

Eskedar Awgichew Ergete
October 2025

Integrating a Just Transition for Workers' Rights and Livelihoods: Enhancing Ethiopia's NDC 3.0

*Enhance Ethiopia's NDC 3.0 With
A Just Transition Perspective*

Friedrich
Ebert 
Stiftung

Imprint

Publisher

FES-Ethiopia
Yeka Sub-City,
Addis Ababa
Ethiopia
info.ethiopia@fes.de

Publishing department

International Cooperation | Africa Department | FES Ethiopia

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Optal Communication and Technology PLC

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October 2025

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ISBN 978-99990-0-929-4

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

- **CETU**: Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions
- **COP**: Conference of the Parties (e.g., COP30)
- **CRGE**: Climate Resilient Green Economy Strategy
- **CSO**: Civil Society Organization
- **EPA**: Environmental Protection Authority
- **FES**: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung
- **ILO**: International Labor Organization
- **ILO-ACTRAV**: International Labor Organization's Bureau for Workers' Activities
- **ITUC**: International Trade Union Confederation
- **MoLS**: Ministry of Labor and Skills
- **MoPD**: Ministry of Planning and Development
- **MRV**: Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification
- **NAP**: National Adaptation Plan
- **NDC**: Nationally Determined Contribution
- **ODI**: Overseas Development Institute
- **TVET**: Technical and Vocational Education and Training
- **UNFCCC**: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Executive Summary: Integrating a Just Transition for Workers' Rights and Livelihoods: Enhancing Ethiopia's NDC 3.0

Ethiopia is a country with ambitious development goals, but it's also significantly vulnerable to climate change. The country is already feeling the effects, like droughts, floods, heatwaves and landslides. These changes are making life harder for people, causing job losses, health problems, and insecurity about their livelihoods. Women and young people are especially affected, facing a lot of stress and uncertainty. As Ethiopia works on its third Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC 3.0) to outline its climate action plans, the idea of a “Just Transition” becomes very important. A Just Transition means making sure that the move towards a low-carbon, climate-resilient economy is fair, socially balanced, and inclusive. It also means protecting vulnerable communities, especially workers, while still supporting Ethiopia's essential goals for industrialization and transformation. This report, a collaborative effort by Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) and its partners, and ILO-ACTRAV, assesses the integration of Just Transition principles in Ethiopia's climate policies and provides actionable recommendations for enhancing the NDC 3.0, with a focus on safeguarding workers' rights and livelihoods.

The assessment of Ethiopia's NDC 2.0 revealed a foundational commitment to climate action, yet also identified significant gaps in the explicit and comprehensive integration of Just Transition principles. While the document implicitly acknowledges broad socio-economic benefits from climate initiatives, it notably lacks dedicated frameworks for ensuring workers' rights, establishing robust social protection mechanisms, or systematically promoting decent green jobs during the transition. Furthermore, the engagement of non-state actors, particularly trade unions, in the NDC 2.0 development process was found to be non-existent. Consultations undertaken for this study highlighted a critical awareness gap: most local stakeholders, including key representatives from the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions (CETU) and its federations, did not possess a foundational understanding of the “Just Transition” concept. Even more critically, climate change was not consistently perceived or acknowledged as an immediate threat demanding organizational attention by the labor movement. This disconnect between policy intent and

stakeholder capacity has historically impeded effective labor advocacy in climate policy. Moreover, lessons from other African nations like South Africa underscore that even robust Just Transition policies on paper require diligent, worker-centric implementation with adequate social protection to genuinely benefit affected communities and avoid exacerbating existing inequalities.

Despite these challenges, encouraging signs of change are emerging. The ongoing preparatory process for NDC 3.0 reveals a wider space for participation, particularly since the Ministry of Planning and Development (MoPD)¹ assumed a more central role in coordinating the climate portfolio. This shift signals a growing recognition within government of the need for more inclusive policy development. While the implementation of NDC 2.0 faced challenges such as financial constraints, capacity gaps, and coordination issues, opportunities exist. The Ministry of Labor and Skills' “Green TVET” initiatives represent a concrete step towards skills

¹ The MoPD's involvement is particularly essential for a paradigm shift because, as the central planning authority, it possesses the mandate and capacity to integrate climate action and Just Transition principles across all national development plans, sectoral strategies, and budgetary allocations. This strategic oversight allows for a coherent, economy-wide approach, moving beyond fragmented environmental initiatives to a truly mainstreamed and resourced climate agenda that considers social and economic implications comprehensively. This mandate is further underscored by Ethiopia's Proclamation No. 1263/2021, Article 28, which explicitly states that the Ministry of Planning and Development shall have the power and duty to “initiate policies, strategies and laws with respect to development, national statistics, population, climate change and environment; prepare detail program compatible with national development plan and implement the same upon approval.”

development for a green economy, and the overall political will for climate action remains strong.

