



HIGH-LEVEL DIALOGUE

Advancing Renewable Energy (RE)-powered lift irrigation systems in Bhutan

3 July 2025 | Namgay Heritage, Thimphu, Bhutan

Agenda

Time	Programme
Opening Session	
Moderator: Barsha Rani Gurung, ICIMOD	
8:45 - 09:00	Registration
9:00 - 09:30	Context setting - Avishek Malla , Intervention Manager, ICIMOD Short video on Gangri Solar PV Grid connected irrigation system
9:30 - 09:40	Remarks - Sarala Khaling , Head of Resilient Economies and Landscape, ICIMOD
9:40 - 09:55	Launch of Landscape Assessment Report Launch of MCA framework
9:55 - 10:05	Special Remarks - Kapil Kapoor , Regional Director, IDRC Canada
10:05 - 10:15	Launch of Bhutan PURE Platform Launch of Grid-connected Solar PV
10:15 - 10:30	Remarks by Chief Guest – Karma Tshering , Secretary, Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources
10:30-10:45	Vote of thanks - Karma P Dorji , Director General, Department of Energy
10:45-11:00	Photo and tea break
Technical Session I: Renewable Energy (RE)-Powered Lift Irrigation Sector: Opportunities and Challenges	
Session Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Share insights from the sector landscape assessment with a focus on challenges and opportunities for scaling RE-powered lift irrigation.• Facilitate dialogue to identify roles and collaborative actions to promote adoption and sustainability of GESI responsive RE-powered lift irrigation systems in the country.	
11:00-12:00	Context setting presentation - Rigzin Pelzang , Engineer, Department of Energy Moderator: Dawa Zangmo , Chief Engineer, Department of Energy Panel Members: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lhap Dorji, Portfolio Manager, UNDP Bhutan• Tenzin Khorlo, Chief Environmental Officer, Department of Water• Thinley Gyamtsho, Principal Specialist, Department of Infrastructure Development• Yonten Gyamtsho, Director, Department of Agriculture

Technical Session II: Financing RE-Powered Lift Irrigation System in Bhutan	
Session Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore innovative and sustainable financing mechanisms that can support the scaling-up of renewable energy (RE)-powered lift irrigation systems in Bhutan. Assess current financing gaps and challenges in implementing RE-powered irrigation systems. Identify opportunities for leveraging public, private, and development finance. Facilitate multi-stakeholder dialogue on financial models and policy instruments needed to enable inclusive, climate-resilient irrigation solutions. 	
12:00-13:00	Context Setting presentation - PC Sharma , Joint Director, International Solar Alliance Moderator: Sarala Khaling , Head of Resilient Economies and Landscape, ICIMOD Panel Members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deepshikha Sharma, Director, Population Council Consulting Pvt, India Dhendrup Tshering, Program Coordinator, Department of Macro-fiscal and Development Finance, Ministry of Finance Hari Shrestha, Chief Operating Officer, SunFarmer, Nepal Philip Kuriachen, Researcher, International Water Management Institute, India
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch break
Technical Session III: Inclusive Irrigation: Advancing Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in RE Powered Lift Irrigation	
Session Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To explore policy and institutional strategies for mainstreaming gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) in the planning, design, and implementation of RE powered lift irrigation projects. Highlight existing gaps and opportunities for embedding GESI in irrigation programs. Showcase inclusive project design practices and tools that ensure equitable access, participation, and benefit-sharing. Facilitate dialogue among policymakers, practitioners, and community representatives to identify actionable pathways for inclusive irrigation development. 	
14:00 – 15:00	Context setting presentation - Deepshikha Sharma , Director, Population Council Consulting Pvt, India Moderator: Nawang Norbu , Executive Director, Bhutan Ecological Society Panel Members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chhimi Dorji, Director, Research and Development, Tarayana Foundation Kapil Kapoor, Regional Director, International Development Research Centre, Asia Sarada Tiwari, GESI Analyst, ICIMOD Yeshe Lhamo, Gangri Tshokpa, Shaba Gewog, Paro
Technical Session IV: Grid-Connected Solar Lift Irrigation	
Session Objective:	

To explore technological, regulatory, and infrastructural pathways for integrating solar-powered lift irrigation systems with the national grid, enabling smallholder farmers to irrigate their crops and supply surplus electricity to the grid to enhance operational sustainability and grid resilience.	
15:00-16:00	<p>Context Setting: Philip Kuriachen, Researcher, International Water Management Institute, India</p> <p>Moderator: Mewang Gyeltshen, Senior Renewable Energy Specialist, ICIMOD</p> <p>Panel Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dechen Dema, Executive Engineer, Department of Energy • PC Sharma, Joint Director, International Solar Alliance • Sangay Tenzin, Director, Bhutan Power Corporation • Thukten Wangmo, Chief of Licensing and Technical Division, Electricity Regulatory Authority
16:00 - 16:15	Presentation of proposed Call to Action – Mewang Gyeltshen , ICIMOD
16:15 - 16:30	Closing remarks - Karma P Dorji , Director General, Department of Energy
16:30 – 16:45	Tea break
18:30 – 21:30	Networking Dinner