

HRC 47 Side-Event

Women's Participation in the Renewable Energy Transition- Policy dialogue, sharing knowledge and mutual learning event

14 July 2022 at 16:00 – 17:30 CEST

Background

It is widely accepted that the climate crisis demands a swift transition from fossil fuels to renewable sources of energy. This restructuring of the global energy system is well underway, ushering in a new, cleaner model of powering societies across the globe. Yet such comprehensive redesign of the dominant model of energy provision also presents a wealth of opportunities that extend beyond the imperative of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The fast-growing green energy industry need not reproduce harms associated with its fossil fuel forebearer: it can break with extractivist practices, do more to supply the millions that suffer from energy poverty, and reject prevailing gender-blind approaches to energy provision. Instead of being conceived as a technical switch from one energy source to another, the renewable energy transition can be seized upon as an opportunity to remedy human rights and environmental gaps in the present energy model, to address entrenched patterns of exclusion, and to embed principles of gender equality in energy policies and frameworks.

How can we ensure that women may meaningfully participate in the renewable energy transition and leverage this opportunity to reshape energy systems so that they better account for their needs, interests, and rights?

This event will take place around the 47th session of the Human Rights Council convening a group of UN expert members of human rights bodies and mechanisms and civil society organizations working in the fields of energy, climate change, and women's rights. This aspires to build a space for civil society organizations to share their experiences on the ground and foster mutual learning on gender-just energy transitions. Furthermore, it aims to strengthen the links between experts and activists and other practitioners to promote network building and informed policy development aiming to achieve gender equitable outcomes in energy interventions. Moving beyond the identification of risks and opportunities for the realization of women's rights, the event aims to:

- Showcase how renewable energy policies can be used as key enablers of gender equality and climate action,
- Specify policy interventions and recommendations that would enable the voices of women to be heard and influence decision-making processes related to the energy transition, and
- Engage with international human rights bodies and mechanisms to inform their work as it relates to climate change and just transitions to low carbon economies.



By creating a space to share case studies and women’s testimonies, the event seeks to invite reflection on concrete action that can be taken to develop effective mechanisms that centre women’s knowledge and experiences and ultimately secure a gender-just transition to renewable energy.

Programme

Time	Session	Leading person
5 min	Welcome and opening	Magdalena Sepúlveda Carmona , Executive Director of GI-ESCR and Former Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights Alexandra Haas , Executive Director Oxfam Mexico
Part I: Experiences on the ground Moderated by Alexandra Haas		
	EXPERIENCES	
5 min	Women’s participation in the renewable energy sector.	Irene Giner-Reichl , Global Women’s Network for the Energy Transition
5 min	Women’s empowerment through electrification	Debajit Palit , Energy and Resource Institute
5 min	Women-led solutions to combat energy poverty	Lidija Živčič , EmpowerMed
5 min	Mainstreaming gender in renewable energy solutions	Marina Dubois , Geres
Part II: Engagement with Human Rights Treaty Bodies and Mechanisms Moderated by Magdalena Sepúlveda		
5 min	Free intervention to react to the information shared by CSO’s	Melissa Upreti , Member of the UN Working Group on the Discrimination Against Women
5 min	Free intervention to react to the information shared by CSO’s	Dorothy Estrada-Tank , Member of the UN Working Group on the Discrimination Against Women



5 min	Free intervention to react to the information shared by CSO's	Heisoo Shin , Member of the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
25 min	Sharing experiences and identifying threats (2-3 min each)	All participants are invited to take the floor and share general reflections: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Energia/Hivos ➤ ProDesc ➤ AIDA ➤ CEEW ➤ IWRAW-AP ➤ Forum for the Future ➤ Ingeniería sense Fronteras
Part III: Key Policy recommendations Moderated by Magdalena Sepúlveda		
POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS		
15 min	Final remarks and key policy recommendations	All speakers are invited to provide final reflections and key policy recommendations (2-3 min per speaker)
5 min	Closure	Magdalena Sepúlveda & Alexandra Haas

With the collaboration of the following partner organizations:



Speakers and Moderators

Ms Irene Giner-Reichl

Senior Adviser of the Global Network of Women in the Energy Transition.

Irene Giner-Reichl has been a member of the Austrian Diplomatic Service since 1982. Her main area of expertise is economic and social development, women's rights' issues, environment, energy, and development cooperation. She has held numerous international bureau functions and led negotiations for the 1995 Beijing International Conference on Women Platform for Action. From 1995 to 1998 she was the director of the international department of the Austrian Ministry for the Environment. From 1998 to 2001 she was Austria's Permanent Representative to the UN, IAEA, UNIDO and CTBTO in Vienna. From 2001 to 2004 she headed the UNIDO Office in New York in the rank of an Assistant Director General. From 2005 to 2012 she was Director General for Austria's development policy and cooperation. From 2012 to 2017 she was the Austrian Ambassador to the PR of China and Mongolia. Between July 2017 and March 2021 she was the Austrian Ambassador in Brazil and Suriname. Upon reaching the mandatory retirement age, she retired on 1 April 2021 from public service.

