



Multiple Impacts Calculation Tool

# **Policy recommendations for integrating MI-EE in decision- making processes**

## **D5.4 Policy recommendations derived in a crosscutting manner for the monitoring and reporting on Multiple Impacts**

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# CONTENTS

1. Executive Summary.....	3
2. INTRODUCTION.....	4
3. Summary of all published policy briefs .....	5
3.1 The first step in co-designing an effective tool for supporting energy efficiency policy design .....	5
3.2 The conceptual framework of MICAT and its relevance for policymakers.....	5
3.3 Bringing the multiple impacts of energy efficiency into SECAPs.....	6
3.4 From principle to practice: The role of the MICATool in addressing multiple impacts and implementing the energy efficiency first principle.....	6
3.5 Reaping the benefits of human-centric urban planning.....	7
3.6 A tool built around its users: the MICATool co-design process.....	8
3.7 Superbonus 110: The generous Italian scattergun and its small but fine impacts.....	8
3.8 An analytical overview of Germany's EEW and its role in energy transition strategies .....	9
3.9 Fitter than 55: The multiple impacts of the EU's ambitious climate agenda .....	9
3.10 Multiple impacts of energy efficiency - growing importance in the last decade and future role .....	9
4. Conclusions.....	11



# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The MICAT project aims to develop a comprehensive approach to estimate Multiple Impacts of Energy Efficiency (MI-EE) by creating a free and easy-to-use online tool (MICATool). The MICATool will enable holistic analyses of MI-EE at the European, national and local levels to strengthen the climate strategy of the Energy Union and accelerate an affordable and just sustainable energy transition by addressing the challenges and needs of target groups such as policy makers, practitioners and evaluators. These groups can conduct simplified analyses for different data and policy scenarios and assess the relevance of the multiple impacts and strengthen reporting and monitoring at the three governance levels.

The scenarios and policies analysed by the MICATool are meant to help in decision-making on different governmental levels. This report seeks to outline the policy recommendations drawn from project testimonials and practical examples throughout its duration. It encompasses a compilation of 10 policy briefs crafted at various stages of MICATool development, spanning across EU, national, and local levels.

The policy briefs in this compilation are crucial tools for policymakers as they help bridge the gap between research insights and pragmatic decision-making, offering clear recommendations based on reliable information. As navigating the complex terrain of policy creation, these briefs serve as guiding lights, assisting policymakers at different levels to make well-informed choices in the complex process of policy development.



## 2. INTRODUCTION

The MICATool (Multiple Impacts Calculation Tool) is a free, easy-to-use online tool developed as an essential component of the MICAT project. It is designed to help policymakers, practitioners, and evaluators assess the multiple impacts of energy efficiency investments at the European, national, and local levels. It allows users to conduct analyses, providing a simplified framework for analysing the MI-EE investments. Users can input data on energy savings, investments, and other relevant parameters to estimate the impacts on various aspects, such as energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, air quality, energy poverty, and job creation. The tool also enables users to compare the results of different scenarios and assess the relative importance of different multiple impacts. This can inform decision-making by highlighting the potential trade-offs and synergies between energy efficiency and other policy objectives.

The scenarios analysed by the MICATool are meant to help in decision-making on the EU, national and local levels. In this context, policy briefs derived from testimonies and practical examples were developed during the project lifetime. Policy briefs are concise tools that deliver information and analysis to policymakers, addressing specific challenges and proposing solutions. Designed for clarity and accessibility, they play a crucial role in supporting evidence-based decision-making in the policy formulation process.

This document is a compilation of 10 policy briefs developed during the various phases of the project, encompassing different government levels and which are available in full on <https://micatool.eu/micat-project-en/publications.php>.