To leverage these opportunities and bridge the identified gaps, this report proposes a series of actionable recommendations for enhancing NDC 3.0 with a robust Just Transition perspective, guided by principles of social dialogue, decent work, inclusivity, and gender-responsiveness. These recommendations encompass policy adjustments for NDC 3.0 and specific guidance for empowering CETU. Regarding policy adjustments, the NDC 3.0 must explicitly commit to safeguarding workers' rights and livelihoods, including a strong gender dimension to address the disproportionate impacts on women workers. It should also define and promote green and decent jobs, setting clear targets for their creation across various sectors. The NDC 3.0 must outline a comprehensive national green skills strategy, expanding initiatives like Green TVET, and establishing targeted re-skilling and up-skilling programs. Furthermore, strengthening and expanding national social protection floors, with climate-sensitive social safety nets, is crucial. Finally, the NDC 3.0 needs to formalize inclusive governance mechanisms and social dialogue platforms, ensuring the systematic inclusion of workers' organizations from the earliest stages of policy development and implementation.

In terms of empowering CETU, recommendations include strengthening its internal capacity through targeted training on climate change and Just Transition, potentially leading to the establishment of a dedicated organizational unit. CETU should adopt strategic engagement approaches in the NDC 3.0 process, actively seeking formal representation and preparing robust policy proposals. Additionally, building alliances with international organizations, national civil society, youth groups, and progressive employers will amplify their advocacy efforts.

In conclusion, a truly Just Transition is not merely an aspiration for Ethiopia but a strategic imperative that ensures climate action drives equitable and sustainable development. While significant awareness and systemic gaps exist, the evolving political landscape for NDC 3.0 offers a unique window of opportunity. By consciously integrating comprehensive social safeguards, fostering decent work, investing in skills, strengthening social protection, and ensuring meaningful participation through robust social dialogue, Ethiopia can craft an NDC 3.0 that stands as a beacon of climate justice, building a more resilient, prosperous, and equitable future for all its citizens.



Side Event at the Second African Climate Summit (ACS2) "Social Dialogue for Climate and Jobs: Unions, Employers, Government, and Civil Society in Just Transition"
Date and Time: 09 September 2025
Source: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung e.V.

Section 1:

Introduction – The Imperative of a Just Transition in Ethiopia’s Climate Action



1.1 Background: Climate Change, Development, and the Ethiopian Context

Ethiopia is a country with bold economic growth and development goals, but it's facing a tough and growing challenge: its vulnerability to climate change. The country is already feeling the severe effects of a changing climate, like more frequent and intense heat waves, unpredictable rainfall that causes devastating floods, landslides and long droughts, and other extreme weather events. These environmental changes are directly threatening the livelihoods of millions of people, making it harder to grow crops, putting a strain on water resources, and worsening food insecurity

Beyond the broad environmental and economic repercussions, climate change has a direct and often immediate impact on the working and living conditions of the Ethiopian population. Workers and their communities, particularly informal sector workers who lack formal protections and safety nets, and women and youth who often bear a disproportionate burden due to existing socio-economic inequalities and their reliance on climate-sensitive livelihoods, are on the front lines of these impacts. The consequences are multifaceted and severe: job losses in climate-sensitive sectors like agriculture, heightened health risks due to extreme heat and waterborne diseases, significant safety concerns during extreme weather events, pervasive livelihood insecurity, loss of traditional rights to resources, income instability, climate induced migration and the psychological stress stemming from profound uncertainty about the future.

In response to the global climate crisis and in alignment with the Paris Agreement, the Ethiopian government is currently developing the third generation of its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC 3.0). This crucial document will outline the nation's updated climate action plans, commitments, and pathways for both mitigating greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the unavoidable impacts of climate change. The NDC 3.0 represents a critical opportunity to chart a course for sustainable and resilient development.

Parallel to this national climate planning, the concept of "Just Transition" has gained prominence globally since its emergence in the 1980s. For Ethiopia, a Just Transition is not merely an ideological concept but a practical necessity for ensuring that the nation's vital shift towards a low-carbon, climate-resilient economy is fundamentally equitable, socially balanced, inclusive, and protective of its most vulnerable communities, especially its workers. This imperative must be carefully balanced with Ethiopia's overarching industrialization and economic transformation agenda, ensuring that climate action supports rather than hinders national development goals. A true Just Transition demands prioritizing workers' rights, establishing robust social protection mechanisms, and investing in skills development for those employed in sectors likely to be affected by climate policies, such as agriculture, energy, and mining.

