





Regionally micro hydro has proven itself as a commercially viable proposition for solving a particular class of energy access problem: providing energy and positive impact on remote, low income populations with few energy options. This technology has been proven in many countries, and particularly in the SARI/E countries of Nepal, Sri Lanka and Pakistan. Despite hundreds of micro hydro projects installed and operational, the commercial and programmatic successes are less well known to a new class of policy makers, project developers, investors, financing institutions and other stakeholders. Also, the emerging policy and donor push towards off-grid renewable energy options provides additional opportunities for micro hydro projects.

Since 1996, AEPC is the National Executing Agency for renewable energy programmes and projects across Nepal and focuses on the promotion and development of renewable energy technologies. AEPC's program objectives are to improve the living standard of rural people, protect the environment and promote the renewable energy technologies related industries. Through delivery of projects, AEPC's staff have built a substantial experience in the micro hydro project cycle. This capability is made available to the region and to the world by the RCEMH :

- Short, medium and long term policy and plan formulation
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Promotion of RET Development
- Standardization of project documents, quality assurance and project monitoring
- Subsidy design and funding structures
- Co-ordination of NGOs and private sector in remote areas
- Strengthening community ownership and raising operations and maintenance levels.
- Working with other government, multi/bilateral agencies.

Nepal's track record of nearly 1,800 hydro projects totaling some 13.5 MW of installed electrical power capacity (mechanical power supplied for agro-processes is additional) across 53 districts gives the region a robust base of experience and capability to draw from. AEPC has installed some 607 projects that generates 7.2 MW benefiting 70,000 families; another 645 projects are in the pipeline which will add another 19.5 MW of installed capacity. The RCEMH is designed to make available this repository of experience and information regionally and internationally.



The objectives of RCEMH are:

- To fill the knowledge and experience gap amongst policy makers that are embarking on a new generation of renewable energy frameworks, of end-user communities, and of developers and investors interested in pursuing off-grid hydro projects.
- Act as a knowledge centre for the micro hydro sector in the SARI/E region.
- Be a self sustaining centre for promoting micro hydro development that will catalyze high growth of micro hydro by addressing all-round capacity building needs for the sector.

Initially, the RCEMH will be developed under the guidance and support of AEPC with USAID technical assistance in developing a detailed first year work plan. Major functions will be overseen by a Steering Committee. RCEMH will showcase emerging technologies, designs, and best practices for development, implementation and management of micro hydro systems; present case studies, shares techniques for maintaining quality and meeting performance standards; advises on methods for social and user committee mobilization; and serve the capacity building needs of the micro hydro sector. RCEMH will secure a set of clients that can serve as an anchor to get the business up and moving. These clients could be local as well as regional and international companies and organization that are pursuing micro hydro projects or designing the policy and institutional arrangements for the sector.

The key focus of the Centre will provide a number of service offerings to clients, which are broadly classified as:

- Knowledge management
- Project monitoring
- Training
- Technical assistance

AEPC will make this Centre self sustaining and offer clients a proven methodology, a results oriented management approach which incorporates high staff training levels, quality outputs and knowledge sharing.