



► **Just transition: An essential pathway to achieving gender equality and social justice**

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I. Background

A. Context

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)'s *Sixth Assessment Report – Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability*, demonstrated that the impacts of climate change are already being felt throughout the world and will have more severe effects than previously believed, with the most vulnerable hit hardest.¹ A warming planet has disruptive impacts in the world of work. According to 2018 ILO estimates, 1.2 billion jobs, or 40 per cent of the global labour force, are dependent on ecosystem services²³ and are thus at serious risk due to environmental degradation⁴. Women are expected to be severely affected due to their high representation in sectors that are particularly susceptible to climate change impacts, such as agriculture.⁵ Policies to respond to climate change and build the global transition towards a low-carbon and sustainable economy will also have significant implications for the world of work, leading both to the elimination and transformation of some jobs, and the creation of new jobs.⁶ However, unless gender-transformative measures are in place, women will not benefit as much as they could from the created jobs, and gender inequalities at work are likely to persist.⁷ There are also risks that given the disproportionate impacts of climate change, gender inequalities in some instances will be exacerbated. The world of work is critical to both minimizing risks and ensuring that the transition to a low-carbon economy empowers women and is supported by their contributions.

Recognizing the strong gender dimension of environmental challenges and the need for specific gender policies to promote equitable outcomes for all in the transition to a low-carbon and sustainable economy, the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) [*Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all*](#) provide an essential pathway for ensuring gender equality and inclusiveness in a world of work disrupted by climate change impacts and by climate mitigation actions that do not incorporate pathways for decent work outcomes. They provide both a policy framework and a practical tool to assist countries in managing the transition to a low-carbon economy in a gender-transformative manner. They also offer a framework to harness women's leadership and power as agents of change in formulating, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating climate action.

¹ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2022.

² Including jobs in "farming, fishing and forestry, and all those that rely on natural processes, such as air and water purification, soil renewal and fertilization, pollination, pest control, the moderation of extreme temperatures, and the protection provided by natural infrastructure (e.g. forests) against storms, floods and strong winds" (ILO 2018, p.8).

³ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2018a.

⁴ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2018b.

⁵ United Nations 2021c.

⁶ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2020c.

⁷ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2019b.

B. Mandate

At its twenty-sixth session which took place in Glasgow in 2021, the Conference of the Parties (COP) adopted the Decision on Gender and Climate, recommended by the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI).⁸ The decision invited “the International Labour Organization to prepare a technical paper exploring linkages between gender-responsive climate action and just transition for promoting inclusive opportunities for all in a low-emission economy”.⁹

C. Objective, scope, approach, and key messages

The main objective of the technical paper is to assist Parties, Non-Party stakeholders and Subsidiary Bodies under the UNFCCC in clarifying how a just transition is fundamental to making climate action in the world of work gender-responsive. It highlights the gendered dimension of the threats faced in the world of work due to the impacts of climate change as well as from climate policies that do not take into consideration the priority of decent work, which is defined as “productive work [for women and men] in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity”.¹⁰ In order to address such threats and leverage the contributions of key agents of change in climate action, the paper identifies avenues through a just transition for promoting inclusive opportunities for all in a low-carbon economy, including women and men experiencing intersectional forms of discrimination. The paper further articulates possible approaches to integrate just transition policies, and their gender-transformative dimension, into national climate mitigation and adaptation efforts. It also identifies best practices, country examples and lessons learned in this regard.

In order to achieve these objectives, this paper draws upon information, knowledge, lessons learned, analysis and research from various sources, including international and regional organizations, scholars, research institutes, and civil society organizations. Data stemming from desk research was complemented by nine key informant interviews with government officials; workers, and employers’ representatives; representatives of multilateral organizations; an indigenous youth leader; as well as partners implementing an ILO project. The interviews were conducted in March 2022 (for more details, please refer to *Annex I – List of Interviews*). The ILO, having adopted the Just Transition Guidelines¹¹ and building upon its previous work on gender and a just transition¹², prepared this technical paper with inputs from the above-mentioned sources.

The paper is structured into five chapters. Following this initial background chapter, Chapter II presents the international policy framework for a just transition for all. Chapter III explores how climate

⁸ UNFCCC. Secretariat n.d.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ International Labour Organization (ILO) 1999.

¹¹ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2015b.

¹² International Labour Organization (ILO) 2017.

change and non-inclusive climate action exacerbate existing gender inequalities in the world of work, and highlights women's central role as agents of change in building a just transition to promote inclusive opportunities for all in a low-carbon economy. Chapter IV explores avenues of how a just transition can leverage women's representation and empowerment and address gender inequality while also strengthening climate action. Chapter V presents concluding remarks and recommendations for stakeholders on how to boldly advance a just transition to ensure transformative, positive outcomes for gender equality in the emerging green and blue economy and the potential linkages with the activities contained in the Gender Action Plan adopted by the UNFCCC's Conference of Parties (COP). Several key messages emerge from these chapters, as noted below.

Key Messages

1. A just transition involves maximizing the social and economic opportunities of climate action while minimizing and carefully managing any challenges related to the impacts on the world of work, including gendered impacts, in an effort to facilitate decent work outcomes, ensuring social dialogue and respect for international labour standards in the process. There is a significant risk that without a just transition, countries will not achieve a low-carbon, environmentally sustainable economy with decent work and social justice that is essential to the wellbeing of current and future generations. Moreover, such inaction could have severe implications for realizing inclusive and gender-transformative climate action, while leading to increased inequality, reduced productivity, less competitive businesses, and social unrest.
2. The [*ILO tripartite Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all*](#) (or 'the Just Transition Guidelines') are both a policy framework and a practical tool to assist countries at all levels of development in managing the transition to low-carbon economies with inclusive decent work opportunities and the advancement of social justice. The Guidelines indicate that just transition policies and programmes need to take into account the strong gender dimension of many environmental challenges and opportunities and that specific gender policies should be considered in order to promote equitable outcomes. This would not only minimize social, economic, and environmental risks and support greater inclusion but also strengthen climate mitigation and adaptation efforts through the empowerment of women as key agents of change. Thus, just transition and the promotion of gender-equality are intrinsically linked and mutually reinforcing. **Just transition is an essential pathway to ensure gender equality and inclusiveness in the world of work.**
3. There is growing scientific consensus that climate change has gendered effects and exacerbates pre-existing gender-inequalities in the world of work. Similarly, climate policy responses themselves can have unintended negative gender-based impacts. ILO research indicates that, if just transition policies are not in place, occupational gender stereotypes are likely to persist even in the emerging green economy, preventing women from benefitting from the new jobs created. In addition, climate change further exacerbates existing care burdens, worsens women's access to occupational health and safety, and has a further negative impact on girls' access to education.

4. Just transition policies must be based on sound statistical information grounded in international statistical standards. Data gaps by sex, and other personal characteristics such as disability and ethnicity, should be addressed, and data analysis of green job outcomes considering gender impacts should be carried out to ensure that climate action offers inclusive opportunities and support to women and men workers and enterprises in the green and blue economy.
5. The negative impacts of climate change on women's employment and occupation can best be understood when the intersectionality of gender with other characteristics is made visible, considering for example, when gender intersects with characteristics such as race, ethnicity, indigenous identity, age, disability, migration and socio-economic status. This is particularly true in the most affected areas and sectors. Hence, it is necessary to supplement climate policies with targeted measures to support women who face compounded inequalities and discrimination due to their personal characteristics, so as to ensure that climate action leaves no one behind and achieves a just transition for all.
6. Women's full and equitable participation needs to be ensured in all steps of the formulation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of just transition policies and programmes. Particularly at a national level, incorporating gender policy scenarios in national just transition plans will be critical.
7. While all nine policy areas outlined in the Just Transition Guidelines are essential and mutually reinforcing for achieving decent work outcomes that include gender equality, skills, enterprise development, care, rights, and social protection policies and approaches are particularly relevant thematic areas of just transition to support gender equality in the world of work. Skills development policies will be key to address existing occupational segregation and ensure that women and girls fully benefit from emerging employment opportunities in a green economy. Care and social protection policies play a central role not only in ensuring women's safety and well-being, but also in providing adequate conditions for women's engagement in the labour market and transforming gender norms. Enterprise development policies and rights at work policies provide key pathways within the just transition framework for facilitating an optimal business environment and ensuring decent work and quality jobs, which encompass safe, healthy working conditions that offer equal opportunity and treatment.
8. National gender-responsive climate action has been gaining momentum. However, the recognition of the gender dimension in green job opportunities and the inclusion of gender-specific policies within just transition plans and strategies has yet to be realized on a wide scale. Clear commitments and language highlighting the gender-transformative nature of just transition plans, policies, and programmes need to be introduced in a more systematic way in Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), initiatives and pledges for Net Zero.
9. Climate finance should support countries in carrying out just transition planning and implementation, leveraging gender equality and women's representation and empowerment, and promoting decent work for all women and men in the green and blue economy.

D. Follow up actions by Subsidiary Bodies

The Subsidiary Bodies may wish to consider the information contained in this technical paper for:

- a) Providing guidance to Parties so that the transition of the national workforce and enterprises as a result of climate change adaptation and the implementation of climate change mitigation policies, is driven by a just transition, viewed as an essential gender-transformative approach.
- b) Providing guidance for the incorporation of a just transition approach into activities undertaken in the implementation of the Gender Action Plan adopted by the UNFCCC's COP, to advance understanding of the linkages between just transition and gender-transformative climate action and its coherent mainstreaming in the implementation of the UNFCCC and the work of Parties, the secretariat, United Nations entities and stakeholders at all levels.
- c) Providing guidance to the secretariat on preparing additional technical materials and/or conducting training sessions with the purpose of assisting Parties in identifying the linkages between gender-transformative climate action and a just transition.

II. The international policy framework for a just transition for all

A. *International instruments, declarations and decisions concerning just transition*

Climate change actions, responses and impacts have an intrinsic relationship with equitable access to sustainable development and the eradication of poverty.¹³ Responses to climate change should thus be designed in an integrated manner with social and economic development policies, as established in Article 3¹⁴ of the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).¹⁵ The 2015 Paris Agreement specifically notes that “a just transition of the workforce and creation of decent work and quality jobs in accordance with nationally defined development priorities”¹⁶ is imperative. At the same time, the Paris Agreement acknowledges that when taking action to tackle climate change, Parties should respect, promote, and consider their respective obligations on human rights, including gender equality and the empowerment of women, as well as the rights of children, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities and all persons in vulnerable situations.¹⁷ The Paris Agreement places the consideration of both gender equality and the empowerment of women fully in the frame of all climate action, including action to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs), adapt to impending climate change impacts, or address resulting loss and damage. In particular, article 7 establishes that adaptation action should follow a country-driven, gender-responsive, participatory, and fully transparent approach.¹⁸

As an outcome of negotiations between governments, employers’ and workers’ organisations, in 2015 the ILO adopted the [*Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all*](#) (hereafter, the ‘Just Transition Guidelines’). This document provides guidance on how to formulate, implement and monitor the policy framework for a just transition in accordance with national circumstances and priorities.¹⁹ The Just Transition Guidelines are at once a policy framework and a practical tool to assist governments and social partners in countries at all levels of development in managing the transition to low-carbon economies with inclusive decent work opportunities and the advancement of social justice, ensuring mechanisms for social dialogue among governments, workers’ and employers’ organizations throughout policy making processes while respecting ILO Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. The Just Transition Guidelines are important for mitigation and adaptation, for all economic sectors – including but not limited to mining and energy sectors – and in urban and rural areas alike. They can also help countries devise and implement their

¹³ UNFCCC 2015a.

¹⁴ UNFCCC, Article 3, paragraph 2.

¹⁵ United Nations 1992.

¹⁶ UNFCCC 2015a.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ United Nations 1992.

National Adaptation Plans (NAP) and thus achieve their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Just Transition Guidelines support the transition of economies, enterprises, jobs, and workers towards greener, more resilient, climate-neutral and gender-equal economies and societies. A just transition means greening the economy in a way that is fair and inclusive of everyone concerned, creating decent work opportunities, and leaving no one behind. Just transition and the promotion of gender equality are intrinsically linked and mutually reinforcing. In other words, climate action in the world of work is gender-transformative when it ensures a just transition for all, including women and men experiencing intersectional forms of discrimination. A just transition can only be fulfilled when gender considerations are mainstreamed in the design of just transition policies. As understood through the Just Transition Guidelines, the concept of just transition provides an essential pathway for ensuring gender-transformative climate action in the world of work.

Box 1. Intersecting characteristics lead to differentiated climate change impacts

When gender intersects with other characteristics such as race, ethnicity, indigenous status, age, disability, migration and socio-economic status, and these layered and intersecting characteristics are analysed among workers, it is possible to observe a broader, more complex range of negative impacts from climate change on women's employment and occupation.²⁰ For instance, indigenous peoples, who are among the poorest groups, tend to live in geographical regions at higher risk to climate variabilities and extremes, and climate change has a particular impact on traditional occupations carried out by women, such as agricultural activities.²¹ Persons with disabilities are rarely included in decision-making and planning for extreme weather events.²² Therefore, existing early warning or evacuation systems may not reflect disability-related needs. Furthermore, in climate-related emergencies, older women might be seen as a burden and therefore be more vulnerable to abuse and neglect.²³ The disruptive effects of a changing climate, biodiversity loss and environmental degradation are particularly acute for the most vulnerable workers, including rural workers, workers from lower-income countries and small-island developing States.²⁴ These phenomena disproportionately affect those in poverty, and can exacerbate economic, gender and other social inequalities.²⁵

A just transition involves maximizing the social and economic opportunities of climate action, while minimizing and carefully managing any challenges such as business closures, worker layoffs or

²⁰ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2017.

²¹ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2017.

²² International Labour Organization (ILO) 2019a.

²³ United Nations 2021b.

²⁴ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2020c.

