

## 2<sup>nd</sup> SDC-SoLAR-India Project Management Committee Meeting

Date: 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2021

Venue: Virtual

| Attendees   | Regrets              |
|---|----------------------|
| Alok Sikka (Chair)  | Nilanjan Ghose (GIZ) |
| Ashwin Gambhir (Prayas Energy Group)                            |                      |
| Tushaar Shah (IWMI)   |                      |
| Mr Rajendra Vala (GUVNL)  |                      |
| Aditi Mukherji (IWMI)   |                      |
| Divya Kashyap (SDC)   |                      |
| Veena Srinivasan (ATREE)  |                      |
| Dr Ratan Jain (Gujarat Water Resources Development Corporation) |                      |
| Akhilesh Magal (GERMI)  |                      |
| Yashodha (IWMI)   |                      |
| Mohammad Alam (IWMI)  |                      |
| Neha Durga (IWMI)   |                      |
| Aditi Sanjay (IWMI)   |                      |

The second meeting of the SDC-IWMI SoLAR India Project Management Committee (SoLAR-IN PMC) was held on 20th January 2021 in virtual mode. Every member (core and invited) attended except for Nilanjan Ghosh who could not join the meeting due to technical issues of connectivity. The meeting was conducted as per the agenda and the following was presented and discussed.

### **1. Overview of the SoLAR Project**

Aditi Mukherji presented an overview of the SoLAR-SA (South Asia) project along with regional activities coordinated under the Project Management Unit. This included the Innovation Fund, Regional knowledge and policy forums (webinars), Regional Training, and Capacity Building. It was also announced that the composition of the PMC had been expanded to include three new invited members.

### **2. Impact Evaluation of SKY Scheme and Data Requirement from GUVNL**

Yashodha, who is a new lead for SoLAR-India briefly explained the background of the SKY scheme covering the technical and financial aspects of the program. The current status of the project was reviewed and work to be done in 2021 was highlighted. Preliminary findings on key indicators from SKY feeder level data were presented and it was emphasized that variation in the energy parameters across DISCOMs requires a more in-depth analysis of the data. The impact evaluation plan was covered, outlining the differences-in-differences methodology to be employed, sampling framework, data availability and requirements. This was followed by a discussion with Mr. Vala who provided inputs on the current status of the SKY scheme based on GUVNL's operational knowledge of the scheme and analysis. He elaborated on the

differences between the SKY program and the PM KUSUM scheme (Components A, B, and C) in terms of the program's design and financial modalities. He also responded that GUVNL would share data on SKY and Non-SKY feeders with IWMI.

**Action Point:** *Follow up with Mr. Vala and schedule a meeting on the data requirements for impact evaluation.*

### 3. Groundwater Studies

The study will make a regional estimation of groundwater abstraction through spatial analysis of groundwater data and drawing from the relationship between energy and groundwater volume. Md. Faiz Alam presented progress in 2020 on the groundwater studies, which comprised of secondary data collection and field visits in Anand and Botad districts. Census is currently being conducted and the selection of Non-SKY feeders is being undertaken on the field. Monitoring and instruments will be used in selected feeders in Anand and Botad to gauge farmers' consumption of electricity and groundwater abstraction in 2021. This would be followed by an analysis of data collected during the Kharif season, set up conceptual groundwater model, and the annual report. Aditi Mukherji concluded that the energy-groundwater relationship would be established by end of 2021/early 2022. Future years would be dedicated towards utilizing this developed relationship with the SKY portal data and groundwater data to derive groundwater abstraction in agri-feeders having similar characteristics (hydrogeology, pumping technology) to the monitored feeders under the board assumption.

### 4. Farmer Training in Gujarat

Aditi Sanjay shared the work done and work in progress in the training component. The design of the training content on five identified modules is underway, and the training workshops would be organised face-to-face in 2021. Farmers would be randomly selected and divided into two batches one each from Anand and Botad districts. Mr. Vala mentioned the inclusion of a training module on improper cleaning of panels, and shading is important as it hinders the maximization of solar generation (one of the five modules), especially in certain feeders in the Botad district. Akhilesh proposed that IWMI should identify and select farmers from SKY feeders that are poorly maintained in order for farmers to realize the benefits of training. Tushaar Shah suggested that local rooftop solar service providers have developed innovative methods to maximise solar generation which could be included in the training content for SKY farmers.

**Action Points:**

- *Request for a list of SKY feeders in which solar modules are poorly maintained from Mr. Vala.*
- *Request Tushaar Shah to share the contact of a rooftop service provider from Anand.*

## 5. Admitting special invitees to core CPMC

The Core members of the CPMC unanimously agreed to include the special invitees as a core member of CPMC. This brings Veena Srinivasan from Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE), Ratna Jain (Government of Gujarat), and Nilanjan Ghose from Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) on board as a core member of CPMC from Year-02 onwards.