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***Saubhagya* and *Ujjwala* make marginal on-ground impact in Jharkhand; affordability, reliability and quality remain critical bottlenecks – CEEW study**

Ranchi (19 December 2018) – In 2018, 60 per cent of Jharkhand’s rural households relied on grid electricity as the primary source of lighting, a three-fold increase since 2015, according to the Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) which recently published its findings from the second round of India’s largest multidimensional energy access survey. The proportion of rural households using kerosene as the primary source of lighting also reduced from 76 per cent in 2015 to about 34 per cent in 2018. However, over 50 per cent of Jharkhand’s rural households still remain at the bottom of the electricity-access ladder, with no or extremely poor electricity access. Further, 20 per cent of rural households in the state used Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) as primary cooking fuel in 2018, up from five per cent in 2015. Though government’s schemes, including *Saubhagya* and Pradhan Mantri *Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY)*, have played an important role in improving energy access in Jharkhand, on-ground progress has been slow.

The findings were published in ‘Access to Clean Cooking Energy and Electricity – Survey of States’ (ACCESS), an independent CEEW study by CEEW supported by the Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation and the National University of Singapore (NUS). The study is based on a CEEW-ISEP-NUS survey covering more than 9,000 households, in 756 villages and 54 districts, across India’s six major energy-access-deprived states. Following up on the first round of the ACCESS survey conducted in 2015, The Council revisited the same households in the six states in mid-2018 to evaluate the changes in their energy access situation over the past three years. In Jharkhand, 840 households in 70 villages from 5 districts were surveyed.

The Council’s study found significant variations in the rate of household electrification among the five surveyed districts of Jharkhand. While the rate of electrification in Bokaro, Ranchi and Saraikela-Kharsawan was more than 90 per cent, it was 65 per cent or less in Garhwa and Sahibganj. Though the household electrification rate has increased rapidly under the *Saubhagya* scheme, there has been a noticeable variation across districts. The government must focus on the districts that have made slow progress in the last three years.

Abhishek Jain, Senior Programme Lead, CEEW and the lead author of the study, said, “The ACCESS study provides a nuanced understanding of the evolution of energy access in rural Jharkhand. While *Saubhagya* would ensure connections for households, Jharkhand’s discoms should also focus on dealing with issues of quality and reliability of power supply. With as many as 40 per cent of rural electrified households not paying anything at all for their supply, the state needs to improve metering rates along with billing and collection efforts.”

Sunil Mani, Research Analyst, CEEW, and co-author of the study, added, “The slow improvement in the number of rural households who received home deliveries along with easy availability of biomass are the major reasons for around 90 per cent of rural households still relying on traditional biomass for cooking. To improve the LPG penetration in the state, awareness among households should be prioritised and the distribution network should be strengthened to promote the sustained use of the fuel.

State of access to electricity

Despite an increase in grid connections, duration of power supply in the state has increased from a median value of eight hours in a day in 2015 to only nine hours in 2018. This improvement is lowest among the six surveyed states. Also, fifty-nine per cent of electrified households received three or more hours of electricity between sunset and midnight, up from 33 per cent in 2015.

Despite free connections provided to below poverty line (BPL) households under *Saubhagya*, eighty-eight per cent unelectrified households in Jharkhand stated high upfront cost as a barrier to electrification. In fact, the scheme also encourages monthly instalments against INR 500 rupees of connection cost from non-BPL households in installing connections.

Quality and reliability of power supply emerged as major bottlenecks for 76 per cent of rural households who remain at the bottom of the electricity-access ladder.

State of access to clean cooking energy

Jharkhand witnessed a marked improvement not only in LPG connections but also in its use as the primary cooking fuel, up from five per cent in 2015 to 20 per cent in 2018. The use of LPG as an exclusive cooking fuel improved from one per cent in 2015 to eight per cent in 2018. Further, The Council's study found that home delivery of LPG cylinders had not improved since 2015 and still only about 20 per cent of rural households had LPG delivered to their doorsteps. However, the median one-way distance to procure LPG had reduced from seven kilometres in 2015 to four kilometres in 2018. This implies an increased presence of distributorships in rural Jharkhand.

The Council's study also found that of the rural households that received an LPG connection in the last two years, 71 per cent had received it under PMUY. Of the rural households that did not have an LPG connection, 87 per cent expressed interest in getting one. However, 85 per cent cited high monthly recurring costs as a significant barrier to getting an LPG connection.

The Council's study covered the districts of Bokaro, Garhwa, Ranchi, Sahibganj, and Saraikela-Kharsawan in Jharkhand.

About CEEW

The Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) is one of South Asia's leading not-for-profit policy research institutions. The Council uses data, integrated analysis, and strategic outreach to explain – and change – the use, reuse, and misuse of resources. The Council addresses pressing global challenges through an integrated and internationally focused approach. It prides itself on the independence of its high-quality research, develops partnerships with public and private institutions, and engages with wider public.

In 2018, CEEW once again featured extensively across nine categories in the '2017 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report', including being ranked as South Asia's top think tank (14th globally) with an annual operating budget of less than USD 5 million for the fifth year in a row. In 2016, CEEW was also ranked 2nd in India, 4th outside Europe and North America, and 20th globally out of 240 Think tanks as per the ICCG Climate Think Tank's standardised rankings. In 2013 and 2014, CEEW was rated as India's top climate change think-tank as per the ICCG standardised rankings.