²⁵ The Government of the United Kingdom 2021.

transitions to new green jobs.²⁶²⁷ In sum, a just transition can enhance our ability to manage natural resources sustainably, increase resource efficiency and reduce waste, while also promoting social justice and addressing poverty, inequality, and gender gaps.

A just transition presents opportunities to achieve both environmental, economic, and social objectives. It has the potential to be a new and sustainable engine of growth, in lower, middle- and higher income economies. It can be a net generator of decent green jobs that can contribute significantly to poverty eradication and social inclusion. However, there is a significant risk that without a just transition, a low-carbon, environmentally sustainable economy that is essential to the wellbeing of current and future generations will not be achieved. If not carefully managed through just transition policies and processes, economic changes could disrupt production and labour markets, and result in increased social inequality, worker disillusionment, strikes or civil unrest and reduced productivity, as well as less competitive businesses, sectors, and economies. Considering the gender dimension, inequalities risk being exacerbated if women are not able to equally benefit from a transition to a low-carbon economy, which in turn also risks undermining climate action, given the limited role that women, as key agents of change would be able to play in climate mitigation and adaptation efforts.

The challenges of just transition cut across several domains, so there is a need for mainstreaming across different areas, and for cooperation and coordination between employment authorities and their counterparts in various fields, including gender equality, finance, planning, environment, energy, transport, health, and economic and social development. Institutional arrangements must be adapted to ensure the participation of workers' and employers' organisations, as well as other stakeholders at the international, regional, national, local, and levels in the building of an appropriate policy framework. Internal coherence should be sought among institutions at the national level as well as within international institutions at the regional and global levels.

The Just Transition Guidelines cover *nine policy areas* to address environmental, economic, and social sustainability simultaneously. These policy areas were established based on tripartite consensus during the 2013 International Labour Conference²⁸ which considered evidence and lessons learned from country-level policies and sectoral strategies geared towards environmental sustainability, greening enterprises, social inclusion, and the promotion of green jobs as follows:

- I. Macroeconomic and growth policies
- II. Industrial and sectoral policies
- III. Enterprise policies

²⁶ Green jobs are defined by the ILO as decent jobs that contribute to preserve or restore the environment, be they in traditional sectors such as manufacturing and construction, or in new, emerging green sectors such as renewable energy and energy efficiency. Green jobs help: (a) improve energy and raw materials efficiency, (b) limit greenhouse gas emissions, (c) minimize waste and pollution, (d) protect and restore ecosystems, and (e) support adaptation to the effects of climate change. (ILO 2016). In 2013, the international standard definition of green jobs was adopted by the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians, the international standard-setting body on labour statistics, in the [Guidelines concerning a statistical definition of employment in the environmental sector](#).

²⁷ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2016; International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) 2013.

²⁸ International Labour Conference 2013.

- IV. Skills development
- V. Occupational safety and health
- VI. Social protection
- VII. Active labour market policies
- VIII. Rights
- IX. Social dialogue and tripartism

B. Just transition is critical for gender-equality in the world of work

Aligning with the Paris Agreement, the Just Transition Guidelines emphasize the need to develop policies that are gender specific.²⁹ Paragraph 13(b) states that “Policies and programmes need to take into account the strong gender dimension of many environmental challenges and opportunities. Specific gender policies should be considered in order to promote equitable outcomes”.³⁰ The ILO’s [Global call to action for a human-centred recovery from the COVID-19 crisis that is inclusive, sustainable and resilient](#) calls for strengthening cooperation with relevant organizations and processes to achieve a strong and coherent global response to support national recovery strategies, including advancing research and data improvements that support a just transition to environmental sustainability.³¹ It further notes the need for a gender-responsive recovery, considering the disproportionate job and income losses suffered by women due to the COVID-19 pandemic, compounded with their major representation in unpaid care work.³²

Box 2. The imperative of a just transition of the workforce for implementing the Gender Action Plan

In 2014, the COP adopted the first Lima work programme on gender (LWPG) ([Decision 18/CP.20](#)), aiming to advance gender balance and integrate gender considerations into the work of Parties and the secretariat in implementing the Convention and the Paris Agreement so as to achieve gender-responsive climate policy and action.³³ COP 22 decided on a three-year extension of the LWPG ([Decision 21/CP.22](#))³⁴. The first gender action plan (GAP) under the UNFCCC was established at COP 23 ([Decision 3/CP.23](#)). In this decision, it was noted that **the imperative of a just transition of the workforce should be taken into account when implementing the GAP**.³⁵ At COP 25, in 2019, considering the need to advance knowledge and understanding of gender-responsive climate action, Parties agreed to a five-year enhanced LWPG and its gender action plan (GAP) ([Decision 3/CP.25](#)). In its article 9, the decision notes that **gender-responsive implementation and means of implementation of climate policy and action can enable Parties to raise ambition, as well as enhance gender equality, and just transition of the workforce and the creation of decent work and quality jobs in accordance with nationally defined development priorities**.³⁶

²⁹ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2015b.

³⁰ Ibid., 6.

³¹ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2021, paragraph 14 (g).

³² Ibid.

³³ UNFCCC 2015b.

³⁴ UNFCCC 2017b.

³⁵ UNFCCC 2017a.

³⁶ UNFCCC 2020.

The GAP establishes objectives and activities under **five priority areas** that aspire to advance understanding of gender-responsive climate action and its coherent mainstreaming in the implementation of the UNFCCC and the work of Parties, the secretariat, United Nations entities and stakeholders at all levels, as well as women's full, equal, and meaningful participation in the UNFCCC process itself,³⁷ as follows:

- 1. Capacity-building, knowledge management and communication:** enhance the systematic integration of gender considerations into climate policy and action and the application of expertise to the actions called for under the Lima work programme on gender and its gender action plan, and facilitate outreach, knowledge-sharing and the communication of activities undertaken to enhance gender-responsive climate action and its impacts in advancing women's leadership, achieving gender equality and ensuring effective climate action.
- 2. Gender balance, participation, and women's leadership:** achieve and sustain the full, equal, and meaningful participation of women in the UNFCCC process.
- 3. Coherence:** strengthen the integration of gender considerations within the work of UNFCCC constituted bodies, the secretariat and other United Nations entities and stakeholders towards the consistent implementation of gender-related mandates and activities.
- 4. Gender-responsive implementation and means of implementation:** ensure the respect, promotion and consideration of gender equality and the empowerment of women in the implementation of the Convention and the Paris Agreement.
- 5. Monitoring and reporting:** improve tracking of the implementation of and reporting on gender-related mandates under the Lima work programme on gender and its gender action plan.

In 2021, at COP26, Parties adopted the Glasgow Climate Pact, which called “upon Parties to strengthen their implementation of the enhanced Lima work programme on gender and its gender action plan”. Simultaneously, in its implementation section, the 2021 Glasgow Climate Pact recognized “the need to ensure just transitions that promote sustainable development and eradication of poverty, and the creation of decent work and quality jobs, including through making financial flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emission and climate-resilient development, including through deployment and transfer of technology, and provision of support to developing country Parties”.³⁸ Moreover, members of the [Women and Gender Constituency to the UNFCCC](#), the platform for observer organizations working to ensure women's rights and gender justice within the UNFCCC, stressed that clearer pathways need to be defined towards gender-responsive climate action, both in adaptation and mitigation, as well as towards a just transition.³⁹

At the fifty-sixth session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation, in June 2022, an intermediate review of the progress in implementing the activities contained in the GAP will take place.⁴⁰ In this context, the COP encouraged Parties to step up efforts to integrate gender into NDCs and national

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ UNFCCC 2021a.

³⁹ Women and Gender Constituency 2021.

⁴⁰ UNFCCC. Secretariat n.d.

climate change policies, plans, strategies and action. Parties, United Nations entities, other stakeholders and implementing entities, were invited to take stock of and map progress in advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in line with the priority areas of the GAP. In particular, the ILO was invited to prepare this technical paper, exploring linkages between gender-responsive climate action and just transition for promoting inclusive opportunities for all in a low-carbon economy.⁴¹

These recent decisions⁴² and declarations⁴³ in the United Nations climate negotiations have underscored the importance of the just transition framework and its gender-transformative approach as an essential tool for climate action and social justice, including for promoting gender equality in the world of work. In 2021, the United Nations Secretary General called on all countries to embrace the Just Transition Guidelines and adopt them as a minimum standard,⁴⁴ while also urging governments and other stakeholders to foster a just transition which is, by definition, gender transformative.⁴⁵ Just transition is a vital means to achieving gender-transformative climate action and reducing poverty and inequality.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² UNFCCC 2021a.

⁴³ The Government of the United Kingdom 2021.

⁴⁴ United Nations 2021a.

⁴⁵ Secretary General United Nations 2022.

III. The gender dimension and climate change: disproportionate impacts and women's role as agents of change towards a just transition for all

In 2022, the IPCC noted that “human-induced climate change, including more frequent and intense extreme [weather] events, has caused widespread adverse impacts and related losses and damages to nature and people, beyond natural climate variability” and that “across sectors and regions the most vulnerable people and systems are observed to be disproportionately affected”.⁴⁶ Such “vulnerability at different spatial levels is exacerbated by inequity and marginalization linked to gender, ethnicity, low income or combinations thereof”.⁴⁷ Gender inequalities can act as a risk multiplier, with women being more vulnerable, for instance, to climate-change-induced food insecurity.⁴⁸

Despite the progress made towards gender equality in the past century⁴⁹, women continue to face exclusion, discrimination, and disproportionate exposure to socio-economic vulnerabilities. Climate change risks widening existing inequality gaps in the world of work.⁵⁰ At the same time, women and girls are “early adopters of new agricultural techniques, first responders when disaster strikes, and important decision-makers at home about energy and waste”.⁵¹ Hence, women are agents of change for a just transition, and climate action cannot be successful or sustainable if it does not meaningfully engage them. A just transition and the promotion of gender-equality are intrinsically linked and mutually reinforcing. Just transition is critical to achieving gender-transformative climate action and social justice.

A. *Climate change exacerbates existing inequalities in the world of work*

The anticipated changes in labour markets due to climate change have an essential gender dimension, with serious policy implications. If targeted gender-transformative measures are not adopted to increase female participation in emerging green occupations, current **occupational gender stereotypes are likely to persist** and women will only get a fraction of the jobs created.⁵² For instance, the renewable energy sector has a great potential for employment generation in a green economy, but women's employment in the sector only makes up 20 to 25 per cent in some advanced economies.⁵³ According to ILO projections for both an energy sustainability and a circular economy

⁴⁶ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2022, 8.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 13.

⁴⁸ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2022.

⁴⁹ International Labour Organization 2019.

⁵⁰ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2017.

⁵¹ United Nations n.d.

⁵² International Labour Organization (ILO) 2020c; International Labour Organization (ILO) 2019b.

⁵³ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2018b.

scenario, gender-transformative reskilling measures will be necessary both at low-skilled, middle-skilled and high-skilled occupations to ensure women's access to the new jobs created.⁵⁴

A factor that contributes to occupational and sector segregation is the **lack of educational opportunities** for women and girls when compared to their male counterparts and the existing segregation by sex in education, for example, in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). For instance, the proportions of male and female TVET graduates in Thailand in 2015, disaggregated by sector, show that the sectors mainly attracting male TVET graduates are those frequently identified as priority sectors for the shift to a green economy, such as construction, industry (manufacturing) and mechanics. If targeted policies are not designed to promote gender-equality in access to TVET, as well in reskilling measures, occupational and sectoral segregation by sex is likely to persist.⁵⁵ The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) expressed concern that “discriminatory social norms and persistent gender gaps in secondary and tertiary education in science, technology, engineering and mathematics and occupational segregation keep young women from attaining quality jobs in the green economy and in climate, environment and disaster risk areas”.⁵⁶

Climate change has a further negative impact on **girls' access to education**, as they may be pulled out of school to help their families grow food, fetch water or take care of siblings.⁵⁷ Research findings from the [Oxford University's Young Lives study](#) in poor communities across Ethiopia, India, Peru and Vietnam, show that increased childhood exposure to climate shocks such as droughts and floods has “an unequal impact on children's development, with children from the poorest households most affected”⁵⁸. Climate-induced water scarcity and disruptions in water supply impact women and girls disproportionately and **increase care burdens**.⁵⁹ The responsibility for this additional work “often falls on girls and young women, further reducing their time to study and increasing their risk of dropping out of school altogether”⁶⁰, and takes away women's time from income-generating activities.⁶¹

Violence and harassment also have a detrimental impact on women and girls' employment and in the quality of their work.⁶² While gender-based violence and harassment in the world of work exists independently of climate change, productivity losses and work intensity resulting from climate change and weather extremes may increase its occurrence⁶³. The garment sector, where an estimated 80

⁵⁴ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2019b.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Commission on the Status of Women and Sixty-sixth session 2022.

⁵⁷ Plan International n.d.

⁵⁸ Young Lives Project n.d.

⁵⁹ Globally, women perform more than three-quarters of the total time spent in unpaid care work (76.2 per cent). Time spent in unpaid care work is one of the most pressing gender inequities in the world of work and partially explains why many women either remain outside the labour force or face inequalities in paid work, as well as women's time poverty in both industrialized and developing countries ([ILO 2019](#)).

⁶⁰ Porter 2021.

⁶¹ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2022, 656.

⁶² International Labour Organization 2019.

⁶³ Hoffner et al. n.d., 4.

per cent of the workforce are women, is likely to be affected by this process.⁶⁴In 2019, the ILO noted that heat stress resulting from global warming is projected to lead to global productivity losses equivalent to 80 million full-time jobs in the year 2030.⁶⁵ The challenges of heat stress could widen existing gender inequalities in the world of work, for instance, by worsening working conditions for the many women employed in subsistence agriculture⁶⁶.

