

Powering Livelihoods offers INR 1 crore support to six enterprises providing clean energy solutions for livelihoods

New Delhi, 25 June 2020: Powering Livelihoods, an initiative by the Council on Energy, Environment and Water ([CEEW](#)) and [Villgro Innovations Foundation](#), has offered a cumulative emergency funding of INR 1 crore to six Indian enterprises working on clean energy-based livelihoods solutions. The fund will help these enterprises to strengthen their resilience and tide over the current crises caused by COVID-19. The six enterprises currently manufacture a wide variety of solar-powered livelihood solutions from water pumps and multipurpose food processors to commercial refrigerators to reeling, spinning and weaving machinery in the textile sector. India has more than USD 50 billion worth of market for clean energy solutions for rural livelihoods.

Abhishek Jain, Research Fellow, CEEW, said, “As India charts its recovery from the pandemic, transforming our rural economy into centres of jobs, growth, and sustainability is essential. Scaling up clean energy innovations for livelihoods would not only help overcome erratic electricity supply but would also improve productivity, product value, and incomes in rural areas. Due to COVID-19, many small and medium enterprises making such innovations are struggling with daily cash flows and most of them do not have access to credit facilities. Powering Livelihoods stays committed to the idea of creating an *Aatma Nirbhar Bharat* by supporting these enterprises during these challenging times.”

Several other companies powered by distributed renewable energy have also contributed to India’s response to tackling the pandemic in recent months. *Kasturba*, a clean energy-powered textile enterprise based in Amravati, Maharashtra, manufactured and supplied over 10,000 reusable cotton masks using solar *charkhas* and looms to the district collectorate and other local government departments. Similarly, *Greenwear*, a sustainable textile manufacturer in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, supplied over 4,00,000 reusable cotton masks to corporates and local government departments in the city.

Ananth Aravamundan, Energy Sector lead, Villgro, said, “Over the last few weeks, the Powering Livelihoods initiative has adapted to respond to the evolving reality around us. In addition to the emergency support, we are innovating new ways to conduct enterprises’ needs assessment, provide incubation support, as well as continue sectoral engagements in a travel-restricted world. We are also bringing together eminent financiers and investors to enable a funding continuum for the sector. Organisations such as Caspian Debt, Beyond Capital Fund, and Upaya Social Ventures are already on board in an advisory capacity.”

Powering Livelihoods, an over INR 20 crore initiative, aims to provide capital, technical, and sectoral growth support to social enterprises deploying clean energy-powered livelihood appliances in rural India. The initiative will help them build resilience, find new markets, undertake large-scale commercial deployments, and generate more rural jobs. By catalysing a transformation of the rural economy, Powering Livelihoods would also help meet the Prime Minister’s vision of *Aatma Nirbhar Bharat* and India’s Sustainable Development Goals.

About Powering Livelihoods

[Powering Livelihoods](#), a CEEW-Villgro initiative, aims to boost India’s rural economy by scaling up the penetration of clean energy-powered appliances for livelihoods. Over three years, the initiative will



support at least five enterprises to undertake large-scale commercial deployment of their solutions and use the generated evidence to catalyse the sector. Learn more about Powering Livelihoods [here](#).

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