

PRESS RELEASE: WRI India and AEDA launch Energy Access Explorer (EAE) platform for Assam

August 31, 2022, Guwahati, Assam: WRI India in partnership with Assam Energy Development Agency (AEDA) launched an online, opensource, interactive geo-spatial platform for the state, called Energy Access Explorer (EAE) in the city today. EAE will help visualize the extent of energy access at Assam's health, education, and livelihood infrastructures. This will in-turn assist policy makers, renewable energy industry entrepreneurs, investors, and researchers from the development sector to make integrated and impactful decisions to expand energy access in the state, in the most efficient, cost-effective, and sustainable way possible.

India's electricity access trajectory is constantly evolving. In recent years, we witnessed a significant policy impetus from both central and state governments to enhance energy access across the country. While India has achieved almost complete [household electrification](#), many crucial public infrastructures like healthcare, education and livelihood facilities continue to lack access to reliable, sustainable, and affordable electricity supply. While the concerned departments have been trying to address these problems at a sectoral level, there is an urgent need to understand the links between them and to adopt an integrated approach to solve some of these challenges.

While Assam has made great strides in electricity provisioning to homes in the past decade despite its difficult terrain, and frequent extreme weather events, 37.7 percent of health sub centres and 41 percent [schools](#) in rural Assam lack access to reliable power, and this became apparent during the Covid19 pandemic years.

Speaking at the event **Mr. Niraj Verma**, IAS, Principal Secretary, Department of Power, Assam, outlined the state's recent achievements in providing electricity to remote and far-flung communities. "Government of India's RDSS scheme attempts to provide quality and reliable power for both rural and urban areas. Energy Access Explorer could help us track demand as we expand this scheme, but more importantly, it will help us validate our claims on energy provision, and therefore provide us mid-course correction possibilities."

Dr. O.P. Agarwal, CEO, WRI India said, "EAE leverages the power of satellite imagery, combined with local data to visualize power supply and demand, and equips electricity planners, investors, and clean energy entrepreneurs with the data they need to close the access gap. We are creating similar platforms for analysis in Kenya, Zambia, Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, and other Indian states."

Access to electricity is a pre-requisite to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) of good health, quality education, clean water, sanitation and eventually, socio-economic development.

"EAE will help us understand these linkages and will enable in developing inferences from these datasets. It will also make this information accessible to all and enable the tracking of progress of electricity and development service delivery indicators over time", said **Ms. Akansha Saklani**, GIS expert and Program Manager at WRI India's Energy Program as she demonstrated the workings of EAE and its use cases.

AEDA is the nodal agency for Assam to develop the state's RE sector **Mr. Mrinal Krishna Chaudhury**, Director, AEDA said, "In extending our support to WRI India's EAE platform, we want to send across a message – we are on the cusp of an energy

transition globally, and AEDA will ensure Assam is not left behind. We want RE entrepreneurs to leverage the datasets provided by EAE, to look at the best use cases for renewables and to make them viable for themselves and affordable for their consumers.”

This event was preceded by a training session for various stakeholders in Guwahati on August 30 and will be followed by another training session in Dhubri on September 2, 2022.

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