

2024 DIGEST

OPERATIONALISING JUST TRANSITIONS IN AFRICA

Foreword

The shift to a green economy presents both challenges and opportunities, especially in Africa, where sustainability, economic development, and social justice intersect with distinct local contexts. The 2024 Digest on Operationalising Just Transitions in Africa highlights the efforts of the OJTA programme in examining the core aspects of the just transition conversation. It underscores the programme's work in addressing critical issues like capacity gaps, infrastructure needs, and financing while emphasizing essential lessons such as the need for coordinated action, stronger policy frameworks, capacity building, and inclusive workforce development. These efforts aim to benefit all communities and contribute to a resilient, sustainable future for Africa.

With the progress of the UNFCCC Just Transition Framework and its practical application across the continent, the OJTA programme is dedicated to making significant contributions to this vital discussion. Focusing on Africa's unique needs and contexts, the programme seeks to play a key role in advancing a just transition that is fair and equitable and tailored to the continent's future.

- Dr. Shehnaaz Moosa
Director, SouthSouthNorth

2024 has been a progressive year for the Operationalising Just Transitions in Africa (OJTA) Programme and for the team as progress was made on the various research endeavours concerning the development of a book centred on unpacking the nuances of a just transition in Africa, across a number of its elements and facets.

This phase involved comparing, contrasting, and deepening their understanding of "operationalising a just transition in Africa," including hosting and attending a number of in-person and virtual events and engagements with other institutions working on issues of just transitions. These events have been instrumental in keeping us updated with the latest conversations and emerging trends within the field and have also highlighted critical themes that are currently influencing the discourse on just transition in Africa.



Research Symposium

The year commenced with an OJTA Research Symposium, which served as a platform for discourse on matters pertaining to the just transition. The symposium involved engagement from various institutions and independent researchers operating in this domain, with the objective of fostering informed discussions and identifying opportunities to enhance research impact within the African context.

A significant observation was the necessity to amplify community voices in global forums, ensuring that the lived experiences of individuals directly impacted by transitions are incorporated into discussions, policies, and decisions at the international level. To read more on the key insights and outcomes of that event, visit the [OJTA SSN programme page](#).



Fulbright Hays GPA 2024: Sustainable Development: History, Environmental Justice and Social Equity

Dr Tamuka Chekero, a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Centre for the Advancement of Scholarship at the University of Pretoria, examined the concept of a just transition within the South African context in his presentation titled "Just Transitions in a Diverse Landscape: Understanding Local Influences on Energy Policy Adoption and Effectiveness in Post-apartheid South Africa." He underscored the importance of a commitment to justice, asserting that ongoing research is crucial to addressing specific local challenges and opportunities. Dr Chekero contended that effective energy transition policies must consider the unique socio-economic, political, and cultural contexts of local communities in South Africa.

During his presentation, he highlighted that local governments play a pivotal role in driving and implementing these strategies, given their close relations with the community and their capacity to tailor solutions accordingly. This is consistent with some of the deliberations and discussion within the UNFCCC negotiations on just transitions where Parties have identified the need for establishing clear roles and responsibilities at the local government level with a view to strengthening the incorporation of local strategies, including just transition strategies, into national planning.



Social Justice Jam: Spaces for Change

Dr Chekero participated in the Social Justice Jam Session from 10-12 June 2024, which proved to be an enriching and insightful experience. This collaborative initiative, organised by the Discovery Delivery Group, the Digital Education Service at the University of Leeds, the University of Pretoria, the LS14 Trust in Leeds, and the Mamelodi community, focused on addressing challenges related to community space access and management. The session emphasised the importance of inclusive, community-driven approaches to achieving social justice. During the event, Dr Chekero observed the transformative power of local storytelling, exemplified by Dr Mabena, a traditional leader who heads

an organisation that employs traditional methods to conserve the mountains in Mamelodi, Pretoria, South Africa. This approach not only contributed to environmental conservation but also galvanized collective efforts towards positive societal change. The experience underscored the critical role of grassroots participation and the value of local knowledge in promoting equitable outcomes on a global scale.