Simultaneously, it advocates for the proactive creation of new, green, and decent jobs. Ensuring that the NDC 3.0 meaningfully embraces a comprehensive Just Transition strategy is, therefore, of significant interest and paramount importance for all Ethiopian stakeholders, particularly those within the labor movement.

1.2 The Role of Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) and Partners

The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) in Ethiopia is committed to fostering sustainable development and social justice. In this context, FES actively collaborates with its partners from the Ethiopian and African Trade Union movement, working in close collaboration with the International Labor Organization's (ILO) Bureau for Workers' Activities (ILO-ACTRAV). This partnership aims to champion and promote a Just Transition that robustly safeguards the future and livelihoods of workers and their communities as Ethiopia navigates its essential shift towards a low-carbon, climate-resilient economy. This report is a direct outcome of this collaborative effort, providing critical analysis and guidance to ensure that climate action truly benefits all segments of Ethiopian society.

1.3 Objectives of the Report

This study aims to critically assess Ethiopia's existing climate policies, with a particular focus on the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) 2.0, to identify gaps and challenges regarding the integration of Just Transition principles. The ultimate intention is to inform and improve the integration of these principles, with a special emphasis on safeguarding workers' rights and livelihoods, within the forthcoming NDC 3.0.

The study includes the following specific objectives. Firstly, it seeks to assess Ethiopia's national climate policies, in particular the NDC 2.0, concerning their commitment to a Just Transition. Secondly, it aims to examine the involvement of trade unions and other stakeholders in the climate policy-making and implementation processes, including Ethiopia's NDC 2.0 negotiations and climate action frameworks, and through what mechanisms. Thirdly, the report intends to describe some of the challenges and opportunities in implementing NDC 2.0 in Ethiopia and suggest practical solutions to inform the development of NDC 3.0. Fourthly, it strives to provide actionable recommendations for improving the integration of Just Transition principles into Ethiopia's climate policies and strategies, focusing on the need to safeguard workers' rights and livelihoods from a gender perspective. Finally, a key objective is to develop a set of policy and political lessons that can be shared with key stakeholders, including governments, trade unions, civil society, and private sector actors.

1.4 Scope of the Report

This report undertakes a comprehensive analysis to address the aforementioned objectives. The study process will consist of several key components. This includes a review of Ethiopia's climate policies, specifically the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) 2.0, while referencing the ILO Just Transition Guidelines and the Just Transition Mapping in the NDCs regarding their emphasis on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and enhancing climate resilience, with a specific focus on how they integrate workers' rights protection and socio-economic development. In this examination, a particular focus is placed on identifying critical links between the economy, decent work, and climate change within the examined policies. The report also explores best practices within existing policies that exemplify a well-integrated Just Transition approach that can be built upon. Furthermore, it analyzes the role of trade unions in advocating for a Just Transition in Ethiopia's NDC 2.0 and climate change negotiations, identifying opportunities to strengthen their influence in national climate discussions and policy-making. The report then provides actionable recommendations for improving the integration of Just Transition principles into Ethiopia's climate policies and strategies, particularly the NDC 3.0, focusing on safeguarding workers' rights and livelihoods. Guidance is also offered on how to foster an inclusive process, specifically integrating trade unions, for the NDC 3.0 preparation. Additionally, the report offers guidance on integrating gender-responsive approaches and safeguarding the rights of affected communities. Lastly, the study aims to develop a set of policy and political recommendations for key stakeholders, including governments, trade unions, civil society, and private sector actors.

1.5 Methodology

This report draws upon a mixed-methods approach to gather and analyze relevant information. Firstly, a comprehensive desk review of key national and international documents was conducted, including Ethiopia's NDC 2.0, the Climate Resilient Green Economy Strategy, national adaptation plans, relevant national laws and regulations, existing literature, reports, and other pertinent policy documents. This review also incorporated insights from the ILO Just Transition Guidelines and the Just Transition Mapping in the NDCs. Secondly, key stakeholder consultations were undertaken, with insights gathered through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions involving a diverse range of key stakeholders. This included representatives from the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions (CETU) and its affiliated federations (Agriculture, Textile, Food and Beverage), government ministries such as the Ministry of Planning and Development (MoPD) and the Ministry of Labor and Skills (MoLS), civil society organizations (South South North, Consortium for Climate Change Ethiopia, Eco-justice Ethiopia, ActionAid Ethiopia), youth

