

Proposed Mini-grid policy, an important step towards 'Power for All' initiative Stakeholders' consultation organized by CEED for feedback on policy

Ranchi, 8 March 2018: The Centre for Environment and Energy Development (CEED), in partnership with the Jharkhand Renewable Energy Development Agency (JREDA) and the Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation, organized a stakeholders' consultation on 'Energising Access in Jharkhand: Empowering through Mini-grids' in the city today. The consultation provided an opportunity to seek input from key stakeholders to strengthen the **Draft Mini-Grid Policy 2018 for Jharkhand**. The proposed mini-grid policy will help the state of Jharkhand realize the vision for 'energy access to all'. Among those who participated in the discussion were private investors, mini-grid developers, government officials, civil societies, policy-makers, think tanks, professors, micro-finance banks, to name a few.

While talking at the event, Chairman, Jharkhand State Electricity Regulatory Commission (JSERC), Shri Arbind Prasad said, "The policy is a positive step in the direction of regulating the mini-grid sector and offering excellent opportunities for private investment in the realm of rural electrification through renewable energy." He added, "Mini-grids are a great means to ensure electricity generation closer to use and can totally transform the rural economy."

Mini-grids are a sustainable way to provide quality power supply to their consumers round the clock, with an additional benefit of quality power supply for local enterprises and commercial activities. Further, they help reduce the state's carbon emission by facilitating the use of low-carbon energy sources, such as solar and biomass.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Niranjana Kumar, Director, Jharkhand Renewable Energy Development Agency (JREDA), said that "JREDA is committed to the development of mini-grids to realize the government's target of providing quality electricity supply to rural households. With this policy, we wish to address the issue of rural electrification through a decentralized approach and to help remove all barriers to investment with better regulation of the mini-grid sector, which, in turn, will benefit the people of Jharkhand."

Mr. Deepak Gupta of the Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation, while commenting on finer details of the policy said, "Mini-grids are capable of changing the entire energy landscape by adding an altogether new dimension to how energy is generated and consumed. However, to make it a reality, we need a regulatory framework to encourage investment in the mini-grid sector in rural areas and also

safeguard investments that have already been made.” He further stressed on the availability of public information on the benefits of mini-grids and the capacity building of mini-grid developers as the state nodal agency.

While Congratulating JREDA, Mr. Ramapati Kumar, Chief Executive Officer, Centre for Environment and Energy Development (CEED) pointed out, "The proposed new policy will develop Jharkhand into a favorable investment destination as well as give a boost to the government's 'Power for All' initiative." Mr. Kumar assured all kind of support to JREDA to effectively implement the policy.

The consultation was also graced by the presence of Shri Arvind Kumar, Project Director, JREDA; Shri Anjan Lahiri, Chief Program Manager, Rural Electrification Corporation (Jharkhand); Shri Ramesh Thakur, Engineer-in-Chief, JBVNL; Shri Rakesh Kumar, Meghraj Capital; Ms. Disha Banerjee, Smart Power India (SPI); Col. Vijay Bhaskar, Mlinda , among others.

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