
Looking Ahead

With the implementation of the programme for little over three years, it has been observed that rural livelihood can be enhanced through the promotion of sustainable energy systems. The integration of micro hydro with other rural energy technologies like biogas, solar and improved cook stoves as well as with irrigation, income generation and natural resources management has demonstrated as a successful model for rural development as a whole. Furthermore, the holistic approach, thus followed, have ensured the maximum participation of the community in one or more activities for socio-economic enhancement. The growing popularity of the approach adopted by Rural Energy Development Programme (REDP) at the grassroots, district, national and even in the international level testifies the success achieved by the programme. To strengthen its activities for the enhancement of rural livelihood, REDP has incorporated expansion, sustainability, impact evaluation / studies, documentation and dissemination and policy inputs as the key focus areas for the coming year.

Expansion

On the basis of the experience gained in enhancing the livelihoods of the people living in programme communities, REDP has been expanding its activities both in terms of geographical coverage and technology diversification for the benefit of more people. In 1999, REDP has started to support rural people for other feasible rural energy technologies other than micro hydro, they include solar, biogas and ICS. With more and more success stories observed in the programme communities, demand for the implementation of the programme is also increasing from other districts and VDCs. In this regard, REDP proposes to expand its activities in 2000 to five additional districts making total 15.

Sustainability

Evidences have shown that the community mobilization process followed by REDP is strong in developing and strengthening social capital among the villagers, both male and female. The impact is far reaching not only in terms of economic development but also on women's empowerment. The social capital thus created ensures the sustainability of the activities undertaken by the villagers. Similarly, the formulation of energy program and budget through the decentralized bottom-up planning process ensured the strong participation and commitment of all stakeholders – villagers, VDC, DDC and line agencies. This ensures

the timely implementation and sustainable operation of energy schemes.

Creation and strengthening of institutions ensure the continuation of processes and mechanisms developed by REDP in future as well. Among others, REDS will remain as an autonomous office under DDC for the planning and management of rural energy development program in the district. In addition, Ministry of Local Development will also be setting up a different unit to look after the renewable energy systems.

For the sustainability of the programme activities REDP is implementing different activities towards capacity building at different level. At the district level, REDP is organizing different programme for enhancing planning and management capability in DDC, community mobilization in SO and technical support services in PSO. Similarly at the grassroots REDP is enhancing the capability of community members in the operation and management of COs, FG, RETs etc.

Impact Evaluation and Studies

With the implementation of the programme activities, REDP has been focusing on the carrying out impact evaluation and studies. The impact evaluation and research studies carried out in MHDS will document the successes of the programme and in assessing the areas of improvements. Through the studies, necessary measures will be ascertained for the future progress. The studies will make significant contribution at the national level for the promotion of sustainable energy systems in future.

Documentation and Dissemination

REDP will continue to give foremost priority for the documentation and dissemination of information relating to the need of the sustainable energy and the programme activities. In the coming years, REDP will maintain the distribution of its publication to all stakeholders. REDP envisages that these documentation and dissemination will provide assistance for the policy formulation as well as attract more development partners to promote the RETs extensively.

Policy Inputs

REDP has already played a key role in providing policy inputs to the approach adopted in the Ninth Plan published by National Planning Commission. On the basis of the field experience REDP will continue to support the formulation and modification of policy and operational guidelines for proliferation of rural energy system in the country. REDP will be providing field based experiences to the policy makers in this regard.