



United Nations



HIGH-LEVEL DIALOGUE ON
ENERGY
UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 2021

Ministerial Thematic Forums

21 – 25 June 2021

Event name: Side Event on “Women-led rural development through renewable energy”

Event date and time: 24 June 2021 at 6:00 – 7:00 AM (NY Time) | 1:00 – 2:00 (Beirut Time)

Organizers: ESCWA, Sida ENERGIA, GWNED, SEWA

Number of participants: 102

Main speakers and brief summary [max 300 words]:

- Moderator: Ms. Radia Sedaoui, Chief of Energy, Climate Change and Natural Resource Sustainability Cluster (CCNRSC), UN ESCWA
 - Ms. Silvia Sartori, Women’s Economic Empowerment Program Manager, ENERGIA
 - Ms. Irene Giner-Reichl, Co-Founder and Senior Advisor, GWNED
 - Ms. Naimishaben Joshi, SEWA and Director of RUDI Multi Trading Company
 - Mr. Khaled Bedoui, Chief Executive Officer, KB Consulting, Tunisia
 - Ms. Poonam Sandhu, Financial Sector Analyst and India Team Lead, NRDC
-
- Women are primary beneficiaries of the introduction of sustainable energy where access to renewable energy improves women’s health, safety, productivity, education, and integration in society and the economy.
 - Rural women face challenges owing to insufficient training opportunities, along with career choices often shaped by gender bias, cultural norms and perceptions; women are generally underrepresented in the energy sector.
 - Renewable energy plays a vital role in improving rural women’s livelihood and enables them to establish enterprises and to foster their income activities.
 - Women in rural areas are not fully aware of clean energy and subsidies on renewable energy, so awareness-raising and training programs have been implemented internationally to enhance women’s role in renewable energy and energy transitions. These programs train women and provide them with the knowledge about the opportunities through which they can get into the renewable energy sector, improve women’s businesses, enhance local income-generating activities and start a new way of life.
 - Rural transportation and infrastructure are vital for food security and rural development since it helps increase farmers’ and agro-food producers’ (which are most often women) income by facilitating expansion into nearby market as well as urban ones.
 - For the energy transition to be truly inclusive and fair, women need to be engaged and consulted at all stages of the decision-making processes, else their views,

- input, talents and needs will remain missing. Representation and engagement of women are a pre-condition for the energy transition to become inclusive and fair.
- It is crucial for financial systems and banks to adapt their financial products and procedures to meet rural women’s needs to ensure women’s empowerment and energy cost reduction. Finally, empowering rural women leads to youth and community empowerment in rural areas.
 - Only by integrating gender and social inclusion considerations at all stages of the energy transition, can the process truly leave no one behind.

Key outcomes [max 100 words]:

- The creation of energy funds and South-South collaborations are indispensable for scaling up rural grassroots women entrepreneurs; setting up decentralized energy planning, management, and trading; and enabling rural-women-centric policy dialogues and policy changes with central governments.
- The collection, analysis and quality of data as well as the integration of gender parity into policy design are a crucial priority to ensure inclusive and just energy transitions.
- Renewable energy has proven to be a catalyst for both women's economic empowerment and rural development when promoted through an integrated approach that includes awareness raising, capacity building, soft skills enhancement, inclusive partnerships, access to innovative finance and an enabling policy environment.

Links to livestream recording/website/social media:

<https://zoom.us/j/92977610550?pwd=RzdJWkNORDdsbHZZL3plc1ZraXhtdz09>

Contacts: Ms. Radia Sedaoui, Chief of Energy, Climate Change and Natural Resource Sustainability Cluster (CCNRSC), UN ESCWA, sedaoui@un.org

