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# CONCEPT NOTE

## POLICY TO PRACTICE: ADVANCING PRODUCTIVE USE OF RENEWABLE ENERGY SOLUTIONS IN NORTH EAST INDIA

Venue: AIC- SELCO Foundation, Guwahati, Assam  
Date: 9 July 2024 (Tuesday) | 09:00 – 17:00 hours IST  
Registration starts at 9:00 am

The North East region (NER) of India comprises eight states with a population of approximately 45 million. Around 70% of the NER's population depends on agriculture as a primary source of livelihood. Despite being rich in biodiversity and natural resources, with the presence of around 19 lakh (micro, small, and medium) enterprises, the region only contributes 2.5% of the national GDP. This results from a lack of consistent and reliable energy access, underdeveloped agro-processing industries and agri-value chain, as well as low female workforce participation (29.1%), which need to be mitigated through technological advancement in agro-processing, quality and reliable energy access, and gender inclusivity.

Decentralised renewable energy (DRE) solutions are small-scale livelihood applications that are powered through renewable energy such as solar, wind, and bio-mass. DRE livelihood technologies have the potential to impact at least 37 million livelihoods in India. These include solar dryers, solar or biomass-powered cold storage/chiller, solar refrigerators, solar-powered fodder grow stations, etc. In February 2022, MNRE introduced a framework on 'Promotion of DRE Livelihood Applications', the first national framework to integrate DRE livelihood technologies into livelihood practices. However, the lack of programme support and affordable finance for DRE remains a key hurdle in scaling these technologies.

### **Prospect for DRE-based livelihoods in Northeast Region (NER):**

Under Vision 2020, the states of NER agreed on creating cold storage, market infrastructure, and expansion of non-farm economic activities in the rural areas as "Rural development initiatives". Emphasis has been on reducing the dairy, poultry, and fishery imports and leveraging the vast potential for expanding poultry and animal husbandry in the regions to increase productive employment as well as incomes.

NER can enhance the livelihood of 17 lakh rural households, by deploying around 13 lakh DRE-powered livelihood technologies (CEEW, 2023). These technologies have proven to mitigate CO2 emissions (by 16,800 metric tonnes from 19,700 DRE technologies) improve income levels, business knowledge skills, and confidence, and reduce physical effort/drudgery, especially for women micro-entrepreneurs. To map this potential against the local needs and regional programs, Clean Energy Access Network ([CLEAN](#)) and GOGLA-the global association for solar energy companies,, in association with the [SELCO](#), [CEEW](#), [UNDP India](#), and [CES](#) are conducting this event in Assam to facilitate discussions around Productive Use of Renewable Energy (PURE) in the weak grid areas of Northeast India. As a part of this endeavor, we are conducting this event in Guwahati, Assam focusing on the Northeastern region.

#### **Consultation objective:**

The session's objective is to increase knowledge, and awareness, explore opportunities and understand challenges in the promotion and financing of DRE for livelihood technologies at a large scale. Specific objectives are listed below.

- Showcase successful case studies/testimonials to inspire for the large-scale DRE deployment.
- Foster interactive discussions to address the challenges and concerns of stakeholders in the promotion of livelihood DRE technologies.
- Provide insights to stakeholders into the growing livelihood, product deployment, and market potential within the state for the DRE livelihood technologies.
- Create synergy for inter-departmental convergence and opportunities for stakeholders to connect and promote DRE through new and existing programmes.

#### **Way Forward:**

Planning to publish a document highlighting the success stories of the PURE initiative in the northeastern states, including an assessment of potential business opportunities in areas with weak grid infrastructure. Additionally, it will outline a comprehensive road map for scaling up the PURE programme through collaboration with government and local partners. This road map aims to ensure sustainable growth and greater impact of the PURE initiative in the region.