UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe

Religions for Peace
UK INTERFAITH YOUTH NETWORK

PROJECT REPORT

2023



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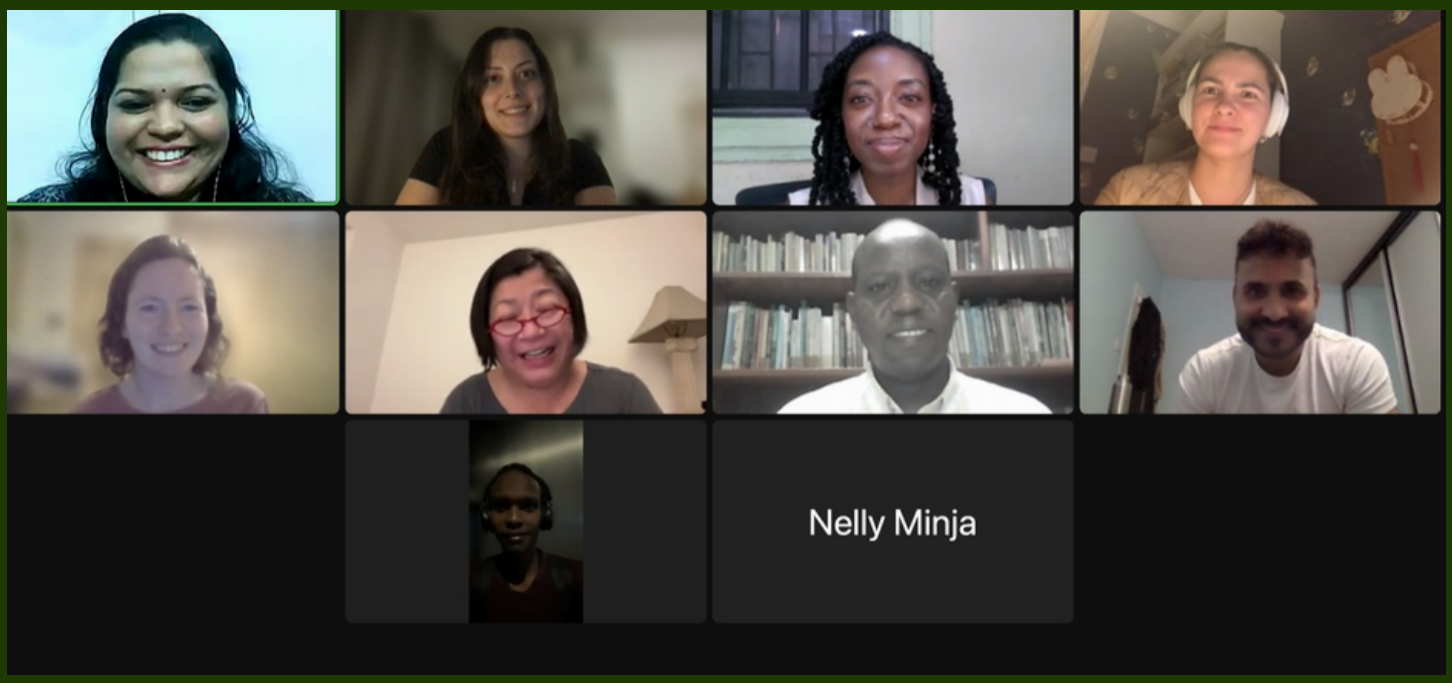


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UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe

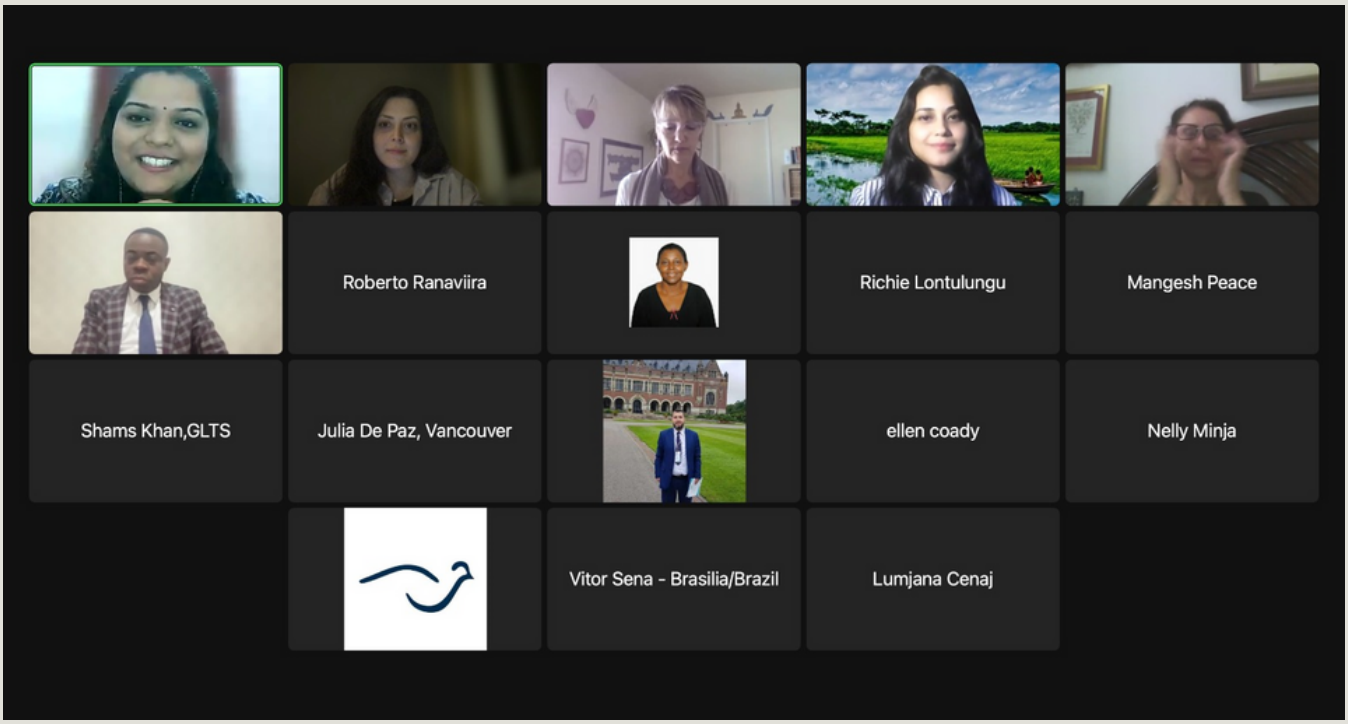
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Finding the Real Changemakers

The UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe project is a dynamic initiative aimed at fostering environmental consciousness, community engagement, and personal development. Through a series of 16 sessions, the project delves into diverse topics ranging from climate change and sustainable architecture to gender equality and community building.

The over-arching goal is to inspire positive change, empower individuals, and cultivate a sense of responsibility towards the environment and society.



ABOUT OUR PROJECT

Our platform provides a space for individuals to connect with like-minded people and share their ideas and experiences. Through our curated content and resources, we hope to inspire and empower individuals to take action in their own lives and in their communities.

OUR OBJECTIVES

- To build a community of people who are aware of the current challenges and take sustainable actions for the betterment of society.
- To educate people on how to restore the ecosystem through interactive training programmes.
- To create awareness among participants on existing inequalities in societies through family dialogues.
- To equip people to lead a peaceful life using non-violent communication skills.