Local problems require tailored local solutions, not a top-down, one-size-fits-all approach.

- Dr. Tamuka Chekero

Dr Chekero also delivered a presentation on the significance of grassroots participation, which not only resonated strongly during the Social Justice Jam but provides a useful basis for the attainment of a just energy transition due to their alignment with the principles of the just energy transition, and why grassroots movements are a critical element of just transitions. The five key pillars that underscore the importance of grassroots engagement and inclusion and their relevance to the just energy transition includes are outlined in the table below:

Pillars	Relevance to the attainment of a Just Transition
<p>1. Local Knowledge</p> <p>Grassroots movements involve individuals directly affected by an issue, bringing invaluable first-hand experience and insights that are essential for developing effective solutions.</p>	<p>Grassroots movements, which are typically driven by individuals directly impacted by issues such as energy poverty, environmental degradation, or job displacement in carbon-intensive industries, bring invaluable first-hand insights into the challenges and opportunities specific to local contexts. These insights are crucial for developing solutions that are not only technically sound but also socially equitable and culturally appropriate.</p>
<p>2. Empowerment</p> <p>Participation in grassroots movements fosters a sense of agency, enabling people to influence decisions that directly impact their lives.</p>	<p>Empowerment is key to a just transition, as it allows marginalized communities to shape decisions that impact their lives. By participating in grassroots movements, individuals gain a sense of ownership and can advocate for policies that meet their needs. This fosters social cohesion, ensures transition strategies are inclusive, and promotes accountability, helping to ensure the benefits of the energy transition are shared equitably and no one is left behind.</p>
<p>3. Inclusion</p> <p>Grassroots movements ensure the voices of those often marginalised or unheard are considered and valued.</p>	<p>Inclusion is essential for a just transition, as it ensures that the voices of marginalized and vulnerable communities are heard and valued in decision-making processes. Grassroots movements provide a platform for these groups—who are often overlooked in top-down policies—to directly influence the design and implementation of energy transition strategies.</p>
<p>4. Innovation</p> <p>Grassroots initiatives often generate local solutions that address issues in innovative ways, which might not be conceived through a top-down approach.</p>	<p>Innovation is a key pillar for a just transition, as grassroots initiatives often develop creative, context-specific solutions that address local challenges in ways that top-down approaches may overlook. By empowering communities to design their own solutions, grassroots movements foster innovation tailored to the unique needs of local populations—whether through renewable energy technologies, community-driven energy management, or sustainable livelihoods. These innovations can lead to more effective, adaptable, and sustainable outcomes, driving the transition in ways that are both practical and grounded in real-world experiences.</p>
<p>5. Accountability</p> <p>Grassroots movements hold those in power accountable, ensuring they act in the best interests of the community.</p>	<p>Accountability is vital for a just transition, as grassroots movements help ensure that those in power are held responsible for their actions and policies. By actively engaging in the decision-making process, local communities can demand transparency and advocate for policies that prioritize their needs and well-being. Grassroots initiatives act as a check on governmental and corporate power, ensuring that the benefits of the energy transition are equitably distributed and that no group is left behind, fostering trust and integrity in the transition process.</p>



Assessing African Countries' NDC Priorities and Implementation Gaps in Relation to Renewable Energy Access

To identify research uptake opportunities for emerging OJTA research, the African Research and Impact Network (ARIN) hosted a virtual learning and exchange forum on June 28, 2024, entitled 'Operationalising a Just Transition in Africa: Assessing African Countries' NDC Priorities and Renewable Energy Access Implementation Gaps'. This forum focused on evaluating the priorities, progress, and implementation gaps of African countries' Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) concerning renewable energy access.

The event provided a platform for the exchange of ideas, sharing of case studies, and provision of insights to guide future NDCs and energy transition policies across the continent, as well as the sharing of comprehensive perspectives on the integration of evidence in just energy transition policies on renewable energy access, and the financing thereof, with a particular focus on the Kenyan context. In addition, it provided a platform for the presentation of a series of blogs centred on Just Transitions in Africa by a diverse set of Early career researchers. To read more on these submissions, insights and perspectives, access the link [here](#).