The subsequent sections detail the policy briefs outlined below:

1. The first step in co-designing an effective tool for supporting energy efficiency policy design
2. Bringing the multiple impacts of energy efficiency into SECAPs
3. The conceptual framework of MICAT and its relevance for policymakers
4. From principle to practice: The role of the MICATool in addressing multiple impacts and implementing the energy efficiency first principle
5. Reaping the benefits of human-centric urban planning
6. A tool built around its users: the MICATool co-design process
7. Superbonus 110: The generous Italian scattergun and its small but fine impacts
8. An analytical overview of Germany's EEW and its role in energy transition strategies
9. Fitter than 55: The multiple impacts of the EU's ambitious climate agenda
10. Multiple impacts of energy efficiency - growing importance in the last decade and future role



## 3. SUMMARY OF ALL PUBLISHED POLICY BRIEFS

### 3.1 The first step in co-designing an effective tool for supporting energy efficiency policy design

The policy-brief underscores the importance of assessing and quantifying the multiple impacts of energy efficiency measures as a strategic approach to increase investment in the energy transition. Despite the availability of tools developed by successful projects for policy impact assessments, their underutilization in policymaking persists. The MICAT project endeavored to actively engage European, national, and local governing bodies, along with stakeholders, in crafting a tailored tool for the design of energy efficiency policies. The engagement process envisions three crucial steps essential for attaining this objective. These steps include collecting data inputs and expectations, conducting validation, and providing training, as stated below:

- **Step 1** - Embedding of analysis in energy & climate strategy: In this step, in situ workshops align the MICATool with the energy and climate strategy of each governance level.
- **Step 2** - Analysis & validation of underlying assumptions & methodology: In the second step, focus groups critically analyzes and validates the MICATool's assumptions and methodology, ensuring alignment with the diverse needs of stakeholders. The tool's adaptability and reliability across different governance levels are emphasized.
- **Step 3** - Implementation of MICATool at each governance level: In the final step, results are presented and training on tool usage is provided through in situ workshops.

The policy brief provides a summary of the outcomes achieved at every level during the first step.

At the EU level include participants from DG ENERGY, DG CLIMA, and CINEA expressed a keen interest in macroeconomic indicators, environmental indicators, and social impacts, particularly the alleviation of energy poverty. The stakeholders' interest in economic impacts ranged from highest to lowest as follows: Macro-economic effects (4.4), Energy security (3.6), Innovation and competitiveness (3.1), and Micro-economic effects (3). Similarly, their interest in social and environmental impacts followed this order: Alleviation of energy poverty (4.7), Local/carbon emissions (4.2), Saving of primary materials (3.7), Human health due to reduced air pollution (3.5), Health impacts due to improved indoor climate (3.3), and Impacts on RES targets (3.2). Finally, the MICATool was seen as beneficial for the new Article 3 of the Energy Efficiency Directive (EED) recast.

At the national level, interest in indicators varies, with environmental and economic indicators being prominent. Poland shows high interest in energy poverty indicators due to high household energy expenditures. Germany and Italy express less interest in social indicators but see value in updating their National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs) using the MICATool and meeting reporting obligations under Article 3 of the EED.

Local level engagement included city administrations, environmental associations, and regional governments. It was observed that local stakeholders require guidance on the multiple impacts concept, and the MICATool is expected to support municipalities in assessing policy options regarding energy efficiency. Challenges included identifying use cases and ensuring simple integration into municipal procedures.

Conclusively, it is affirmed that the projected usefulness of the MICATool at local, national, and EU levels will undergo validation in Step 2, underscoring the significance of stakeholder engagement and its practical integration into policy-making procedures.

### 3.2 The conceptual framework of MICAT and its relevance for policymakers

This policy brief delineates the components of the MICAT conceptual framework and underscores its significance for policymakers engaged in energy efficiency initiatives. The conceptual quantification not only enables the anticipation and evaluation of multiple impacts (MI) across different governance levels but also offers flexibility for scenario-based analyses.



The MICATool's flexibility is highlighted in the nuanced quantification of multiple impacts (MI), employing impact factors tied directly to specific input parameters. The quantification process, spanning input data, impact assessment, monetisation, aggregation, and Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA), reflects a systematic and comprehensive approach.

To incorporate impacts into CBAs, the MICATool necessitates converting them into a common monetary metric using monetisation methodologies. Addressing the challenge of interactions and overlaps among impacts, the tool identifies approximately ten indicators eligible for non-double-counting inclusion in the CBA. MICAT acknowledges the substantial impact of energy efficiency's monetary value on CBAs, emphasizing the potential for these values to exceed direct energy cost savings, and underscores the importance of considering these impacts to prevent biased policy decisions.