OVERVIEW

16

Online Events

10

Facilitators

90

Participants

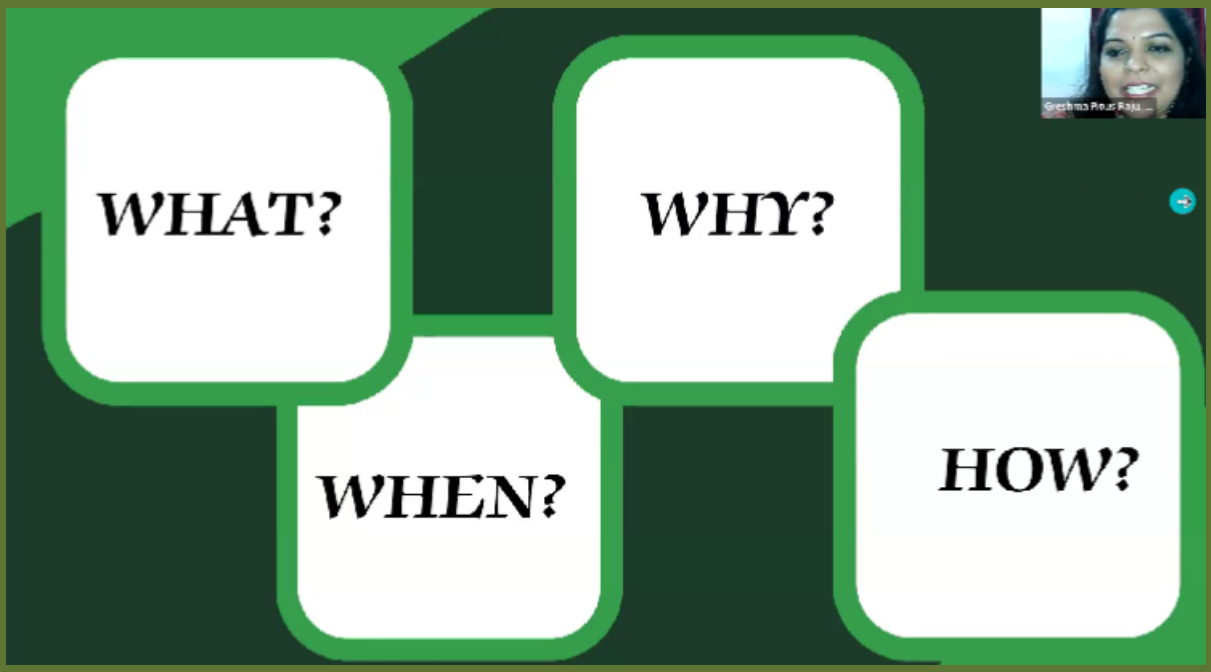
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SESSIONS REPORT

UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe

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ORIENTATION PROGRAM

About the session

On 24 July 2023, the UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe successfully conducted an insightful orientation programme, marking a significant step towards engaging young individuals in meaningful environmental initiatives. The lead facilitator was Greshma Raju, she introduced the programme to UKIYN members. The orientation aimed to not only familiarise participants with the objectives and structure of the programme but also to instill a sense of urgency and purpose in addressing environmental challenges. By leveraging the power of technology, the UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe has embarked on a journey to inspire and empower the younger generation to actively contribute to sustainable practices and foster a sense of eco-consciousness within their communities.

Objectives of the session

- To provide participants with a clear understanding of the overall structure, goals, and expectations of the upcoming sessions.
- To create a sense of community among participants.

About the facilitator

Greshma Pious Raju is a young peacebuilder with several years of experience in interfaith dialogues and environmental peace-building. She promotes faith and climate actions among different faith actors. Greshma is the founder of Ecopeace Teen Cafe, an online transformative education programme for teenagers, where she focuses on caring for the community, environmental protection, social justice and nonviolent communication. Greshma is the Lead Facilitator for the UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe.



TRAINING FOR FACILITATORS

Objectives of the session

- Improve the proficiency of participants in employing a variety of facilitation techniques. This includes developing skills in active listening, asking open-ended questions, managing group dynamics, and fostering a participatory atmosphere.
- Equip participants with the ability to adapt their facilitation style to different group dynamics, learning preferences, and cultural backgrounds.

About the facilitator

This session was presented by Greshma Pious Raju, the Lead Facilitator of the UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe.

About the session

On 27 July 2023, a transformative training session on facilitation skills was conducted by the facilitator, Greshma P Raju. The purpose of the session was to enhance the facilitation capabilities of participants, equipping them with the tools and knowledge needed to conduct successful and engaging sessions . Participants were guided on the art of clear and concise communication. The facilitator demonstrated effective communication techniques, emphasising active listening, paraphrasing, and the use of open-ended questions to encourage participant engagement. The session introduced participants to a variety of facilitation tools and techniques. The session witnessed an interactive discussion on hands-on practice, allowing participants to apply these tools in simulated scenarios. This interactive approach enabled the participants to gain a deeper understanding of how to select and implement the most effective tools for different situations. Participants were encouraged to share their experiences and challenges, and constructive feedback was provided to facilitate individual growth.



CLIMATE CHANGE & THE COMING GENERATIONS

Objectives of the session

- To raise awareness and enhance understanding among participants about the critical issues related to climate change.
- To foster active participation and collaboration among attendees.
- To empower participants with practical knowledge and actionable steps that they can take to contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts.

About the facilitator

Ishita Garg is the Co-founder and director of EXSTEMPLAR Education Linkers Foundation, a non-profit which works to promote STEM and social equity in education for social development.

About the session

On 11 August 2023, the UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe hosted a thought-provoking session on climate change and the role of the coming generation, featuring the dynamic speaker Ishita Gard. With passion and expertise, Ishita articulated the critical role that youth play in climate action, emphasising their potential to drive positive change. Delving into the intersectionality of the issue, she highlighted the influence of cultural groups in shaping climate action strategies for mitigating the current environmental crisis. Ishita's engaging discourse not only shed light on the urgency of addressing climate change but also underscored the significance of considering diverse cultural perspectives in crafting effective solutions. The session left attendees inspired and equipped with a deeper understanding of their pivotal role in shaping a sustainable future. The UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe continues to host an inclusive space for meaningful conversations and actions that contribute to a more environmentally conscious and responsible global community.



SUSTAINABLE ARCHITECTURE FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

Objectives of the session

Educate, inspire and share the importance, benefits and implementation of sustainable architecture.

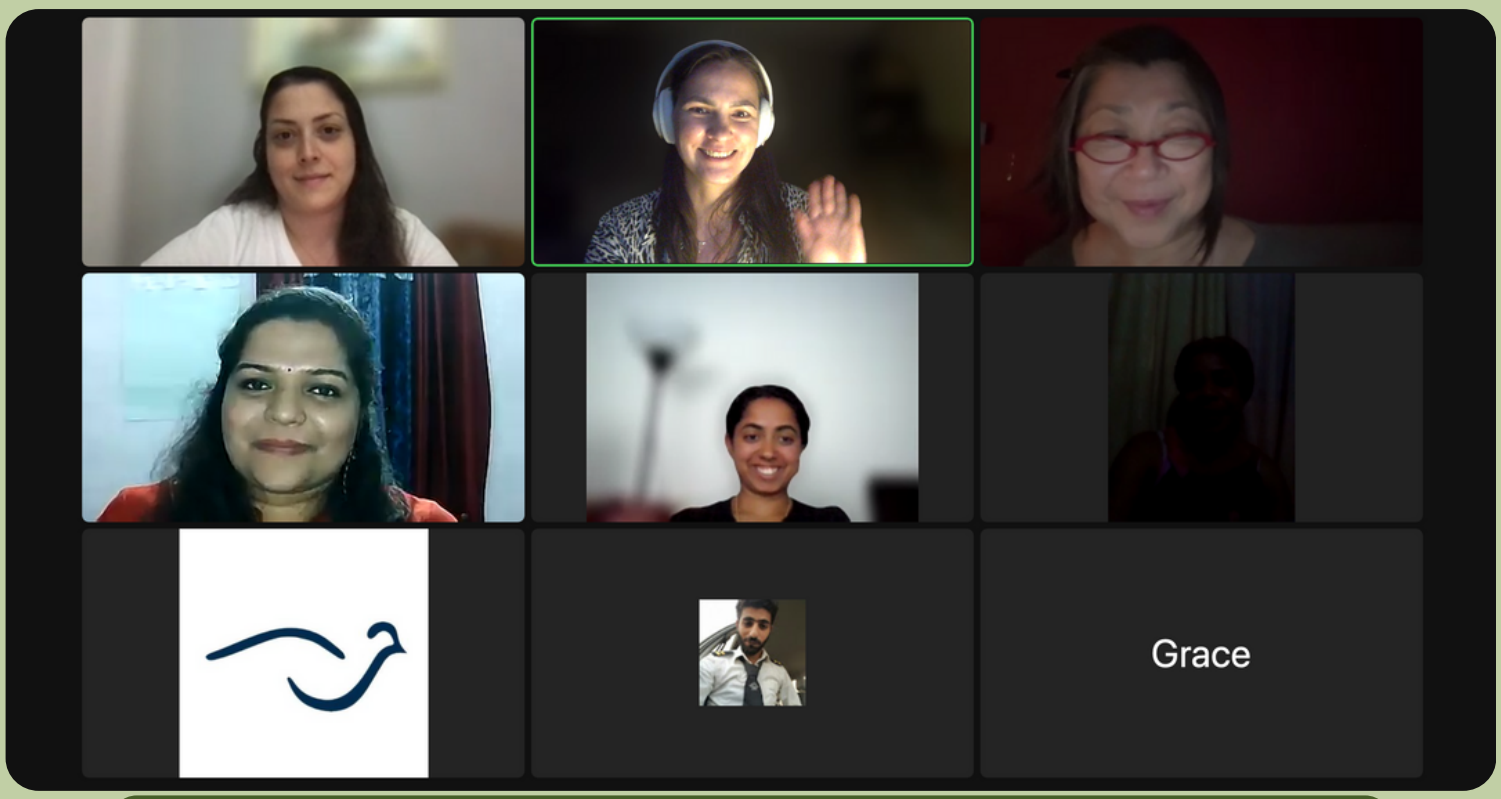
- To increase understanding of sustainable architecture and its significance in addressing environmental, social and economic challenges
- To provide insights into sustainable design practices, energy-efficient technologies, and eco-friendly materials that can be used in architectural projects
- To motivate participants to use sustainable practices in their own personal and professional projects

About the facilitator

Merylene Chitharai is based in Durban, South Africa. Obtaining her Bachelor of Architecture Studies Degree at UKZN Howard College, she works as a graphic artist, 3d designer and architectural technologist with 16 years of experience in the realm of social and sustainable architecture.