Climate change is likely to worsen women's **access to occupational health and safety at work**. For instance, women are overrepresented in agriculture, a sector highly vulnerable to climate change and characterised by seasonal work and high rates of informality, where trade union density is low. Deteriorating working conditions are expected to hit women in agriculture especially hard.⁶⁷ Indigenous women will be disproportionately affected, considering that globally 54.9 per cent of employed indigenous women work in agriculture, compared to only 24.3 per cent of their non-indigenous counterparts.⁶⁸ Agricultural losses and impacts on livelihoods may further increase care obligations and the need to make ends meet through more informal and precarious means, increasing the burden of poor women and girls.⁶⁹

Climate change increases the frequency of disaster events, such as floods and storms, which exacerbate existing gender inequalities and result in **gender-differentiated disaster impacts**.⁷⁰ Exposure to weather extremes and impacts of climate change that lead to resource scarcity, in combination with poor income generation opportunities and **dependence on the informal economy**, displace many workers and force them, particularly those in rural areas, to migrate to urban areas or to cross borders in search of work.⁷¹ Evidence shows that 80 per cent of people displaced by climate change are women.⁷² Women are also strongly affected when their partners migrate due to climate change impacts. In Cameroon, for example, women farmers were unequally and more negatively affected by climate change than their male counterparts. While most men moved away from affected areas in search for paid jobs in urban zones, women remain in their own communities, facing increased care burdens and having to diversify their livelihood activities.⁷³

In addition, **gender differences in social and economic roles** and responsibilities imply that women have more **limited access** than men **to resources to adapt to climate change**, including land, credit, agricultural inputs, decision-making bodies, technology, social insurance, and training. For the majority of women working in the informal economy and in small enterprises, it can be particularly

⁶⁴ Hoffner et al. n.d.

⁶⁵ International Labour Office 2019c.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Montague-Nelson 2022; International Labour Organization (ILO) 2017.

⁶⁸ Dhir et al. 2020, 19.

⁶⁹ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2022.

⁷⁰ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2014.

⁷¹ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2018b; International Labour Organization (ILO) 2017.

⁷² United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) 2017.

⁷³ Nkengla-Asi 2017.

difficult to recover from the effects of environmental disasters⁷⁴, as they may have **less access to social protection benefits**. For instance, after Tropical Storm Erika, in Dominica, around 40 per cent of informal economic activities were disrupted. 55 per cent of people engaged in these informal activities were women. Impacts in informal activities and lack of social protection, coupled with resettlement policies that were not gender-responsive, put single women with children at greater economic disadvantage.⁷⁵ In the context of climate change, the lack of access to social protection translates into income loss due to loss of livelihoods and lack of unemployment insurance, increased care needs and lack of access to healthcare. Lack of social protection coverage does not only affect women of working age, but also prevents girls from accessing adequate healthcare and social assistance, and puts older women at greater risk of poverty, due to lack of access to old age pensions. In the context of the **COVID-19 pandemic**, pre-existing gender inequalities have translated into exacerbated vulnerability to the impacts of the crisis for women and girls⁷⁶, including for indigenous women⁷⁷ and women with disabilities.⁷⁸

B. Negative impacts of non-inclusive mitigation and adaptation actions in the world of work

The Paris Agreement recognizes that Parties may be affected not only by climate change, but also by the impacts of the measures taken in response to it.⁷⁹ The intersection of inequality and poverty is recognized to present important adaptation limits, leading to residual impacts for disadvantaged groups, including women, youth, elderly, ethnic and religious minorities, indigenous peoples and refugees.⁸⁰

Scholars have found that **adaptation** interventions may inadvertently “reinforce, redistribute or create new sources of vulnerability” due, for instance, to superficial understanding of the vulnerability context and inequitable stakeholder participation in design and implementation.⁸¹ For example, a study on the gender dimensions of climate-smart agriculture⁸²⁸³ projects in disaster-prone smallholder farming communities in Malawi and Zambia found that, while gender considerations were present in project design, implementers assumed homogeneity among women and did not take into consideration

⁷⁴ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2014; International Labour Organization (ILO) 2018b.

⁷⁵ Bleeker et al. 2020.

⁷⁶ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2021c, 19; Azcona et al. 2020; International Labour Organization (ILO) 2021b; International Labour Organization (ILO) 2020.

⁷⁷ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2020b, 19.

⁷⁸ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2020a.

⁷⁹ UNFCCC 2015a.

⁸⁰ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2022.

⁸¹ Eriksen et al. 2021.

⁸² The introduction of climate-smart agriculture intends to increase productivity and incomes, building resilience and adaptation to climate-related extreme-weather events, while achieving mitigation through reduced greenhouse gas emissions (FAO 2018).

⁸³ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) 2018.

differences in ownership of productive assets.⁸⁴ Thus, intersectional power relations were overlooked, leading to a bias towards male elite beneficiaries in the implemented climate smart agriculture practices and failing to promote gender-equality in the process.⁸⁵

In the context of **mitigation** and the transition to a green energy and decarbonised future, evidence suggests that women and men workers in the coal-fired energy sector experience the impacts of the transition differently.⁸⁶ Unplanned mine closure can lead to grief, loss of trust, and a sense of helplessness for workers and communities, particularly marginalising and disempowering women in the process.⁸⁷ A transition that does not include gender-targeted action, an “unjust” transition, can exacerbate existing inequalities, enhancing occupational and sectoral segregation, widening the skills and pay gap, and pushing women out of the labour force. Climate policies that do not incorporate just transition, supporting gender equal outcomes in the world of work, may not only result in job losses and displacement of workers, loss of assets and involuntary migration, but also have adverse impacts on poor household incomes, increase violence and harassment, as well as yield negative consequences for occupational safety and health.⁸⁸ By disempowering women to contribute towards climate action, an “unjust” transition risks undermining efforts towards meaningful climate action.

Initiatives to address climate change must consider improving **gender-targeted statistics** in the work-environment nexus, and fostering just transition for gender equality in the world of work.⁸⁹ For instance, important gaps in research exist on the precise consequences of the energy transition for working women.⁹⁰ In the process of developing policy scenario estimations, the disaggregation of employment should be available by sex, at a minimum, so negative impacts on women’s working time can be detected, as well as testing the effects of equality policies on a transition scenario (for instance, family reconciliation with respect to the variation of working time).⁹¹

Box 3. Data needs in support of just transition mitigation and adaptation policies and gender equality

The just transition policy framework — with its nine policy areas to support sustainable economies and societies and decent work for all — lays a good foundation for developing a statistical framework for measuring and monitoring the creation of green jobs and green enterprises and promoting women’s engagement in these arenas, including at the managerial level. National data producers are encouraged to use international statistical standards such as those adopted by the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS), as this facilitates the development of internationally comparable labour statistics and

⁸⁴ Khoza, Van Niekerk, and NemaKonde 2019.

⁸⁵ Ibid.; Resurrección 2021.

⁸⁶ Walk et al. 2021.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2017; Hoffner et al. n.d.

⁸⁹ UN Women 2022b.

⁹⁰ García-García, Carpintero, and Buendía 2020.

⁹¹ Ibid.

enhances the comparability and data coherence within a country over time.⁹² In 2013, the 19th ICLS adopted the *Guidelines concerning a statistical definition of employment in the environmental sector*⁹³ which represent the first internationally agreed conceptual framework for understanding the concepts and definitions associated with employment in the environmental sector and green jobs as well as the related data collection programme and methods recommended at the national level.⁹⁴

The 19th ICLS Guidelines aim to facilitate the development of a comprehensive system of statistics on employment in the environmental sector to provide an adequate statistical base for different data users.⁹⁵ Such statistics are needed for informing just transition policies and monitoring the impacts of implemented strategies and plans on green jobs levels and trends.⁹⁶ They can help support the planning, design, and evaluation of aligned environmental and labour market policies, including impacts on the number of people employed in green jobs and their skill levels. They facilitate assessing the extent to which the economy is responding to various public policies and initiatives. They support the analysis of the economic and social situation of particular groups of workers in the environmental sector and green jobs such as women, rural and urban populations, youth, and the elderly. Moreover, such statistics can support not only just transition national plans and strategies, but also SDG Frameworks, NDCs and NAPs. Nonetheless, there is a need for better indicators to measure the connections between the world of work and the environment, including indicators disaggregated by sex, supporting just transition outcomes.⁹⁷

As regards data availability to inform just transition policies, important gaps still remain. In particular, gender data that can provide a more complete assessment of direct and indirect impacts of climate change on women and men in the world of work need to be substantially strengthened.⁹⁸ Data on indirect effects of climate events may provide a better picture of gender inequalities compared to that related to direct effects, as they can help to identify, for example, shifts to informality.⁹⁹ Data about ownership of environmental assets, such as ownership of land, is scarce, and filling existing gaps would be particularly relevant to help understand existing inequalities in women's enterprise development and capacity to cope with natural hazards and crises.¹⁰⁰

In order to address these data gaps, on the one hand, there is a need to analyse existing data through a gender lens.¹⁰¹ For instance, existing data could be used to understand, through a gendered approach, the underexplored contribution of unpaid work towards climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as the consequences of climate change on unpaid work. That requires allowing not only an aggregate macro-level perspective on environment statistics, but also encouraging analysis at the individual level. From a statistical

⁹² Contribution from Monica Castillo, Senior Green Jobs Technical Specialist in the Green Jobs Programme, ILO Geneva.

⁹³ For a list of relevant international statistics standards, see Annex III.

⁹⁴ International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) 2013.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Contribution from Monica Castillo, Senior Green Jobs Technical Specialist in the Green Jobs Programme, ILO Geneva.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Interview with Sara Duerto Valerio and Cecilia Tinonin, respectively Region Advisor on Gender Statistics and Statistics Specialist at UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

methodology perspective, it means measuring more elusive categories of workers, for example, waste pickers who are part of the circular economy and who are often excluded.¹⁰² On the other hand, efforts are needed to collect new data on the nexus between gender and the environment. Considering this need, UN Women, in close consultation with FAO, ILO, IUCN, SPC, UNEP, UNDRR and UNESCAP, and in response to a request made by some Member States, developed the *Model questionnaire: Measuring the nexus between gender and environment*.¹⁰³ The questionnaire directly contributes to the first key priority area of the GAP (capacity-building, knowledge management and communication) as it strengthens the evidence base and understanding of the differentiated impacts of climate change on men and women, and their contributions to environmental conservation, degradation and climate change mitigation and adaptation.¹⁰⁴

C. Women as agents of change: A fundamental force for ensuring a just transition for all

While being disproportionately hit by climate change's causes and consequences,¹⁰⁵ women contribute less to its causes than men yet often bring innovative solutions and responses.¹⁰⁶¹⁰⁷ Women are central actors for environmental protection and own knowledge, capabilities, and effective networks to drive real solutions in a just transition as their roles across society influence production, consumption, and market sustainable solutions. Women are thus important agents of change towards a just transition and "their contribution and participation in green economic activities is essential for achieving equitable sustainable development".¹⁰⁸

Women have demonstrated leadership in advocating, designing, and implementing just adaptation and mitigation measures that are particularly well-suited to the specific needs of their communities.¹⁰⁹ A UN Women study shows that women in local communities are leading innovative approaches to promote gender equality in sectors such as sustainable energy in Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda and United Republic of Tanzania; and in agroecology in Brazil, Cuba and Nicaragua, protecting local ecosystems based on indigenous knowledge.¹¹⁰ These efforts need support from governments so that their models can be replicated at scale.¹¹¹ In the context of enterprises, a study comprising companies in industrialized economies¹¹² found that gender diversity within organisations can have a significant impact in combatting climate change. By contrasting firm-corporate governance characteristics with firm-level carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions over a ten-year period, the study

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ UN Women 2022a.

¹⁰⁵ Interview with Txai Suruí.

¹⁰⁶ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2022.

¹⁰⁷ Interviews with Txai Suruí and with ITUC representatives.

¹⁰⁸ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2015a.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.; International Labour Organization (ILO) 2017.

¹¹⁰ United Nations Women 2021.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² The study covered 24 countries, namely, Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom and the United States of America.

identified that an increase in the share of women managers was associated with a decrease in firms' CO₂ emissions. They also found that gender diversity at the managerial level had stronger mitigating effects on climate change if women are also well-represented in political institutions and civil society organizations.¹¹³ These examples on women's role in climate action underscore the importance and benefits of including them as agents of change in just transition policy development and implementation. However, women's role as key stakeholders in climate action is still insufficiently acknowledged¹¹⁴.

At COP 26, important initiatives were announced towards a just transition. South Africa established a historic international partnership with the governments of France, Germany, the United Kingdom, the United States, and the European Union to support a just transition to a low-carbon economy in the country. The document includes a provision on the need to enable the protection of women and most vulnerable workers in a just transition, .¹¹⁵ Also at COP26, parliamentary leaders from Latin American and Caribbean countries, Spain, and the United Kingdom, announced the creation of the Parliamentary Observatory on Climate Change and Just Transition (OPCC), an innovative initiative to strengthen inter-parliamentary cooperation so that policy makers can review and pass legislation relevant to the just transition to low-carbon economies.¹¹⁶ The OPCC is to serve as a shared information tool on the state of environmental legislation and parliamentary procedures in the Latin America and the Caribbean region and beyond.¹¹⁷ National and intergovernmental initiatives for a just transition are encouraged to include explicit language and gender transformative provisions, recognizing women's role as agents of change for a just transition and ensuring their representation, empowerment and leadership. The Just Transition Guidelines provide a vital pathway forward in this regard.

Box 4. Women as agents of change in the national just transition strategy: the case of Spain

Spain is an interesting example in including gender targeted provisions in the national just transition strategy. In 2020, the country adopted its Just Transition Strategy, which seeks to maximize the social gains of the ecological transition and to mitigate its negative impacts.¹¹⁸ The document notes that policies to promote green jobs must ensure that women can take advantage of the opportunities provided by the transition and includes among its strategic objectives measures to reduce gender inequalities in the ecological transition (SO₂). The strategy includes, for instance, a specific provision "to ensure the incorporation of women into green economy employment opportunities through gender mainstreaming" (E2).¹¹⁹ It also provides for the

¹¹³ Altunbas et al. 2021.

¹¹⁴ Secretary General United Nations 2022.