organizations (Enfluencers, Youth Print), and international partners (ILO, FES). A group discussion was also held with compost manufacturing SMEs and informal waste pickers to capture grassroots perspectives. It was a significant observation during these consultations that, with the exception of international organizations and a couple of NGOs, a basic understanding of the "Just Transition" concept was largely absent among the interviewed stakeholders. Exposures to NDC was also largely minimal among the stakeholders. Notably the leadership and colleagues from CETU, have not been exposed to NDC or other national climate policies. They also did not demonstrate familiarity with the concept of just transition. Furthermore, it was evident that climate change was not consistently perceived or acknowledged as a direct or immediate threat that the organization or its federations were actively dealing with. This finding underscores a critical awareness and capacity gap that needs to be addressed for effective Just Transition integration. Thirdly, for the development of actionable recommendations, an examination of relevant international case studies on the involvement of trade unions in NDCs, climate change negotiations, and Just Transition practices was undertaken. Lessons learned from other countries facing similar socio-economic contexts proved supportive in formulating context-specific recommendations for Ethiopia. Lastly, the research actively applied gender-responsive and inclusive methodologies, ensuring that the diverse impacts of climate change and proposed Just Transition measures on different genders and vulnerable groups were considered.

1.6 Defining Just Transition and Introduction to NDCs

The concept of Just Transition has emerged as a vital component of global climate action, originating in the 1980s as a movement by U.S. trade unions advocating for workers affected by environmental regulations (UNFCCC, 2021). Over time, this concept has evolved to encompass the creation of sustainable jobs, the transformation of economic sectors, and the pursuit of equitable and inclusive growth.

Although no universally accepted definition exists, the International Labour Organization (ILO) defines Just Transition as "greening the economy in a way that is as fair and inclusive as possible to everyone concerned, creating decent work opportunities and leaving no one behind"

(ILO, 2015).

In practical terms, this means that as Ethiopia moves towards a greener economy, policies must actively ensure that workers, their families, and communities, especially those currently reliant on carbon-intensive or climate-vulnerable sectors, are not left behind. This involves concrete

actions such as: providing retraining and reskilling programs for workers whose jobs might be affected (e.g., a farmer learning new techniques for climate-resilient crops or a factory worker gaining skills for a renewable energy plant); actively investing in new, sustainable industries that offer good working conditions, fair wages, and social protection (e.g., building solar farms creates jobs for engineers, technicians, and construction workers); establishing or strengthening social safety nets like unemployment benefits and health insurance; and ensuring that workers, trade unions, employers, and communities are actively involved in decision-making processes related to climate policies and economic transitions.

Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) are at the heart of the Paris Agreement, representing each country's pledges and plans to reduce national emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change. The Paris Agreement is a landmark international treaty adopted in 2015 by nearly every nation in the world. Its core goal is to limit global warming to “well below 2 degrees Celsius” above pre-industrial levels, and ideally to 1.5 degrees Celsius, to avoid the most catastrophic impacts of climate change. It works by requiring each country to set its own climate action plan (the NDCs) and regularly update them with increasing ambition, while also providing a framework for financial and technical support to developing countries.

Ethiopia's commitment to addressing climate change through its NDCs under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) reflects its determination to align ambitious climate goals with sustainable development (UNFCCC, 2021). The upcoming NDC 3.0, due in 2025, provides a pivotal opportunity to integrate Just Transition principles into Ethiopia's climate policies, ensuring these goals are achieved in a socially equitable manner. By addressing key dimensions such as decent work, gender equity, and community inclusion, Ethiopia's NDC 3.0 can serve as a benchmark for ambitious and inclusive climate action. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) underscores the importance of Just Transition within its Quality Assurance Checklist for NDC 3.0, recognizing it as an essential pillar for achieving sustainable development alongside climate resilience (UNDP, 2023).

1.7 Historical Overview of the Just Transition Framework

The concept of Just Transition has evolved from a labor-centered advocacy tool into a globally recognized framework for equitable climate action. Initially rooted in the labor movement of the 1970s in the United States, the term emerged through efforts led by the Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers Union. During the closure of the Ciba-Geigy chemical facility in New Jersey in the 1980s, union

leaders sought to ensure that workers affected by environmental regulations were adequately protected or compensated. The union president coined the term “Just Transition” to capture the principle that no worker should bear the burden of environmental progress without due support (ITUC, 2017).

In the 1990s, Just Transition gained traction at the international level, particularly within United Nations discussions on sustainable development and climate change. At COP4 in Buenos Aires in 1998, trade unions emphasized the importance of addressing both the positive and negative employment impacts of emissions reduction scenarios. This marked a critical step in linking climate action to labor rights, underscoring the need for social dialogue and inclusive policymaking

(ILO, 2015).