About the session

On August 14, 2023, the UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe organised a transformative session titled "Sustainable Architecture for a Better Tomorrow." The event proved to be an enlightening experience, delving into the critical intersection of architecture and environmental sustainability. Attendees were treated to a comprehensive exploration of innovative and eco-friendly architectural practices that contribute to a more sustainable future. The session, expertly curated by knowledgeable presenters, highlighted the importance of integrating green technologies, renewable energy sources, and environmentally conscious design principles into architectural endeavours. Participants gained valuable insights into how sustainable architecture not only mitigates the ecological impact of construction but also enhances the overall well-being of communities. The UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe continues to be a beacon of environmental awareness, providing a platform for fostering discussions and initiatives that pave the way for a greener and more sustainable tomorrow.



EARTH CHARTER: A VISIONARY DOCUMENT

Objectives of the session

The Guiding Principles Behind a Worldwide Movement for Over Two Decades.

- To provide an overview of the Earth Charter as a guiding document that promotes sustainability, social justice, and respect for all forms of life.
- To increase the understanding of existing challenges and the role of the Earth Charter in addressing these challenges.
- Motivate participants to reflect on principles of Earth Charter in their personal and professional lives and become agents of change.

About the facilitator

This session was presented by Greshma Pious Raju, the Lead Facilitator of the UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe.

About the session

On 19 August 2023, UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe hosted a thought-provoking session, shedding light on the Earth Charter as a visionary document guiding sustainable development. Greshma eloquently delved into the ethical dimensions of the Earth Charter, captivating the audience with insights into its role as a moral compass for fostering environmental stewardship and social responsibility. The session underscored the significance of aligning actions with the principles outlined in the Earth Charter, emphasising the need for a holistic approach to sustainable development. Greshma's articulate presentation not only elucidated the key tenets of the Earth Charter, it also inspired participants to consider the Earth Charter as a fundamental ethical framework for shaping a more harmonious and sustainable future. The event at UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe successfully underscored the importance of the Earth Charter in guiding individuals towards responsible and conscientious practices in the pursuit of a more sustainable world.



INNOVATIVE WAYS FOR WASTE MANAGEMENT

Objectives of the session

- To increase awareness among participants about waste management challenges and the importance of adopting innovative solutions to address them.
- To discuss innovative approaches to waste management practices in different geographical locations.
- To introduce the concept of a circular economy and its role in waste management, emphasising the importance of reducing waste generation, reusing materials, and recycling.
- To discuss the involvement of the community in creating meaningful engagement in waste management practices.

About the facilitator

Mayokun Iyaomolere is the Founder and Executive Director of Plogging Nigeria Club, an organisation dedicated to promoting a culture of responsible waste handling and physical fitness.

About the session

On 23 August 2023, the UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe hosted an enlightening session on "Innovative Ways for Waste Management," featuring a dynamic speaker who shared his inspiring journey with Plogging Nigeria. The session proved to be a valuable platform for participants to gain insights into creative and effective waste management practices. The speaker's narrative highlighted the transformative impact of plogging—a combination of jogging and picking up litter—showcasing how a simple yet innovative approach can significantly contribute to waste reduction and community engagement. The session not only provided practical tips for waste management but also underscored the importance of grassroots initiatives in fostering sustainable habits. The UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe continues to serve as a catalyst for environmental awareness, bringing together individuals dedicated to pioneering solutions for a cleaner and healthier planet.



Gender Equality:Let's Talk and Practice

Objectives of the session

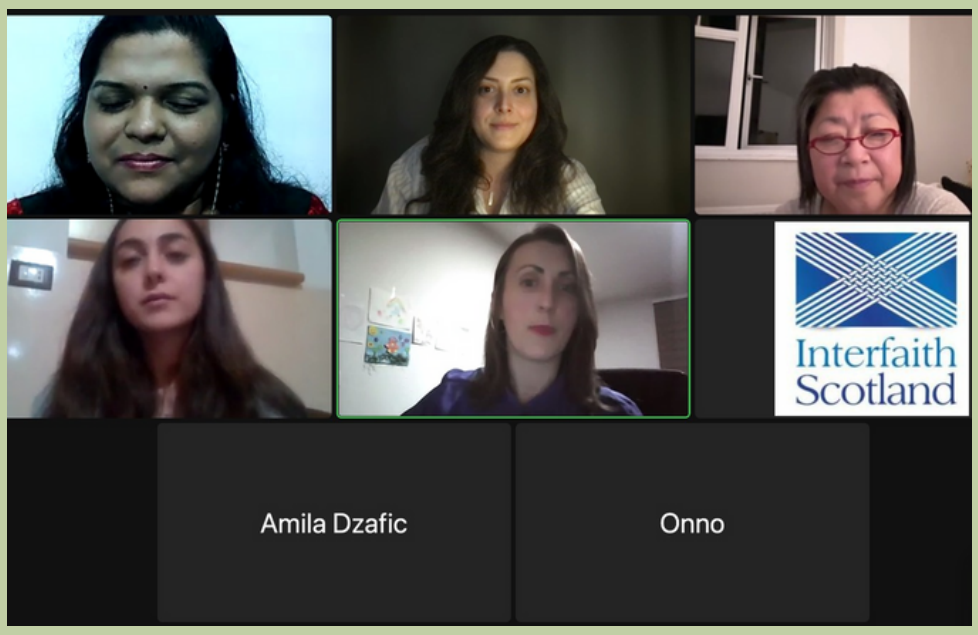
- To increase understanding of gender equality as a human right and its benefits to individuals.
- Address gender stereotypes existing in societies and create awareness regarding their harmful impact.
- Create a safe and inclusive space for open conversations about gender equality.
- Encourage individuals to take practical steps to promote gender equality.
- To share successful initiatives promoting gender equalities and inspire participants to initiate such initiatives in their communities.

About the facilitator

Jacinta Astles is a feminist, activist and researcher. She holds a master's degree in Gender and Peacebuilding from the University for Peace and is certified as a self-defense instructor from Empowerment Self-Defence Global. She is currently working to promote the human rights of migrants through education.

About the session

On 25 August 2023, the UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe hosted "Gender Equality: Let's Talk and Practice", aiming at fostering awareness and action towards creating a more inclusive and equitable society. The session provided a platform for open and constructive conversations, encouraging participants to delve into the complexities of gender equality. The facilitator skilfully navigated through discussions on societal norms, stereotypes, and the importance of dismantling barriers that hinder progress towards gender parity. She also shared the importance of self-defence practices and her initiative in providing training programmes for women. Interactive activities and real-life examples were incorporated to make the session engaging and relatable. Emphasising the significance of practical implementation, the event encouraged dialogue and inspired individuals to actively contribute to creating environments that champion equal opportunities for all. The UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe's commitment to addressing crucial societal issues was evident in this impactful session, which catalysed positive change within the community.