To address the needs of policymakers and evaluators at various governance levels, the MICATool offers a range of indicators to aggregate Multiple Impacts (MI), including total monetised value, various CBA metrics, and marginal abatement cost curves. The tool includes sensitivity analyses, allowing users to modify parameters and evaluate the robustness of CBA results. Emphasizing its versatility, The MICATool integrates core scenarios and framework data, while also providing the flexibility for users to input their own data. This adaptability is crucial for evaluating interventions like energy efficiency improvement actions or assessing scenarios such as REF 2020 or National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs).

It is concluded that the MICATool stands out as a resilient and adaptable instrument tailored for policymakers and evaluators. With its comprehensive features, characterized by a systematic approach, flexibility, and a dedicated focus on societal perspectives, the tool facilitates a nuanced evaluation of the genuine value of energy efficiency.

### **3.3 Bringing the multiple impacts of energy efficiency into SECAPs**

This policy brief provides a summary of the MICAT project's workshops conducted in three pilot cities, Tartu (Estonia), Vitoria-Gasteiz, and Calvià (Spain). The workshops aimed to introduce the MICATool to diverse stakeholders, including city council members, academia, energy sector companies, and civil society organizations. The methodology involved developers presenting the MICATool, participants testing it with a common example, and providing feedback on language clarity, ease of use, and the generation of insights for supporting energy and climate objectives.

The research findings highlighted the MICATool's significant insights, offering value to local governments in assessing the multiple impacts of energy efficiency in their Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans (SECAPs). Stakeholders viewed the tool as beneficial for informing councils, achieving climate goals, and facilitating policymaking. However, challenges were identified, such as the need for alignment with specific local indicators, reliance on relevant data availability, and the tool's requirement for expertise. Suggestions included incorporating short reports to explain calculation assumptions and addressing the issue of multiple tools with different proposals in municipalities.

The conclusion and recommendations emphasised the MICATool's potential, urging attention to data availability, interpretation support, and communication through clear factsheets. Following usability heuristics was proposed to enhance the tool's usability. Considering Multiple Impacts of Energy Efficiency (MI-EE) in SECAPs was deemed essential, enhancing the structured policy framework for sustainable energy and climate initiatives. Comprehensive evaluation of EE benefits, from reduced emissions to improved air quality, ensures informed decision-making and resource allocation.

To incorporate MI-EE in SECAPs, the document recommended proper quantification of energy savings and highlighted the MICATool's role in supporting monitoring and evaluation of SECAP actions. The broader socio-economic and environmental advantages of EE measures were underlined, emphasizing the holistic approach. The importance of local case studies in collaboration with energy experts, local authorities, and businesses was stressed. Finally, municipalities were advised to conduct education programs to raise awareness about the multiple impacts of energy efficiency, encouraging individuals and businesses to adopt energy-efficient practices.

### **3.4 From principle to practice: The role of the MICATool in addressing multiple impacts and implementing the energy efficiency first principle**

This policy brief explores the application of the MICATtool in supporting the implementation of the energy efficiency first (EE1st) principle within the European Union (EU). The EE1st principle, entrenched in EU



strategies and recently recast in the Energy Efficiency Directive (EED), advocates prioritizing energy efficiency solutions over new energy supply infrastructure when they offer greater value. The MICATool addresses a critical aspect of EE1st by providing a framework for assessing the multiple impacts of energy efficiency, encompassing social, environmental, and economic factors often neglected in quantitative assessments.

The MICATool facilitates a comprehensive evaluation of these impacts through physical quantification, monetisation, and aggregation, aligning with legal requirements under the EED. The brief highlights three key areas where the MICATool can contribute: assessing energy efficiency solutions in planning, policy, and major investment decisions; reporting on the benefits of energy efficiency in National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs); and addressing energy poverty issues. The tool's ability to quantify impacts in physical terms and monetize them ensures a fair comparison between energy supply and efficiency alternatives, avoiding biased decision-making.

The EE1st principle underscores the significance of considering the 'wider benefits' or multiple impacts in decision-making, as these impacts, when expressed monetarily, often rival direct energy cost savings. Ignoring multiple impacts may lead to suboptimal energy efficiency levels. The MICAT project's contribution is the development of the publicly available MICATool, which allows decision-makers to comprehensively assess impacts, translating them into monetary terms for cost-benefit analysis.

