

Masterclass

Renewables for SDGs: Jobs, Gender and Sustainable Production and Consumption

18 July 2019 | 1130 - 1300 hrs

Hyatt Regency, New Delhi

India has emerged as one of the leaders of the global energy transition with a cumulative renewable-energy installed capacity of 80 gigawatts (GW) as of April 2019. In addition, India has deployed over 4 million solar lamps, 1.7 million solar home lights, 0.6 million solar street lights, 0.2 million solar pumps and 188 MW of standalone solar home systems. While emission mitigation and access to clean and affordable electricity are important objectives of our renewable energy deployment, the employment generated from it is of considerable significance for a developing country like India to improve the standard of living of its people. CEEW along with the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) had previously undertaken multiple surveys with industry organisations to assess the employment potential of various renewable energy technologies. The surveys project that the solar and wind sector would employ 1.3 million people by 2022.

In addition to utilizing scale projects, decentralised renewable energy (DRE) solutions such as mini-grids and standalone solar also have tremendous potential to create jobs and improve livelihoods for rural communities. To unlock these benefits, there must be greater integration of these solutions into national electrification policies and programmes, and investment in closing the skills gap that currently exists. This will also help in realising Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 7 (reliable and quality universal electricity access) and SDG 8 (decent work). However, there is little data to inform such policy changes. To that end, in late 2018, a coalition of partners launched an initiative, Powering Jobs, to create the first comprehensive energy-access jobs census to better understand employment trends and to provide data to ensure the creation of a job-ready workforce for rural electrification and development. The jobs census is the first to understand current DRE employment, job growth trends, and to identify gaps in workforce development. The findings will be captured in a report, titled “Powering jobs census 2019: The energy access workforce.”

The masterclass on socio-economic co-benefits as part of the Energy Horizons 2019, CEEW’s annual flagship event, will take the forum of a roundtable discussion. Designed as a candid and interactive session, the Roundtable will present research findings for India, identify barriers to growing the energy-access workforce, and discuss opportunities for collaboration to overcome the barriers and create better livelihoods for rural Indians, especially youth and women.

The session would also deliberate on research findings from the latest publications on annual employment trends in the renewable energy sector, a long-term assessment of potential employment gain or loss in the power sector with shifting priorities from conventional to renewable energy technologies and the participation of women in the rooftop sector. The latest publications are in partnership with our multiple partners including, the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), the Skill Council for Green Jobs (SCGJ), the International Energy Agency (IEA), and the Institute of Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS).

Participants will include a select group of 30-40 key stakeholders, including government, civil society and the private sector representatives. In particular, the event will bring together decision makers

who stand to benefit from an increased role of decentralised renewable energy solutions on gender, labour, youth development, rural livelihoods and agriculture.

With this high-level roundtable we aim to achieve the following objectives:

- Build a cohesive understanding on socio-economic benefits of renewable energy technologies and likely employment potential
- Elevate dialogue on inter-sectoral benefits of DRE (on youth/women employment, rural development, farmer income.)
- Identify key national schemes/government policies which can be leveraged to enhance the availability of a skilled workforce for rural electrification and economic development