LET'S COUNTER HATE SPEECH

Objectives of the session

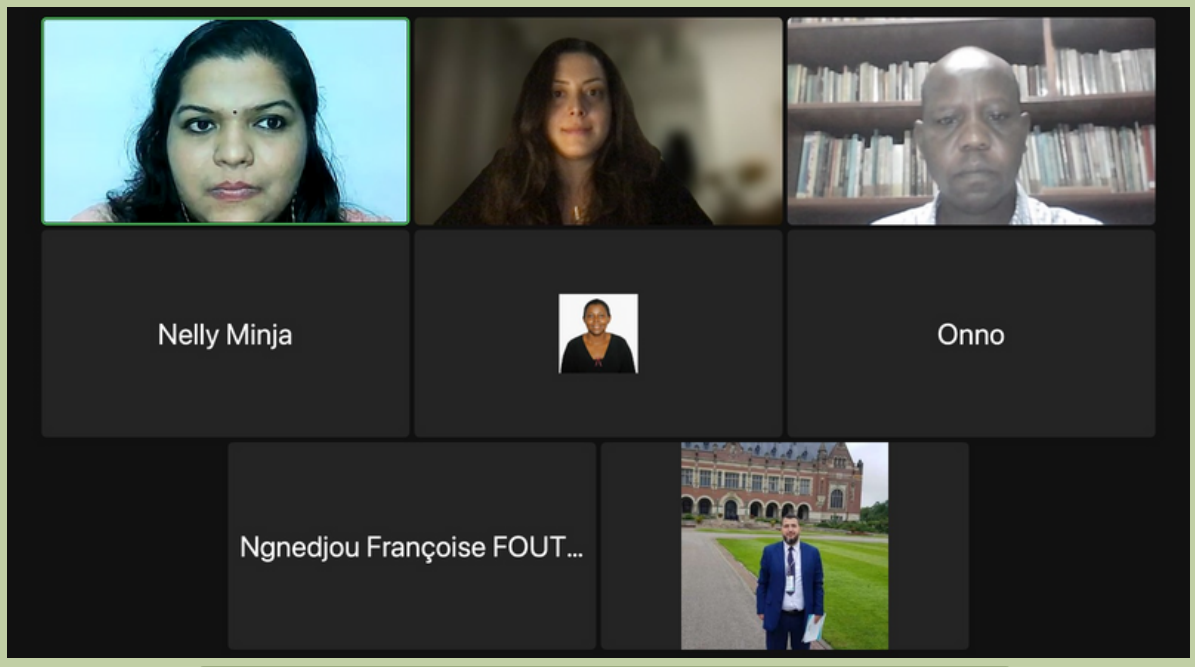
- To enhance participants' understanding of what constitutes hate speech, its various forms, and its consequences on individuals, communities, and societal harmony.
- To provide participants with insights into the psychological and social mechanisms that drive hate speech, helping them comprehend why individuals engage in it and how it spreads.
- To equip participants with communication and conflict resolution skills that can help them effectively address hate speech, promote empathy, and encourage open dialogue.
- To foster a sense of inclusivity and respect for diversity by emphasising the importance of maintaining respectful discourse, even in the face of differing opinions.

About the facilitator

Emina Frljak is Project Coordinator at Youth for Peace (Bosnia and Herzegovina). She is also a member of the Religions for Peace International Youth Committee since 2019. Her academic background is in educational sciences, interreligious studies and peace-building. Her areas of work and interest are peace education, interreligious dialogue, and religious literacy.

About the session

On 15 September 2023 the UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe hosted a pivotal session entitled "Let's Counter Hate Speech", addressing a critical aspect of fostering a positive and inclusive community. The session, thoughtfully conducted, aimed at raising awareness and equipping participants with the tools to combat hate speech effectively. Through engaging discussions and interactive activities, the facilitator encouraged open dialogue on the impact of hate speech and its connection to environmental and social issues. Attendees gained valuable insights into the role they can play in creating a more tolerant and respectful environment within the context of environmental activism. The session underscored UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe's commitment to environmental sustainability and to nurturing a community that values diversity and advocates for harmonious coexistence. The initiative signifies a proactive step towards building a more compassionate society, aligning with our over-arching mission of promoting ecologically sustainable practices and fostering a sense of unity among our participants.



PROTECTING WATER RESOURCES: A WAY TO CONSERVE ECOSYSTEM

Objectives of the session

- To provide insights into effective strategies for conserving water resources, including sustainable water management practices and the role of technology.
- To emphasise the significance of healthy water bodies in supporting diverse species, habitats, and ecosystem functions.
- To encourage active participation and collaboration among communities, organisations, and individuals in safeguarding local water resources.

About the facilitator

This session was presented by Greshma Pious Raju, the Lead Facilitator of the UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe.

About the session

On 30 September 2023, the UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe hosted a highly informative and engaging session "Protecting Water Resources: A Way to Conserve Ecosystem". The session aimed to raise awareness about the critical importance of safeguarding water resources as a means to preserve and nurture ecosystems, featuring the current challenges of water ecosystems and offered practical solutions for conservation. Attendees gained comprehensive understanding of the inter-connectedness between water resources and broader ecological health. The session highlighted the environmental significance of water conservation and also underscored the role that individuals and communities can play in adopting sustainable practices. Through this initiative, UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe continues to demonstrate its commitment to environmental education and activism, inspiring a community of eco-conscious individuals dedicated to the protection of our precious natural resources.



YOUTH, PEACE AND ENVIRONMENT

Objectives of the session

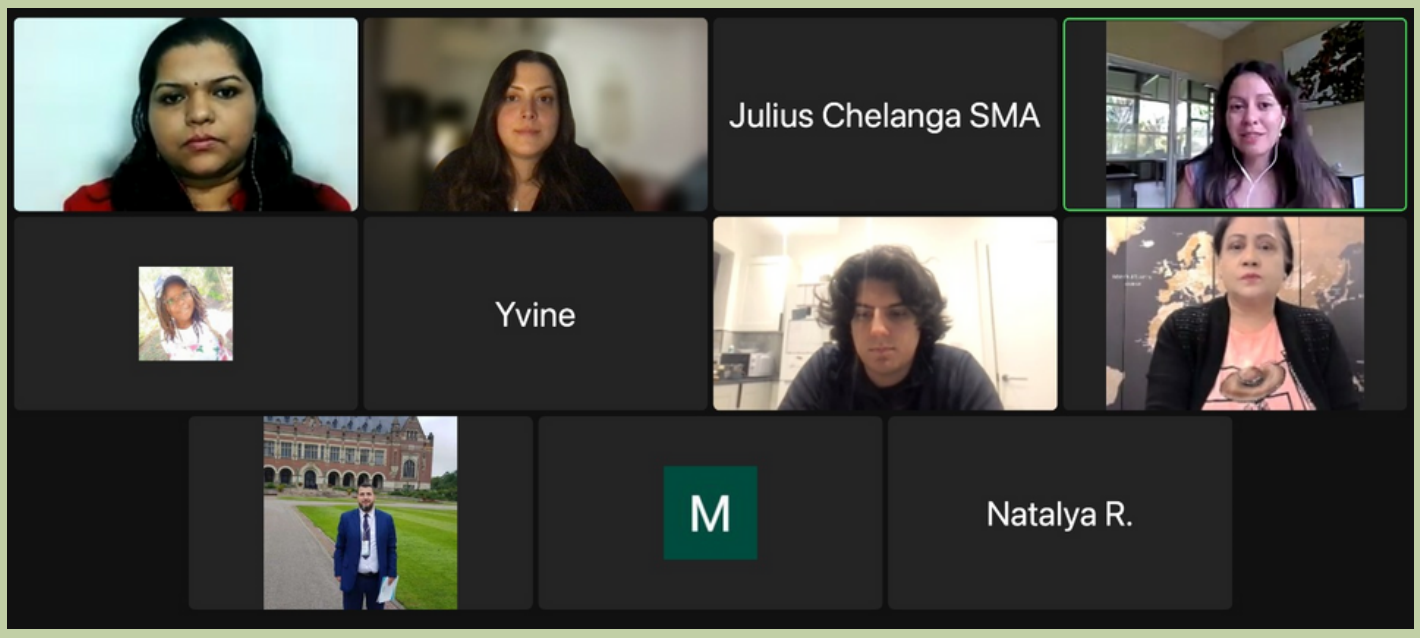
- To foster a comprehensive understanding of how youth engagement and environmental consciousness are pivotal in nurturing peace and sustainability.
- To reflect on current youth policies which promote peace and security.
- To encourage participants to initiate climate actions and promote peace in communities.

About the facilitator

Jamella Chesney holds a master's degree in Environment, Development and Peace with a specialisation in Climate Change Policy from the University for Peace, Costa Rica, and a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry from Stony Brook University, New York, U.S.A. Jamella has over 2 years' volunteer experience in community engagement and youth empowerment as a member of the Caribbean Youth Environment Network where she facilitates the delivery of environmental preservation projects and awareness-raising campaigns for young people.

About the session

On 10 October 2023, the UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe organized a dynamic and thought-provoking session centered around the crucial intersection of "Youth, Peace, and Environment". The session, meticulously designed to address the interconnectedness of these themes, provided a platform for participants to delve into young individuals' role in fostering peace through environmental stewardship. The session covered a range of topics, from the impact of environmental degradation on peace to the empowering potential of youth-led initiatives in driving positive change. The facilitator guided the discourse, encouraging active participation and dialogue among attendees. The event heightened awareness about the intrinsic link between a sustainable environment and peaceful societies, and it also inspired a commitment to collective action among the youth present. The UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe's dedication to creating spaces for meaningful discussions and fostering a sense of responsibility among the younger generation was evident throughout this impactful session.



