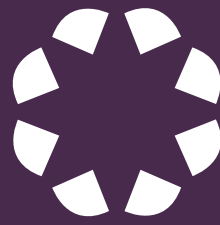


QUARTERLY

NEWSLETTER

JAN - MAR 2026



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THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

The CEO of CLEAN, Dr Piyadarshini Karve, reflects on the emerging opportunity to build energy sovereignty through clean cooking solutions, positioning the “kitchen” as a critical yet often overlooked entry point in the energy transition. The piece highlights how distributed, locally driven clean energy systems—particularly in cooking—can reduce dependence on imported fuels, enhance resilience, and deliver social and environmental benefits. By reimagining kitchens as hubs of energy innovation, the

article underscores their potential to drive inclusive development while strengthening national energy security.

Read the full article,
Scan

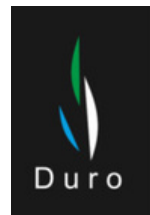


From LPG Crisis to Kitchen Energy Sovereignty 

Transforming Crisis into Choice for Cleaner Cooking

<p>One Crisis Exposed it All</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LPG shortages disrupted daily cooking Overdependence on one fuel = high risk 	<p>Cooking Energy is Still Fossil-Dependent</p> <p>Energy transition is happening globally, but kitchens are still left behind</p>	<p>Energy Sovereignty in EVERY KITCHEN</p> <p>Build Your Own Clean Cooking Stack Move from Fuel Dependence to Energy Independence</p> 
<p>Solutions Failed Because Users Were Ignored</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designs didn't match real cooking needs Convenience & culture were overlooked 	<p>Solutions Already Exist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smokeless biomass stoves Solar cookers Biogas plants 	

NEW MEMBERS



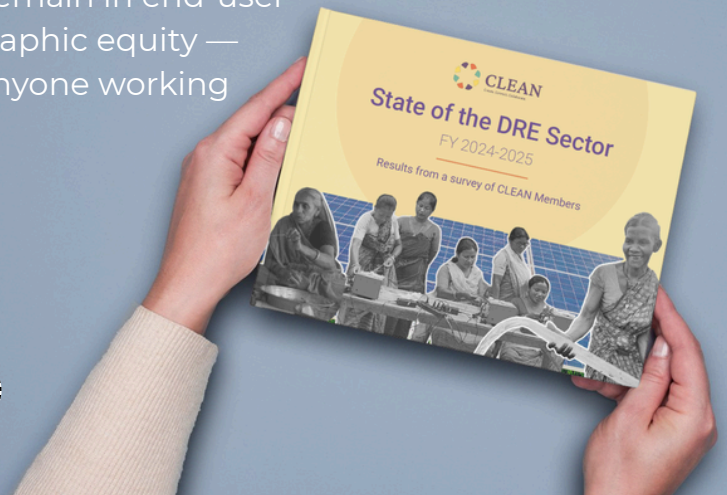


STATE OF THE DRE SECTOR FY 2024–25

CLEAN's annual State of the DRE Sector report is out! Based on a survey of 47 member enterprises and intermediaries across 26 states, the report captures where India's DRE ecosystem stands today — from deployments and revenues to finance and workforce. This year's findings point to a sector in confident scale-up: growth-stage enterprises are catching up with established players, over three-quarters now prioritise productive use and livelihoods alongside household energy, and the sector collectively crossed INR 100 crore in annual revenue. Persistent gaps remain in end-user finance, carbon market access, and geographic equity — making this report essential reading for anyone working in or funding the DRE space.



Read the full report, Scan



MUMBAI CLIMATE WEEK



CLEAN was pleased to be part of a thought-provoking discussion convened by the World Resources Institute on “Productive Uses of Renewable Energy for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods”, held on the sidelines of the inaugural Mumbai Climate Week. Bringing in perspectives from Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, the discussion highlighted the critical

need to move beyond standalone energy solutions. CLEAN emphasised the importance of integrating renewable energy technologies with access to finance, market linkages, and digital inclusion—an ecosystem approach essential for unlocking sustainable impact at the energy-agriculture nexus.

Inspired by global platforms such as New York City Climate Week and London Climate Week, the inaugural Mumbai Climate Week brought together governments, civil society, businesses, and citizens to address the Global South's pressing climate challenges through collaboration and innovation.

As a growing platform, it marks a timely and significant step in amplifying India's leadership and voice in advancing climate action across the Global South.



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WATT MATTERS - WEEKLY MEMBERS SPOTLIGHT



Kissan Dharambir:

Transforming post-harvest challenges into opportunities, Dharambir Kamboj empowers farmers with affordable, multipurpose food processing machines that enable on-farm value addition, reduce waste, and boost incomes.



ARKLE Energy Solutions:

Founded by young innovators Jeevith Reddy and Varad Latkar, ARKLE is advancing long-duration energy storage with vanadium redox flow batteries, delivering safe, scalable, and 20+ year solutions that make renewable energy reliable and truly round-the-clock.



THIRD WAVE POWER
Energy made good.

Third Wave Power:

Since 2011, Third Wave Power has been driving clean energy access through innovative portable solar solutions, expanding from mobile charging products to rooftop solar, impacting 5M+ lives while building resilient, low-carbon communities across regions.