Some of the emerging insights from the Forum in relation to capacity gaps included the following:

Technical and Technological Gaps

- **Renewable Energy Technologies:** Kenya has made strides in solar energy, but there is a need for more advanced technologies such as high-efficiency solar panels and off-grid solar solutions. For instance, while Kenya has many solar home systems, expanding to more sophisticated solar solutions like solar water pumping systems for agriculture remains a gap.
- **Grid Infrastructure:** The integration of renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar, can be challenging due to Kenya's current grid infrastructure. For example, Kenya's national grid, operated by Kenya Power, still struggles to accommodate the fluctuating supply from large-scale solar and wind farms without significant upgrades.

Energy Efficiency Technologies:

Many Kenyan industries and households use outdated and inefficient energy systems. For example, traditional cooking methods like using charcoal stoves are highly inefficient and contribute to deforestation and health problems. Transitioning to cleaner cookstoves or efficient electric cooking methods is needed but requires overcoming technology adoption barriers.



Infrastructure and System Integration Gaps

Transmission and Distribution Networks: Kenya's transmission network, operated by the Kenya Electricity Transmission Company (KETRACO), is not fully equipped to handle the increased load from new renewable energy sources. For instance, connecting remote wind farms in areas like the Lake Turkana Wind Power project to the national grid has been challenging due to inadequate transmission infrastructure.

Energy Storage: Energy storage solutions, such as batteries, are crucial for stabilizing the supply from intermittent renewable sources. Currently, Kenya has limited large-scale energy storage facilities. The absence of these systems means that excess energy produced during peak solar hours may be wasted, rather than stored for use during times of low production.

Financial and Economic Challenges Gaps

Funding and Investment: Many renewable energy projects face financial hurdles due to high initial costs. For instance, while projects like the Menengai Geothermal Power Station have significant potential, the upfront capital required has been a barrier. Innovative financing mechanisms or partnerships are needed to bridge these financial gaps.

Cost of Transition: The transition to renewable energy often involves substantial financial investment which the country has no capacity to accommodate.

Data and Research Needs Gaps

Research and Development: Local R&D capabilities need strengthening. For instance, while Kenya has made progress in geothermal energy, further research is needed to enhance geothermal drilling techniques and resource management to increase efficiency and reduce costs.

Policy and Regulatory Framework Gaps

Regulatory Barriers: Existing policies do not fully support the rapid deployment of new technologies. For instance, while Kenya has a feed-in tariff system to encourage renewable energy, bureaucratic delays and unclear regulations have slowed down project approvals and implementation.

Policy Alignment: Ensuring that national policies align with local needs is crucial. For example, while Kenya's National Climate Change Action Plan sets ambitious renewable energy targets, county governments still face challenges in aligning their energy policies with these national goals due to resource constraints or lack of technical expertise.



Human Capital and Skills Development Gaps

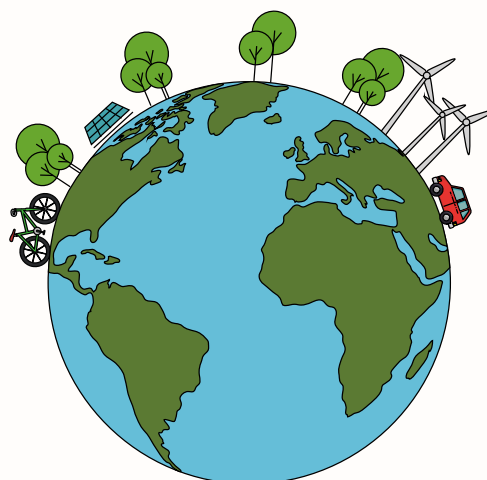
Training and Education: There is a need for more training programs focused on renewable energy technologies. For instance, specialized training for technicians on the installation and maintenance of wind turbines or solar PV systems is limited. Initiatives like the Kenya Industrial Training Institute's energy-related courses can be expanded to meet this demand.