The discourse expanded further in the 2000s to incorporate the concept of “green jobs” as a cornerstone of low-carbon economic transformation. At COP14 in Poznan, unions reinforced the message that a low-carbon economy could create quality employment opportunities, provided that unions and civil society were actively involved in decision-making processes. Despite setbacks such as the adoption of the Copenhagen Accord at COP15, COP16 in Cancun reaffirmed the importance of Just Transition, explicitly acknowledging its role in fostering climate resilience and equitable development (UNFCCC, 2011).

The historic breakthrough came with COP21 in Paris, where Just Transition was officially enshrined in the preamble of the Paris Agreement. The agreement recognized “the imperatives of a just transition of the workforce and the creation of decent work and quality jobs in accordance with nationally defined development priorities” (UNFCCC, 2015). This milestone cemented Just Transition as a vital link between climate action, worker rights, and sustainable development, aligning global ambitions with the principle of leaving no one behind.

The historical evolution of Just Transition reflects its growing significance as a unifying framework for balancing climate goals with social equity. By drawing on these global experiences and milestones, Ethiopia's NDC 3.0 can integrate Just Transition principles to ensure that its climate policies not only reduce emissions but also promote social justice and economic inclusivity.

Section 2: Ethiopia's Climate Policy Landscape and Just Transition Integration



2.1 Overview of Ethiopia's Climate Policies and Strategies

Ethiopia has demonstrated a proactive stance in addressing climate change, recognizing its profound implications for national development and poverty reduction. At the core of its climate action framework is the Climate Resilient Green Economy (CRGE) Strategy, launched in 2011. This ambitious strategy aims to build a green economy that is resilient to climate change impacts, while simultaneously achieving middle-income status by 2025. The CRGE outlines a vision for zero net carbon growth by 2025, achieved through investments in renewable energy, sustainable land management, climate-smart agriculture, and industrial development.

Complementing the CRGE, Ethiopia has developed National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and various sectoral strategies designed to enhance resilience across key economic sectors and vulnerable communities. These plans detail specific actions to manage climate risks, such as improving early warning systems, promoting drought-resistant crops, and developing climate-resilient infrastructure.

A cornerstone of Ethiopia's international climate commitments is its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement. The NDC 2.0, submitted in 2021, reiterated Ethiopia's commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 68.5% below a business-as-usual scenario by 2030, conditional on international support. It also articulated adaptation priorities across various sectors, underscoring the dual imperative of mitigation and adaptation. These policy documents collectively represent Ethiopia's commitment to a sustainable and climate-resilient future.

2.2 Assessment of NDC 2.0: Commitments and Gaps in Just Transition

While Ethiopia's NDC 2.0 represents a significant commitment to climate action, a detailed assessment reveals both implicit commitments and notable gaps concerning the explicit integration of Just Transition principles, particularly regarding workers' rights and socio-economic development.

2.2.1 Implicit Integration and Areas of Opportunity in NDC 2.0

The NDC 2.0, rooted in the CRGE, implicitly acknowledges the need for socio-economic development alongside climate action. For instance, its focus on sustainable agriculture, afforestation, and renewable energy development inherently holds the potential for creating new job opportunities and improving livelihoods in rural areas. The emphasis on climate-smart agriculture could, in theory, lead to more stable incomes and reduced vulnerability for farmers, who constitute a large segment of Ethiopia's workforce. Similarly, investments in geothermal, hydro, and wind power are presented as avenues for energy security and economic growth, which could indirectly support job creation in these emerging sectors.

The document often frames climate actions in terms of broad "benefits to the population" or "livelihood improvement." For example, enhanced forest management and improved cookstoves are cited for their potential to reduce health burdens, particularly for women, and improve household economies. These aspects touch upon elements of a Just Transition, as they aim to improve well-being and economic conditions.

Furthermore, the NDC 2.0, in its broader ambition, implicitly recognizes the link between a healthy environment and productive employment. Initiatives aimed at restoring degraded lands or improving water management could lead to more stable agricultural seasons, directly benefiting rural workers. The document also highlights the importance of capacity building and technology transfer, which, if strategically implemented, could contribute to skills development for a green economy.

