

Decentralized Renewable Energy

Livelihood applications include solar dryers, solar-powered cold storage, and solar lighting systems

The following interventions are proposed under the draft policy framework to promote DRE livelihood applications in rural areas [in India]:

1. Enable a market-oriented framework to attract the private sector for the development and deployment of DRE livelihood applications
2. Easy access to end-user finance for DRE livelihood applications
3. Introduction of standards, stringent monitoring, and evaluation frameworks
4. Skill development for strengthening the service infrastructure at the local level
5. Encourage innovation and research to develop efficient and cost-effective DRE livelihood applications.

The implementation of this framework would require

1. accessing demand,
2. research and development,
3. pilot and up-scaling of projects,
4. access to finance,
5. skill and capacity building, and
6. public awareness.

With this, the ministry plans to enable a market-oriented framework to attract the private sector for development and deployment of DRE livelihood applications, provide easy access to end user finance, introduce standards, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

The framework for promotion of DRE livelihood applications allows interventions to assess demand for their deployment across sectors of the rural economy.

“This demand assessment activity will help in mapping needs of beneficiaries with appropriate fit to DRE livelihood applications. MNRE will develop a list of DRE livelihood applications in consultation with stakeholders, which will be updated regularly,” it said.

For the standardisation of research and development, MNRE and other ministries would be helping in development of new devices and applications for the rural economy.

“In addition, private sector, technology incubation centres, bilateral and multilateral agencies and NGOs will participate in the research and development activities,” the draft policy said.

MNRE would be pursuing financial institutions for credit facilitation.

The market for distributed solar products for rural areas – such as solar lanterns, pump sets and mini-grids – was estimated to grow to Rs 10,117 crore by 2023 before the pandemic hit. It is now reeling under financial stress due to lack of liquidity to support operations and government schemes yet to make a visible impact.

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