Skill Gaps: Skilled personnel are highly needed for emerging technologies. For example, the transition to electric vehicles requires new skills in vehicle maintenance and charging infrastructure management, areas where there is currently a shortage of trained professionals in Kenya.

Social and Community Impacts Gaps

Job Displacement: The shift away from fossil fuels can impact workers in traditional energy sectors. For example, those employed in coal-fired power plants or in the charcoal production industry may face job losses. Comprehensive workforce transition plans, including retraining and job creation in renewable energy sectors, are necessary but remain significantly inadequate.

Community Engagement: Effective community engagement is crucial. For instance, projects like the Lake Turkana Wind Power project have faced local resistance due to inadequate community consultation and benefits sharing. Ensuring that local communities benefit from such projects is vital for their success and acceptance. However, efforts to ensure that such social license is bought are still inadequate.



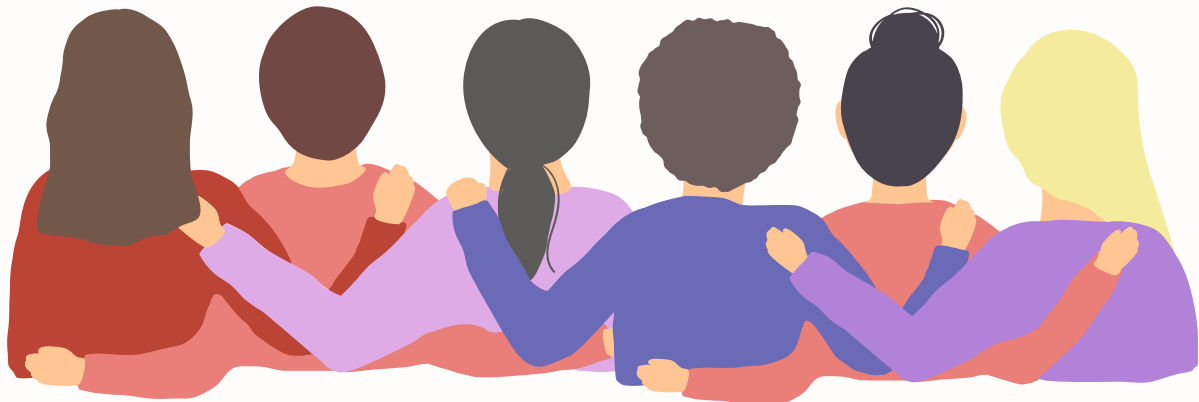
Institutional and Organizational Capacity Gaps

Institutional Coordination: Effective coordination among various stakeholders is essential but remains weak in Kenya. For example, ensuring that government agencies, utility companies, and private sector players work together efficiently on large-scale projects like the Kenya National Electrification Strategy requires improved institutional frameworks and communication.

Project Management: Expertise in managing large-scale energy projects requires improvement. For instance, complex projects like the Lamu Coal Power Plant have faced delays and cost overruns, highlighting the need for better project management practices and capabilities.



Like many other African countries, addressing the capacity gaps in Kenya's just energy transition is critical for unlocking the necessary progress toward a sustainable, inclusive, and equitable energy future. As Africa strives to meet its growing energy demands while transitioning to low-carbon, resilient systems, overcoming these challenges will be central to ensuring that no one is left behind.



No Just Transition Without Gender Justice

The OJTA team represented by Phatsimo Rahman and Priyanka Ukabhai attended a virtual Round Table Dialogue addressing gender and just transitions. This roundtable, aimed at raising awareness for a gender-equal and inclusive transition in the eMalahleni Local Municipality, unveiled significant deficiencies in gender inclusion within the just transition framework.

Discussions also emphasised the inadequate representation of women in leadership positions, academia, and political parties, as well as the information and skills deficits that prevent women and marginalised communities from engaging in the green economy. The event highlighted the imperative for holistic and inclusive approaches that respond to both immediate and long-term needs, with a strong focus on integrating the informal sector and empowering the women's movement to facilitate systemic changes.