2.2.2 Explicit Gaps and Challenges in Just Transition Integration in NDC 2.0

Despite these implicit connections, the NDC 2.0 largely lacks explicit and comprehensive provisions for a "Just Transition" as defined by international labor standards and best practices. Several critical gaps are identified. Firstly, there is an absence of an explicit Just Transition Framework. The term "Just Transition" is not prominently featured, nor is there a dedicated section outlining a strategic framework for ensuring equity and social justice during the climate transition. This fundamental omission makes it challenging to track and implement specific Just Transition measures. Secondly, the NDC 2.0 demonstrates a limited focus on workers' rights and livelihoods. While it discusses broad socio-economic benefits, it rarely delves into specific protections for workers' rights, social dialogue mechanisms, or comprehensive social protection for those whose livelihoods might be negatively impacted by climate policies (e.g., shifts away from certain extractive industries or changes in agricultural practices that require significant adaptation). There is no clear articulation of how the rights to freedom of association, collective bargaining, and safe working conditions will be guaranteed in the context of climate action.

Thirdly, inadequate mechanisms for social dialogue and significant awareness gaps were observed. The NDC 2.0 does not outline clear or robust mechanisms for engaging workers' organizations, such as trade unions, in the design, implementation, and monitoring of climate policies. This lack of explicit social dialogue provisions means that the voices of those directly affected by transition processes are not systematically integrated into policy formulation. Compounding this, as observed during consultations, a significant challenge is the limited understanding of the "Just Transition" concept within key labor institutions like CETU and its federations. Furthermore, climate change itself is not consistently perceived as an immediate or acknowledged organizational threat by these bodies. This fundamental awareness gap creates a barrier to effective engagement and advocacy, highlighting the need for foundational capacity building before meaningful participation can occur. **For instance, future NDCs should mandate the establishment of tripartite (government, employer, worker) committees specifically for climate policy development, and fund comprehensive training programs for union representatives on climate science and Just Transition principles.**

Fourthly, there is limited assessment of transition impacts. The NDC 2.0 does not contain a detailed assessment of potential job losses or disruptions in specific sectors (e.g., carbon-intensive industries, or agricultural practices that might become unsustainable) as a result of climate mitigation or adaptation actions. Consequently, there are no pre-defined strategies for re-skilling, re-employment, or compensation for workers in these transitioning sectors. **To address this, NDC 3.0 should include a requirement for sector-specific labor impact assessments, for example, a study on the projected job changes in the coffee sector due to climate variability, followed by a plan for farmer diversification or value-chain support.** Fifthly, the NDC 2.0 lacks a gender-specific analysis for workers. While it sometimes refers to "women" in the context of vulnerability, it generally lacks a specific gender-responsive analysis of how climate policies will impact women workers differently, or how their specific rights and livelihoods need to be safeguarded within a Just Transition framework. **(Note: A comprehensive framework for gender-specific analysis and interventions is provided in Section 2.2.3, "Ensuring Gender Equality in Ethiopia's Just Transition," to address this critical gap in detail.)** Lastly, there is an absence of explicit green and decent job targets. While green job creation is a desired outcome, the NDC 2.0 does not set explicit targets or concrete strategies for generating a specific number of "decent" green jobs, nor does it define what constitutes a "decent" green job in the Ethiopian context (e.g., fair wages, social security, safe working conditions). **As an example, NDC 3.0 could set a target of creating a specific number of new jobs in renewable energy installation and maintenance by 2030, explicitly defining these as "decent" by requiring adherence to national minimum**

wage standards, providing social security benefits, and ensuring safe working conditions.

2.2.3 Links between the Economy, Decent Work, Gender, and Climate Change in NDC 2.0

The NDC 2.0 implicitly acknowledges the inextricable links between Ethiopia's economic growth, the pursuit of decent work, gender equality, and the imperative of addressing climate change. The CRGE strategy, upon which the NDC is built, posits that a green economy can be a driver of sustainable growth. For example, the expansion of renewable energy sources is presented as a pathway to energy security, industrial development, and job creation in the energy sector, reducing reliance on fossil fuels and external energy sources. This directly links climate mitigation to economic growth, creating new employment opportunities for both men and women in a growing sector. Similarly, initiatives in sustainable land management and agriculture aim to improve agricultural productivity and resilience, which are fundamental to Ethiopia's economy and to ensuring food security and rural livelihoods, with the expectation that improved productivity will lead to more stable and potentially more decent work for farmers, benefiting both male and female agricultural workers. Efforts to manage urban waste and promote green infrastructure can also create jobs in waste management, recycling, and urban planning, including opportunities for informal waste pickers to transition into formalized, decent work.

However, the "decent work" and gender equality aspects often remain implicit rather than explicitly defined or guaranteed. The assumption is that economic growth driven by green initiatives will naturally translate into decent work and equitable outcomes, without specific mechanisms or targets to ensure fair labor practices, social protection, or the systematic involvement of workers' organizations. This is where the "just" element of the transition needs to be made explicit and strengthened in NDC 3.0.

