



## **Radical Partnerships for Strengthening the Nexus between Women of Faith & Renewable Energy Practices**

### **Executive Summary**

The third Collaboration Workshop of the Women of Faith and Climate Network (WFCN), held virtually on July 22, 2025, convened over 90 participants representing diverse geographies and institutions. The session focused on building radical collaborations at the intersection of renewable energy and women's empowerment through faith-based leadership. The 90-minute workshop showcased successful models from South Asia and Africa, explored practical strategies for climate justice, and identified key steps to scale up faith-led, women-centered renewable energy solutions.

Key speakers included Fiza Farhan, Reema Nanavaty, and Aneta Loj, who shared pioneering case studies on women's energy entrepreneurship and grassroots mobilization. The event incorporated breakout discussions, open Q&A, and calls for practical partnerships. The session culminated in clear next steps for continued collaboration through the WFCN platform and beyond.

### **Introduction**

#### **1.1 Purpose of the Collaboration Workshop**

Workshop 3 aimed to strengthen collaborations between women-led faith-based organizations and secular actors working on renewable energy solutions. It sought to identify effective models, surface key challenges, and co-develop strategies to expand access to clean energy through women's leadership and collaboration.

#### **1.2 Scope of the Report**

This report documents the workshop's key sessions, participant insights, featured case studies, and strategic recommendations for WFCN members and partners.

### **2. Workshop Design and Participation**

#### **2.1 Format and Structure**

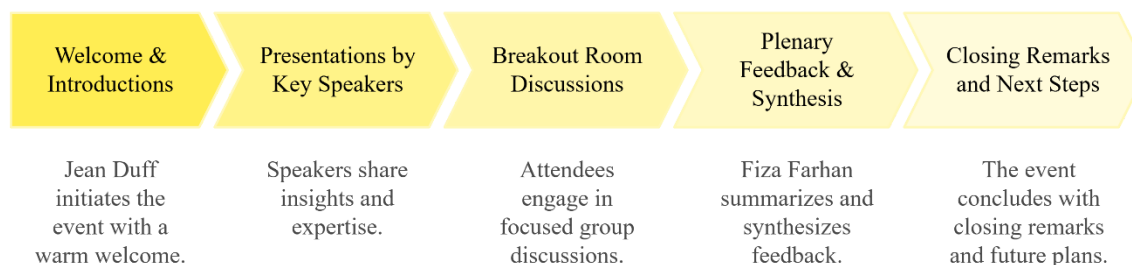
The 90-minute virtual session was hosted via Zoom and facilitated by Jean Duff, WFCN Coordinator, with support from Florine De Wolf (Joint Learning Initiative). The structure included three main presentations, interactive breakout sessions, and a wrap-up plenary.

#### **2.2 Key Stakeholders and Geographic Reach**



Participants joined from countries including India, Pakistan, Uganda, Kenya, Ireland, Spain, the U.S., and more. Organizations represented included SEWA, NRDC, Brahma Kumaris, Home Net International, Aura Global, FMRI, UISG, Laudato Si', and others.

## 2.3 Agenda Overview



## 3. Featured Presentations & Insights

### 3.1 Fiza Farhan – ORA Global (Pakistan)

Fiza shared a transformative project enabling women in off-grid villages in Pakistan to become solar energy entrepreneurs or “Light Ladies.” The model was replicated with PepsiCo under the “Liter of Light” initiative and received global recognition. Key success factors included community engagement, religious leader involvement, and economic viability.



### 3.2 Reema Nanavaty – SEWA (India)

Reema presented SEWA's solar pump initiative that transitioned over 7,000 salt pan workers from diesel to solar in Gujarat. This was enabled through blended finance with IFC and public banks, culminating in a 2.7 MW solar park. SEWA's model also includes youth green skills training and participation in carbon markets.



### 3.3 Aneta Loj – (Brahma Kumaris)

Aneta emphasized solar innovation, particularly in cooking and domestic electricity. She offered free solar training and highlighted the



role of research, R&D partnerships, and the importance of training hubs for scaling access.

## 4. Themes of Group Discussions

### 4.1 Radical Collaboration Models

Participants emphasized the value of cross-sector collaboration: between secular institutions, faith-based groups, and private enterprises. Shared ethics and community orientation were identified as foundational for trust and sustained action.