In recognition of these issues and the important role that gender has in the attainment of a truly just energy transition, the OJTA programme has included gender as a central theme in unpacking and understanding the justice elements of the transition through an exploration of the contextual and conceptual foundations of "justice" in a just transition, highlighting that a just transition must include gender-justice.

Climate change alone disproportionately impacts women in Africa across key areas such as agriculture, food security, health, water and energy. As such, response action to climate change, including the transition towards a low-emissions economy cannot be gender-blind and must include a foundational understanding of the multifaceted gender injustices exacerbated by climate change.

Drawing from emerging literature the team has dedicated a chapter of OJTA's upcoming publication to an examination of the relationship between just transitions and gender in Africa. Through these efforts, the OJTA seeks to contribute to the literature on gender and just transition, including how the consideration of gender is integrated into the setting of NDC targets and the NDC update process, as well as how financial institutions are incorporating gender lens in the approval of and investment in just transition finance and projects.

7th Neuchâtel Graduate Conference of Migration and Mobility Studies; University of Neuchâtel, 11 – 12 July 2024, Switzerland

Dr. Tamuka Chekero, a postdoctoral researcher with the Operationalising Just Transition in Africa (OJTA) project, participated in the Neuchâtel Graduate Conference on Migration and Mobility Studies, held from July 11 to 12, 2024, at the University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland. Organized by the Swiss National Center of Competence in Research (NCCR) as part of the NCCR – on the move initiative, this esteemed international forum fosters the exchange of ideas, networking, and collaborative research among PhD and postdoctoral researchers from various institutions.

The 7th edition of the Neuchâtel Graduate Conference, themed "Navigating Turbulences: Interdisciplinary Inquiries into the Transformations of Migration and Mobility in the 21st Century," provided an important platform for scholarly engagement through both formal presentations and informal discussions. Dr. Chekero presented his research, titled "Navigating Passports and Borders: The Complex Realities of Zimbabwean Migrants in South Africa," which critically examines the profound impacts of passport-related issues on the daily lives and well-being of Zimbabwean migrants.

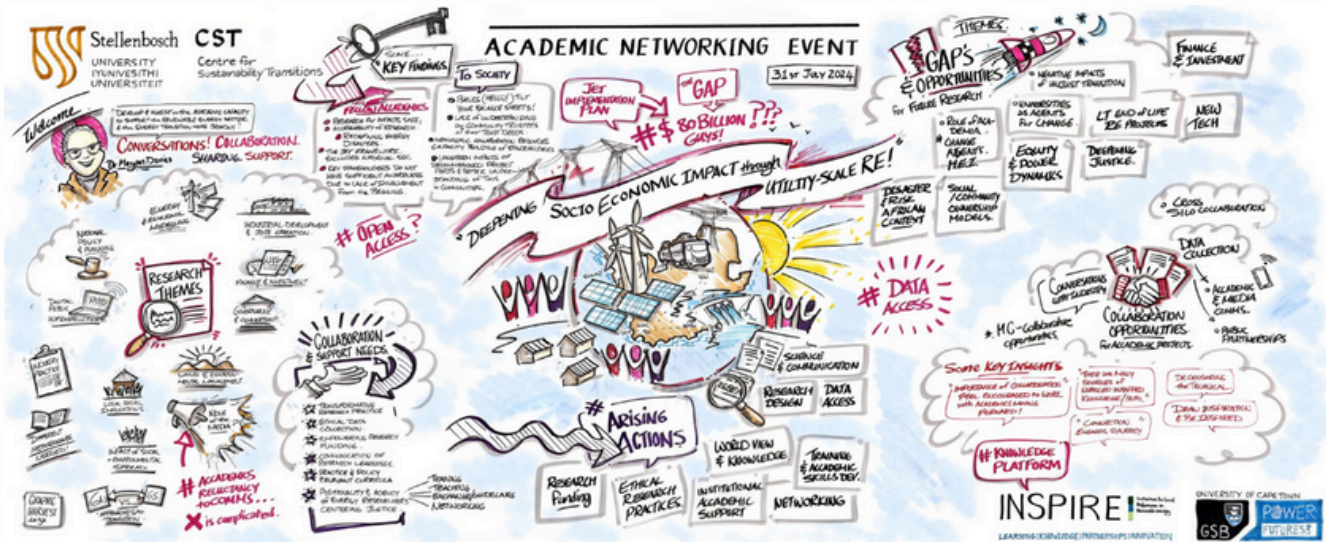
Dr. Chekero's presentation sparked discussions on how issues related to Just Transition, climate change, and energy policies may exacerbate these challenges. These challenges are directly linked to the principles of a just transition, particularly in the context of how climate change and energy transitions can exacerbate migration pressures. As regions dependent on fossil fuel industries undergo shifts to renewable energy, workers may face economic displacement, potentially driving migration in search of new opportunities.