2.3 Best Practices and Opportunities within Existing Policies

Despite the identified gaps in explicit Just Transition integration within NDC 2.0, there are elements within Ethiopia's broader policy landscape and ongoing initiatives that can serve as foundational "best practices" or provide significant opportunities to build upon for NDC 3.0. The Climate Resilient Green Economy (CRGE) Strategy's holistic vision, which integrates economic development with climate resilience, provides a strong conceptual framework. Its emphasis on sustainable growth pathways, even without explicit Just Transition language, offers a fertile ground for incorporating social equity dimensions into future climate action plans, and its multi-sectoral approach can facilitate cross-ministerial collaboration essential for a comprehensive Just Transition.

The presence of “Green TVET” (Technical and Vocational Education and Training) initiatives, as highlighted by the Ministry of Labor and Skills (MoLS) during consultations, is a promising development. These programs, aiming to equip the workforce with skills relevant to green jobs and sustainable practices, represent a concrete step towards skills development crucial for a Just Transition, directly addressing the need for capacity building for new employment opportunities, and providing a valuable foundation for expanding national re-skilling and up-skilling programs. Furthermore, many adaptation programs, particularly at the local level, focus on strengthening community resilience through interventions like sustainable water management, soil conservation, and improved agricultural techniques. These initiatives often empower local communities and can contribute to diversified livelihoods, aligning with Just Transition principles even if not formally framed as such.

While not a formal policy “best practice,” the engagement with compost producing SMEs of Addis Ababa and informal waste pickers during consultations, and the emerging

discussions around formalizing and improving conditions in this sector, represent a significant opportunity. Acknowledging their current contribution to the green economy (recycling) and developing pathways for formalization and improved rights is a concrete Just Transition measure that can be integrated into future policies. Lastly, the very fact that this study is being conducted, and that international partners like FES and ILO are actively promoting the Just Transition concept in Ethiopia, creates an opportunity for increased awareness and dialogue. Even if initial understanding among some stakeholders, particularly CETU, was limited, this engagement serves as a critical first step in building the necessary knowledge and capacity to champion these principles, with the willingness of government stakeholders to engage indicating a receptive environment for incorporating new approaches.



Side Event at the Second African Climate Summit (ACS2) “Social Dialogue for Climate and Jobs: Unions, Employers, Government, and Civil Society in Just Transition”
Date and Time: 09 September 2025
Source: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung e.V.

Section 3: Stakeholder Engagement in Climate Policy: Focus on Trade Unions



3.1 Current State of Stakeholder Involvement in Climate Policy-Making

Ethiopia's journey in climate policy development, including its first Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) and the subsequent NDC 2.0, has largely been characterized by a centralized, government-led approach. While official documents for NDC 2.0 indicate that the process involved "comprehensive stakeholder engagement" and "consultative processes" for identifying and prioritizing interventions (UNFCCC, 2021; World Bank, n.d.), the practical experience of many non-governmental stakeholders suggests that participation was not as broad or deeply embedded as could be desired.

For many civil society organizations (CSOs) **such as local environmental advocacy groups, development NGOs, and particularly labor organizations**, genuine opportunities for meaningful input and influence during the development of these earlier NDCs remained limited. This often resulted in policies that, while technically sound, may not have fully captured the diverse socio-economic realities and concerns of all segments of the population, including critical perspectives from informal sector workers, women's groups, youth organizations, and marginalized rural communities.

However, a notable shift is observed in the preparatory stages for the forthcoming NDC 3.0. There is an increasing recognition, particularly with the Ministry of Planning and Development (MoPD) taking a more prominent role in coordinating the climate portfolio, that a wider and more inclusive participatory space is essential for developing robust and implementable climate policies. Consultations with government stakeholders, including those from the MoPD, indicate a relatively greater openness to engaging a broader array of actors. This evolving landscape suggests a growing appreciation for diverse perspectives in shaping climate action that is not only environmentally effective but also socially equitable and economically viable. This trend, if sustained, marks a promising departure from earlier, less participatory processes, paving the way for more integrated and widely supported climate strategies.

3.2 The Role and Influence of Trade Unions in NDC 2.0 and Climate Action

The involvement of trade unions, specifically the Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions (CETU) and its federations, in Ethiopia's climate policy-making, including the NDC 2.0, has historically been marginal. Despite the profound implications of climate change and climate policies on workers' rights and livelihoods, direct and systematic engagement mechanisms for labor organizations have been largely absent or ineffective. For instance, during the formulation of Ethiopia's first NDC, formal invitations or dedicated consultation channels for CETU were not consistently established, leading to their input being ad hoc rather than structurally integrated into the core policy process.