RESTORING ECOSYSTEM: THROUGH PLANTING TREES

Objectives of the session

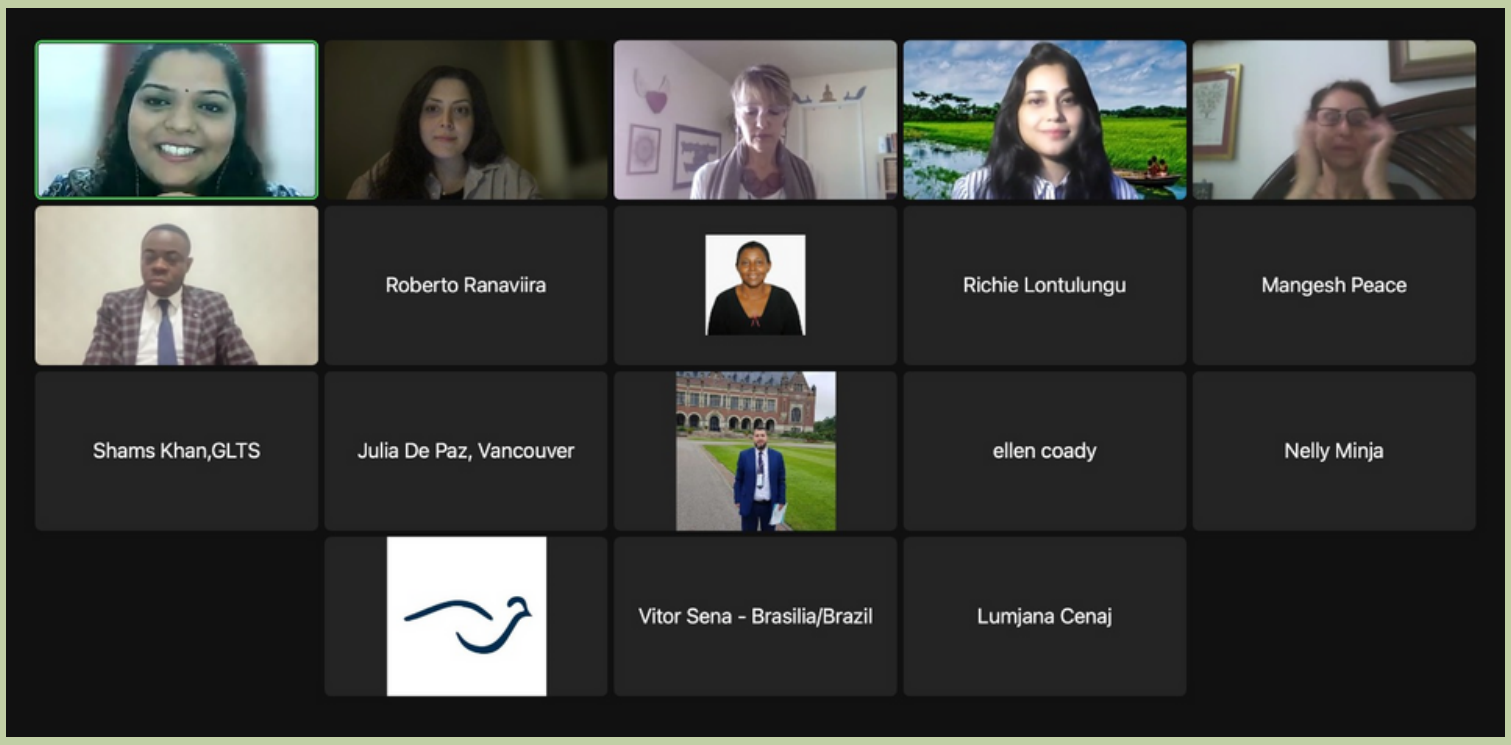
- To enhance participants' understanding of the current state of ecosystems, the challenges posed by deforestation, and the potential of tree planting to restore ecological balance.
- To provide participants with insights into the diverse ecological benefits of trees, including carbon sequestration, biodiversity conservation, soil preservation, and watershed protection.
- To equip participants with knowledge about selecting appropriate tree species, planting techniques, and maintenance practices to ensure the success of tree planting projects.
- To inform about the role of Earth Charter in protecting nature through community initiatives.

About the facilitator

Amanda Bennett is the Youth Programme Coordinator and Project Officer at the ECI Secretariat and the Center for Education for Sustainable Development at University of Peace. She was born in Guanacaste, Costa Rica, and grew up in South Carolina, United States. She earned a bachelor of arts degree in Experimental Psychology at the University of South Carolina, and a master's in Public Policy at the University of Maryland.

About the session

On 17 October 2023, the UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe conducted a transformative session dedicated to "Restoring the Ecosystem through Planting Trees". The session proved to be a pivotal moment in the Cafe's commitment to environmental stewardship. Participants were guided through a comprehensive exploration of the vital role tree planting plays in ecosystem restoration. The session incorporated hands-on activities, providing attendees with practical knowledge on selecting and planting native trees, fostering an immediate connection to the restoration process. Emphasizing the significance of individual actions in collective environmental impact, the session not only educated but also inspired participants to take an active role in rejuvenating our planet. The UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe continues to lead by example, fostering a community that recognizes the pivotal role trees play in sustaining a healthy and balanced ecosystem.



CLIMATE JUSTICE FOR YOUNGER GENERATION

Objectives of the session

- To foster an intergenerational dialogue on climate justice, bringing together experts and young leaders to share perspectives, experiences, and insights.
- To raise awareness about the unique challenges faced by younger generations in the context of climate change and advocate for their involvement in climate action.
- To explore strategies for creating a more equitable and sustainable future by addressing climate-related injustices.

About the speakers

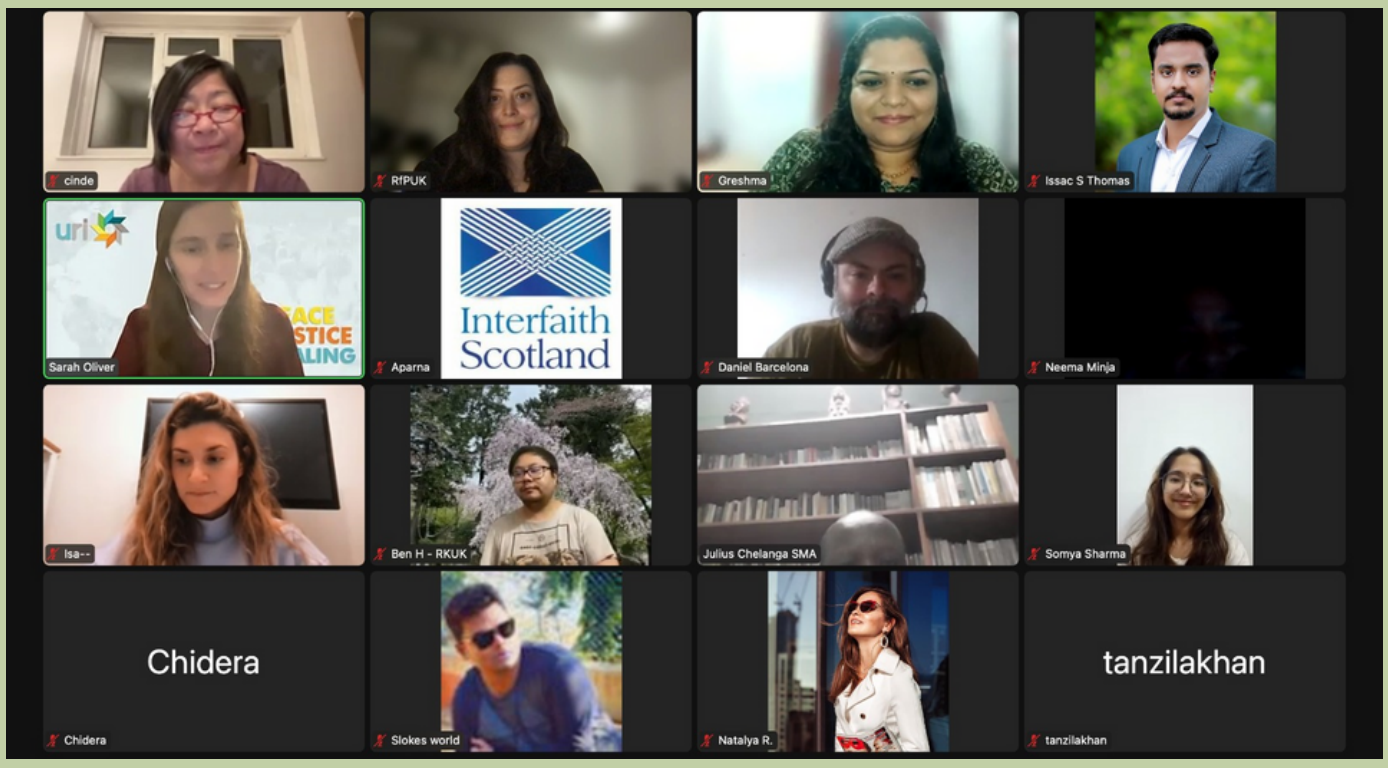
Lauren Van Ham – Climate Action Coordinator, United Religions Initiative