¹¹⁵ Government of the Republic of South Africa 2021.

¹¹⁶ Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) 2021.

¹¹⁷ Parliamentarians of Latin America and the Caribbean 2021.

¹¹⁸ Government of Spain 2020.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

presentation of gender disaggregated data in the monitoring of the situation, trends, and evolution in the ecological transition of economic sectors (H1), and for specific support to the creation of green jobs in the rural areas, with particular attention to the promotion of youth and women's employment and entrepreneurship (A11).¹²⁰

In 2021, the Women's Institute of Spain's Ministry of Equality and the Institute for Just Transition (ITJ) signed a protocol to jointly develop actions in the framework of the development of Just Transition Agreements, aiming to promote entrepreneurship and improve the employability and working conditions of women in the territories affected by the energy transition.¹²¹ The protocol also gives visibility to the active and equal contribution of women as agents of change. While it is still early to assess the impacts of this partnership, this case demonstrates the relevance of including gender-specific provisions in just transition strategies, as well as the importance of establishing coordination and partnerships among governmental institutions to design implementation strategies that ensure women's participation. Hence it contributes to gender-responsive implementation of climate action (the fourth priority area of the GAP) by promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women in just transition policies and climate action.

While facing important barriers, women's participation in policy making – including young women – has the potential to bring more knowledge, diversity and equity to the negotiation table and contribute to the needed advancements in commitment to the climate agenda. Their effective participation in bottom-up processes is important to ensure the legitimacy and inclusiveness of the decision-making process and the design of socially just adaptation and mitigation actions.¹²²

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Government of Spain 2021.

¹²² Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2022, 4–138.

IV. Charting pathways for a just transition for all

A just transition to environmentally sustainable economies and societies offers significant opportunities for generating green jobs and opportunities for all and for achieving gender equality in the world of work if the right policies are formulated and implemented. There is potential for creating significant numbers of additional decent jobs for women and men in green sectors through investments in environmentally sustainable production and consumption and management of natural resources.¹²³ For instance, a circular economy that emphasizes the reuse, recycling, remanufacture and repair of goods could create a net total of 12 million new jobs for women¹²⁴ by 2030.¹²⁵

Just transition policies can yield improvements in job quality and incomes on a large scale from more productive processes, as well as greener products and services in sectors like agriculture, construction, recycling, and tourism.¹²⁶ For example, the adoption of more sustainable agricultural policies together with just transition measures can create decent job opportunities in medium and large organic farms and allow smallholders to diversify their sources of income through a transition to conservation agriculture.¹²⁷ Substantial improvements for women workers in agriculture, reforestation, and similar activities, can be realised in a just transition through addressing deep structural challenges such as land ownership and access, informality, precarious types of work, and entrenched gender inequality.¹²⁸ What is more, just transition can drive inclusion outcomes through, for example, improved access to affordable, environmentally sustainable energy and payments for environmental services. These changes are of particular relevance to women and residents in rural areas.¹²⁹ Moreover, such policies encourage the development of emerging green sectors, including in traditionally male-dominated sectors, such as energy and construction¹³⁰, and address existing inequalities in time and income poverty.

Just transition strategies and policies support decent work for *all* and, by extension, contribute to building more equal and resilient societies and economies, which are equipped to respond to the climate emergency.¹³¹ Just transition approaches, which include multi-stakeholder co-learning platforms, transboundary collaborations, community-based adaptation, and participatory scenario

¹²³ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2015b.

¹²⁴ Advancing the circular economy increases employment chances for women, albeit not on a large enough scale to offset prevailing gender employment inequalities, and with the caveat that some of this equalizing tendency comes at the expense of net job losses for men (ILO 2019).

¹²⁵ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2019b.

¹²⁶ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2015b.

¹²⁷ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2018b.

¹²⁸ Smith and Koning 2021.

¹²⁹ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2015b.

¹³⁰ Smith and Koning 2021.

¹³¹ Interview with Marieke Koning, Policy Equality Adviser at ITUC.

planning, focus on capacity-building, and meaningful participation of the most vulnerable and marginalised groups, and their access to key resources to adapt.¹³²

In sum, the Just Transition Guidelines offer a highly relevant framework for designing policies, measures, and actions for green jobs opportunities for all women and men, reducing gender inequalities and leveraging women's empowerment and leadership. Actions across the nine policy areas identified in the Just Transition Guidelines are key to simultaneously addressing environmental, economic, and social sustainability.¹³³

A. Leveraging gender equality through the nine just transition policy areas

a. Macroeconomic and growth policies

In order to align with the Paris Agreement and ensure a just transition, macroeconomic and growth policies should promote sustainable production and consumption patterns, and place full and productive employment and decent work for all, particularly the most marginalized and vulnerable, at the centre of economic and social policies. If the right policy and institutional frameworks are in place, economic growth can be a major driver for the creation of green jobs, which are by definition decent jobs.¹³⁴

To achieve these objectives, targeted fiscal policy measures, market-based instruments, public procurement, and investment policies can create frameworks for enterprises and investors to adopt or promote more innovative economic practices, which are grounded in the sustainable use of resources and lead to better access to economic opportunities and more inclusive labour markets.¹³⁵ It should be noted that policies that are not inclusive can have adverse income distribution effects, in particular in relation to energy poverty. Gender equality should hence be integrated in the design of macroeconomic policies aiming at sustainable growth.¹³⁶ Moreover, leveraging women's existing and potential contributions is essential for stimulating green growth.¹³⁷

It is thus essential to design appropriate laws, regulations and policies aimed at environmental improvements that lead to resource and energy efficiencies, the prevention of environmental degradation and damaging labour market and social outcomes. In the path towards environmental sustainability, macroeconomic and fiscal policies should foster equity and stability.¹³⁸ They can align private incentives with public policy objectives and can be cost-effective in the long term. Legislative

¹³² Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2022, 31.

¹³³ International Labour Conference 2013; UNFCCC. Secretariat 2020, 202.

¹³⁴ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2018b.

International Labour Organization (ILO) 2015b.

¹³⁶ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2015a.

¹³⁷ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2017.

¹³⁸ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2021b.

and regulatory certainty and the rule of law are key to promote environmental and social sustainability, while stimulating innovation and investments in human, social and environmental capital. These are the prerequisites for long-term competitiveness and economic prosperity, social cohesion, quality employment offering equal opportunity and treatment and better environmental protection for all.¹³⁹

b. Industrial and sectoral policies

Many environmental challenges can be understood at the sectoral level, where the search for solutions and the adoption of policies also begins.¹⁴⁰ For instance, as regards mitigation proposals, the Glasgow Climate Pact focuses on the energy sector, as it “calls upon Parties to accelerate the development, deployment and dissemination of technologies, and the adoption of policies, to transition towards low-emission energy systems (...) while providing targeted support to the poorest and most vulnerable in line with national circumstances and recognizing the need for support towards a just transition”.¹⁴¹

Numerous countries have used industrial policy to support the greening of their economies. Industrial and sector-related policies, public-public partnerships and, when appropriate, public–private partnerships, are effective ways to complement macroeconomic policies in helping to improve both the environmental and the employment performance of existing businesses, and in stimulating growth in green products and services.¹⁴² Efforts need to focus on key sectors that are most relevant for environmental sustainability and job creation in the national economy such as agriculture, water management and sanitation, forestry, fisheries, energy, resource-intensive industries, recycling, waste management, buildings, and transport. In addition, targeted measures will be needed to formalize substandard, informal jobs in environment-related sectors, such as recycling and waste management, in order to transform them into decent jobs. Action is also needed, for instance, to ensure that formalization processes for women transport workers in the informal economy in the context of a just transition include action for gender equality.¹⁴³ Targeted policies and investments should cover women workers in the energy value chain, including clerical and service workers, and in energy regions more broadly. It has been noted that just transition pathways must be established to create decent jobs for women in care, energy, transport, agriculture and waste and water management.¹⁴⁴ Just transition actions must promote equal employment opportunities and treatment across all green sectors, targeting both horizontal and vertical gender equality by industry and occupation. These new jobs create opportunities for women to access decent work.¹⁴⁵

¹³⁹ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2015b.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ UNFCCC 2021a.

¹⁴² International Labour Organization (ILO) 2015b.

¹⁴³ ITF Our Public Transport n.d.

¹⁴⁴ United Nations Women 2021.

¹⁴⁵ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2015a.

If the development of green sectors establishes the principles of equality of opportunity and treatment as a specific focus and goal from the beginning, there is significant potential for addressing gender inequalities and ensuring that occupational and sectoral segregation are dismantled.¹⁴⁶ Addressing gender inequality also has the potential of increasing productivity in lower productivity types of jobs and sectors.¹⁴⁷ Engaging in social dialogue at the sectoral level, often characterized by specific governance instruments and institutions, presents opportunities to pursue economic, environmental and social objectives in an effective way.¹⁴⁸

Box 5. Investing in the Care Sector: Key for ensuring more resilient economies and societies in a changing climate

The COVID-19 pandemic has drawn attention to three interwoven crises that steadily undermine gender equality and threaten the survival of people and the planet: jobs, care, and climate.¹⁴⁹ Sectors where a majority of workers are women, such as care, continue to have poor wages, are precarious and often informal, and display worse working conditions than sectors dominated by men.¹⁵⁰ There is a pressing need for long-term policy to adapt the care sector considering climate change impacts, such as increasingly frequent heat waves and climate-related disasters.¹⁵¹ Indeed, the demand for public care and health services intensifies due to climate change and disasters, and will lead to an increase of the time women spend on unpaid care and exacerbate resource poverty. For instance, in the Philippines, climate change is increasing the need for decent care jobs as the country experiences on average twenty typhoons in a year, most of which are very devastating.¹⁵² Women are most likely to suffer from such disasters. Natural disasters are increasing women's unpaid care responsibilities in the Philippines, underscoring the need for investment in care work to be adequately integrated within the frameworks or approaches in disaster management.¹⁵³

Investing in decent jobs in care at scale, and eliminating gender deficits at work, drives economic and social development and increases opportunities to raise household incomes.¹⁵⁴ An ILO study shows that addressing existing significant gaps in care services could generate nearly 300 million jobs and create a continuum of care that would help in alleviating poverty and encourage gender equality.¹⁵⁵ Similarly, the conclusions of the sixty-sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women indicate that placing care at the centre of the just transition is critical.¹⁵⁶ Care infrastructure such as sanitation, water, and electricity, is essential to achieve an equitable green economy and to ensure a just transition for all workers and members of their families.¹⁵⁷

¹⁴⁶ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2017.

¹⁴⁷ Interview with Robert Marinkovic, Advisor at the International Organisation of Employers (IOE).

¹⁴⁸ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2015b.

¹⁴⁹ UN Women 2021.

¹⁵⁰ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2022.

¹⁵¹ Reset.Vlaanderen 2021.

¹⁵² Interview with Joy Quitain Hernandez, Communications and Advocacy Officer, ITUC - Asia Pacific.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Novello 2021; United Nations Women 2021; Resurrección 2021; International Labour Organization (ILO) 2022; Commission on the Status of Women and Sixty-sixth session 2022.

¹⁵⁵ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2022.

¹⁵⁶ Commission on the Status of Women and Sixty-sixth session 2022.

¹⁵⁷ Smith and Koning 2021.

c. Enterprise policies

An important avenue for Parties to foster the greening of jobs is through comprehensive frameworks that support environmental, economic, and social sustainability while fostering business competitiveness, stimulating innovation and encouraging investments. These frameworks should provide an enabling environment for greening enterprises, and in particular assist micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), including cooperatives and entrepreneurs, towards making a just transition.¹⁵⁸ Enterprises are the main source of economic growth and employment, and have a central role in guiding and sustaining the transition to a low-carbon and resource-efficient economy considering their contributions to innovation, adoption of new technologies, financing, and know-how to address environmental challenges.¹⁵⁹ It is important to create an “enabling environment for businesses, particularly SMEs, which facilitates, accelerates and incentivises the creation of more resilient and sustainable enterprises that can achieve decarbonization objectives while creating quality employment and maintaining business needs”.¹⁶⁰ ILO standards, such as the *ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy (ILO MNE Declaration)*, provide essential guidance to both governments and enterprises on aspects of inclusive economic growth and development.¹⁶¹

Regulatory frameworks and institutions should be coupled with economic policies and incentives to support enterprises in adopting clean technologies, low-carbon production processes, and encourage investment in up-skilling and re-skilling of their workforce.¹⁶² Such investments should be designed to reduce possible barriers for women to access capacity-building opportunities. For instance, work and personal-life balance should be prioritized, as women may have less possibilities to follow training after working hours due to care responsibilities. Other aspects, such as childcare and paid educational leave should also be considered. Workers and employers can work together towards building a just transition for their enterprises, including to promote gender equality. For instance, the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) launched the campaign Climate and Employment Proof our Work (#CEPOW), where workers around the world invited their employers to discuss plans for resilience and sustainable business – safety, jobs, emissions, and secure pathway for the future.¹⁶³ Just transition policies, including social dialogue, are essential tools for sustainable enterprises to ensure decent working conditions and opportunities.

The opportunities created via just transition enterprise development policies can substantially promote gender equality in the world of work. Hence, opportunities for women to become entrepreneurs by

¹⁵⁸ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2015b.

¹⁵⁹ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2018b.

¹⁶⁰ International Organisation of Employers (IOE) 2022.

¹⁶¹ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2021a.

¹⁶² International Organisation of Employers (IOE) 2020.

