

Call for Applications: Channel partners for Scaling DRE Livelihood technologies across India

Issued by: Powering Livelihoods (Villgro-CEEW Initiative)

1. Introduction

About Powering Livelihoods

The Powering Livelihoods (PL) programme, a joint initiative by CEEW and Villgro, aims to catalyse India's rural economy through distributed renewable energy (DRE)-powered livelihood technologies. At its core, the programme adopts a market-driven approach with gender-inclusive strategies to scale DRE technologies at the last mile and establish a robust end-to-end support ecosystem. To date, the programme has incubated over 18 cleantech enterprises that offer innovative solutions such as solar dryers, solar refrigerators, energy-efficient multi-purpose food processors, solar silk reeling machines, solar sprayers, solar-powered cold storage units, among others. These technologies cater to six key value chains—on-farm activities, post-harvest processing, dairying, fisheries, animal husbandry, and textiles. Through enterprise support, evidence generation, knowledge dissemination, and sectoral engagement, the programme works to drive widespread adoption of these solutions while unlocking a potential USD 50 billion market opportunity in India's clean energy-livelihoods sector.

Our portfolio includes market-tested, income-enhancing technologies such as:

- Solar dryers
- Small horticulture processors
- Biomass/Solar-powered cold storage units
- Solar DC refrigerators
- Solar silk reeling machines
- Solar sprayers
- Solar-powered hydroponic fodder units

These solutions serve value chains in agriculture, food processing, animal husbandry, dairy, fisheries, and textiles — with proven impact on rural incomes and women's enterprise development. We're looking for serious collaborators with a **clear strategy, operational bandwidth, and commercial orientation** to take these products to market at scale.

2. What We're Looking For

We invite applications from organisations with the **intent and capacity to achieve ambitious sales targets** over a 6–12 month period. Partners should have:

Minimum Requirements

- Proven **track record in rural product sales**, with verifiable annual turnover from commercial sales over the past three years. Technology sales preferred.
- Existing **distribution channels** across a minimum of 5 districts
- Strong rural presence with active connections to Self-help groups (SHGs), Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs), cooperatives, Village-level Entrepreneurs (VLEs), agri-input dealers, or other grassroots organisations.
- Field sales teams with experience in demand generation and lead conversion.
- Ability to train, deploy, and support a women-inclusive agent network.
- (Preferred) Experience with rural financing or credit facilitation.

3. What You Will Be Expected to Do

As a strategic partner, you will be responsible for the **end-to-end sales lifecycle** of DRE technologies:

- **Design and execute a sales and distribution plan** with a product-specific target of at least 200 units for your geography.
- Identify and prioritise **high-potential value chains and districts** for product deployment.
- Build awareness through **community engagement**, farmer demos, village meetings, and local events.
- Recruit, train, and manage a network of **local sales agents** (with at least 33% women).
- Ensure **qualified lead generation, conversion tracking, and field-level data reporting**.
- Facilitate **financing or EMI options** through our partner NBFCs, MFIs, banks, etc.

4. What We Offer

- **Access to an exclusive portfolio** of tested, innovative DRE livelihood products.
- **Attractive distribution margins** over and above enterprise offerings.
- **Demo units** and select capital support for establishing **Experience Centres**.
- Continuous **product training, strategic support, and marketing assets** from the Powering Livelihoods team.
- Recognition and visibility through PR as a key partner in India's clean energy livelihood movement.

Offerings are decided on a case by case basis as well as availability of funds. *This is not a grant or subsidy-driven engagement.* We seek **commercial/business growth partners** who can grow in our portfolio on performance-based models. *Salaries, travel, and staffing costs are not covered.*

5. Application Requirements

We are not looking for generic proposals. Submit a **focused business partnership plan** (max 4 pages) outlining:

1. Sales Strategy:

- Your proposed approach to taking 2–3 DRE products from Powering Livelihoods Portfolio to market
- Channels you will activate (dealer networks, SHGs, FPOs, etc.)
- How you will structure agent networks or local sales teams

2. Scope & Commitment:

- Geography and value chains you will cover
- Awareness activities and lead generation plans
- Minimum sales targets you propose for the first 6 months

3. Team & Infrastructure:

- Existing sales infrastructure, team structure, and regional footprint
- Training capacity and field reporting systems

4. Past Performance & Clients:

- Summary of rural sales experience, relevant partners/clients
- Data on previous sales (volume, value, products, etc.)

6. Engagement Duration

Initial engagement period: **6 to 12 months**, extendable based on performance and mutual alignment.

Join Us in Empowering Rural Livelihoods Through Clean Energy!

Become a key partner in transforming rural economies with innovative DRE technologies — where your expertise meets opportunity to create impact, enabling sustainable livelihoods at scale in rural India

Annexure

What are DRE-based livelihood technologies?

DRE solutions are essentially small-scale livelihood applications powered through RE—solar, wind, micro-hydro, biomass or their combinations or energy-efficient technologies operating in off-grid/mini-grid settings. Examples include solar dryers, solar or biomass-powered cold storage/chillers, solar refrigerators, energy-efficient multi-purpose food processors, etc.

About CEEW

The Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) — a homegrown institution with headquarters in New Delhi — is among the world's leading climate think tanks. The Council is also often ranked among the world's best-managed and independent think tanks. It uses data, integrated analysis, and strategic outreach to explain — and change — the use, reuse, and misuse of resources.

About Villgro Innovations Foundation

Villgro Innovations Foundation is India's foremost impact first incubator. Established in 2001, Villgro's mission is to make innovative, impactful businesses succeed in Health, Agribusiness, and Climate Action. We believe that innovation and for-profit business models are the sustainable route to solving critical social and environmental problems in India. Since 2001, we have worked with over 350 enterprises which have impacted over 20 million lives.

[Link to application form](#)

Deadline: 31st July, 2025