

CEEW, Villgro sign MoUs with Uttar Pradesh State Rural Livelihood Mission (UPSRLM) to promote energy efficiency & women's empowerment

For immediate release

Lucknow, 6 July 2022: **Shri Keshav Prasad Maurya, deputy chief minister of Uttar Pradesh** said, “All the work we have done through SHGs has increased people's incomes and brought happiness and prosperity into their lives. We even launched the *Vidyut Sakhi* portal today and signed the Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with the Council on Energy, Environment, and Water (CEEW)-Villgro. This is a significant step forward for the state towards women’s empowerment, ensuring energy efficiency, and increasing incomes of people in the state.”

Shri Keshav Prasad Maurya spoke at the event where Uttar Pradesh State Rural Livelihood Mission (UPSRLM) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Powering Livelihoods, a Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW)- Villgro initiative. As part of this agreement, the Powering Livelihoods programme will help UPSRLM and Perna Ojas, an entity promoted by UPSRLM, to mainstream distributed renewable energy (DRE) solutions for livelihoods to enhance rural incomes in Uttar Pradesh.

Further, CEEW signed another MoU with UPSRLM to support the implementation of the “*Vidyut Sakhi*” initiative of the UP Government. CEEW will provide project monitoring support to UPSRLM with the aim to effectively engage the *Vidyut Sakhis* (women self-help groups) in order to enhance their income as well as the collection efficiency of the power distribution companies in rural areas.

Shri Bhanu Goswami, Managing Director, Uttar Pradesh State Rural Livelihood Mission (UPSRLM) said, “We are thrilled to be joining hands with CEEW- Villgro and Perna Ojas in promoting DRE-powered livelihoods for people living in UP's rural areas. We are also keen to receive support from CEEW for our *Vidyut Sakhi* initiative. We hope with technical support of organizations like CEEW and Villgro, Perna Ojas will work towards transforming millions of lives in the state.”

Dr Arunabha Ghosh, CEO, CEEW, said, “We are delighted to partner with the Uttar Pradesh State Rural Livelihood Mission (UPSRLM) to help enhance the incomes of rural households and improve efficiency of power distribution companies in rural areas. Scaling up the deployment of clean energy innovations such as solar dryers, solar refrigerators, solar food processing machines would not only transform rural enterprises but also drive jobs, growth and sustainability. Further, we look forward to supporting the *Vidyut Sakhi* programme and helping discoms in revenue recovery.”

Shri Srinivas Ramanujam, CEO, Villgro, said, “We are excited to work with Perna Ojas, a unique start-up supported by UPSRLM, to increase the footprint of DRE for Livelihoods in Uttar Pradesh.”

About CEEW

The Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) is one of 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. It prides itself on the independence of its



high-quality research, develops partnerships with public and private institutions, and engages with wider public. In 2021, CEEW once again featured extensively across ten categories in the 2020 Global Go To Think Tank Index Report. The Council has also been consistently ranked among the world's top climate change think tanks. Follow us on Twitter @CEEWIndia for the latest updates.

About Villgro

Villgro is India's foremost and one of the world's largest social enterprise incubators. Established in 2001, Villgro's mission is to make innovative, impactful businesses succeed in Health, Agribusiness, and Climate Action. Since 2001, Villgro has supported 340 social enterprises that have raised over INR 4.28 billion in investments, created 5646 jobs, and impacted over 20.8 million lives. Villgro was awarded the Top Incubator Award by the Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (GoI) in 2020 and the DivHERsity awards in 2022. Visit website: <https://villgro.org/>