

ENERGY SERVICES ARE LINKED TO WELL BEING AND HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO IMPACT ON ALMOST EVERY AREA OF HUMAN LIFE

MEETING WITH NEWLY RECRUITED UNDP FIELD OFFICE MONITORING TEAM

The Rural Energy Development Programme (REDP) has organized an orientation session (meeting) to the UNDP Field Monitoring Team members as a part of their induction course at REDP/AEPC meeting hall on 8th January, 2009. 12 team members, all REDP staffs, UNDP Programme Officer, Mr. Manoj Khadka and UNDP Monitoring Analyst Mr. Dharma Swarnakar participated in the meeting. The main purpose of the meeting was to make familiar about REDP's objective, strategy, experiences, lesson learnt and 2009 workplan. During the meeting National Programme Manager of REDP Mr. Kiran Man Singh made a brief presentation on REDP including KiND project. Thenafter free and frank interactions were held among the participants during discussion. Mr. Singh expressed that the interaction session would help the monitoring team members to understand more about REDP to be able to carry out effective monitoring that would be helpful to both UNDP and REDP. Similarly, Mr. Khadka and Mr. Swarnakar expressed the satisfaction and extended their thanks to REDP for organizing successfully.



ONE MORE MICRO HYDRO HAS TESTED IN SODASADEVI VDC AT ACHHAM

The 10 kW Gadikhet Kholra II MHDS of Shodsadevi VDC of Achham district has been completed on 27th December, 2008. The scheme has directly benefited 142 households of Ward No. 5, 7, 8 and 9 of Shodsadevi VDC. The scheme was built at the total cost of NRs. 2,525,889 of which WFP had contributed 475 Kata and Rice equivalent to NRs. 426001 and AEPC/REDP NRs. 1,150,000 as grant subsidy. The remaining cost of the project were funded by VDC (NRs. 2,52,589) DDC (NRs. 126294), Community people (NRs. 2,24,672 local labour and material) and bank (NRs. 3,46,333 as loan). After completion of this scheme, total electricity generated by the micro hydro systems supported by REDP in Achham district in 2008 have totaled to 90 kW benefiting 975 households. The electricity is being used for lighting as well as running various income generating activities.

GENDER AND ENERGY: RECHARGING WOMEN'S LIVES

Energy is needed for cooking, heating, lighting for agricultural tasks like tilling, irrigation, harvesting, milling and processing and for industrial activities. It is also required as an input for water supply, communications, health, education and transportation. The energy needs of women, however, are quite different from those of men. In rural areas, for example, men use energy predominantly for agriculture, transportation and industries, while women need energy inputs for their household chores such as cooking, space heating modern energy services, and women spend a large amount of their time on unpaid household and farm tasks, leaving little time for much else. Addressing women's basic subsistence needs and releasing their time and labour through improved energy services is a necessary first step towards poverty reduction. The role for energy services then is one of reducing drudgery, freeing time from domestic chores to provide flexibility to the working day of women and enabling them to participate in productive activities. The availability of electricity can extend the working day, assist in the establishment of small home industries and improve productivity in agriculture.

When energy has to be purchased, men enter the decision-making process, and often, energy is purchased first for recreational equipment and then for labour-saving equipment which can simplify domestic tasks. Decisions on how electricity and electricity services are provided to households and communities also influence women's ability to take advantage of these services. If energy is provisioned for women, they too can experience similar gains in social and human capital. Energy can provide valuable benefits to women such as time saving and reduced household expenditure, increased school attendance by girls, and empowerment through having more choice in organizing their work and through access to television and media. Better energy access can also directly help women's income earning activities. Women's micro-enterprises, which make an important contribution to the household income and in women's empowerment are often heat-intensive, labour intensive and light intensive. The absence of quality energy and other coordinated support for these activities and technical training, access to equipment, credit facilities profitably and safely. Thus, the provision of affordable and regular energy supply is a key factor in the sustainability of these enterprises. While energy may have important effects on women in relation to the MDGs, this varies greatly according to the social and economic environment in which the women are placed. (*Source: Will tomorrow be brighter than today? – UNDP Regional Centre Bangkok, 2007*)