She has published various articles and several books on international relations and global issues. She is the president of the Global Forum on Sustainable Energy (www.gfse.at), Vice-President of REN21 (www.ren21.net), founder and current vice-president of the Austrian National Committee for UN Women (www.unwomen.at) and founding member of the Global Women's Network for the Energy Transition (GWN, www.globalwomennet.org). She has lectured at the Diplomatic Academy in Vienna for several years on human security and development policy. Since 2016, she is Honorary Professor at the University for International Business and Economics (UIBE) in Beijing.

Amb. Giner-Reichl has in-depth knowledge, with policy and operational experience of developing country realities and their sustainability challenges. She is familiar with the multilateral system, including development banks. She has advocated for sustainable energy, notably SDG 7 and the establishment of Sustainable Energy for All, as well as for women's rights for decades and can draw on a vast and international network of personal contacts.

Mr Debajit Palit,

Senior Fellow & Director of the Rural Energy and Livelihoods Division, TERI.

Has worked with TERI since 1998 and now holds the position of Senior Fellow & Director of the Rural Energy and Livelihoods Division. His research interests are clean energy access, distributed generation/DRE/minigrids, rural electrification policy and regulation, energy-gender-poverty nexus and water-energy-food nexus.

He has around 24 years' experience on managing teams, raising funds and working on academic and consultancy projects in the field of renewable and rural energy that includes among others analytical, empirical and policy research, design and implementation of RE, resource assessment and energy planning, monitoring, evaluation, impact assessments and capacity building. He has undertaken a number of projects as team leader in over 15 countries across India, South and Southeast Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. The notable programmes and projects that he led/co-led are the Lighting a Billion Lives (LaBL) Initiative, the OASYS South Asia and EFWEE projects. The LaBL initiative has had a successful run of over a decade since 2007 and has

impacted more than 5 million lives of people across 24 states of India and 13 countries worldwide, through designing and implementation of innovative DRE based techno-institutional models, by working with more than 100 grassroots partner organisations including women led SHG Federations. The 4 years long EFEWEE project, undertaken as part of the Gender and Energy initiative of ENERGIA, attempted to account for the various factors that enhance and restrict women's opportunities and empowerment through electrification, both as the users of electricity services and as involved actors in the provision of electricity.

He has a firm belief on co-creation & sharing knowledge and have written widely on energy access, DRE, rural electrification and energy-gender-poverty nexus and have written more than 70 research publication, with national and international researchers, in scholarly journals, conference proceedings and books.

Ms Lidija Živčič,
Senior Expert at Focus Association for Sustainable Development.

Lidija Živčič is currently senior expert at Focus Association for Sustainable Development in Ljubljana, Slovenia. She covers topics of sustainable development, climate, energy, transport, consumption and degrowth.

She has over 15 years of experience in managing projects at the level of Slovenia and EU and is also experienced in policy work and campaigning. After completing her undergraduate studies of economics in Ljubljana in 2000, she completed a MSc course in Environmental Science and Policy at Central European University in Budapest. In 2012 she earned a PhD degree at Biotechnical faculty, University of Ljubljana.

Ms Marina Dubois
Community Mobilization and Inclusion Representative.

Ms Marina Dubois holds a Master in Management of development projects, with a focus on economic development. She has more than 14 years of experience in designing, implementing and evaluating programs for various development organisations: INGOs, IDAs, DFIs. Over the years and throughout her experience spanning thorough education, health, protection, entrepreneurship, energy and climate change, she specialized in partnership approach and community mobilization and acquired a sound knowledge in gender issues. Her academic experience and career path brought her to Australia, Burkina Faso, India, Nepal, the Philippines, Cambodia, Indonesia, Myanmar, Ghana and Mali.

Ms Melissa Upreti
Expert member of the UN Working Group on Discrimination Against Women in Law and in Practice.

Melissa Upreti (Nepal) is the Chair of the UN Working Group on discrimination against women and girls. A human rights lawyer and women's rights advocate, she has spent nearly two decades advocating for the recognition and fulfilment of women's rights through the use of national, regional, and international law and mechanisms. She has led fact-finding missions, undertaken strategic litigation, built the capacity of civil society organizations, and provided technical support for law reform to governments in Asia.

She actively facilitated and participated in the first CEDAW Special Inquiry in Asia in 2012 and was co-petitioner in the landmark case, *Lakshmi v. Nepal*, which recognized access to abortion as a constitutionally protected right. She has worked closely the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation to strengthen regional



commitments to end child marriage and played a key role in bringing about the adoption of the Kathmandu Call for Action to End Child Marriage in South Asia in 2014. Ms. Upreti has written and lectured extensively about women's reproductive rights and the importance of legal accountability. Her articles and other publications on women's reproductive rights and discriminatory practices such as child marriage have been used by activists to develop legal strategies and in courses on human rights.

Ms. Upreti is a Fellow in the University of Toronto Law Faculty's International Reproductive and Sexual Health Law Program and currently Senior Director of Program and Global Advocacy at the Center for Women's Global Leadership at Rutgers University in the United States.

