

PROGRAMME STRATEGIES AND IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENT

The main objective of the REDP is to support the government to implement community-oriented coordinated policies and initiatives, based on a holistic approach to development, leading to the development of the hydropower sector as a significant contribution to the conservation of the natural environment and to promote better rural livelihoods in Nepal. The two immediate objectives are to: (1) support formulation of policy, development of strategic framework, and identification of coherent institutional framework at all level for development and promotion of rural energy systems and approaches leading to improved livelihoods and conservation of natural environment, and (2) support consolidation/strengthening for sustainable development including planning, implementation, operation, and M/E of rural energy systems.

In order to achieve its stated objectives, the REDP supports the development of rural energy systems at three levels:

1. Centre: To support the formulation of policy and the institutionalisation at all levels for the promotion and development of decentralized and community managed rural energy systems for holistic development.
2. District: To develop and strengthen the elected bodies (DDCs and VDCs) to plan and manage rural energy system as an integral component of district development

programme, the NGO as a Support Organization to implement community mobilization package for holistic development of rural energy systems at the community levels and the private sector to provide technical support services for ensuring trouble free operation of rural energy systems in programme districts.

3. Grassroots: To develop strong social capital and grassroots level institutional mechanism to build up capability of local community members in planning, implementation, operation and management of rural energy systems in a holistic manner for the enhanced livelihoods.



STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

REDP promotes an integrated approach to sustainable rural energy systems development in order to have impact in the following action areas: (1) rural development; (2) improved quality of life for women and children; (3) promotion of efficient end-use technologies, including the promotion of the non-farm activities, and (4) conservation and restoration of the natural environment. It is the programme policy to provide technical assistance not only for use of UNDP resources allocated through this programme, but also to provide technical support in promoting rural energy development from other sources (DDC, VDC, donors, government agencies, and others) at all levels - centre, district and community.

MOBILIZING COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

The programme implementation is fundamentally based on the principles of community organisations managing the implementation of rural energy systems

with the support from non-government organizations and private sector organisations such as the manufacturing companies. The roles of the programme's professional staff are to motivate and facilitate the whole implementation process. For this to happen, priority has therefore been given first and foremost to the mobilisation of the communities of the selected VDCs into self-governing community organisations. Formation of community organisations and decision-making are done with the participation of, at least, a male and female members of each beneficiary household. It is mandatory for 99% of the households to participate in the decision-making meetings. Formation of community organisations (COs) and functional groups (FGs) to manage and implement the rural energy systems are the prerequisite and criteria to judge the interest of the VDCs or particular communities in the programme. The REDP community mobilization process is formulated on the basis of the six basic principles popularly known as MUL MANTRAS. They are Organization Development, Skill Enhancement, Capital Formation, Technology Promotion, Environment Management and Women's Empowerment.



IMPLEMENTATION OF INTEGRATED RURAL ENERGY SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT

An integrated approach and package for the development of rural energy systems is followed. The package focuses on the utilisation of local water resources, as demonstration projects, to promote the development of micro-hydropower linked to the possibilities of



- 1) preserving the natural environment through community initiated natural resources conservation practices or through reforestation programmes;
- 2) multi-purpose use of the water resources, besides for hydropower, for drinking water and for irrigation purposes;
- 3) use of energy for household uses as well as for the promotion of farmer-managed small-scale lift irrigation or drinking water projects; and
- 4) promotion of non-farm enterprises and income generating initiatives.

Decisions on formulating, contents of and management of the rural energy development package are done by the FGs (that includes COs). Participation of all households in making decisions is mandatory.

HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

Primary emphasis is given to the development of skilled manpower within the communities to manage and implement rural energy systems. Candidates identified by the beneficiary households, through a competitive process, and with a commitment to remain in the villages are provided skilled manpower training in (1) management and maintenance of micro hydro systems and (2) other related subject areas, depending upon the programme package developed such as in forestry, non-farm entrepreneurial skills, drinking water, irrigation, agriculture and others. All training are provided (1) based on their relevance to the programme package and use of hydropower; (2) for the development and provision of services to the communities; and (3) based on the requests from the COs and FGs. This strategy has resulted into the availability of skilled manpower in the villages (i.e. for the communities) to manage rural energy and development initiatives. As part of the human resource development package, the programme also supports the community-



level experts or those trained, showing successful entrepreneurial skills to operate repair and maintenance shops/centers. As for developing the skilled manpower for operation and management of micro hydro schemes, the programme uses the services of professional private companies or reputed institutes with proven, practical experience in micro hydro and other rural energy technologies.

MANAGEMENT OF OPERATIONS

The REDP has launched an innovative operations and maintenance system. From the very beginning, the programme assists the communities to set up a functional Community Energy Fund (CEF). An agreement is reached amongst the participating households for collection of funds as well as electricity fee (tariff) which is deposited in the CEF. This fund is utilized for

- 1) operations and maintenance,
- 2) expansion of the distribution systems,



- 3) development of end-use facilities,
- 4) repayment of loan from the banks,
- 5) providing dividend from the net profit among the members and investors, and
- 6) use by the communities to support other initiatives in community.

