Just Transition in Different Contexts and Its Potential to Transform Economies
Managing a Just Transition to Environmentally Sustainable Economies and Societies for All

Webinar for Module 1
Global Context and Agenda

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Evolution of the Concept

Term originally used by workers unions and frontline communities; has now been taken up by mainstream actors (see *Mapping Just Transition(s) to a Low-Carbon World*)

First labour environmentalists: Safer working conditions and better environmental standards

Globalization of just transition by national unions, ITUC, Sustainlabour, etc. for advocacy during climate change negotiations

Inclusion of just transition in the Paris Agreement, ILO’s just transition agenda, European Green Deal just transition mechanism. Does just transition still have its transformative meaning?

How can just transition be used to advocate for social and ecological transformation?
France’s Yellow Vests Movement (Mouvement des gilets jaunes) was driven by:
- rising fuel prices
- claims that the burden of government tax reforms were falling on working and middle classes, particularly in rural and peri-urban areas

Demonstrators called for (among others):
- minimum wage increase
- lower fuel taxes
- re-establishment of the solidarity tax on wealth
- implementation of a referendum for citizen initiatives

Majority of polled respondents (68%) supported the protests

Protestors wanted to (among others):
- fight climate change
- oppose compelling the working class and the poor to pay for pollution caused by large multinational companies
In Germany, eco taxes first implemented through pilot projects. Popular participation and initiatives such as selling home-produced renewable energy to the grid led to:

- increased use of renewable energy
- reduced emission of greenhouse gases
- job creation

Even among climate change sceptics, the *Energiewende* (energy transition) is generally undisputed, with an approval rating of 88%

73% of population wants the state to ensure that:

- poorer families have adequate access to energy services
- tenants do not face increased rents due to upgrades to the energy efficiency of buildings
- big polluters pay higher taxes
Differing Levels of Ambition

Status Quo
Narrowly defined compensation of affected workers

Managerial Reform
Enhancing workers’ rights, social protection, distribution of benefits and costs

Structural Reform
Addressing inclusive/equitable decision making, procedural justice

Transformation
Fundamental overhaul of existing economic and political system for eco-social justice
New Vision

Transformation

Scope is Exclusive

Managerial Reform

Structural Reform

Status Quo

Scope is Inclusive

No Harm Done

Community-driven, progressive call for development alternatives
Jackson, US

Public-policy-driven reform for distributive justice
Just Transition mechanism of the European Green Deal

Compensation for fossil fuel workers
South Africa, green bonds
Need for Integrated Approaches and Policy Coherence

• Avoid compartmentalization of goals
  o consider them an integral part of a single development agenda
  o Such an approach significantly increases policy coherence among different sectoral interventions, the ability to mobilize and allocate the right resources at the right time and make significant progress in meeting the SDGs

• Institutional contextual analysis
  o to clearly identify vertical and horizontal policy and budget coherence gaps and trickle-down barriers
  o articulate actions to inform project design when aiming to generate change through the inclusion of poverty-environment objectives in policies and budgets

• Social dialogue
  o structures and processes have potential to resolve important economic and social issues
  o encourage good governance
  o advance social and industrial peace and stability
  o boost economic progress
Just Transition Research Collaborative

Qualitative mapping of Just Transition, its history and different approaches:


Examples from developed and developing countries, potential of local just transition(s) to influence higher level policy change:


Online Forum: [medium.com/just-transitions](http://medium.com/just-transitions)
Further Resources

- Just Transition Research Collaborative (Phase I): Mapping Just Transition(s) to a Low-Carbon World
- Just Transition Research Collaborative (Phase II): Cities in Transition—Urban Struggles for Just Transition(s)
- UNRISD at Science-Policy Dialogue on Just Transitions to a Low-Carbon World at UN Climate Conference
- (Re)claiming Just Transition
- Cities in Transition: Local Struggles for a Just Transition and Their Potential to Advance Climate Justice
- Just Transitions as a Process with Communities, not for Communities

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