¹⁶³ Olsen and La Hovary 2021.

starting their own green businesses and becoming green employers should be fostered.¹⁶⁴ To that end, governments should ensure targeted incentives and funding, including through partnerships, to increase resilience and sustainability for both viable and vulnerable enterprises.¹⁶⁵ Furthermore, targeted programmes should be established in sectors where a significant proportion of enterprises are informal with a view to promote formalization.¹⁶⁶ In the context of the just transition, with a view to promoting gender equality, fostering the progressive formalization of enterprises in sectors such as waste management and recycling, amongst others¹⁶⁷, will be crucial. The use of the cooperative model, among others, can be an effective tool for formalization.¹⁶⁸

It is also essential to support access to new technologies and production methods that support green women entrepreneurs and can increase productivity, and to developing well-functioning markets and effective regulatory conditions that incentivise innovation and entrepreneurship.¹⁶⁹ Specific training programmes for women on green entrepreneurship, access to finance and resources, and skills development will be key to make sure that enterprises become greener and more gender equal, as well as to support the development of women-led enterprises. United Nations agencies and other multilateral institutions can play a particularly important role in this regard, offering technical capacity-building and coaching for women entrepreneurs in greening their businesses and contributing to the empowerment of women in the implementation of green policies, in accordance with priority area four of the GAP¹⁷⁰. A case in point is that of the [Partnership for Action on Green Economy \(PAGE\)](#), which brings together in joint collaboration UNEP, ILO, UNDP, UNIDO, and UNITAR, whose mandates, expertise, and networks combined can offer integrated and holistic support to countries on inclusive green economy, ensuring coherence and avoiding duplication.¹⁷¹

Box 6. Training and advisory support infrastructure on green businesses for women entrepreneurs in Burkina Faso¹⁷²¹⁷³

Through the [Partnership for Action on Green Economy \(PAGE\)](#), the ILO and other UN agencies provide integrated and holistic support to countries on eradicating poverty, increasing jobs and social equity, strengthening livelihoods and environmental stewardship, and sustaining growth. In 2019, the ILO and the Ministry of the Environment, Green Economy and Climate Change agreed to cooperate in the implementation of a project to set up a green entrepreneurship training and advisory support infrastructure in Burkina Faso. The project, implemented from October 2019 to December 2020, with the support of the *Maison de*

¹⁶⁴ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2015a.

¹⁶⁵ International Organisation of Employers (IOE) 2022.

¹⁶⁶ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2015b.

¹⁶⁷ United Nations 2021d.

¹⁶⁸ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2015b.

¹⁶⁹ International Organisation of Employers (IOE) 2022.

¹⁷⁰ Namely, gender-responsive implementation and means of implementation.

¹⁷¹ PAGE n.d.

¹⁷² Interview with Albert Compaore (ILO Burkina Faso) and members of the Maison de l'Entreprise Burkina Faso.

¹⁷³ Maison de l'Entreprise Burkina Faso 2020; International Labour Office 2019a.

l'Entreprise du Burkina Faso, aimed at developing and implementing women entrepreneurs' capacities in green entrepreneurship. In total, nine women entrepreneurs in the region of Ouagadougou received training. The participants own small enterprises (between USD 25,000 and 50,000), and work in the agri-food processing sector (e.g. producing sweet potato flour, karité butter, attiéké, soap, soubala, non-timber products, and fruit juice).

The five-day training consisted initially of clarifying green entrepreneurship concepts and understanding the green economy sectors in Burkina Faso, presenting case studies on green businesses, and subsequently analysing the particular case of each participants' enterprise. The coaching team provided advice and identified steps as to how participants could green their own production. The major outcome of the training was that each participant developed their own action plan on how to green their business process (*Le plan d'écologisation*) and established an ecological control list, in order to assess where improvements to make their processes greener could be implemented. The priority ecological measures were defined, as well as the timeline and the needed financial and technical resources to implement them.

Another important follow-up strategy was the creation of a Whatsapp group with all participant women, where relevant opportunities for their businesses could be shared. As many of the participant women are illiterate, Whatsapp offered a means of communication that allowed them to overcome this barrier. A couple of months after the training, a follow-up process took place, where trainers wanted to visit the companies and understand how changes were being implemented. Reportedly, this was the most challenging phase. Many women were reluctant to continue participating in the effort due to the difficulties in finding financial support to implement their action plan. According to the team, the absence of financial structures that are prepared to take up these projects and offer financing is the main challenge faced by women. Traditional structures for providing credit include barriers that discouraged the participation of the targeted women, often unable to provide the required credit guarantees.

An important outcome of the project is that it gives participant women a "reference". During the training, participants acquired specific competencies and participated in a network that they can continue to rely on. This demonstrates the importance of established institutions, such as the *Maison de l'Entreprise*, that serves as a network and a reference for beneficiaries even beyond the end of the project. Nevertheless, for the initiative to have a more impactful outcome, the follow-up phase should have been coupled with financial support to help implement the identified ecological opportunities.

Moreover, it has been demonstrated that gender diversity within organisations can have a significant impact in combatting climate change.¹⁷⁴ To harness the power of women as agents of change towards a just transition within organisations, gender-inclusive policies are essential for achieving gender balance at all enterprise levels, including strategic senior management positions to develop and implement green private policies and practices. Active equal opportunity and gender inclusive policies such as flexi-time, maternity, paternity and parental leave, return-to-work programmes and measures to promote more balanced sharing of family responsibilities within households, can help to ensure

¹⁷⁴ Altunbas et al. 2021.

that women are not disadvantaged at work for having responsibilities at home. ILO standards such as the *Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100)*, the *Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)*, the *Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156)*, the *Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183)*¹⁷⁵ and the *Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190)*, provide relevant frameworks to promote gender equality in the workplace. While enterprises cannot single-handedly dismantle society-wide gender bias, they can challenge it by recognizing its existence and addressing it within their workplace culture. For instance, mentoring programmes, awareness campaigns and transparency policies are effective tools for tackling wider gender bias.¹⁷⁶

d. Skills development

Just transition policies on skills development are essential to supporting workers and businesses in the transition to a green economy and should involve engagement from governments, workers', and employers' organisations in their formulation and implementation. Access to training can assist workers and enterprises in transitioning to new green jobs, or work with new materials, processes, and technologies that support greening existing jobs. Initiatives to develop skills that support entrepreneurship, resilience, innovation in enterprises (including MSMEs), and their transition to sustainable practices are critical factors for success.¹⁷⁷ The successful reallocation of workers and the filling of new jobs in the green and blue economy in a gender-equal manner is dependent on workforce access to training and related policy measures.¹⁷⁸ Including gender considerations in the skills policy response, particularly for skills development to meet the demands of new jobs, could promote equal opportunity and treatment in the emerging green jobs and could alleviate the gender imbalance in the affected occupations.¹⁷⁹ For instance, investment and targeted programmes in areas where women are underrepresented, such as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) are needed.¹⁸⁰ In addition, action is needed to recognize and develop indigenous women's traditional knowledge and skills, which are vital for climate mitigation and adaptation.¹⁸¹

Education and training for green jobs requires a comprehensive lifelong learning approach. National skills development and employment policies linked to broader development plans need to incorporate education for environmental awareness with coherent skills strategies to prepare women and men

¹⁷⁵ For a full list of relevant international labour standards and resolutions, see Annex II.

¹⁷⁶ Activities (ACT/EMP) 2019.

¹⁷⁷ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2015b.

¹⁷⁸ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2018b; International Organisation of Employers (IOE) 2020.

¹⁷⁹ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2019b.

¹⁸⁰ United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and ITU 2020.

¹⁸¹ Ahern, Oelz, and Dhir 2019; Chianese 2016; International Labour Organization (ILO) 2017; Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2014; Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2022; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and Fondo para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas de América Latina y El Caribe (FILAC) 2021.

workers, in particular young people, for a more sustainable world of work. Training programmes need to target displaced workers and those who lost jobs because of greening to ensure their swift re-entry into the labour market.¹⁸² Gender mainstreaming in skills development could empower women to move from low-skill and entry-level positions to high-skilled jobs, supporting growth of their sustainable enterprises. Curricula should take a gender-transformative and intersectional approach, and education efforts should be targeted at empowering women and girls and fostering their preparedness to participate in climate discussions.¹⁸³ The ILO *Human Resources Development Recommendation, 2004 (No. 195)*¹⁸⁴, is a key instrument regarding education, training, and lifelong learning in general.

Furthermore, countries need to be equipped with the anticipation, forecasting, and monitoring tools needed to respond to the demand for skills for green jobs and to assess progress in respect of gender mainstreaming.¹⁸⁵ A large number of countries recognise the importance of capacity development and climate change literacy in their NDCs. Nevertheless, a 2019 study showed that “less than 40 per cent of NDCs globally include any plans for skills training to support their implementation, and over 20 per cent do not plan any human capital related activities at all”.¹⁸⁶ Therefore, there is a clear need to enhance the visibility of just transition skills policies in national climate plans to support gender equality in the emerging green economy. Without conscious efforts, women’s participation in the green economy will not increase quickly enough to close the existing gender gap.¹⁸⁷

Box 7. Skills for Resilience project: Disability- and gender- inclusive climate-smart agriculture in Malawi¹⁸⁸

The Skills for Resilience project aims to protect the livelihoods of young smallholder farmers in rural Malawi from increasing climate change induced natural hazards. The project is implemented by private sector entities, local government, and local associations, and brings together national and international experts in the field of vocational training, social inclusion, and climate-smart agriculture. The Skills for Resilience Project aims to educate 5,000 young smallholder farmers in climate-smart agriculture, who will become more resilient in the face of natural hazards. As of March 2021, the project had trained more than 3,000 smallholder farmers in practical climate-smart agriculture among whom 65 per cent are women and 10,3 per cent are persons with disabilities. By ensuring that young women, including women with disabilities, enhance their skills in climate-smart agriculture, the project contributes to priority area four of the GAP.

¹⁸² International Labour Organization (ILO) 2015b.

¹⁸³ Hopgood 2022.

¹⁸⁴ See Annex II.

¹⁸⁵ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2019b.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2018b.

¹⁸⁸ NAD - The Norwegian Association of Disabled n.d.

e. Occupational safety and health

Extreme heat and cold temperature waves have been linked to an augmented risk of occupational injuries and fluctuations in labour productivity.¹⁸⁹ Several economic activities for environmental sustainability present health and safety risks related to minerals, chemicals, and pesticides, among others. Local air, water and soil pollution and other forms of environmental degradation negatively affect workers' health, income, food, and fuel security. Currently, segregated employment by industry and occupation in which men in developing countries are more often engaged in construction and heavy manufacturing while women are more heavily concentrated in agriculture and service sectors suggests that men and women face differentiated occupational safety and health risks at work. Both excessive heat in the workplace and extreme weather events, can have disproportionate impacts on women in the labour market where they already face barriers to accessing decent work.¹⁹⁰

Such negative impacts can be reduced by the adoption of specific just transition occupational safety and health legal and policy measures, sustainable social protection policies and other actions designed to adapt to a changing environment.¹⁹¹ ILO standards, such as the *Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155)*¹⁹², provide a solid basis to develop just transition legal and policy measures. Such just transition measures ensure that new jobs in the green and blue economy are decent, safe, and healthy. Switching from fossil fuels to renewables, for instance, entails changes in the occupational safety and health risks. Occupational safety and health standards and training are an essential component of all skills training for women and men. Regulations and guidance should be provided by national government occupational safety and health authorities, in alignment with international labour standards, with practical prevention measures adopted at the sectoral and enterprise level based on risk assessment and the principles of elimination and control of hazards. Policies and programmes under national systems for occupational safety and health should be continuously improved considering new challenges to ensure that green jobs are safe and promote the principle of equal treatment. Adequate capacity of the labour inspectorate, including gender-transformative capacity-building, is key to ensuring compliance with these standards.¹⁹³

Furthermore, violence and harassment at work, including gender-based violence and harassment, is likely to increase due to climate change impacts, such as heat stress.¹⁹⁴ Further, when women enter occupations that are traditionally dominated by men, they may be more exposed to discrimination and sexual harassment at work than their male counterparts.¹⁹⁵ Hence, for the transition to be just, occupational safety and health regulation should address violence and harassment at work, as well

¹⁸⁹ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2022.

¹⁹⁰ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2017.

¹⁹¹ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2018b.

¹⁹² See Annex II.

¹⁹³ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2015b.

¹⁹⁴ Hoffner et al. n.d.

¹⁹⁵ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2009, 4.

as their associated psychological risks, and develop specific measures to target this issue. Such measures will ensure safer and healthier workplaces for all and have the potential for enhancing gender equality in the world of work.

f. Social protection

The IPCC noted that “integrating climate adaptation into social protection programmes, including cash transfers and public works programmes, is highly feasible and increases resilience to climate change, especially when supported by basic services and infrastructure”, having “strong co-benefits with development goals such as education, poverty alleviation, gender inclusion and food security”.¹⁹⁶ Sound, comprehensive and sustainable social protection schemes are an integral part of the strategy for just transition towards sustainable development, built on principles of decent work, social justice, and social inclusion. Firstly, social protection can support adaptation efforts when it is used to protect populations who are at heightened risk of climate-related hardship. Secondly, it is a key tool to support individuals and households that are negatively affected by the unintended impacts of green policies.¹⁹⁷ Universal social protection facilitates the global shift towards a carbon-free world by ensuring the provision of essential guarantees against social risks affecting income and health in the context of climate change, thus favouring social acceptability of green policies.¹⁹⁸ Social protection policies should provide workers displaced by technological change or those affected by natural disasters with income support as well as access to health care and basic services (e.g. energy, transportation, and housing) during the transition, and thereby reduce inequality while supporting gender equity. Targeted assistance to groups, regions and occupations affected by the transition is essential. The *Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102)* and the *Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202)*¹⁹⁹ provide essential frameworks to develop such policies.

Furthermore, adequate care services and gender-transformative social protection make it possible for more women to participate in the formal economy and to engage in decent work, as they help promote employment and increase women’s bargaining power. Thus, a just transition to a low-carbon economy is an opportunity to enhance social protection, while transforming gender norms and, in parallel, to recognize, reduce and redistribute care work.²⁰⁰ Social protection systems need to be adequately designed in terms of inclusion and gender responsiveness, particularly as regards climate-related risks.²⁰¹ A focus on social protection, considering its strong links with the gender dimension, is particularly necessary for policies to address adaptation and loss and damage.²⁰² Moreover, social

¹⁹⁶ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 2022, 26.

¹⁹⁷ International Labour Office 2021.