This could lead to increased vulnerabilities for migrants if a just transition is not inclusively designed.

Dr. Chekero also presented for the OJTA programme during a Seminar, titled "Localising Justice in Africa's Just Transition", hosted at the Center for Advancements of Scholarships (CAS) of the University of Pretoria. His presentation "Nothing for the Community without the Community: A Bottom-Up Approach to Justice in the Just Transition", addressed the importance of localised ideas of justice in shaping Africa's Just Transition. By offering a nuanced exploration of terms like 'bottom-up' and 'consulting,' he argued that for just transition initiatives to succeed, it is essential to centre the lived experiences, cultural values, and sociopolitical realities of local communities in both the debates and solutions surrounding the transition. He further highlighted Interdisciplinary methodologies should be adopted to address the question of justice and equity in Africa's just transition, as well as the importance of a bottom-up approach in thinking about what justice means for local communities impacted by the transition. This research will form part of an upcoming flagship publication of the OJTA Programme.

The Socio-Economic Dynamics of Utility-Scale Renewable Energy in South Africa’s Just Energy Transition: An Academic Networking Event



● Grant Johnson from *Graphic Harvest* captured the Academic Networking Event in visual form. Courtesy of *INSPIRE*, the Centre for Sustainability Transitions and *POWER FUTURES LAB*.

The OJTA Team (Phatsimo Rahman and Priyanka Ukabhai) participated in the third and largest Academic Networking Event of the year, conducted in collaboration with the Centre for Sustainability Transitions and POWER FUTURES LAB. This event, which concentrated on the socio-economic dynamics of utility-scale renewable energy within South Africa’s just energy transition, convened practitioners, academics, students, and researchers from across the country, including representatives from eight South African universities. The event sought to explore the social, governance, and developmental impacts of utility-scale renewable energy in South Africa, with the aim of enhancing academic capacity to support the renewable energy sector and contribute to South Africa’s just energy transition.

Following up on the key takeaways from the event that resonated with the OJTA Programme, the OJTA programme is particularly focused on two areas that are critical to advancing Africa’s Just Energy Transitions: enhancing access to data, and interrogating the role of finance and investment linked to the JET-IP, with a focus

on the agency of financial actors and intermediaries in driving broader outcomes. Additionally, embedding policy and practice more strongly into curricula is crucial to ensuring that graduates are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute effectively to South Africa’s Just Energy Transition. For example, one of the key issues that emerged is the need to align undergraduate and postgraduate teaching, learning, and assessment practices at higher education institutions with the evolving needs of both industry and society. These priorities are closely aligned with the OJTA programme’s commitment to understanding and addressing the unique challenges and opportunities within the African context.

The OJTA programme recognises the need for enhancing capacities required to operationalise the transition, particularly amongst government representatives and financial institutions. As a result, the program has developed a set of training modules aimed at enhancing the understanding and integration of just transitions, which can be adopted as part of a university level curriculum within African universities.



Insights from the COP Resilience Hub Virtual Summit “Navigating Just Transitions: Building Resilience and Equity in Africa”

As the world grapples with the impacts of climate change, the concept of a Just Transition—as introduced in the Paris Agreement—takes on heightened significance. This concept advocates for safeguarding jobs and socio-economic rights as economies shift from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources. However, Africa faces a critical challenge: there exists a significant evidence gap in operationalizing the just transition agenda through effective policy and action.