USE OF NGO AND PSO AS SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS

The programme supports and links the services of NGOs and private sector organisations, with proven expertise, to the needs of the COs and FGs. The NGOs are developed and strengthened to implement community mobilization package at the grassroots for capacity building of community members, both men and women, to undertake rural energy systems and other development initiatives in an integrated manner. The programme liaisons and provides support to private sector firms or manufacturing companies with proven expertise in

- 1) human resource development,
- 2) technology development and
- 3) manufacture of energy development equipments and electrical appliances.

Support has been provided to test innovative technologies, especially those, which will affect the load-factor and/or development of end-use facilities.

INFORMATION DISSEMINATION AND COORDINATION

The programme places priority on the documentation and dissemination of all information, including field and research experiences, to the public. It is envisaged that support at the central, district and community levels will be used to link practical initiatives with management at the district and macro-policy formulation at the central-level. Besides, the experience gained by the programme is used, including the results of the consultative processes and action-research work done, to develop

- 1) training materials, and
- 2) training capability of the REDP.

The REDP coordinates with all stakeholders for utilising their expertise and research outputs. Important stakeholders include

- 1) International Center for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD),
- 2) Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG), and
- 3) The United Mission to Nepal (UMN).

The technical Review Committee (TRC) composed of representatives from ITDG, UMN, ADBN and REDP has been formed and is under operation from the outset to verify and validate the technical and financial analysis of MHDS prepared by REDP staff or the consulting firms. Similarly, the micro hydro promotion group (MHPG) which is represented by ITDG, UMN, ICIMOD, RADC, ESAP/DANIDA, and REDP meets every quarter and exchanges information and

avoids duplication of efforts to contribute to the promotion of micro hydro and other rural energy technologies such as solar PV, biogas and improved cook stoves.

IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

The government counterpart agencies of the REDP include:

- 1) Ministry of Local Development,
- 2) National Planning Commission,
- 3) Water and Energy Commission Secretariat, and
- 4) Alternate Energy Promotion Center.

Since rural energy development is related to local development in the context of this programme, the Ministry of Local Development has been designated as the main counterpart agency (focal point) supporting the linkage and efforts of this programme with the DDCs and VDCs. The NPC and AEPC provide major support in formulating overall policies related to rural energy development. The Water and Energy Commission Secretariat serve as the technical support agency of the government for this programme. The executing agency UNOPS coordinates all execution responsibilities in close coordination with all the four agencies, forming the management committee. A consultative forum of practitioners represented by the manufacturing companies, installers, owners, NGOs, institutes and others have been formed as a network of practitioners.

The REDP Central Office is responsible for the day to day operation of the programme activities. It is managed by the National Programme Manager (NPM) with the support of professional staffs and

support staffs. The REDP Central Office has the following components:

- 1) Policy and Guideline formulation
- 2) Research and Development,
- 3) District Energy Development and Management,
- 4) Environment and Natural Resource Management, and
- 5) Monitoring and Evaluation

DISTRICT LEVEL OPERATIONS

The Rural Energy Development Section (REDS) is established under the umbrella of the District Development Committee (DDC) for the implementation of district level activities. For coordination purposes, a District Energy Committee (DEC) is formed under the chairmanship of the DDC Chairman. Members include

- 1) Chairman, District Infrastructure Development Committee,
- 2) VDC Chairmen (of the selected VDCs),
- 3) District Forest Officer;
- 4) Manager of the ADB/N,
- 5) Chief of District Industry Office,
- 6) Local Development Officer District Development Advisor, and
- 7) District Energy Advisor

Depending upon the district situations, the DEC may include representatives from other line agencies such as District Agriculture Office, District Irrigation Office, District Drinking Water Supply Office, and the district office of NEA. The Secretary of the DEC is the District Energy Advisor of the DDC:REDS.

A District Energy Network (DENET), networking 15 programme DDCs has also

been established to focus primarily on sharing of experiences, advocacy and consolidate strategies and approaches for energy development. It is envisaged that the establishment of DENET will provide support to DDCs for the sustainable development of the rural energy systems development in Nepal.

COMMUNITY LEVEL OPERATIONS

For the successful operation and management of rural energy schemes at the grassroots institutions are formed and operationized. Community organizations (COs) and Micro hydro functional groups (MHFGs) are formed by the men and women of the communities. MHFGs have their rules and regulations prepared based on the local situation for the planning, implementation and operation and management.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The programme follows a participatory monitoring methodology for evaluating the progress achieved, quality of work and, primarily, the impact made on the lives of the people. Two way information flow mechanism is in place. Monthly report is prepared at VDC level by community mobilizer and is moved upward upto the central level through the SO and DDC:REDS at the district level. A monthly meeting is organized among CM, CMC and DDC:REDS staff to asses progress, evaluate problems and undertake corrective measures. An independent evaluation by competent national and international firms and experts are also carried out from time to time to assess the progress and impact of the programme.