The brief concludes by emphasizing the MICATool's role as a key resource for operationalizing the EE1st principle. Its capacity to quantify, monetize, and visualize the impacts of energy efficiency actions positions it as a vital tool for informed decision-making, strategic planning, and aligning with the EU's overarching energy and climate governance objectives. The MICATool's versatility makes it applicable across various domains, enabling a holistic assessment of energy efficiency measures and supporting policymakers in justifying public investments.

### 3.5 Reaping the benefits of human-centric urban planning

The policy brief discusses the ongoing implementation of the Superblock concept in Vitoria-Gasteiz, which aims to transform city streets into pedestrian-friendly spaces by limiting vehicle traffic and prioritizing pedestrians and cyclists. The initiative, part of the city's Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan since 2007, has led to significant improvements in the quality of life for residents, including reduced pollution, noise, and congestion. By 2021, 20 of the planned 77 Superblocks had been developed, with ongoing efforts to implement the model citywide. The program has resulted in increased use of sustainable transportation modes, with a notable decrease in car usage.

The Superblocks in Vitoria-Gasteiz have not only enhanced the city's liveability but also generated substantial energy savings. The expected annual final energy savings of 372.2 GWh, once the concept is fully implemented, far outweigh the investment costs of 11.5 million euros. The program's positive impacts extend beyond energy efficiency, encompassing reductions in air pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions. Additionally, there are notable health benefits, including fewer lost workdays and avoided mortality due to reduced air pollution. The initiative has also contributed to the economy by creating new jobs and adding value.

The policy brief highlights the use of the MICATool to assess the multiple impacts of the Superblock program. The tool indicates that the benefits of the program, when monetized, significantly surpass the costs. Various indicators, such as energy cost savings, impact on GDP, avoided mortality, and societal costs of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, are considered. The results show that the benefits, when compared to the investments, demonstrate a clear advantage in favor of the Superblock concept. The success of the initiative not only aligns with the city's goals of improving quality of life but also supports its ambitious plans for decarbonization.

In conclusion, the Superblock concept in Vitoria-Gasteiz has proven so far to be a success in achieving its primary objective of enhancing the city's quality of life. Moreover, it has demonstrated itself as a highly cost-effective measure, generating substantial energy savings and additional benefits. The program's success lies not only in promoting sustainable modes of transportation but also in contributing significantly to the city's decarbonization efforts and economic well-being.





### 3.6 A tool built around its users: the MICATool co-design process

This policy brief highlights the MICAT project emphasis on stakeholder engagement, which is interwoven with the MICATool's development over a three-year period. The engagement fostered a trustful relationship between the project team and end-users.

The employed engagement strategy consists of both vertical and horizontal components. Vertically, the project engaged three governmental levels with further segmentation, conducting case studies at national and local levels in Germany, Italy, Poland, Tartu (Estonia), Vitoria Gasteis, and Calviá (Spain). Drawing from previous projects and stakeholder involvement, the MICATool aims to assist not only national governments and the European Commission but also local authorities in formulating cost-effective climate policies. It can aid investors in making sustainable decisions and demonstrate the sustainability of energy efficiency investments, aligning with the European Green Deal and Energy Efficiency Directive. Horizontally, the engagement strategy involved embedding analysis, validating assumptions, and training, with a focus on assessing Multiple Impacts of Energy Efficiency (MI-EE). The process included incorporating policies and scenarios, setting up an online tool with back-end and front-end development, and ensuring stakeholder involvement at every step.

As outcomes of the engagement strategy, a total of 66 unique feedback comments were collected across indicators, MICATool's architecture, data needs, requests for guidance, and suggestions for policy improvement. These comments were addressed, either fully or partially, to enhance the MICATool.

User feedback played a crucial role in driving positive enhancements to the MICATool, focusing on improvements in graphical representation, labeling, and conceptual clarity. The collaborative environment established through stakeholder engagement fosters the positive evolution of the MICATool, aligning it more closely with user expectations.

The policy brief concludes by highlighting potential applications of the MICATool, including its central role in examining multiple impacts in National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs), potentially substituting impact assessments, aiding member states in meeting reporting obligations, evaluating cost-benefit ratios in funding programs, and contributing to municipalities' Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans (SECAPs). Overall, the MICATool is positioned as a versatile and user-friendly resource with significant potential for enhancing sustainable energy and climate planning.