Understanding Just Transitions

Just transitions pathways aim to address the vulnerabilities of marginalized groups while enhancing access to investment flows linked to low-emissions and climate-resilient infrastructure development. For Africa, this means not only reducing risks but also unlocking financial opportunities that can propel the continent towards sustainable development. In regions where climate change poses immediate threats—intensifying weather events and rising sea levels—effective strategies for resilience and adaptation are imperative. These challenges not only disrupt lives but also jeopardize developmental goals that are crucial for progress.

Amplifying Local Voices

A critical aspect of advancing just transitions is to amplify the voices and stories of local communities, particularly those most affected by climate change. For instance, the story of Constance Okollet from rural Uganda illustrates the urgent need to center the experiences and priorities of marginalized groups. By highlighting individual narratives, we can better understand the real-world impacts of climate change and the specific adaptations needed at the community level.

Implementing Locally-Led Adaptation Approaches

Kenya’s County Climate Change Fund mechanism serves as an exemplary model of locally-led adaptation approaches.

This mechanism devolves climate finance to the subnational level, ensuring community involvement in decision-making and building local capacity. By empowering communities to take ownership of their climate strategies, we can enhance resilience and ensure that local needs and conditions are prioritized.

The locally-led adaptation approach in Kenya is closely aligned with the principles of a just transition, which seeks to ensure that the transition to a sustainable economy is equitable and inclusive. Here are key areas of relevance:

- **Empowerment of Local Communities:** The approach enables communities to become architects of change in their own lives, reducing dependence on external entities and fostering local leadership.
- **Equity and Inclusion:** By ensuring the representation of diverse stakeholders, the initiative addresses historical injustices and promotes equity in climate action, vital for a just transition.
- **Sustainable Development:** The focus on locally-led solutions aligns economic development with environmental sustainability, ensuring that adaptation strategies contribute to broader socio-economic goals.
- **Resilience Building:** Empowering communities to design and implement their own adaptation strategies enhances their resilience to climate impacts, facilitating a transition that protects vulnerable populations.

Kenya's locally-led adaptation approach serves as a compelling example of how devolving climate finance can empower communities to take charge of their own futures. This strategy not only enhances local resilience but also embodies the principles of a just transition by promoting equity, inclusion, and sustainable development. As climate challenges continue to evolve, such models will be essential in guiding communities toward adaptive and sustainable futures.

Advocating for a Rights-Based Approach

"It is essential to advocate for a rights-based approach to climate finance and investment plans"(Basani Baloyi, Insitute for Economic Justice) , as outlined in the Institute for Economic Justice's toolkit. This framework aims to ensure that climate actions uphold fundamental human rights, promoting equity and justice in the transition process. By embedding human rights principles into climate finance, we can mitigate the risks of exacerbating existing inequalities.

Facilitating Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration

Addressing the magnitude of climate change impacts requires multi-stakeholder collaboration. Involving the private sector, civil society, and international players is crucial for effective local-level responses. Collaborative efforts can drive innovative solutions and mobilize the necessary resources to support communities in adapting to climate change. Engaging civil society is vital to ensure that the principles of just transitions are realized. Their involvement guarantees that diverse perspectives are included in the conversation, and it can drive collective action toward climate justice. A call for civil society action underscores the necessity of their participation in shaping and implementing climate strategies.



Moving from Frameworks to Implementation

While discussing just transitions, it's important to develop tools, frameworks, and approaches that operationalize these concepts in practical terms. The discussion emphasized the need to move beyond mere framing and towards the implementation of specific mechanisms that embody just transition principles. This includes creating actionable strategies that communities can utilize in their climate adaptation efforts.

Ensuring New and Additional Climate Financing

A key point raised during discussions was the necessity of ensuring that climate financing is new and additional, rather than diverting funds from existing developmental needs. Participants highlighted the importance of well-costed climate finance that aligns with the requirements of just transitions. This approach ensures that climate action supports both resilience and ongoing development goals.

