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**USAID to Inaugurate
Women's Institute for Sustainable Energy Research (WISER)**

Thiruvananthapuram: On March 22, 2010, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)'s South Asia Regional Initiative for Energy (SARI/E) program, in cooperation with the Energy Management Centre (EMC), and the Government of Kerala, is inaugurating the Women's Institute for Sustainable Energy Research (WISER), the first institution in south Asia dedicated to promoting the active participation and leadership of women in the energy sector.

The Honorable Minister for Health and Social Welfare, Government of Kerala, P.K. Sreemathy Teacher; the Principal Secretary of Power, Government of Kerala L. Radhakrishnan; Vice Chairman of Energy Management Center, Kerala, Prof. V. K. Damodaran; and the Deputy Mission Director, USAID/India, Elizabeth Warfield, will launch the program at a ceremony in Thiruvananthapuram.

WISER will begin operations soon after the inauguration, with a nine-day capacity building training program for twenty Afghan women who will benefit from a mix of classroom training and hands-on exposure to renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies, financing mechanisms for clean energy, and gender considerations in energy policy development. PA Consulting, the institutional contractor for SARI/E, in collaboration with the National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Boulder, Colorado is coordinating the training program.

USAID's SARI/E program promotes energy security in South Asia through three activity areas: cross border energy trade, energy markets, and clean energy access partnerships. Through these activities, SARI/E facilitates more efficient regional energy resource utilization, mitigates the environmental impacts of energy production, and increases regional access to energy resources. SARI/E countries include Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

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