



Develop and monitor standards in clean Off Grid lighting: Top experts

New Delhi, September 18, 2014: The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) in collaboration with Electric Lamp and Component Manufacturers' Association of India (ELCOMA) organized a workshop titled, **“Quality assurance of lighting products and importance of laboratories’** on the sidelines of **‘Lighting India 2014, an exhibition featuring green lighting technology,’** held today in New Delhi.

The workshop brought together leaders and experts from the lighting and off-grid lighting sector to share their experiences and to find solutions collectively and establish a network that can ensure and maintain lighting product quality. Participants from several countries discussed various aspects of energy conservation to promote off grid lighting and general lighting and discussed the aspects of quality assurance, the need for standards and test labs to provide good quality products to end users.

Mr Shekhar Bajaj, CMD, Bajaj Electricals, and former President, ELCOMA, said: “Unless we improve the quality of our products, we cannot move towards energy efficiency. There is a strong need to set up testing laboratories and meet standards for each quality product we manufacture or export.” Mr Bajaj added that though global initiatives on off grid lightning are active, their presence is not felt, due to poor benchmarking, and this affects the targeted results.”

Mr Amit Kumar, Senior Fellow, TERI, said “The market for lighting consumer products, especially the solar ones has expanded substantially in recent years across geographies and applications. However, there is a huge gap in getting the right kind of quality lighting solutions for specific applications. There are challenges pertaining to quality assurance and quality control, standardization, testing and validation that needs immediate attention. The issue of quality becomes even more critical when seen against

the backdrop of energy access where a major user segment of these lighting products is rural poor, a market where after sales service is non-existent and which does not have paying capacity. In such a scenario, role of lighting testing laboratories cannot be over emphasized. What is urgently needed, therefore, is to chart out a roadmap to ensure quality lighting products to the end users."

The experts at the workshop stressed on the following:

- 1- **Develop** standards and codes in the Southeast Asian region. These standards and codes can be developed by taking reference from existing International codes of the International Electro-technical Commission (IEC) and the standard codes followed by various countries;
- 2- **Establish** programmes to develop a labeling scheme for different off-grid lighting components;
- 3- **Enhance** the use of off-grid lighting system through financial incentives such as a cut in the value-added tax, reduction of import duty and various other sustainable fiscal incentives;
- 4- **Generate** awareness on the availability and benefits (health and monetary) of efficient off-grid lighting system through media campaigns, voluntary programmes and pilot projects, which should be taken up by various Governments;
- 5- **Ensure** credibility of test results generated by various laboratories. These results should be recognised by the nodal government body responsible for accreditation;
- 6- **Set up** an enforcement body to look into the overall operations; and,
- 7- **Organize** training programmes for professionals working in in the field of testing laboratories and enforcement departments at regular intervals.

TERI has also established a Solar Lighting Laboratory (SLL), which is a unique laboratory in India that adheres to the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) standards to test of solar lighting systems (SLS). It is also the first laboratory in India which has got the recognition under the Lighting Global programme of the International Finance Corporation (IFC). IEC is an international body that sets standards for all electrical, electronic and related technologies throughout the world. The laboratory is also supported by the Union Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), and is currently adhering to all quality procedures which comply to the National Accreditation Board for Laboratories (NABL).

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