Establishing Partnerships for Sustainable Growth

Finally, establishing partnerships, project development, and pipeline creation for new green industries and value chains are crucial for driving the transition to sustainable economic activities. These partnerships can foster innovation, create jobs, and support communities in moving towards a low-emission future.

Case Study: IDC's Commitment to Just Transition and Sustainable Development

The Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) plays a pivotal role in South Africa's economic transformation and just transition by managing a range of dedicated funds and fostering partnerships aimed at developing sustainable industries. This case study explores IDC's innovative approaches, including its social funds, sustainable industrial pathways, development scorecard, and collaborative project development initiatives.

IDC oversees a significant number of social and solidarity funds specifically designed to support the transformation of the economy, particularly within marginalized communities. These funds focus on enhancing the township economy, empowering women, and creating opportunities for youth. By developing new industries and skills within these communities, IDC aims to stimulate local economies and promote inclusivity in the broader economic landscape.

At COP28, IDC launched its "Sustainable Industrial Pathways," which outlines four strategic pathways for guiding its work. These pathways emphasize catalyzing low-carbon growth, promoting diversification and job-rich industrialization, ensuring economic resilience, and developing regional value chains. This comprehensive framework enables IDC to operationalize just transition principles, ensuring that economic growth aligns with sustainability and social equity.

To effectively prioritize investments that support the just transition, IDC employs a development scorecard. This tool defines specific indicators and matrices that focus on critical areas such as renewable energy, energy efficiency, reskilling initiatives, and local supply development. By using this scorecard, IDC can translate just transition principles into actionable investment decisions, ensuring that funds are directed towards projects that foster both environmental sustainability and social progress.

Additionally, IDC has established a dedicated project development team that formulates partnerships and creates a pipeline of new green industries and value chains. Notable examples include initiatives in green hydrogen and new energy vehicles. This proactive approach demonstrates IDC's commitment to shaping and supporting the emergence of sustainable industries, thereby contributing to a just transition.

Through its dedicated funds, sustainable industrial pathways, development scorecard, and collaborative project initiatives, the IDC exemplifies how targeted strategies can drive economic transformation while promoting equity and sustainability. By focusing on marginalized communities and emerging industries, IDC not only supports the just transition but also lays the groundwork for a resilient and inclusive economy. This case study highlights the importance of integrating social, environmental, and economic considerations in the quest for sustainable development.

Embracing AI in Facilitating a Just Transition

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is increasingly becoming a powerful tool in driving progress towards a just transition, with the potential to support Africa's shift to a sustainable future in practical and impactful ways.

The COP29 Presidency hosted the inaugural Digitalisation Day, where various stakeholders endorsed the COP29 Declaration on Green Digital Action. This declaration advocates for the use of digital tools to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, enhance climate resilience, and promote sustainable development. It also emphasizes the acceleration of climate-positive digitalization, improving energy efficiency, and expanding inclusive digital access, particularly in developing countries. The implications of this for the integration of digital technologies in Africa, where infrastructure and data challenges persist, let alone for the integration of AI in accelerating progress on climate action and goals, are important points of discussion and warrant further exploration.

In a recent blog post, Tamuka Chekero and Noeleen Murray explore the many ways AI can contribute to the continent's energy transformation. From advancing energy access and efficiency to enhancing financing options for renewable technologies, AI also plays a crucial role in informing policy, setting emissions targets, and conducting scenario analysis. Their insights highlight how AI could potentially help chart a more efficient, inclusive, and data-driven path to achieving Africa's climate and energy goals. This opinion piece can be accessed [here](#) and is also the prelude to another forthcoming OJTA output.



LOOKING TO 2025 - What is on the horizon for OJTA

As we wrap up this edition, we want to highlight how the recent events have been instrumental in deepening our understanding of the just transition landscape in Africa. We've noted recurring themes in our discussions and research, particularly the critical importance of local contextualization and individual experiences, and how these elements uniquely influence the justice aspect of energy transitions on the continent.

We're excited to continue building on these insights and shaping our next steps. Stay tuned for more updates and developments as we move forward. We look forward to sharing our progress with you in the coming months!