### 4.2 Energy Access and Climate Justice Synergies

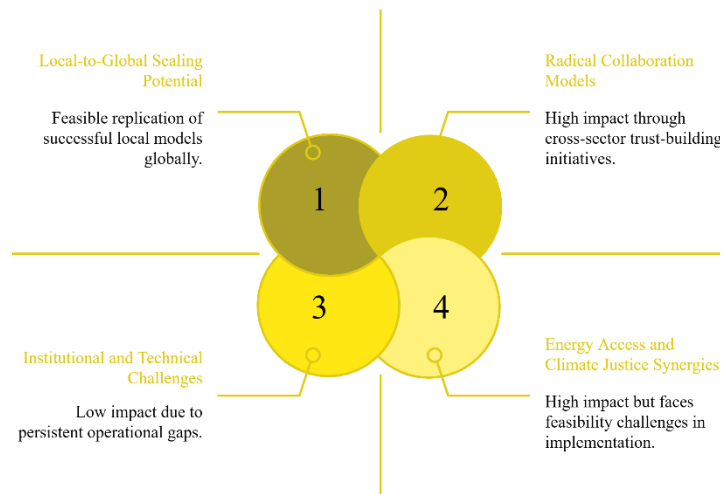
Access to energy was viewed not only as a technical issue but as a justice imperative. Several speakers linked clean energy access to women's economic agency, health, and dignity.

### 4.3 Institutional and Technical Challenges

Participants highlighted persistent gaps in technical capacity, funding, and policy engagement. Connectivity issues and lack of inclusive platforms were cited as operational challenges.

### 4.4 Local-to-Global Scaling Potential

The potential for replication and regional adaptation of successful models (e.g., SEWA's blended finance, Solar Sister's distribution networks) was widely discussed. Interest was expressed in creating toolkits and documentation.



## 5. Breakout Room Reflections

### 5.1 Structure and Adjustments

Breakout sessions were 20 minutes due to time constraints.

### 5.2 Summary of Discussion Points

- Need for case study documentation and storytelling
- Leveraging faith leaders to shift social norms



- Use of aggregated demand to access government subsidies
- Carbon finance as a pathway to sustainability
- Cross-regional knowledge exchange on training models

## 6. Action Points and Next Steps

| Action                                                       | Lead                  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Share "Building Cleaner Skies" campaign report               | Mansi, Jean, Fiza     |
| Upload Workshop Materials on WFCN Site                       | Florine               |
| Distribute SEWA Carbon Market Case Study                     | SEWA Team             |
| Promote Brahma Kumaris' Training Offers                      | Aneta                 |
| Compile Solar Funding Resources for Africa                   | Charu Lata (NRDC)     |
| Organize In-person Regional Meetings, with support from WFCN | Fiza, Aneta and Reema |
| Encourage Participant Sign-ups to WFCN                       | All Participants      |

## 7. Recommendations

- Develop multilingual toolkits for interfaith renewable energy partnerships
- Strengthen regional mentorship and training hubs
- Expand private-public-faith financing coalitions
- Promote case-based learning in women's energy initiatives
- Leverage digital platforms for storytelling and coordination

## 8. Reflections and Closing Remarks

Speakers emphasized the power of collective action, trust, and radical partnerships across divides. The workshop reinforced the transformative role of women of faith in addressing the



climate crisis. Participants were encouraged to remain engaged with WFCN and explore regional collaborations and funding opportunities.

## Appendices

### Appendix A: Shared Links & Resources

- WFCN: <https://www.womenfaithclimate.org/>
- SEWA: <https://www.sewa.org/>
- SEWA Salt Worker Video: <https://youtu.be/dbOWSMecYJY>
- NRDC Report:  
<https://www.nrdc.org/sites/default/files/worth-their-salt-women-farmers-skills-gujarat-fs.pdf>
- Just Stories:  
<https://www.just-stories.org/stories/agents-of-green-transition-gujarats-women-salt-farmers-signal-a-cleaner-fairer-future-for-informal-workers>

### Appendix B: Contact Information

- Fiza Farhan: [LinkedIn](#)
- Reema Nanavaty: [reemananavaty@sewa.org](mailto:reemananavaty@sewa.org)
- Aneta Loj: [aneta.loj@pl.brahmakumaris.org](mailto:aneta.loj@pl.brahmakumaris.org)
- Devesh Shah: [devesh.shah@sewa.org](mailto:devesh.shah@sewa.org)
- Rehana Riyawala: [rehanariyawala@sewa.org](mailto:rehanariyawala@sewa.org)

### Appendix C: UNEP Guidebook on Renewable Energy & Women Entrepreneurship

**Title:** *Renewable Energy and Women Entrepreneurship Programmes: A Guidebook in Design and Implementation* (2022)

**Publisher:** UN Environment Programme (UNEP)

**Author:** Fiza Farhan

#### Highlights:

- Ten-step implementation framework for women-led RE businesses



- Case studies from Asia and Africa
- Training methodologies and business modeling guidance
- Guidance on gender-sensitive project design, financing, and policy engagement

## **Appendix D: Lighting a Million Lives (LaML) Concept Paper**

### **Overview:**

- Conceptual foundation for decentralized solar micro-enterprises
- Model developed in Pakistan with women at the forefront as “Energy Entrepreneurs”
- Became an internationally certified best practice receiving multiple awards by the UN Foundation & UN Habitat
- Paved the way for the "Liter of Light" initiative in collaboration with Pepsi Co
- Project Video: <https://youtu.be/5BX8Z8q42LM?si=sPYBc9bMK25sFCgh>