

BEST PRACTICES - CASE STUDIES

ON

Sustainable Energy Technologies Solutions for Poverty Reduction in South Asia



INF  RSE - South ASIA

International Network for Sustainable Energy

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INTRODUCTION

Absolute poverty is linked to lack of access to a number of basic needs, including clean, affordable energy. The majority of people without adequate energy use biomass in an unhealthy ways and unsustainable manner, and have limited alternatives. This is why it is important that they be able to choose better alternatives that can improve their existing exploitative situations. High dependence on biomass fuel in a traditional and inefficient manner has been having negative influence on the environment. Unsustainable consumption of firewood and crop & agricultural residues etc, results in erosion and desertification as well as adds pressure on the limited biomass resources. This high dependence on traditional fuels and lack of access to clean, reliable and affordable energy solutions has adverse impacts on the lives and health of people living in poverty. The use of biomass energy, utilised as domestic fuel in traditional cook stoves and fires in developing countries are responsible for indoor pollution, which results in severe health problems and deaths of women and children.

Based on information collected and practical experience of developmental organisation, it is now recognised that the capacity building of NGOs is one of the key factors to realise the positive results. The lack of capacity of implementing NGOs, operating at the regional, national and local levels, as well as the CBSs, local artisans and the end users, has been one of the major barriers for the large-scale implementation of energy solutions for poverty reduction. The INFORSE partners in South Asia felt that this barrier exists in all countries, as presently only few NGOs involved in rural development and poverty reduction have energy in their programmes, while the traditional energy sector does not have the skills and capacity to deal with the dispersed SETs that can reach the rural poor.

Keeping the above realities in view, the INFORSE South Asia partners, from 4 countries (Bangladesh, India, Nepal & Sri Lanka) in partnership with OVE & DIB from Denmark, came together as group to work on the capacity building project on sustainable Energy technology Solutions for poverty reduction realising that NGOs can learn from each other on ways to inform and assist selection of the best solutions and get access to them.

Under this project, the Sustainable Energy Technology (SET) Manual, Financial Manual and NGO guidelines for project formulations were prepared for sustainable energy solutions for poverty reduction in the region. The first manual is the technical manual, which covers the use of appropriate sustainable energy technological solutions for the reduction of poverty, and is prepared in English and 4 local languages (Bengali, Hindi, Nepali and Sinhalese) for printing and distribution. The SET manual includes guidelines to choose the best solutions locally and an overview of different solutions that can be used depending on local situations and priorities. The solutions include technical as well as organisational solutions collected by the project partners.

Since the SET manual had limitation of number of pages, all the case studies and materials related to good practices collected and received by partners were not included in it, whereas a few typical examples were selected and appropriately edited to reduce the number of pages, and incorporated under the section on organisational solutions. Therefore, a separate manual on all the examples of successes and best practices of SETs to reduce poverty in the region are compiled in this manual for inclusion in the CD. This manual will adequately supplement the SET manual on the best practices is prepared by the materials collected, by the project partners, on a number of examples of successes and good practices of SETs to reduce poverty in the region.