Roamon Smitha – Global Law Thinkers Society, Bangladesh

Christian Lupemba – Chairperson, Interfaith Youth Network of the Democratic Republic of Congo

About the session

On October 25, the UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe orchestrated a compelling session on Climate Justice, embodying the spirit of intergenerational collaboration and dialogue. The session served as a platform for the younger generation to engage in meaningful conversations with seasoned advocates and experts, fostering a dynamic exchange of ideas and perspectives. The event aimed to deepen the participants' understanding of climate justice issues and empower them to become agents of positive change.
Facilitated by knowledgeable experts, the session addressed the urgency of climate action and the interconnectedness of environmental issues with social justice.
The dialogue not only enriched the younger generation with valuable insights but also provided a space for elders to share their experiences and wisdom, creating a harmonious bridge between generations in the pursuit of a sustainable and just future.
This session underscored the UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe's commitment to nurturing a community that is well-informed, inspired, and actively engaged in addressing the critical challenges posed by climate change.



BUILDING A COMMUNITY

Objectives of the session

- To bring participants of UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe participants from diverse backgrounds and demographics together to strengthen social bonds, increase mutual understanding, and build a sense of unity and belonging.
- To provide strategies and activities that help in building trust and empathy among community members.
- To equip participants to work for a common vision and to think about their community projects and roles as facilitators in the programme going forward.

About the facilitator

Sarah Oliver is the Global Youth and Learning Coordinator for the United Religions Initiative (URI). Based in South Africa, she works to support, connect and inspire young people as interfaith activists and peacebuilders around the world. Sarah has worked in the interfaith sector for the last 10 years, running youth camps, workshops and skills training, both locally and globally.

About the session

On 1 November 2023, UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe hosted a transformative session focused on "Building a Community", marking a pivotal moment in the organisation's commitment to fostering sustainable and inclusive environmental practices. The session, expertly curated and facilitated, aimed to unite individuals with a shared passion for eco-conscious living. Participants were guided through discussions and activities that not only emphasised the importance of community in driving positive environmental change but also provided practical tools and strategies for building and sustaining such communities. Attendees were encouraged to exchange ideas, share experiences, and envision collaborative initiatives that would amplify the impact of their collective efforts. This session underscored the cafe's dedication to not only promoting environmental awareness but also cultivating a sense of belonging and collaboration among like-minded individuals, laying the groundwork for a more connected and effective eco-conscious community.



THE POWER OF MENTORSHIP

Objectives of the session

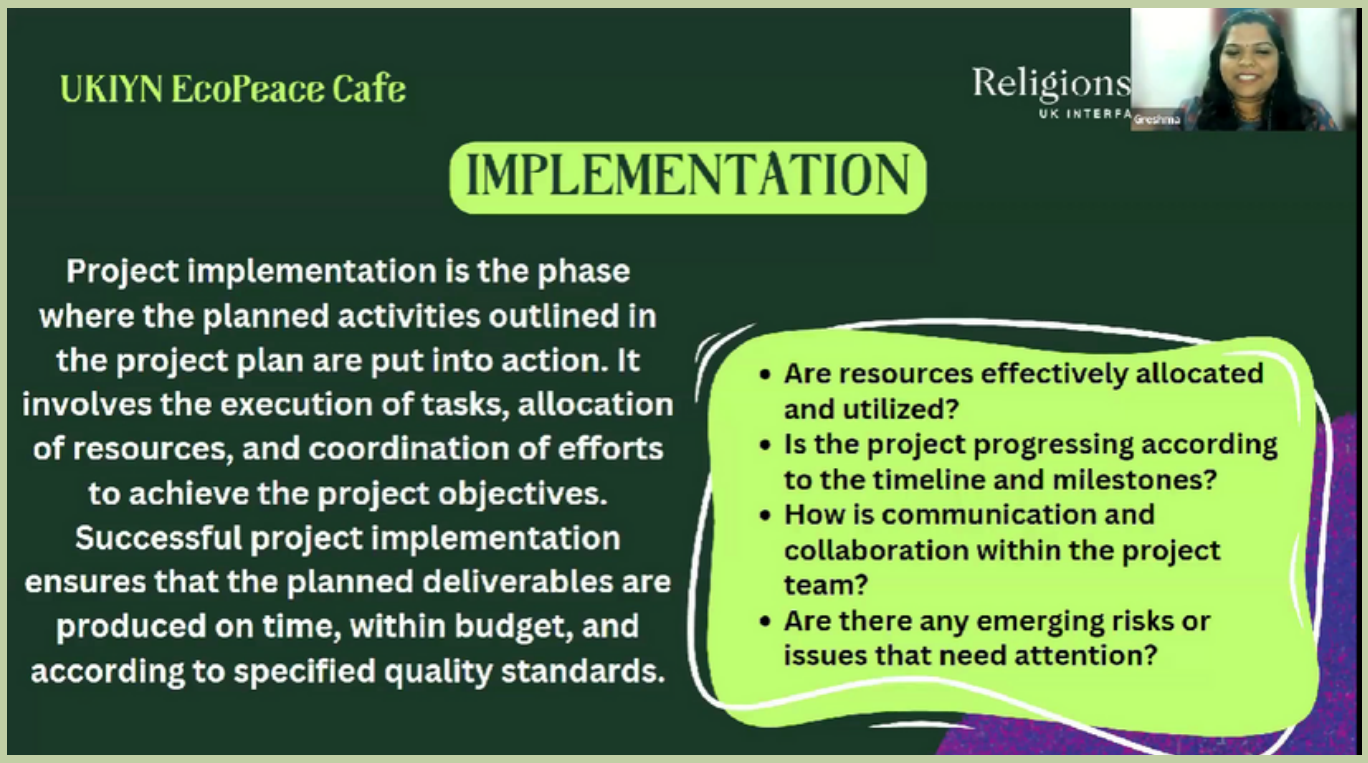
- To assist participants in identifying the strength and weakness.
- To address specific challenges that participants are facing in working with communities.
- To provide support in taking actions with the community members.
- To foster connections and provide networking opportunities.

About the facilitator

This session was presented by Greshma Pious Raju, the Lead Facilitator of the UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe.

About the session

On 8 November 2023, the UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe conducted a transformative session on mentorship, underlining the organisation's commitment to nurturing leadership and fostering sustainable practices. The session, designed to empower participants with mentorship skills, was facilitated with enthusiasm and expertise. Attendees were guided through the essential principles of effective mentorship, emphasising the crucial role it plays in personal and professional development, especially within the context of environmental conservation. The session provided valuable insights into mentorship dynamics and also offered practical tools and strategies for mentors to support and guide their mentees effectively. By investing in mentorship initiatives, UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe is building a stronger internal community and cultivating a network of individuals equipped to drive positive change in the realm of environmental sustainability. The session continues to advance the awareness mission and a culture of mentorship among the participants.



IMPLEMENTING COMMUNITY-BASED PROJECTS?

Objectives of the session

- To introduce the concept of community level projects, it's success and failures.
- To provide guidance on designing projects and its implementation.
- To provide peer learning and networking opportunities to explore potential collaborations in implementing community level projects.