### 3.7 Superbonus 110: The generous Italian scattergun and its small but fine impacts

The policy brief discusses Italy's Superbonus, introduced in 2020 to stimulate the economy post-pandemic by promoting energy efficiency in residential buildings. The Superbonus offers up to a 110% refund for retrofitting measures, including thermal insulation, heating system replacement, and other sustainable technologies. Despite its success in incentivizing large-scale renovations and contributing to a 20% growth in the construction sector, the scheme faces criticism for its high public costs and perceived lack of environmental ambition, allowing funding for climate-damaging technologies.

In 2023, the Italian government changed the Superbonus from a tax credit to a tax deduction system, restricting its support to higher-income individuals due to income requirements for tax deductions. This shift has sparked controversy, as the previous system provided funding irrespective of recipients' tax liability, benefiting a broader range of homeowners. Consequently, the Superbonus now favours well-off recipients, raising concerns about equity in its implementation.

The final energy savings and investments of the Superbonus for 2021, as reported by the Italian National Agency, are underscored in the policy brief. The MICATool is used to assess multiple impacts, revealing benefits beyond energy savings. These include reductions in air pollutants and greenhouse gas emissions, health benefits, alleviation of energy poverty, increased building asset value, and macroeconomic effects such as job creation and added value.

Despite controversies, the Superbonus has delivered substantial energy savings and diverse benefits. According to the MICATool's results, the program has resulted in various benefits beyond energy efficiency. However, the policy brief suggests that a more targeted approach explicitly aimed at addressing climate change could potentially have achieved greater energy savings and broader benefits, given the considerable public funding involved in the Superbonus programme.



### 3.8 An analytical overview of Germany's EEW and its role in energy transition strategies

The policy brief discusses Germany's Federal Funding Scheme for Energy and Resource Efficiency in the Economy (EEW) and its remarkable success in achieving substantial energy savings and generating positive impacts beyond energy efficiency, as revealed by the MICATool. Launched in 2019 as a successor to the German Energy Efficiency Fund, the EEW has undergone revisions and witnessed a significant funding increase, reaching approximately 640 million EUR in 2022. The programme comprises five modules, offering a combination of direct investment grants and low-interest loans to cater to diverse financing needs.

The MICATool analysis highlights the EEW's significant achievements, including substantial reductions in air pollutants, particularly a noteworthy decrease in NOX by 2,159 tons. This reduction has led to improved air quality, resulting in health benefits such as avoided mortality and reduced working days lost due to lower air pollution levels. From a macroeconomic perspective, the EEW has contributed 3.8 B€ to Germany's GDP and has played a pivotal role in creating around 62,300 full-time equivalent jobs. Additionally, the programme has successfully reduced Germany's gas import dependence by 0.07%.

Additionally, the MICATool's insights reveal that the EEW's impacts extend well beyond mere energy savings, encompassing reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, enhanced air quality, and positive economic outcomes. The monetisation of these impacts illustrates that the annual benefits nearly surpass the investments, with the cumulative impacts outweighing the costs over the measures' lifetimes.

In conclusion, the German EEW stands out as a commendable energy efficiency programme, achieving substantial savings with relatively modest investments. With a subsidy rate of 28%, it holds the potential to serve as a model for other EU countries seeking expedient and cost-effective energy efficiency solutions, particularly within the industrial sector.

### 3.9 Fitter than 55: The multiple impacts of the EU's ambitious climate agenda

The policy brief discusses the multiple impacts resulting from the energy efficiency measures laid out in the Fit-for-55 package. Although, these projected figures have been altered in the legislative process, their effects are still remarkable. Moreover, although some pieces of legislation have been watered down in the process, the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the resulting REpowerEU package have partly further increased the ambition of affected directives.

The MICATool analyses the energy efficiency impacts of the package. This means that not only savings resulting from the recast Energy Efficiency Directive are considered, but also savings stimulated by other revamped directives. These result in enormous benefits bolstering environmental, social, and economic sustainability across the bloc. When accounted over the investments' lifetimes, these monetised impacts surpass projected triggered investment costs but also the primary benefit of energy cost savings.