¹⁹⁸ Pal and Cotinguiba 2019.

¹⁹⁹ See Annex II.

²⁰⁰ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2017.

²⁰¹ International Labour Office 2021.

²⁰² Interview with Bert de Wel, Climate Policy Officer at ITUC.

protection policies should be coordinated with vocational training and active labour market policies to ensure the social dimension of a sustainable economy.²⁰³

The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the need to expand social protection as a key tool to combat poverty and inequalities and strengthen social cohesion in times of crisis, including the climate crisis. Societies with robust social protection systems demonstrably had the ability to protect their populations against adverse impacts more effectively and rapidly during the COVID-19 crisis.²⁰⁴ In particular, improving social protection provision for women, taking account of their diversity and diverse needs, remains a paramount goal to ensure that crises do not worsen patterns of inequality, discrimination, and structural disadvantages. Parties should use the unique policy opportunity created by the COVID-19 pandemic to pursue the high road towards universal social protection.²⁰⁵ This will pave the way for social justice for all women and men and will empower societies to be more resilient to crises, including successfully meeting challenges stemming from environmental degradation and climate change.²⁰⁶

Box 8. Just transition social protection policies: supporting women in the face of climate challenges

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) funded [Poverty, Reforestation, Energy and Climate Change Project \(PROEZA\)](#), implemented by the Government of Paraguay in partnership with the FAO, promotes incentives to mitigate climate change in an environmentally friendly and socially responsible way. PROEZA's adaptation strategy consists of supporting poor and extremely poor rural vulnerable households to increase their resilience to climate change through the diversification of production through intensive social and technical assistance for the establishment of climate-smart agroforestry production systems and/or multifunctional "Close-to-Nature" planted forests.²⁰⁷ The beneficiaries are 87,210 people living in poverty and extreme poverty in an area affected by climate change, of which 43,600 are women and 14,800 are indigenous. In its [Gender Action Plan](#), the project includes specific indicators targeting women's social protection. For instance, among its targets, it establishes that "Women from 17,100 households receive financial support (...) to ensure food security until agroforestry models begin to generate incomes" and "Women of beneficiary's households receiving financial support from the social Tekoporã programme".²⁰⁸ While being an interesting example of how gender-transformative social protection can be included at the outset of a climate change adaptation project, its results remain to be assessed, as the project is still in its [inception phase](#) and has so far only received a small percentage of funding.²⁰⁹

²⁰³ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2015b.

²⁰⁴ International Labour Office 2021.

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

²⁰⁶ International Labour Office (ILO) 2021.

²⁰⁷ Green Climate Fund 2018b.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Green Climate Fund 2018a.

An example of a more established programme, which has been the subject of numerous studies, is that of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in India. Introduced in 2006, this is one of the largest and most ambitious public works programmes in the world, with 128.5 million registered households across 685 districts in India.²¹⁰ It legally entitles all rural adults to 100 days of work in public works per household per year, at minimum wages.²¹¹ The work is mainly related to natural resource management activities, including soil and water conservation.²¹² The programme increased person-days of female employment and includes key gender-sensitive provisions. For instance, at least one-third of work offerings at the worksites are reserved for women, equal wages between men and women, specific work activities for pregnant and lactating women, reserved spaces for women on central and state employment guarantee councils, and a provision of crèche and childcare facilities on the worksite.²¹³ Both cases underscore options for combining gender equality in the implementation of social protection measures in the context of climate change adaptation and environmental conservation policies, contributing to priority area four of the GAP (*gender-responsive implementation and means of implementation*).

g. Active labour market policies

The transition to a green economy poses challenges similar to those of earlier transitions caused by technological revolutions and globalization. Just transition-linked active labour market policies can help enterprises and workers, as well as unemployed persons, face these challenges. The anticipation of changing labour market demands towards a greener economy, through sound labour market information and data collection systems, as well as social dialogue, is essential to helping governments, employers, workers, and education and training systems identify the skills in demand and take appropriate measures to provide timely training. Employment services can help facilitate the match between labour demand and supply in the workforce transition to green occupations.²¹⁴

Considering women's overrepresentation in the informal economy and guided by the *ILO Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204)*, policymakers should include in the design of just transition policies a transformation of precarious, informal work into decent jobs that are environmentally sustainable, thus reducing women's and families' vulnerabilities to climate change.²¹⁵ There is also an opportunity to incentivize the formalization of informal enterprises, including women-led businesses in the informal economy, while integrating climate and gender considerations in the process.²¹⁶

²¹⁰ Curry 2019.

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² Has India's Employment Guarantee Program Achieved Intended Targets? - A. Amarender Reddy, Namrata Singha Roy, Divya Pradeep, 2021 n.d.

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2015b.

²¹⁵ Joy Hernandez, ITUC.

²¹⁶ Interview with Robert Marinkovic, IOE.

h. Rights

Along with human rights treaties, such as the as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women²¹⁷, international labour standards offer robust tools within the Just Transition framework for addressing the challenges in the world of work connected with achieving a greener and more gender-equal economy.²¹⁸ These standards provide clear rules for the just transition framework to ensure that a transition towards a greener and more gender-equal economy would go hand in hand with social justice, prosperity and peace for all. International labour standards are legal instruments drawn up by the ILO's constituents (governments, employers and workers) setting out basic principles and rights at work. Standards are adopted by a two-thirds majority vote of ILO constituents and are therefore an expression of universally acknowledged principles. In most cases, international labour standards have universal value and apply to all workers and all enterprises.²¹⁹ Due to the fact that many standards cover specific industries or groups of workers, they offer a social pillar for the green economy²¹⁷ and are key in ensuring that emerging sectors offer decent working conditions.²²⁰ A list of international labour standards and resolutions that may be relevant to a just transition framework is provided in *Annex II*. For instance, *ILO Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205)* provides guidelines regarding the need to include just transition considerations in building the response to crisis situations.

Box 9. Recommendation No. 205: incorporating just transition considerations in crisis response²²¹

In its article 7 (f) and (j), Recommendation No. 205 highlights that when taking measures on employment and decent work in response to crisis situations arising from conflicts and disasters, and with a view to prevention, Members should consider the need for a just transition and to combat discrimination, including gender-based discrimination. Furthermore, article 8 (c) establishes that Members should adopt a phased multi-track approach implementing coherent and comprehensive strategies for promoting peace, preventing crises, enabling recovery, and building resilience that include promoting a just transition towards an environmentally sustainable economy. Article 11 (e) states that Members should, in consultation with the most representative employers' and workers' organizations, adopt inclusive measures in order to promote full, productive, freely chosen employment and decent work and income-generation opportunities through, as appropriate, facilitating a just transition towards an environmentally sustainable economy as a means for sustainable economic growth and social progress, and for creating new jobs and income-generation opportunities.

²¹⁷ United Nations Human Rights Council 2019.

²¹⁸ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2015b.

²¹⁹ International Labour Office 2019b.

²²⁰ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2018b.

²²¹ General Conference of the International Labour Organization n.d.

Furthermore, ILO standards on occupational safety and health are also relevant as they not only offer a framework to safer and healthier workplaces, but also include provisions that contribute to the preservation of the environment. While environmental concerns are primarily addressed through the lens of worker protection, environmental protection has increasingly become an objective in its own right in these standards, through rules on environmentally sound management of pollution and waste disposal, hazard control and accident prevention, and the protection of the environment in specific sectors.²²² The *Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169)*²²³ also addresses environmental protection, requiring environmental impact assessments to be carried out in relation to development activities that may affect indigenous peoples.²²⁴ What is more, ILO Convention No. 169 is a key framework to ensure indigenous women's participation in decision-making processes that affect them, including climate policy.²²⁵ This instrument focuses on equality of opportunity and treatment for indigenous women and stresses participation in decision-making as essential for tackling discrimination and inequality.²²⁶

Box 10. ILO Convention No. 169: a key framework for ensuring indigenous women's participation in climate policy making

Peru ratified the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169) in 1994. On April 2nd, 2018, the country passed its Framework law on Climate Change (Law 30,754), which directly references ILO Convention No. 169 in its section on indigenous participation.²²⁷ This legislation expressly acknowledges the role of indigenous peoples in the response to climate change and provides a framework for their participation in designing and implementing mitigation and adaptation strategies.²²⁸ Indigenous women organizations participated actively in the process of formulation of a Regulation for implementation Law 30,754, where the duty of consultation and the right of participation of indigenous peoples, as enshrined in ILO Convention No. 169, are reinforced.²²⁹ In 2020, the Indigenous Peoples' Platform to Combat Climate Change ([*Plataforma de los Pueblos Indígenas para enfrentar el Cambio Climático*](#))²³⁰ was created in response to a demand made by indigenous peoples' organizations.²³¹ The platform is composed of representatives of the seven national indigenous organizations in Peru, among which are two national indigenous women organizations.²³² The participation of indigenous women's organizations in the consultation process contributed to the inclusion of a gender, intersectional and intergenerational perspective, and represents an important contribution to GAP priority area two, namely, gender balance, participation and leadership in climate policy.

²²² International Labour Organization (ILO) 2018b.

²²³ See Annex II.

²²⁴ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2018b.

²²⁵ Interview with Txai Suruí, Brazilian indigenous youth leader.

²²⁶ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2021a.

²²⁷ Peru 2018.

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ ONAMIAP 2019b; ONAMIAP 2019a; ONAMIAP 2021.

²³⁰ Ministerio del Ambiente, Peru 2021.

²³¹ Ministerio de Cultura de Perú 2020.

²³² Ibid.

i. Social dialogue and tripartism

One of the guiding principles of the ILO Guidelines is the need for strong social consensus on the goal and pathways to sustainability. Social dialogue has to be an integral part of the institutional framework for policymaking and implementation at all levels. Social dialogue is defined by the ILO to include all forms of “negotiation, consultation or simply exchange of information between, or among representatives of governments, employers and workers, on issues of common interest”.²³³ It can exist both as a tripartite process with the government as an official party to the dialogue, or as bipartite relations only between trade unions and employers’ organizations, with or without indirect government involvement.²³⁴ A social dialogue process may be “informal or institutionalized and is often a combination of the two. It can take place at the national, regional or at enterprise level. It can be sectoral, inter-professional or a combination of these”.²³⁵

The main purpose of social dialogue is “to promote consensus building and democratic involvement among the main stakeholders in the world of work”²³⁶. The ILO Guidelines include specific roles and responsibilities of governments, workers’ and employers’ organizations at different levels. They also call on consultation with other stakeholders where necessary, including women’s organizations. Social dialogue is “an indispensable building block of sustainable development and must be at the centre of policies for strong, sustainable and inclusive growth and development”²³⁷.

While continuous improvements are made in women’s representation in trade unions and employer’s organizations, social dialogue is an invaluable tool to ensure women’s participation and representation.²³⁸ For instance, collective bargaining ensures improved pay and working conditions and provides essential support in just transition policies for reskilling and redeployment.²³⁹ Achieving social dialogue with all the social partners involved and broader stakeholder consensus with environmental organizations and other civil society organizations, is a central element towards balanced climate decisions.²⁴⁰ The Just Transition Guidelines are a concrete instrument to involve civil society in decision making to ensure support and social acceptance of climate policies. The social dialogue process aspects of just transition policies are thus essential; they need to be gender inclusive and integrate all people in society.²⁴¹

²³³ Olsen and La Hovary 2021, 18.

²³⁴ Olsen and La Hovary 2021.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, 18.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*

²³⁷ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2015b.

²³⁸ Interview with Bert de Wel, Climate Policy Officer at the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC).

²³⁹ Smith 2017.

²⁴⁰ Interview with Josdeny Alely Alarcón González, Deputy Director for Climate Change at Mexico’s General Direction for Global Affairs.

²⁴¹ Interview with Bert de Wel, Climate Policy Officer, ITUC.

Box 11. Improving access to clean energy for workers in the informal economy through social dialogue: the case of the Self-Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) in India²⁴²

The Self-Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) organizes workers in the informal economy in several states in India and currently has 2.1 million members, including waste pickers, small farmers, and salt pan farmers. Salt pan farmers are independent workers, more than 95 per cent of whom are women, whose work is exposed to weather variations and is strongly affected by rains. They have long been neglected by public policies and are facing increasing hardships. Rising energy prices have a direct effect in salt production, as workers need to pump water into the pans to harvest the salt. Traditionally, farmers burned diesel to provide energy to such pumps, leading to high levels of CO₂ emissions. Through SEWA initiatives towards green energy and just transition, diesel pumps were replaced with over 4,500 solar pumps. On an annual basis, the use of this equipment has the capacity of reducing the common carbon emission by at least 40,000 tons. So far, cumulative savings on carbon emissions amounted to over 200,000 tons and there was an increase in production of salt from 600 tons to over 800 tons. Salt pan farmers use these panels for around six months, from October to March, to support salt production. After negotiations with the government, it has been agreed that these solar panels can be installed in a solar panel park for the remaining six months, generating green energy and income for the women working in the sector. Thus, the women have an additional source of income and are becoming more resilient to impacts stemming from climate change and unseasonal rain.

Social dialogue has played a crucial role in ensuring that the needs of salt pan farmers were met, and that appropriate policies were implemented. Women participated in the process of designing the response to the problem and were also involved in the implementation of the strategy. The organization of women in the association provided a platform to engage in dialogue with policymakers and ensure that solar panel parks could be leveraged to reduce costs and emissions in salt production, while also providing an additional source of income for the women.

B. Incorporating just transition targets as a vehicle to gender equality in NDCs and NAPs

The previous section demonstrates that just transition policies covering all nine policy areas can yield meaningful improvements towards gender equality and women’s empowerment in a changing world of work. While there are signs of marginal improvements in the inclusion of just transition considerations and the gender dimension in NDCs, the inclusion of just transition as a vehicle for gender equality in the transition to green economies is lacking as regards NAPs. A report released by the UNFCCC secretariat in 2021 suggests that a higher number of Parties provided information on their consideration of just transition in updated NDCs as compared to the previous round of NDCs.²⁴³ The report also indicates that the share of Parties referring to gender – independently of just transition — in their new or updated NDCs has increased significantly: currently, only 14 per cent of Parties *do not* refer to gender, while 65 per cent *did not* do so in previous NDCs. This represents a significant

²⁴² Interview with SEWA representatives.