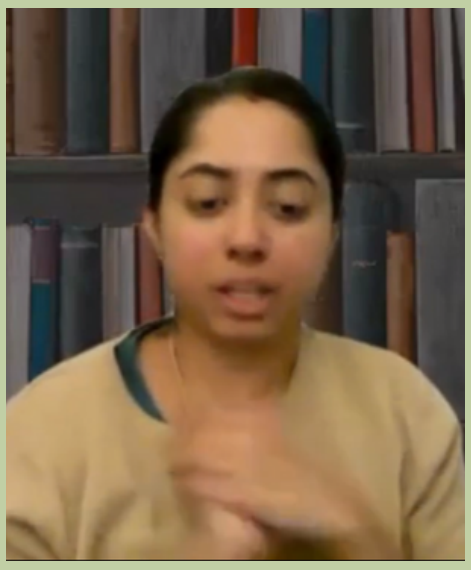
About the facilitator

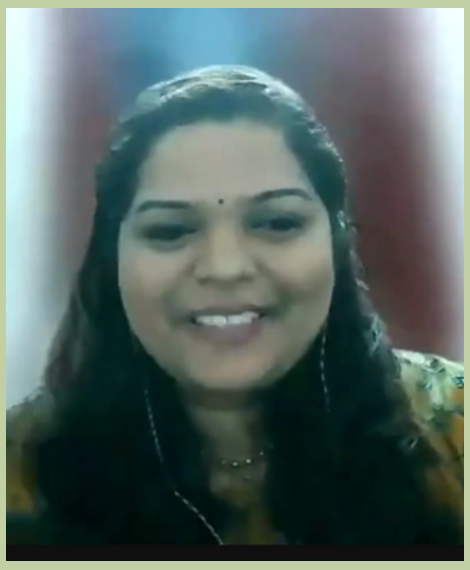
This session was presented by Greshma Pious Raju, the Lead Facilitator of the UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe.

About the session

On 14 November 2023, the UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe hosted an informative and empowering session on "How to Implement Community-Based Projects". The session served as a crucial platform for individuals interested in making a positive impact within their communities by initiating environmental projects. Greshma expertly navigated through the key elements of successful project implementation, providing practical insights and strategies to engage community members effectively. Participants gained valuable knowledge on project planning, stakeholder engagement, resource mobilisation, monitoring and evaluation. The session equipped attendees with the necessary tools for project management and fostered a sense of collaboration and shared responsibility in addressing environmental issues. The UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe continues to play a vital role in nurturing environmentally conscious individuals dedicated to creating tangible positive changes in their localities.







REFLECTIVE PRACTICES

Objectives of the session

- To introduce the concept of reflective practices.
- To reflect on UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe sessions with participants.
- To discuss lessons learned and potential actions arising from each sessions.

About the facilitator

This session was presented by Greshma Pious Raju, the Lead Facilitator of the UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe.

About the session

On 22 November 2023, UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe hosted a transformative session on Reflective Practices, providing a space for participants to introspect and contemplate their roles in fostering environmental stewardship. The session encouraged individuals to reflect on their personal experiences, values, and attitudes towards sustainability. Attendees were guided through various reflective exercises that allowed them to explore the interconnectedness between their actions and the broader ecological impact. The facilitator navigated the intricacies of encouraging self-awareness and critical thinking, fostering a deeper understanding of the importance of incorporating reflective practices in their daily lives. By nurturing this reflective mindset, UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe aims to empower individuals to make informed and conscientious decisions that contribute to a more sustainable and harmonious coexistence with the environment. The session serves to strengthen the commitment to instilling a sense of mindfulness and responsibility within its community members.

Table 1: Attendance of Participants

No	Date	Events	Number of Registrations	Number of participants
1	**24 July 2023**	**Orientation Programme**	26	9
2	**27 July 2023**	**Training on Facilitation Skills**	28	12
3	**11 August 2023**	**Climate Change and the Coming Generations**	22	15
4	**14 August 2023**	**Sustainable Architecture for Better Tomorrow**	14	9
5	**19 August 2023**	**Earth Charter: A Visionary Document**	11	12
6	**23 August 2023**	**Innovative Ways for Waste Management**	7	8
7	**25 August 2023**	**Gender Equality: Let's Talk and Practice**	12	12
8	**15 September 2023**	**Let's Counter Hate Speech**	12	9
9	**30 September 2023**	**Protecting Water Resources: A Way to Conserve Ecosystem**	16	11
10	**10 October 2023**	**Youth, Peace and Environment**	13	15
11	**17 October 2023**	**Restoring Ecosystem: Through Planting Trees**	19	14
12	**25 October 2023**	**Climate Justice for Younger Generation**	25	25
13	**1 November 2023**	**Building a Community**	16	20
14	**8 November 2023**	**The Power of Mentorship**	25	17
15	**14 November 2023**	**How to implement Community**	16	12
16	**23 November 2023**	**Reflective Practices**	15	6

PARTICIPANTS ENGAGEMENT

Over the course of 16 sessions, participants demonstrated an exceptional level of engagement, transforming the learning experience into a vibrant and interactive journey. The success of these sessions can be attributed to the active involvement of the participants, their seamless interactions with the facilitators, and the impactful breakout sessions that not only fuelled discussions on future actions but also fostered strong connections among participants.

Active Participation:

Throughout the sessions, participants exhibited a commendable level of enthusiasm and active involvement. The facilitators played a crucial role in creating an inclusive environment, encouraging participants to share their thoughts, experiences, and insights. This open dialogue contributed to a rich and multifaceted learning experience, where each participant felt valued and heard.

Interaction with the Facilitator:

The facilitators' skilful guidance and approachable demeanour facilitated a strong rapport between the participants and themselves. Participants felt comfortable expressing their opinions, seeking clarification, and actively participating in discussions. The facilitator's ability to adapt to the dynamics of the group and address individual concerns played a pivotal role in maintaining a positive and collaborative atmosphere throughout the sessions.

Breakout Sessions:

A key highlight of the programme was the incorporation of breakout sessions, providing participants with dedicated time to engage in in-depth discussions. These smaller, focused groups allowed for a more intimate exchange of ideas and fostered a sense of community among participants. The discussions ranged from exploring practical applications of the session content to strategising future actions based on shared insights.

Future Actions and Connections:

The breakout sessions, specifically designed as rooms for discussions on future actions, proved to be instrumental in translating theoretical knowledge into actionable plans. Participants collaboratively brainstormed and devised strategies that could be implemented in their respective contexts. This not only enhanced the practical applicability of the sessions but also inspired a sense of collective responsibility towards the shared goals of the programme.

FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

In our commitment to continuous improvement, a comprehensive feedback initiative was undertaken through a dual approach—individual participant interviews and a focal group discussion with facilitators. The objective was to gain nuanced insights into the effectiveness of our recent program and to inform future enhancements.

Participant Interviews:

Individual interviews were conducted with diverse participants, representing various backgrounds and perspectives. The interviews aimed to delve into the participants' experiences, perceptions, and suggestions regarding the programme.

Key themes that emerged included:

Content Relevance: Participants expressed appreciation for the relevance of the content to their needs, and shared recommendations for including practical application of concepts.

Facilitation Effectiveness: The majority highlighted the facilitators' ability to create an inclusive and interactive learning environment. Specific facilitation techniques, such as open-ended questioning and encouraging participant contributions, were noted positively.

Engagement Levels: Participants reported high levels of engagement throughout the sessions, attributing it to the dynamic content delivery and opportunities for active participation.

Logistical Considerations: Constructive feedback was provided regarding certain logistical aspects, such as scheduling preferences the desire for additional resources, and strong mentorship opportunities, accommodating global participants by changing the time.

Facilitator Focus Group Discussion:

A focal group discussion was conducted with facilitators to gather their insights into the program dynamics, challenges faced, and potential improvements.

Key takeaways from the discussion include:

Participant Dynamics: Facilitators highlighted the diversity in participant backgrounds as a valuable asset. Strategies for effectively managing diverse groups were discussed, emphasising the importance of tailored approaches.

Interactive Techniques: Facilitators shared successful interactive techniques employed during breakout sessions, including case studies and group discussions, contributing to the overall engagement of participants.

Challenges and Solutions: Open communication allowed facilitators to share challenges, fostering a collaborative environment for problem-solving.

Facilitators suggested hosting one session with facilitators to ensure the connection and continuity in the topics they are discussing.

The combination of participant interviews and Facilitators Focus Group discussions provided a comprehensive understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement of UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe. These insights will be instrumental in refining future sessions, ensuring a continued commitment to delivering high-quality and impactful learning experiences. Moving forward, an action plan will be developed to address specific recommendations, fostering a culture of continuous improvement within our educational initiatives.

CHALLENGES & SOLUTIONS

CHALLENGES:

Reduced Interest in Online Sessions:
After the post-COVID period, there is a diminished interest in participating in online sessions. UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe experienced low attendance and that affected the effectiveness of the expected outcome of the programme.

Challenges in designing course structure
The contents for initial sessions were prepared for young people but most of the participants were experienced individuals. So the content may not align with the experiences and preferences of the mature and experienced participants. That causes limited relevance and engagement, potentially leading to disinterest and dropout during the call (especially during the breakout session).

