# Webinar Follow-Up: Women on the Frontlines – Lessons from Bikita in the Just Energy Transition

On 9 April 2025, SHINE held the third webinar in its **Power to the People series,** attracting 120 registered participants, with 70 joining the live session. The event highlighted community perspectives from Bikita, Zimbabwe, where local representatives shared compelling stories about the gendered effects of energy poverty and extractive industries.
The webinar amplified the voices of community leaders, Esther, Gamuchirai, and Kenias, who spoke with conviction and clarity about how current energy policies and extractive practices affect women's everyday lives, and what changes are urgently needed as part of a Just Energy Transition (JET).

**Main Takeaways:**

**1. Disproportionate Burdens on Women:**

"Every day, women in our communities walk long distances just to find firewood. It's not just about energy it's about our time, our health, and our children's futures," said Esther, highlighting the daily struggle with energy poverty.

**2. Participation & Representation:**

"We are tired of outsiders making decisions for us. We need to be in the room when policies are made," insisted Gamuchirai, calling for genuine community inclusion in planning and policy processes.

**3. Land and Livelihood Disruptions:**

"They call it a green project, but what we see is dust, displacement, and disease," explained Kenias, referring to the environmental and social impacts of lithium mining in Bikita.

SHINE
GENDER-JUST CLIMATE SOLUTIONS THROUGH ENERGY ACCESS

## Lessons & Recommendations:

### Reclaiming Power: Ecofeminist Principles for a Just Energy Future

**Center Women's Voices as Agents of Transformation**

Women in frontline communities are not passive recipients of harm—they are intergenerational knowledge keepers, organizers, and architects of regenerative futures. Local women are leading with rooted wisdom, resisting extractive systems, and crafting life-affirming energy alternatives.

**Equitable Benefit-Sharing through Feminist Economies**

True energy justice requires moving beyond top-down investment models. Community-controlled resources and feminist approaches to economic redistribution must ensure that energy systems nourish livelihoods, not reproduce inequalities. Local women's leadership must shape how benefits are defined, distributed, and sustained.

**Transparency, Consent, and Accountability in Practice**

Feminist ethics demand radical transparency and collective accountability. Energy initiatives must be built on informed consent, accessible communication, and mechanisms that respect community autonomy and prioritise care over control.

**Community-Led Advocacy as Climate Feminist Praxis**

The webinar affirmed that liberatory energy futures are community-built. Women's grassroots organizing is a powerful force dismantling systems of exploitation and advancing the just transition as a movement of collective care, justice, and ecological restoration.

**"We are not victims—we are organizers. We want a future where energy works for us, not against us," Esther reminded us, embodying the spirit of ecofeminist resistance.**

## Conclusion

The Women on the Frontlines webinar re-centered what the **Just Energy Transition** must truly mean: not just wires, grids, or capital flows, but a **reclamation of dignity, sovereignty, and planetary justice.** Voices from Bikita reminded us that energy justice must be grounded in the lived realities, leadership, and visions of women who hold communities together—those who have long sustained life despite colonial, patriarchal, and extractive systems.

As we look ahead, policy and practice must be re-rooted in ecofeminist values: community care, reciprocity, and a commitment to transforming energy systems into sources of collective liberation and ecological healing