Ms Dorothy Estrada-Tanck**Expert member of the UN Working Group on Discrimination Against Women in Law and in Practice.**

Dorothy Estrada-Tanck is the Vice-Chair of the UN Working Group on discrimination against women and girls. She assumed her functions on 1 November 2020. Dorothy holds a PhD in Law from the European University Institute (Italy), an MSc in Political Theory from the London School of Economics and Political Science (United Kingdom) and a Law Degree from Escuela Libre de Derecho (Mexico).

She is currently Assistant Professor of Public International Law and International Relations at the Faculty of Law of University of Murcia (Spain) and Director of its Legal Clinic. Her academic and professional activities have focused on international human rights law, human security, women's rights, gender equality and violence against women, human rights of migrants and refugees, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and economic, social and cultural rights. She holds 15 years of professional experience: Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Mexico); UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights; Mexico City Human Rights Commission; UN Women/Mexican Supreme Court/Inmujeres; Case Matrix Network (Centre for International Law Research and Policy); and the NGO Fundación CEPAIM (Spain). She has published extensively, including *Human Security and Human Rights under International Law: The Protections Offered to Persons Confronting Structural Vulnerability* (Hart Publishing, Oxford, 2016; Best Book Award 2017 of the Inter-American Bar Association, Washington, D.C.).

She has taught and conducted research at institutions in Mexico, Italy, the U.S, Spain and Canada, including at Escuela Libre de Derecho, Universidad Iberoamericana (Mexico), Fordham School of Law (New York), IE Law School, ICADE (Madrid), the Centre for Human Rights and Legal Pluralism at the Faculty of Law of McGill University in Montreal (as O'Brien Fellow in Residence), and as Visiting Fellow at the Human Rights Program of Harvard Law School.

Ms Heisoo Shin,**Expert member of the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.**

Ms Heisoo Shin currently serves as a member of the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. This is her third period as expert member of this UN treaty body. She has been a lifelong advocate of the women's human rights movement and has substantially contributed to the struggle to end violence against women.

She served as an expert on the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women from 2001-2008, and as a commissioner of the National Human Rights Commission in Korea from 2005-2008. She is

currently the Chair of the Board of Directors of the Korea Center for United Nations Human Rights Policy (KOCUN). From 2011 to 2017 she was Regional Council member, Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law & Development. Ms. Shin holds a B.A. in English Language and Literature, a M.A. in Sociology from Ewha Woman's University, and a Ph.D. from Rutgers University.

**Ms Magdalena Sepúlveda Carmona,
Executive Director of GI-ESCR.**

Magdalena Sepúlveda is a human rights lawyer with vast experience in economic, social and cultural rights. In her 20-year career, Magdalena has focused on the intersection of poverty, development and human rights and has bridged research and policy formulation. She has worked as a researcher at the Netherlands Institute for Human Rights, as a staff attorney at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, as the Co-Director of the Department of International Law and Human Rights of the United Nations-mandated University for Peace in Costa Rica and as a Research Director at the International Council on Human Rights Policy, in Geneva. More recently, she was a Senior Research Fellow at the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD).

From 2008 to 2014 she was the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights. From 2013 to 2017 she was a member of the High-Level Panel of Expert on Food Security and Nutrition of the United Nations Committee on World Food Security (CFS). In 2015, she was recognised in the Global Tax 50, a list of individuals and organizations with the biggest impact on taxation worldwide. Magdalena is a member of the Independent Commission for the Reform of International Corporate Taxation (ICRICT) and of the High Level Panel on International Financial Accountability, Transparency and Integrity for Achieving the 2030 Agenda.

Ms Sepúlveda has published widely on human rights, poverty, gender and development and has taught university courses in Latin America and the United Kingdom. She writes frequent op ed columns and her pieces have been published in more than 30 countries.

Ms Sepúlveda holds a Ph.D. in International Law from Utrecht University in the Netherlands, an LL.M in human rights law from the University of Essex in the United Kingdom and a post graduate diploma on comparative constitutional law from the *Universidad Católica de Chile*.

**Ms Alexandra Haas,
Executive Director of Oxfam Mexico.**

Alexandra Haas is a human rights lawyer and lifelong women's rights advocate. She is currently Executive Director of Oxfam Mexico. Previously, she was President of the Mexican Nacional Council to Prevent Discrimination, a government agency to promote policies and measures to contribute to the cultural and social development and progress in social inclusion and the advancement of substantive equality. Before this designation, she also headed the political affairs section of the Mexican Embassy in Washington, D.C., was a visiting researcher at the Center for Economic Research and Teaching (CIDE), and advisor on gender and inclusion of the Coordination of Cultural Diffusion of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM).



The Global Initiative
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Ms Haas has worked at international organizations, government institutions, and social organizations in Mexico, the United States, Guatemala, and Argentina, where she has participated in the construction and implementation of legislative and public policy initiatives with a human rights perspective.

She is the author of essays and articles and has taught at various universities. Alexandra has a degree in Law from the *Universidad Iberoamericana* in Mexico City and a Master of Law from the New York University (NYU).