

## *Workshop Concept Note*

### **Community Micro Hydro in Northeast India: Challenges and Opportunities**

at the Center for Excellence in Renewable Energy Studies (CERES), Dimapur, Nagaland, May 8-9

Hosted by Nagaland of People thru Energy Development (NEPeD)

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The northeastern states of India are endowed with rich natural resources, exceptional biodiversity, and vibrant indigenous cultures. The development scenario of the region sits at a crossroad now, as the national government and private investors target the large hydro potential of this region to soon become the country's mega powerhouse. As the region's citizens weigh the cost-benefits, the state's financial prosperity and modernization are put against deeply rooted values of people and environment. However, there are solutions that would not only provide modern services but also strengthen the social, economic, and ecosystem fabric of this unique region. One such solution is community-based micro hydro. With this workshop, we want to help ensure that micro hydro in northeast India includes:

- A holistic approach that is built upon the region's strong culture of community and strengthening watersheds/ecosystems.
- An integrated approach that connects micro hydro implementation with a strategy for reducing poverty and drudgery and increasing local economic development.
- A sustainable and scaled approach that transforms pilot projects into a robust, long-term program built upon local capacity building, quality assurance, productive use, and innovation.
- An advocating approach that reaches out to communities and other local stakeholders.

The objectives of this workshop are to bring together international and regional experts, policy makers, government agencies, practitioners, community organizers, and civil society to strengthen community micro hydro projects in northeast India, with the aims to:

- Characterize the baseline of community micro hydro projects in northeast India: cost-benefits to communities, policy mechanisms, and practitioner realities.
- Identify bottlenecks to community micro hydro development in northeast India.
- Understand how best practices from scaled and sustained micro hydro programs, namely, northern India, Nagaland, Nepal, and Sri Lanka could be applied to the northeast India context. Experts from Nepal and Sri Lanka will be present as resource persons.
- Consider scope and opportunity for grid-connected and mini-grid micro hydro in northeast India.
- Dialogue on identified issues and opportunities to establish next steps in alleviating challenges and nurturing best policy and practice for robust community micro hydro in northeast India.
- Document, publish, and disseminate the outcomes and recommendations of the workshop.

#### Envisioned Outcomes

1. There is an increased awareness among decision makers and local stakeholders of bad and good micro hydro practices; and how micro hydro can trigger an alternative, development model.
2. Decision makers identify solutions and explore probable next steps for alleviating sustainability issues with existing micro hydro projects and scaling successful pilot projects.
3. Local stakeholders are more active in initiating next steps to promote community micro hydro.