URJATALK PODCAST

In this episode, **Resham Sutra** joins us to share how decentralised renewable energy is reshaping rural livelihoods. Upasna Jain takes us through their journey, empowering artisan communities, building sustainable value chains, and driving innovation through the SURE initiative.



WEBINAR

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

On International Women's Day 2026, CLEAN hosted two sessions spotlighting grassroots women sharing lived clean energy experiences, revealing journeys of resilience, livelihoods, and leadership driving transformative change across rural communities.



Mlinda Charitable Trust

Gramonatti Sansthan



Switch On Foundation

SANJOG Assam



IDRES26

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SUSTAINABLE ENERGY
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

IDRES 2026 brought together more than 400 participants - policymakers, investors, civil society leaders, researchers, and grassroots entrepreneurs- at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, from 9 to 11 February 2026. Organised by CLEAN in partnership with the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), the Summit unfolded across four thematic workshops, seven plenary sessions, a 40-exhibitor DRE technology exhibition, an awards ceremony, and an investment matchmaking programme. It marked a decisive shift in the sector's conversation: from energy access to productive, livelihood-linked impact.

What the Summit Heard

The Summit placed a strong focus on the impact of decentralised renewable energy on livelihoods. CEEW data showed that over 90% of DRE users recorded at least a 33% increase in income, and enterprises supported across 20 states unlocked more than 35,000 livelihoods, predominantly among women, while raising over \$8 million in capital. The case for treating productive-use DRE as a central instrument of rural development, rather than a peripheral programme, has rarely been stronger.

Operations and maintenance emerged as the sector's most urgent unresolved gap. Community trust is not built at installation; it is built, or lost, in the months and years that follow. There was a broad sense across sessions that O&M capacity deserves to be planned and funded as a co-equal requirement alongside deployment, and that counting systems installed without tracking systems still operational is a metric the sector may wish to reconsider. On policy, a recurring theme was the distance between intent and instruction. DRE's convergence with agriculture, food processing, and rural livelihood schemes

HIGHLIGHT

**400
PARTICIPANTS**

**18 INDIAN
STATES**

5 COUNTRIES

60+ SPEAKERS

**40
EXHIBITORS**

9 INVESTORS



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is happening in pockets, but rarely, because systems are designed for it. Formal notifications that translate high-level policy commitments into financial flows for implementing agencies remain, in many cases, the missing step. On quality, sessions were consistent: lowest-bid procurement produces systems that fail, and failed systems erode exactly the community confidence the sector depends upon. A minimum quality floor covering, earthing, mounting structures, inverter ratings, and DC safety standards would be a meaningful protection for communities and for the sector's long-term standing.

Gender ran as a thread through almost every conversation. 60 to 70 per cent of DRE users at the village level are women, yet women make up only 11 per cent of India's renewable energy workforce. The sector's aspiration is clear; the question raised repeatedly was whether financing products, skilling infrastructure, and procurement processes are yet designed to make that aspiration real.

Directions for the Road Ahead

Several areas emerged where early action could make a significant difference. Standardised impact metrics and repayment data could meaningfully close the gap between DRE's actual risk profile and how lenders perceive it. On workforce development, beginning skill assessment and local recruitment four to six months before commissioning, rather than after, was offered as a practical starting point. Africa presents a significant and under-utilised opportunity: the continent is ready for implementation partners, and India's two decades of rural electrification experience is directly relevant.

Looking Forward

The evidence for DRE's transformative potential is no longer in question. What IDRES 2026 made clear is that the sector is ready to move from last-mile connectivity to the first step towards expansion, and that doing so will require the same coordination, patience, and ambition that brought it this far. CLEAN and its co-partners look forward to carrying the work of this Summit into the months ahead.

Watch session videos



Read Full Report





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THOUGHTS FROM THE IDRES26 OPENING PLENARY

"Now they need more, they need something extra. They need livelihood."

"If it is not efficient, you have to put more storage, more solar panels, which are more costly. Make it more efficient, and your storage will be reduced."

—Dr Jeevan Kumar Jethani (Executive Director, AREAS / Scientist F, MNRE)



"The next phase of DRE must be measured not only in megawatts installed, but in enterprises created, livelihoods strengthened, and resilience built."

—Mr Nitin Akhade (President, CLEAN)



"When an ecosystem is ready, market forces penetrate rapidly. Government schemes must influence ecosystem building."

— Ms Svati Bhogle (Founding Chairperson, CLEAN)



"The question is not whether we can afford this transition. It is whether we can afford not to pursue it."

— Dr Angela Lusigi (Resident Representative, UNDP India)



"Digitisation will fundamentally transform your business models. Why are you stuck in the 1 to 5 crore bracket, all of you?"

— Mr Ashish Khanna (Director General, International Solar Alliance)



"If there are no firm contracts and firm suppliers, nothing is going to succeed."

— Dr Ashvini Kumar (Technical Advisor, Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation)



"We are at the end of the beginning. Energy is about people. Without the right leaders, the rest is academic. But with them, it could be magic."

— Dr Arunabha Ghosh (Founder & CEO, CEEW)



C O N T A C T U S

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