

WE ARE MADE WISE NOT BY THE RECOLLECTION OF OUR PAST BUT BY THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR FUTURE – George Bernard Shaw

DEC MEETING CONDUCTED IN MYAGDI DISTRICT



District Energy and Environment Section (DEES) Myagdi has organized DEC meeting on 9th of Bhadra 2065 (25th August 2008) under the chairmanship of Local Development Officer (LDO) Bhakti Bilash Subedi. Altogether 20 officials, professionals and members of political parties were attended in the meeting.

Mr. Dhakal presented on the rural energy policy of GoN followed by REA Tara Shrestha on the plan and programme of REDP III. Similarly, EDO Ramesh Sherchan presented on the activities conducted by DEES. Likewise, CMC presented on achievements in the FY 2064/065 of the community mobilization process. During the meeting, various concerns about the biogas and other RETs were raised and made suggestions for the improvement.

PARTICIPATION IN GENDER MAINSTREAMING TRAINING WORKSHOP

A three days (22 Sep-24 Sep 2008) National Training Workshop on Mainstreaming Gender Concern in Energy Projects in Nepal was organized by the Gender, Energy and Water Network (GEWNet/CRTN) with the support of the International Network on Gender and Sustainable Energy (ENERGIA) based in the Netherlands. REDP and BSPN were the implementing partners. Five officials (4 REAs and one TO of DEES, Parvat) of REDP had participated in the training. The overall objective of the training was to sensitize the programme managers of energy projects to design and implement gender sensitive rural energy projects. The resource persons from GEWNet were the lead trainers and AEPC, REDP, BSP were the supporting trainers. The concept of gender, gender analysis tools, stakeholder analysis through gender lens, gender energy planning concept, government policy etc were the major subject matters of the workshop. Group works to analyze the subject matter through gender perspective to gather the information and views from participants of different organization was another focus of the training. Finally the action plan was prepared and presented by individual organization with the target that the activities mentioned in the plan would be implemented and completed by the end of May 2008. The regular follow up and suggestions will be provided by GEWNet to accomplish the planned activities on time. The training remained fruitful so that a gender effective programme activities could be implemented in coming days.

POOREST AND SOCIALLY DISCRIMINATED PEOPLE IN NEPAL AND ASSOCIATED CHALLENGES

The poorest of the poor are generally the disadvantaged groups due to discriminatory social structures like caste, ethnicity and gender. In the hierarchical social structure, so-called Dalits (Kami/blacksmiths, Sarki/leather workers, Dami/tailors, etc.) and women in all categories are the poorest and very likely to be excluded in the project implementation process. They may even remain unseen. They are always addressing basic survival issues and avoid or are systemically excluded in the development process. They can only be brought into the development process if a rule is established for 100 percent participation and their immediate hand-to-mouth problems are addressed. Once participation is ensured through careful intervention, their capacity to afford energy services is another challenge. It is possible to gain consensus among the villagers for supporting the poorest as well as addressing the equity issue which serves as a shield against insurgency (destroying microhydos). So far no single microhydro scheme has been damaged.

Although the constitution of Nepal does not allow discriminatory practices based on caste, ethnicity, colour, religion and sex, many discriminatory structures and practices are embedded in the social system and are perpetuated by the patriarchal norms. Therefore, it is pertinent to consider organizing homogeneous people in terms of their caste and gender in community mobilization. There should be gradual social guidance to empower them to become equal participants. Adult literacy classes, envisioning exercises about their lives and the role of energy services in their lives were some of the key tools applied in the community mobilization process. These helped to mainstream the disadvantaged into the overall development paradigm which was key to successfully overcoming these social barriers.

The selection of community mobilizer(s) is also a critical dimension. The REDP set a policy that the mobilizers must be from within the district but not from the same village where they have to act. This gave a fair chance of employment within the district and at the same time the biases that could arise due to being resident of a particular village were avoided. This is, however, still a point for future debate. *(Source: Energy for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific Region: Challenges and Lessons from UNDP Projects)*