²⁴³ UNFCCC 2021b.

advance and testifies to the results of efforts to mainstream gender in the context of the international climate change regime.²⁴⁴ Nevertheless, only 28 per cent of Parties referred to gender in their NDCs as a cross-cutting issue to be addressed across adaptation and mitigation plans.²⁴⁵ Also in 2021, the UNFCCC secretariat released a note indicating that gender considerations had been included in all new NAPs presented that year.²⁴⁶ The note does not make any reference to the inclusion of a just transition in NAPs.²⁴⁷

The incorporation of gender and just transition considerations in some NDCs has been the result of coordinated work among UN agencies and national governments. As the case studies presented below show, through the NDC Partnership²⁴⁸ and UNDP's Climate Promise²⁴⁹, international organizations have been strengthening capacity-building efforts to support governments in mainstreaming gender and just transition considerations in their NDCs, in line with the GAP's priority area one (*capacity-building, knowledge management and communication*).

Despite the progress made, there is still an urgent need to build capacity to recognize the crucial value of just transition policies for supporting gender-transformative climate action and design targeted action in this regard.²⁵⁰ Just transition and gender-transformative climate actions are cross-cutting and mutually reinforcing issues which are central to pave the way for fair and equitable low-carbon economies. Furthermore, there is a clear need to better include data and encourage data production supporting just transition policies in NDCs and NAPs including sex disaggregated indicators. Just transition objectives outlined in these documents should ideally include a specific timeline for their implementation and ensure adequate budget allocations.

Box 12. Multistakeholder support to NDC formulation and implementation

Through the [Climate Promise](#) programme, the UNDP has supported 120 countries in revising and enhancing their NDCs. UNDP's Climate Promise includes UN partners, such as the ILO, as well as multilateral banks, intergovernmental and international organizations, and civil society groups.²⁵¹ Of the 94 Climate Promise countries that submitted enhanced NDCs in 2020-21, 90 integrated gender dimensions (compared to just 45 in the initial round of NDCs in 2015). 39 percent of NDC revisions involved multistakeholder consultations including gender perspectives, compared to 2 percent in 2015.²⁵² In partnership with the ILO and its [Climate](#)

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

²⁴⁶ UNFCCC 2021c.

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

²⁴⁸ NDC Partnership n.d.; NDC Partnership n.d.; The Government of Belize 2021; The Government of Antigua and Barbuda 2021.

²⁴⁹ UNDP n.d.; United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) 2022; Svenja Viebe et al. n.d.; Svenja Wiebe, Simas, and Harsdorff 2021.

²⁵⁰ Interview with representative of Josdeny Alely Alarcón González, Deputy Director for Climate Change at Mexico's General Direction for Global Affairs. She highlighted that capacity-building initiatives should be developed in an inclusive manner and be made available in different languages.

²⁵¹ UNDP n.d.; UNDP n.d.

²⁵² UNDP 2022.

[Action for Jobs Initiative](#), UNDP supported NDC development and implementation in several countries. The following cases represent particularly good examples of achieving gender-transformative climate action through a just transition.²⁵³

In [Zimbabwe](#)²⁵⁴ and [Nigeria](#)²⁵⁵, the ILO and UNDP support just transition policymaking through evidence-based green jobs assessments that measure the impact of priority NDC measures on Gross Domestic Product (GDP), employment, skills, income distribution, and gender equality, and help lay the groundwork for a just transition. With technical support from the ILO and UNDP, both countries have built nationally owned macroeconomic models, called Green Jobs Assessment Models (GJAM) and analysed 12 NDC policy scenarios against the economic multiplier and job creation potentials.²⁵⁶ The GJAM were further complemented by qualitative assessments of just transition entry points conducted by ILO country offices. Findings of both assessments have been reflected in the updated NDCs with clear reference to each government's commitment to achieve just transition that supports gender equality in the world of work. For instance, among the adaptation measures listed in its updated NDC, Zimbabwe committed to promoting “the use and roll-out of gender sensitive climate-smart agriculture technologies and practices”.²⁵⁷ In its NDC, Nigeria included the aim to “provide access to loan and microcredits for women to engage in small-scale waste management projects”.²⁵⁸ The policy recommendations on leveraging job opportunities and achieving just transition will be further realized through ILO and UNDP's country work programmes that support green enterprise development, jobs upskilling/reskilling, and the design of accompanying industrial and social protection policies. The national research team consisting of national research institutes, national statistics office, and local consultants will also receive capacity building support to be able to use the model for future policy planning.²⁵⁹

Another important initiative is the [NDC Partnership](#) that includes among its members several countries, UN organizations, regional international organizations, civil society organizations as well as multilateral banks.²⁶⁰ Through the partnership, members can leverage their resources and expertise to provide countries with the tools they need to implement their NDCs and combat climate change to build a better future.²⁶¹ The NDC Partnership supported the development of [Antigua and Barbuda's NDC](#) which includes specific targets for a just transition supporting gender-transformative action, including specific targets at the intersection of both.²⁶² For instance, in the realm of social inclusion and social protection it anticipates, by 2030, a “50% reduction in the average annual preparation costs for hurricanes on single-parent households”. It also expects that, by

²⁵³ Interview with Verania Chao and Sangji Lee, respectively Programme Specialist - Climate, Gender and Inclusion and Climate Change and Green Economy Technical Specialist at UNDP's Climate Promise Programme and written contribution by UNDP.

²⁵⁴ Svenja Wiebe et al. n.d.

²⁵⁵ Svenja Wiebe, Simas, and Harsdorff 2021.

²⁵⁶ Svenja Wiebe et al. n.d.; Svenja Wiebe, Simas, and Harsdorff 2021.

²⁵⁷ Government of Zimbabwe 2021, 15.

²⁵⁸ The Federal Government of Nigeria 2021, 29.

²⁵⁹ Interview with Verania Chao and Sangji Lee, respectively Programme Specialist - Climate, Gender and Inclusion and Climate Change and Green Economy Technical Specialist at UNDP's Climate Promise Programme and written contribution by UNDP.

²⁶⁰ NDC Partnership n.d.; NDC Partnership n.d.

²⁶¹ NDC Partnership n.d.; NDC Partnership n.d.

²⁶² The Government of Antigua and Barbuda 2021.

2030, “100% of female-headed households have all barriers removed to access back-up renewable energy generation and storage systems (i.e., 20,000 homes)” and a “20% increase in the number of women-led businesses implementing renewable energy and adaptation interventions”.²⁶³ In addition, it targets the development of a gender-responsive green business development programme by 2025, and that by 2030 “100% of community businesses and organizations that support women in their post-extreme weather event recovery are identified and provided with support for their efforts to facilitate women’s ability to resume work/livelihoods”. It also aims to develop, by 2030 a gender-responsive approach to the just transition in the energy and construction sectors (*Baseline: currently approximately 95% men in these sectors*).²⁶⁴

C. Climate finance for a just transition: supporting gender equality in the world of work

One of the main challenges for the sustainability and scaling up of just transition initiatives that leverage gender equality is access to financial resources, as underscored by the example of the PAGE project in Burkina Faso. Expanding climate finance for just transition at scale is key for supporting gender equality in the emerging green economy and should reach and strengthen women’s organizations, enterprises, and cooperatives.²⁶⁵ Climate finance that supports a just transition, can enhance climate resilience, reduce emissions, and advance gender equality and women’s enjoyment of their human rights. Both adaptation and mitigation strategies need to be carefully managed through just transition policies and processes, to avoid economic changes resulting in increased gender inequality.²⁶⁶ Climate finance should be directed toward just transition projects, which directly benefit women and are designed, decided, and implemented with their full and effective participation, considering women in all their diversity as well as the particular challenges faced by them²⁶⁷, including due to social norms that limit their access to productive assets, such as land.²⁶⁸

Recently, some initiatives emerged aiming at financing a just transition. At COP 26, multilateral development banks (MDBs) jointly committed to supporting a just transition through the [MDB Just Transition High-Level Principles](#). The principles highlight the centrality of deploying a gender-lens to mitigate negative socio-economic impacts and increase opportunities associated with the transition to a green economy and include provisions for inclusive planning, implementation and monitoring of just transition policies, aiming to advance gender equality.²⁶⁹ Also at COP 26, the Climate Investment Funds (CIF) launched the Accelerating Coal Transition (ACT) investment program, an effort to

²⁶³ Ibid.

²⁶⁴ Ibid.

²⁶⁵ UN Women 2022b.

²⁶⁶ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2021d.

²⁶⁷ For instance, ITUC representatives highlighted that financing options that use conditional financing models might be inaccessible for many women, as they demand for cash or asset guarantees that beneficiary women are often unable to provide.

²⁶⁸ Ibid.

²⁶⁹ Islamic Development Bank 2021.

advance a just transition from coal power to clean energy in emerging economies, which however does not include a gender-lens.²⁷⁰ In 2020, the EU launched its Just Transition Mechanism, which offers targeted support to help mobilise funds to alleviate socio-economic impacts of the transition.²⁷¹ At the same time, an increasing number of climate funds are recognising the importance of the gender dimension of climate investments. The Green Climate Fund (GCF), the main multilateral climate fund for the implementation of the Paris Agreement, has a mandate to integrate a gender approach into its policy frameworks and funding operations from the outset.²⁷² Through its Gender Policy, the GCF pledged to "consistently mainstream gender issues in its implementation arrangements and frameworks for its projects".²⁷³ The attention placed by these funds on gender-equality resulted in important fund structure and policy improvements.²⁷⁴ Nevertheless, the linkages between the just transition and gender-transformative climate action need to be made clearer in investment policies to ensure that climate finance and the projects or initiatives supported by it do not exacerbate gender inequalities in the world of work, and instead support a just transition for all. The case presented in the box below represents an example of promoting gender equality through investment in green jobs for women.

Box 14. Promoting Green Jobs for Women: European Investment Bank Financing in the Pune and Bangalore Metro Lines in India

The European Investment Bank (EIB) is stepping up its efforts on gender responsive public and private climate finance and just transition through its Climate Bank Roadmap.²⁷⁵ EIB is also a member of the [2X Collaborative](#) initiative, a global industry body that convenes various investors to promote gender and climate responsive investing.²⁷⁶

EIB financed two metro lines in Pune and Bangalore, in India.²⁷⁷ The lines are estimated to save 29 million hours in travel time, while reducing GHG emissions and improving air quality in both cities. Provisions to make the metro a more inclusive workplace were included in the design of the investment.²⁷⁸ In that sense, 33 per cent of the positions as drivers and station controllers will be filled by women and specific skills trainings were provided for them to become drivers.²⁷⁹ Crèche facilities were provided for employees and women drivers are scheduled to work at stations close to where they live. Working schedules are also

²⁷⁰ CIF Action 2021.

²⁷¹ European Commission n.d.

²⁷² Schalatek 2020.

²⁷³ Green Climate Fund 2019.

²⁷⁴ Schalatek 2020.

²⁷⁵ European Investment Bank (EIB) 2020.

²⁷⁶ 2X Collaborative n.d.

²⁷⁷ 2X Collaborative n.d.

²⁷⁸ Interview with Moa Westman and Sladjana Cosic, respectively Gender Specialist and Senior Social Development Specialist at EIB.

²⁷⁹ 2X Collaborative n.d.

designed to be respectful of women's needs.²⁸⁰ For instance, women with small children who are not able to perform night shifts, have priority to take up morning or afternoon shifts.²⁸¹ The project is still in its implementing phase, so results are yet to be assessed.

Although some initiatives to finance the just transition are emerging, “actual delivery remains at an early stage and action in 2022 needs to intensify as part of efforts to keep global warming to 1.5°C”.²⁸² Similarly, the pace of gender integration in climate investment is slow and its impact is fragmented.²⁸³ There is a need for adequate and increased investment in a just transition²⁸⁴ and for better coordinating finance frameworks and investment strategies in support of gender equality in the greening of the economy. In addition to stepping up government action towards a just transition, an “acceleration in investor action to support the just transition is now needed (...), particularly to ensure a convergence around common approaches and to deliver real results on the ground”.²⁸⁵ Action is also needed for better integrating just transition budgeting into national plans to advance gender-transformative climate policies, plans, strategies, and action. Also, as developing nations struggle to respond to the effects and impacts of both the climate crisis and the pandemic, there is a need for climate finance to scale up much more rapidly, and do so equitably, with the objective to provide decent work opportunities to women and vulnerable groups²⁸⁶ in the emerging green economy thus ensuring a just transition for all.

²⁸⁰ Interview with Moa Westman and Sladjana Cosic, respectively Gender Specialist and Senior Social Development Specialist at EIB

²⁸¹ Ibid.

²⁸² Robins and Mueller 2021, 2.

²⁸³ Williams 2021, 7.

²⁸⁴ Smith and Koning 2021.

²⁸⁵ Robins, Muller, and Szwarc 2021.

²⁸⁶ Williams 2021.

V. The way forward

A. Concluding remarks

The [Just Transition Guidelines](#) offer a vital framework for designing policies, measures, and actions for generating green job opportunities for all women and men, reducing gender inequalities and leveraging women's empowerment for furthering meaningful climate action. Drawing on the Just Transition Guidelines, just transition policies and programmes need to consider the strong gender dimension of environmental challenges and opportunities. In a just transition, specific gender transformative policies should be designed to promote equality of opportunity and treatment in the world of work. This involves minimizing social, economic, and environmental risks while also encouraging greater inclusion and strengthening climate mitigation and adaptation efforts through the empowerment of women as key agents of change. As demonstrated throughout this paper, just transition and the promotion of gender equality at work are intrinsically linked and mutually reinforcing. **Just transition is an essential pathway to ensure gender equality and inclusiveness in the world of work.**

The Just Transition Guidelines cover nine policy areas²⁸⁷ to address environmental, economic, and social sustainability simultaneously, that can create meaningful opportunities for gender equality and women's empowerment in the green economy. The coordinated and coherent implementation of policies in the nine areas promote inclusive opportunities for all women and men in a low-carbon economy, including for those experiencing intersectional forms of discrimination. A just transition of the workforce, which by definition enhances gender-equality and creates decent work for both women and men, is an essential element for gender-transformative implementation and means of implementation of climate policy and action, enabling Parties to raise ambition and achieve a sustainable and socially just low-carbon economy.

