluate the project to exaggerated claim of "mass destruction"

Disinformation – Case Example

- Nigoza WPP in Kaspi Municipality – Installed capacity 50 MW, projected generation – 232 mln.kwh;

- Construction of Wind PP was temporarily suspended, due to a risk of affecting Egyptian Vultures, which nested in 300 m from the PP;

- In reality, the closest nest of Vultures is 2-3 km from the WPP, and the height of the turbine (180 m) is insufficient to interfere with flight patterns (at 200-300 m).

Combating Disinformation

Identify the source Determining the origin of the source

Determining the aims and grounds of the disseminator.

Concentrated and specific public responses to separate sources of disinformation.

Disclosure of the disseminator, his motives and goals

Sharing experiences, creating a database of disinformation sources

Ways to Resolve Communication Issues

Opening communication channels between the population and organizations

Improve public awareness of the projects (social media, advertisement, the media, etc.)

Publicize the project necessity in order to increase public involvement

Ensure access to information about project financing, including through the media and meetings

Define qualified specialists who will work with the population

Opportunities for Establishing Communication

Use of Internet space (creating specially designed sites, advertising access to the project on Facebook and other popular social networks);

Use of public spaces for the organization of discussions (administrative centers, city halls, public schools, libraries, etc.)

Creating virtual and physical spaces for the expression of thought, with the prospect of further sorting and discussing them.

Optimization of processes and creation of a standard review mechanism, which is completed by mutual agreement.

Develop a strategy to combat disinformation

Creating focus groups working on individual issues

Thank You for Your Attention!