Need to Reduce Session Duration:
The current time commitment of 2 hours for each session might be excessive for participants, affecting their availability, causing potential drop-offs, and reducing overall programme effectiveness. That can also reduce the number of registrations for the sessions.

Time Management Issues –
Sessions Running Overtime:
Sessions consistently exceed the scheduled time, impacting participants' schedules and causing potential disengagement.

Missing Call to Action in Sessions:
Due to spending more time on introductions and breakout sessions, facilitators could not present their last slides on the call for action. That affects the effectiveness of the programs.

SOLUTIONS:

Rekindling Interest in Online Sessions:
Emphasise the benefits of online learning, including flexibility and accessibility. Use interactive social media posts, stories and email campaigns to reach more people.

Tailoring Content for Experienced Participants:
Modify the programme content to address the specific needs, challenges, and experiences of the mature participants by incorporating case studies and examples relevant to their professional backgrounds. Also, there is a need to include questions regarding the professional background of participants during the registration time, which will help to prepare course design according to the needs of participants.

Optimising Session Duration:
Condense content without compromising quality. Prioritise key topics, and consider asynchronous learning elements to allow participants flexibility in their engagement. Reducing the time to one hour and increasing the number of sessions will help to engage more participants.

Improved Time Management:
Enforce strict time management practices and provide reminders to both participants and facilitators.

Incorporating a Strong Call to Action:
Conclude each session with a clear call to action, outlining specific steps participants can take to apply the learning. Inform facilitators' regarding the issues that happened during the last sessions and encourage them to follow strict time management.

SESSION ANALYSIS

Audience Engagement

Analysis: The level of audience engagement varied across sessions, influenced by factors such as content relevance, speaker delivery, and interactive elements
Recommendation: Enhance engagement through varied formats, including polls, Q&A sessions, and interactive discussions. Tailor content to address specific concerns and interests of the audience.

Content Depth and Diversity

Analysis: Sessions demonstrated in-depth coverage of topics, while others lacked diversity in content, potentially limiting the breadth of understanding and call for action.
Recommendation: Ensure a balance between depth and breadth in content. Incorporate diverse perspectives and case studies to provide a comprehensive understanding of the issues.

Speakers and Expertise

Analysis: Sessions with expert speakers received positive feedback, highlighting the importance of speaker expertise in delivering impactful content.
Recommendation: Continue to secure expert speakers and diverse voices. Consider incorporating panel discussions for a multi-faceted exploration of key themes.

The interconnectedness of Themes

Analysis: Participants appreciated sessions that effectively highlighted the interconnectedness of climate change, gender equality, and climate action.
Recommendation: Emphasise the interrelated nature of these themes throughout the sessions, fostering a holistic understanding and encouraging participants to consider the intersectionality of issues.

Inclusivity and Representation

Analysis: Sessions demonstrated inclusivity by bringing facilitators from diverse backgrounds, and ensured every voice was heard during discussions.
Recommendation: Prioritise inclusivity by ensuring diverse representation in speakers, case studies, and examples. Address intersectionality to create a more comprehensive narrative, and ensure the representation of differently-abled persons, refugees and gender minority groups will increase the effectiveness of the programme.

Call to Action and Practical Application

Analysis: The incorporation of actionable takeaways varied, with some sessions lacking a clear call to action.
Recommendation: Conclude each session with tangible action items and practical steps for participants. Encourage them to use toolkits and apply the knowledge gained in their respective spheres of influence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Thematic Integration

Integrate sessions thematically to showcase the interconnectedness of climate change, gender equality, climate action and peace-building. Design a series that builds on previous sessions, creating a cohesive learning journey.

Collaborations and Partnerships

Seek collaborations with organisations and experts in the field to bring diverse perspectives. Collaborative efforts can enhance the depth and credibility of the content presented.

Inclusive Audience Participation

Encourage active participation from a diverse audience by creating a welcoming and inclusive environment. Implement strategies to ensure representation from various backgrounds and experiences.

Post-Session Resources

Develop and share post-session resources, including reading materials, toolkits, and additional learning opportunities. This extends the impact beyond the live sessions and supports ongoing learning.

Continuous Feedback Mechanism

Establish a robust feedback mechanism after each session to gauge participant satisfaction and gather insights for improvement. Use this feedback to refine future sessions and address participant needs. Polls can be used after sessions.

Multi-Modal Content Delivery

Employ a variety of content delivery methods, including multimedia, case studies, and interactive simulations, to cater to different learning styles and maintain participant interest.

Advocacy and Amplification

Encourage participants to become advocates for climate action and gender equality. Provide resources and guidance on how they can amplify the message within their communities and networks.

By incorporating these recommendations, future webinar sessions can build upon the successes of the previous 16 sessions, ensuring a more engaging, inclusive, and impactful learning experience for participants interested in the critical intersections of climate change, gender equality, and climate action.

OUTREACH TO UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe needs to engage university students to ensure the success and sustainability of the programme. The energy and creativity of the next generation in addressing pressing environmental challenges will help to achieve the expected outcome of the project. Universities serve as hubs of knowledge and innovation, making them ideal platforms to educate and mobilise students towards sustainable practices and climate advocacy. By reaching out to university students, we can tap into a diverse pool of talents, disciplines, and perspectives, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration crucial for effective climate solutions. The youth's passion for change and their ability to influence peer networks can create a ripple effect, amplifying the impact of climate action initiatives initiated within university programmes.

Outreach to university students effectively involves understanding their preferences, platforms, and interests. Here are some strategies to engage university students:

Utilise Social Media

- Create and maintain active profiles on popular social media platforms
- Share engaging content, including information about events, workshops, and opportunities relevant to students.
- Use visually appealing graphics and multimedia to capture attention.
- Share social media posts as messages to social media accounts of universities, clubs and student organisations.

Campus Ambassadors Programme

- Recruit enthusiastic students as campus ambassadors to represent your organisation.
- Ambassadors can help promote events, share information, and serve as a bridge between your organisation and the student community.

Networking Events

- Participate in university career fairs or organise networking events on campus.

Offer certificates

- Provide certificates for student participation and recognise their contributions.

Create Engaging Content

- Develop blog posts, articles, or videos that provide valuable information and insights.
- Tailor content to address the interests and concerns of university students, offering a mix of educational and entertaining materials.

Utilise University Platforms

- Explore university-specific platforms such as student portals, newsletters, or bulletin boards to share information.
- Advertise in university publications or collaborate with campus radio or TV stations.

Personalised Email Campaigns

- Develop targeted email campaigns tailored to specific student groups or academic departments.
- Highlight the benefits and relevance of the programmes.

CONCLUSION

UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe sessions presented a dynamic and impactful approach to disseminating information, fostering engagement, and creating a valuable learning experience for participants. Throughout the project, we witnessed the power of online sessions in transcending geographical barriers, providing a platform for knowledge exchange, and catering to diverse learning preferences.

Several key observations and outcomes emerged from the webinar series:

Global Reach and Accessibility
The webinars successfully reached a global audience, transcending physical boundaries. Participants from various regions were able to access the sessions, broadening the impact of the project.

Learning Environments
Interactive features like breakout discussions created an engaging and participatory learning environment. This allowed for real-time interaction, fostering a sense of community among participants. The content delivered in the webinars was designed to be informative, relevant, and applicable. Participants gained theoretical knowledge as well as acquired practical insights that could be readily implemented in their professional and personal spheres.

Continuous Improvement and Participant Feedback
Regular feedback mechanisms were integrated into the webinar series, allowing for continuous improvement. Participant input guided adjustments to content delivery, session structures, and engagement strategies, creating a responsive and participant-centric learning experience.

Strategic Partnerships and Collaborations
Webinars provided opportunities for strategic partnerships and collaborations with industry experts, guest speakers, and organisations. These collaborations enriched the content, offering diverse perspectives and enhancing the overall quality of the sessions.

Technology as an Enabler
The seamless integration of technology played a pivotal role in the success of the webinars. Platforms with user-friendly interfaces, technical support, and robust features contributed to a smooth and efficient delivery of content.

UKIYN EcoPeace Cafe believes in peace dialogues and actions. Our world is facing numerous challenges, these challenges can be addressed only with the selfless efforts of humanity. Let’s forget the differences, forgive the past and work together for a better, sustainable and peaceful world not just for today but for our coming generations.

Religions *for* Peace
UK INTERFAITH YOUTH NETWORK

LET'S TRANSFORM THE WORLD THROUGH SUSTAINABLE ACTIONS

Access our Linktree

bit.ly/UKIYN_linktree

Keeping Up-to-Date with RfPUK's Projects

Sign up to our mailing list

If you're interested in learning more or exploring potential collaborations, please don't hesitate to reach out to us at

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