In conclusion, beside its symbolic stance in committing to climate action, the Fit-for-55 package has the potential to deliver huge societal benefits across the European Union, inter alia in key policy fields, such as energy security, energy poverty, and many more.

### 3.10 Multiple impacts of energy efficiency - growing importance in the last decade and future role

This policy brief outlines the evolution and growing importance of considering the multiple impacts of energy efficiency in policy discussions over the past decade. The focus is on justifying more ambitious energy efficiency targets and policies through the quantification and monetization of these impacts. The MICAT project has played a significant role in this by developing the MICATool, an online tool that comprehensively quantifies and partly monetizes the various impacts associated with energy efficiency.

The brief highlights the increasing recognition of multiple impacts at the international and European policy levels, citing examples such as the Energy Union Strategy, the "Clean Energy for all Europeans" Package, and the more recent "Fit for 55" package under the European Green Deal. The revised Energy Efficiency



Directive (EED) in 2023 further emphasised the importance of considering "wider benefits" or multiple impacts in cost-benefit analyses related to energy efficiency solutions. As a response to the evolving landscape, the MICATool is set to be expanded through the SEED MICAT project, initiated in December 2023, to accommodate the analysis of potentially competing or complementary paths and options towards achieving climate neutrality.

The brief underscores the continued relevance of multiple impacts in the next decade, particularly in the context of the COP28 Agreement's goal of doubling global energy efficiency progress by 2030. While these impacts have been crucial in justifying energy efficiency targets, the brief points out that they are seldom quantified or monetized. Here, the MICAT project, building upon methodologies from previous projects such as COMBI and ODYSSEE-MURE, has made significant strides by introducing the MICATool, providing a valuable resource for decision-makers.

The policy brief also delves into the broader considerations in the Assessment Report 2024 of the European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change, connecting the Energy Efficiency First (EE1) principle to the consideration of multiple impacts and the pursuit of climate neutrality.

Finally, the challenge lies in comparing cost-effective energy efficiency measures with other options, such as renewable energies, especially when pathways to climate neutrality involve varying levels of renewables and energy efficiency policies. The MICATool, with its ability to assess multiple impacts comprehensively, can help decision-makers evaluate energy efficiency alongside other options, thereby providing a nuanced understanding of its true value in achieving climate goals.



## 4. CONCLUSIONS

This deliverable underscores the significance of comprehensive information in shaping effective energy efficiency policies. The compilation of these succinct documents serves as invaluable resources for policymakers, offering targeted insights into challenges and proposing pragmatic solutions. Emphasizing clarity and accessibility, policy briefs contribute to evidence-based decision-making, playing an important role in the formulation of informed policies at various government levels.

The varied focus of the policy briefs reflects the multifaceted nature of the MICAT project. Briefs such as “The first step in co-designing an effective tool for supporting energy efficiency policy design”; “Bringing the multiple impacts of energy efficiency into SECAPs”; and “A tool built around its users: the MICATool co-design process” highlight the necessity of a participatory approach in developing user-friendly tools like MICATool, emphasizing the importance of engaging key users in the design process. Other policy briefs delve into specific policy aspects, such as analysing and simulating scenarios for programmes like the Italian Superbonus (Italian Superbonus: an analysis of energy savings and beyond) and Germany's EEW (An analytical overview of Germany's EEW and its role in energy transition strategies). Additionally, some briefs underscore the relevance of considering the multiple impacts of energy efficiency in alignment with directives like the EED. This is the case of the briefs entitled “From principle to practice: The role of the MICATool in addressing multiple impacts and implementing the energy efficiency first principle” and “Multiple impacts of energy efficiency - growing importance in the last decade and future role”.

The MICATool, as an integral part of this project, stands out for its capacity to comprehensively assess multiple impacts, providing decision-makers with a nuanced understanding of energy efficiency's true value. By enabling the evaluation of energy efficiency alongside other options, the tool aids in informed decision-making, facilitating the achievement of climate goals. As Europe navigates the complexities of energy transition, the insights derived from these policy briefs and the MICATool contribute significantly to shaping a sustainable and effective policy landscape. The collaborative efforts involved in user engagement, policy analysis, and impact assessment showcased in these briefs collectively reinforce the importance of a holistic approach in addressing the challenges and opportunities within the realm of energy efficiency policy.