B. Possible elements for consideration by Parties, Non-Party stakeholders and other actors

This technical paper has underlined the vital linkages between a just transition and gender-transformative climate action. Addressing the climate crisis has never been more urgent, while its impacts have already been borne disproportionately by women. This section presents possible elements for consideration by the Parties to the UNFCCC, by Non-Party stakeholders²⁸⁸, grouped into

²⁸⁷ These policy areas were established based on tripartite consensus during the 2013 International Labour Conference, which considered evidence and lessons learned. The nine policy areas are: (i) macroeconomic and growth policies; (ii) industrial and sectoral policies; (iii) enterprise policies; (iv) skills development; (v) occupational safety and health; (vi) social protection; (vii) active labour market policies; (viii) rights; (ix) social dialogue and tripartism.

²⁸⁸ UNFCCC n.d.

nine recognised constituencies²⁸⁹, as well as by all other actors engaging in climate policy who are not represented in the UNFCCC processes, but may find value in the paper (hereafter, 'Parties, Non-Party stakeholders and other actors').

In view of the limited engagements undertaken regarding gender equality in the world of work and just transition, Parties, Non-Party stakeholders and other actors may consider:

- a) Recognizing the critical role of a just transition, which draws on the Just Transition Guidelines, in ensuring that climate action is gender-transformative.
- b) Integrating just transition as a key priority-area for gender-transformative climate action in the Lima work programme on gender.
- c) Enhancing engagements with the International Labour Organization to develop capacities and further an understanding regarding the Just Transition Guidelines, and its role in developing national level policies and interventions.

While there is growing scientific consensus that climate change has gendered effects and exacerbates pre-existing gender inequalities, improved data on the gendered impacts of climate change and climate policy in the world of work is needed. Considering the upcoming intermediate review of the progress of implementation of the activities contained in the GAP at the fifty-sixth session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation in June 2022, during their discussions, Parties, Non-Party stakeholders and other actors may consider:

- a) Developing an indicator framework defined by a common, core set of indicators that builds on the SDGs and focuses specifically on monitoring just transition policies at national level through a gender equality and intersectional lens.
- b) National statistical producers may consider using international statistical standards, such as the [*Guidelines concerning a statistical definition of employment in the environmental sector*](#), to collect comparable and coherent data within their country across time on the environmental sector and green jobs, including consideration for disaggregation of data by sex and other intersecting characteristics, such as race, ethnicity, indigenous identity, age, disability and migration status.
- c) Developing research to assess the precise consequences of the transition to a green economy for women. Policy scenario estimations should include gender-disaggregation, in order to detect potential negative impacts of transition policies on women's participation in the labour market, as well to test the effects of equality policies in just transition scenarios.

²⁸⁹ Namely: Business and Industry NGOs (BINGO), Environmental NGOs (ENGO), Farmer and agricultural NGOs (Farmers), Indigenous peoples organisations (IPO), Local governments and municipal authorities (LGMA), Research and independent NGOs (NGOs), Trade union NGOs (TUNGO), Women and Gender Constituency (WGC) and Youth NGOs (YOUNGO) (UNFCCC n.d.).

The ILO adopted the Just Transition Guidelines, which offer an important pathway for ensuring gender-transformative climate action. At the national level, Parties, Non-Party stakeholders and other actors may consider:

- a) Adopting the Just Transition Guidelines and introducing clear commitments and language highlighting the gender-transformative policies within their just transition plans, policies, and programmes in a systematic way, including in the context of their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and pledges and initiative for Net Zero.
- b) Including, in particular, detailed, and actionable frameworks to address skills gaps and worker rights gaps supporting in particular women, indigenous peoples and youth and include gender-transformative care and social protection policies in their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and strategies for Net Zero.
- c) Fostering opportunities for women to become green entrepreneurs, thus encouraging green businesses and green employers that respond to the goal of gender equality. In this sense, specific training programmes for women on green entrepreneurship, access to finance and resources and skills development will be key to ensure that enterprises become simultaneously greener and more gender equal.
- d) Fostering international cooperation with international institutions, including ILO and workers' and employers' organizations, as well as other public, private, and civil society organizations that support national action for the inclusion of just transition considerations in national climate change policy, including through capacity-building.

Women are key agents of change for a just transition and their contribution and participation in green economic activities is essential for achieving equitable sustainable development. Thus, women's – including young women - full and equitable participation needs to be ensured in all steps of the formulation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of climate policies and programmes. Parties, Non-Party stakeholders and other should consider:

- a) Ensuring that gender considerations, human rights standards and international labour standards are fully integrated in climate action, as recognized by the international climate change regime.
- b) Ensuring gender mainstreaming throughout governmental activities, including coordination between the governmental institutions working on women's rights, gender justice and human rights, and those working in relevant policy areas for the just transition, such as Ministries of Labour, Gender equality, Environment, Energy, Agriculture and rural development, Infrastructure, among others.
- c) Particularly at a national level, incorporating gender policy scenarios in national just transition plans, drawing on the Just Transition Guidelines.

- d) Implementing specific policy measures to ensure women's participation in decision-making on climate action and just transition, including at the global, regional, national, and local levels.
- e) The strong encouragement of social dialogue processes and institutions to develop, implement, and monitor just transition policies, drawing upon analytical and research findings to inform such a dialogue.

Climate finance for a just transition is essential for achieving gender equality in the changing world of work, facilitating an inclusive transition, and creating decent work opportunities in the green and blue economy. In this regard, Parties, Non-Party stakeholders and other actors may consider:

- a) Integrating gender-budgeting within climate policies and including financial commitments for a just transition in order to achieve gender-transformative climate action in their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and pledges and initiatives for Net Zero.
- b) At the national level, strengthening access to finance for women's enterprises, including cooperatives, that contribute towards developing a low-carbon economy.
- c) Investing in social protection floors, care-related social infrastructures, and skills training for minimizing the gendered risks from the impacts of climate change and supporting the inclusion of women in the low-carbon economy.
- d) Ensuring that climate finance and the projects or initiatives supported by it do not exacerbate gender inequalities, and instead support a just transition for all women and men.
- e) Utilizing financial mechanisms designed to support climate action, such as the Green Climate Fund, for developing projects and initiatives that create green jobs opportunities in the low-carbon economy through a just transition for all women and men.

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Resources

[ILO Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all](#)

[Gender, labour and a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all](#)

[ILO Guidelines concerning a statistical definition of employment in the environmental sector](#)

[Greening with jobs – World Employment and Social Outlook 2018](#)

[Skills for a Greener Future](#)

[How to measure and model social and employment outcomes of climate and sustainable development policies](#)

[Care at work: Investing in care leave and services for a more gender equal world of work](#)

[World Social Protection Report 2020-22: Social protection at the crossroads – in pursuit of a better future](#)

[Financing human-centred COVID-19 recovery and decisive climate action worldwide: International cooperation's twenty-first century moment of truth](#)

Annex I – List of Interviews

The interviews were carried out in March 2022. A total of nine interviews were undertaken.

Stakeholder	Organizations	Name	Position
Social partners	International Organization of Employers (IOE)	Robert Marinkovic	Adviser
	International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)	Marieke Koning	Policy Adviser Equality
		Joy Quitain Hernandez	Communications and Advocacy Officer, ITUC - Asia Pacific
		Bert de Wel	Climate Policy Officer
	Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) - India	Reema Nanavaty	Director
		Megha Desai	Senior Coordinator, Leads the National Farmer's Forum Network
		Devesh Shah	Coordinator at SEWA and CEO Grassroots Trading Network for Women
		Naimisha Joshi	Senior Coordinator
Mexico's General Direction for Global Affairs	Josdeny Alely Alarcón González	Deputy Director for Climate Change	
Stakeholders in the project "Training and advisory support infrastructure for women entrepreneurs in green entrepreneurship in Burkina Faso"	Partnership for Action on a Green Economy (PAGE)	Albert Compaore	Partnership for Action on a Green Economy (PAGE) National Coordinator, Burkina Faso
	Maison de l'Entreprise du Burkina Faso	Ismaël Tannamda Sawadogo	Director of Marketing and Consulting Support GERME/ILO Trainer
		Sirikatou Honga	Head of Business Capacity Building
		Bèbè Wilfriéd Hovice Kansie	Project Manager SME Business Training & Coaching Loop
Indigenous Youth Leader	Associação de Defesa Etnoambiental Kanindé; Indigenous Youth Movement of	Walelasoetxeige Paiter Bandeira Suruí (Txai Suruí)	Counselor at Associação de Defesa Etnoambiental Kanindé; Coordinator at



	the Rondonia state (<i>Movimento da Juventude Indígena de Rondônia</i>);		Movimento da Juventude Indígena de Rondônia
Multilateral organisations	European Investment Bank (EIB)	Moa Westman	Gender Specialist Environment, Climate & Social Office
		Sladjana Cosic	Senior Social Development Specialist
	UN Women – Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific	Cecilia Tinonin	Statistics Specialist
		Sara Duerto Valero	Regional Advisor on Gender Statistics
	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)	Sangji Lee	Climate Change and Green Economy Technical Specialist at the Climate Promise Programme
		Verania Chao	Programme Specialist - Climate, Gender and Inclusion

Annex II – List of relevant international labour standards and resolutions

Some of the international labour standards and resolutions that may be relevant to a just transition framework, including its gender equality dimension, are listed below. The Annex includes the instruments listed in the Appendix to the 2013 ILC Conclusions²⁹⁰ and Annex I to the ILO Just Transition Guidelines²⁹¹, as well as key Conventions and Recommendations for gender equality in the world of work²⁹² and two relevant instruments relevant to a just transition adopted after 2015, namely Convention No. 190 and Recommendations No. 205.

A. Conventions on fundamental principles and rights at work (see [website for all Conventions](#))

- Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87)
- Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)
- Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)
- Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)
- Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100)
- Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)
- Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)
- Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)

B. Governance Conventions (see [website for all Conventions](#))

- Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122)
- Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81)
- Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144)
- Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969 (No. 129)

C. Other technical Conventions (see [website for all Conventions](#))

- Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97)
- Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102)
- Social Policy (Basic Aims and Standards) Convention, 1962 (No. 117)
- Paid Educational Leave Convention, 1974 (No. 140)
- Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No. 142)
- Working Environment (Air Pollution, Noise and Vibration) Convention, 1977 (No. 148)

²⁹⁰ International Labour Conference 2013.

²⁹¹ International Labour Organization (ILO) 2015b.

²⁹² International Labour Organization 2019, 66–67.

- Labour Administration Convention, 1978 (No. 150)
- Labour Relations (Public Service) Convention, 1978 (No. 151)
- Collective Bargaining Convention, 1981 (No. 154)
- Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155)
- Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156)
- Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983 (No. 159)
- Occupational Health Services Convention, 1985 (No. 161)
- Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169)
- Chemicals Convention, 1990 (No. 170)
- Night Work Convention, 1990 (No. 171)
- Prevention of Major Industrial Accidents Convention, 1993 (No. 174)
- Part-time Work Convention, 1994 (No. 175)
- Home Work Convention, 1996 (No. 177)
- Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183)
- Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187)
- Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189)
- Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190)

D. Recommendations (see [website for all Recommendations](#))

- Human Resources Development Recommendation, 2004 (No. 195)
- Job Creation in Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises Recommendation, 1998 (No. 189)
- Maternity Protection Recommendation, 2000 (No. 191)
- Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendation, 2002 (No. 193)
- HIV and AIDS Recommendations, 2010 (No. 200)
- Social Protection Floors Recommendation, 2012 (No. 202)
- Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204)
- Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience Recommendation, 2017 (No. 205)

E. Resolutions

- [Resolution concerning the promotion of sustainable enterprises – International Labour Conference](#), June 2007
- [Resolution concerning promotion of rural employment for poverty reduction – International Labour Conference](#), June 2008

Annex III – List of relevant international statistics standards adopted by the International Conference of Labour Statisticians

First convened in 1923, the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) is the recognized international standard-setting body on labour statistics. The ICLS meets every five years to establish the standards and participants include experts from governments, mostly from ministries of labour and national statistical offices, as well as from employers' and workers' organizations. Regional and international organizations and other interest groups attend as observers. The ICLS makes recommendations on selected topics of labour statistics in the form of resolutions and guidelines, which are then approved by the Governing Body of the ILO before becoming part of the set of international standards on labour statistics. These standards usually relate to concepts, definitions, classifications, and other methodological procedures which are agreed as representing 'best practice' in the respective areas. When used by national producers, these will increase the likelihood of having internationally comparable labour statistics as well as comparability across time within a country.

A. Labour Statistics Convention adopted by the International Labour Conference

- [Labour Statistics Convention, 1985 \(No. 160\)](#)

B. International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) (see [website for all ICLS standards](#))

The list below includes Resolutions, Guidelines and Checklist for mainstreaming gender in labour statistics relevant for monitoring just transition and gender equality in the world of work:

- 19th ICLS Resolution concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization, 2013
- 19th ICLS Guidelines concerning a statistical definition of employment in the environmental sector, 2013
- 20th ICLS Resolution concerning statistics on work relationships, 2018
- 18th ICLS Resolution concerning the measurement of working time, 2008
- 17th ICLS Guidelines concerning a statistical definition of informal employment, 2003
- 17th ICLS Checklist of good practices for mainstreaming gender in labour statistics, 2003
- 9th ICLS Resolution concerning the development of social security statistics, 1957