

Final conference

Key take aways

Multiple Benefits Project Partners

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Project partners



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Background

The Multiple Benefits Virtual Conference attracted over 300 participants for an engaging event on May 11, 2021! Representatives from industry, the buildings sector, energy services, research and academia, government and policy, and investors came together to discuss how companies realise competitive advantages through energy efficiency.

New evidence and tools were presented on how to make a compelling business case for energy-saving projects, and panelists and participants identified how the multiple benefits approach and results can bolster energy efficiency policy, programmes, and related green recovery efforts.

Key themes included:

1. ***Competitiveness*** – Companies highlighted competitive energy saving investments leading to improved value proposition, lower costs and risks
2. ***Enhancing the business case*** – New tools, project results and evidence linked energy saving projects/solutions to core business benefits
3. ***Synergies with green recovery*** – Panelists and participants made connections and identified synergies with efficiency policy, programmes, and related green deal and recovery plans.

Key take-aways

The major take-aways from the event are summarised below.

Advantages & lessons learned from companies

- In firms, the Multiple Benefits approach and tools can promote collaboration and communication across business units/departments that may not interact often. It is a platform that helps promote common cause between e.g., finance, operations, HR, sustainability/energy, and upper management.
- Multiple benefits help firms think creatively and generate insights.
- By opening communication channels across departments, the approach can even lead companies to extend/relax the financial return criteria to allow for more projects to receive funding.
- The approach is not a “copy and paste”. It is a tool that can be applied to many different types of organisations; however, the process and analysis requires time, commitment, and practice. The types of benefits and how to quantify them will vary across firms.
- The pilot projects identified and quantified different types of benefits and their contribution to competitiveness (value proposition, reduced costs and risks). Some of the benefits quantified in the case studies include safety improvements, time savings, enhanced productivity, improved occupant comfort, reduced maintenance costs, and reduced carbon (CO₂) costs.

Synergies with policy, programmes, and related initiatives

- The Multiple Benefits approach can create a meaningful bridge and stimulate dialogue across disciplines or across “silos” e.g., a platform/forum for academia to collaborate with energy services, for labour/finance departments to collaborate with environmental/energy departments.
- While the process at a high-level can be applied to all types of companies and organisations, companies are not homogenous, so the benefits differ and are not always obvious. Structured tools and practical examples (from the project) can contribute to better understanding of these benefits.

- Multiple benefits are spoken about at multiple levels – traditionally the societal or regional level – so it is important to define the level and make the context clear (who receives the benefits?)
- The focus on non-energy benefits especially better comfort, healthier homes and workplaces, and reduced energy poverty can help stimulate demand for a host of programmes including building renovation efforts.
- More harmonisation and standardization of the approach and the benefits, through for example a taxonomy, can lead to benchmarks for monetising these benefits (links to investor-level and ESG/impact investors).
- Enhancing energy audits to account for and clearly include multiple benefits in the results and recommendations is a clean synergy. However, energy auditors will require training on the method and tools and there needs to be a business driver/case since applying the method requires more time (and hence cost).

See the Multiple Benefits Synergies document for additional information and potential linkages with energy efficiency policies and related programmes.