During consultations for this report, it became evident that trade unions, including representatives from CETU and its affiliated federations (Agriculture, Textile, Food and Beverage), generally lacked a foundational understanding of the "Just Transition" concept. For many, climate change was not yet perceived or acknowledged as a direct or immediate threat to their organizational mandate, nor were its socio-economic ramifications on workers fully grasped. This limited awareness at the leadership and operational levels within the trade union movement has significantly hindered their ability to proactively engage in climate policy discussions and advocate for workers' interests. Without a clear understanding of the impending shifts and their implications, advocating for specific protections, reskilling initiatives, or social safety nets becomes challenging.

This awareness gap is a critical factor explaining their minimal influence in past NDC negotiations and broader climate action frameworks. While other stakeholders like international organizations (e.g., ILO, FES) and some environmental NGOs; such as the Forum for Environment, Climate Change Consortium Ethiopian, or specific local environmental advocacy groups like Eco-Justice Ethiopia, have been actively advocating for inclusive climate action, the local labor movement has struggled to translate these broader principles into specific, actionable demands within the Ethiopian policy context. Their engagement, when it occurred, was often reactive or peripheral rather than integrated into the core policy development process.

Despite this historical context, significant opportunities exist to strengthen the influence of trade unions in national climate discussions and policy-making, particularly as Ethiopia moves towards NDC 3.0. The observed widening of participatory space under the MoPD's coordination presents a crucial opening. For trade unions to capitalize on this, internal capacity building on Just Transition and climate change impacts is paramount. Equipping their leadership and members with the knowledge to articulate the links between climate action, employment, and workers' rights is the first step towards meaningful engagement.

Recent developments illustrate a crucial shift in CETU's engagement with national climate policy. Following a training series facilitated by FES Ethiopia for CETU leadership and representatives from nine trade federations, concrete steps were taken to close the awareness and identified capacity gaps. The training focused on the intersections of climate change, Just Transition, and the future of work that were previously underexplored within the union movement. As an outcome, CETU formally appointed three focal persons to lead its work on climate change and Just Transition and submitted a request to the MoPD to participate in the development of Ethiopia's NDC 3.0. This marks the first time the Confederation has proactively requested institutionalized inclusion in national climate processes. CETU's intention to influence Ethiopia's climate agenda was extended on the continental stage during the Second Africa Climate Summit (ACS2) held in Addis Ababa (8–10

September 2025), where it co-hosted a side event with FES Ethiopia titled “Social Dialogue for Climate and Jobs: Unions, Employers, Government, and Civil Society in Just Transition.” These efforts underscore a growing recognition within the trade unions of the importance of shaping climate policy not only to safeguard existing jobs but also to promote sustainable employment strategies aligned with a Just Transition framework.

3.3 Challenges and Opportunities in Implementing NDC 2.0

The implementation of Ethiopia’s NDC 2.0, while ambitious, has faced several challenges, many of which have implications for the integration of Just Transition principles. Simultaneously, there are discernible opportunities that can inform the development and implementation of NDC 3.0.

3.3.1 Challenges in NDC 2.0 Implementation:

The implementation of NDC 2.0 faced several challenges. Firstly, financial constraints remain a significant hurdle, as the NDC 2.0 is heavily conditional on international support, with a substantial portion of its estimated cost requiring external financing (UNFCCC, 2021). The persistent gap between committed funding and actual financial flows affects the scale and pace of climate interventions, directly impeding investment in comprehensive Just Transition measures. Secondly, capacity gaps persist across various government ministries and implementing agencies, limiting their ability to effectively integrate climate action into sectoral plans and budgets. This includes a limited understanding of how to operationalize cross-cutting concepts like Just Transition in specific projects and programs, and, as observed in consultations, this capacity gap extends to non-state actors, notably trade unions. Thirdly, despite the CRGE strategy’s overarching vision, effective coordination among various ministries and sub-national entities in implementing climate actions can be challenging. A lack of robust mainstreaming mechanisms can lead to climate actions being treated as separate initiatives rather than integral to national development plans, thereby impeding a holistic Just Transition. Fourthly, while efforts are underway to enhance monitoring, reporting, and verification (MRV) systems, reliable and disaggregated data on climate impacts, job creation, and socio-economic shifts are crucial for tracking progress and ensuring that Just Transition measures are effective. Gaps in data collection and analysis can hinder evidence-based policy adjustments. Lastly, mobilizing private sector investment for climate action remains a challenge, despite its critical role in driving green growth and job creation. Barriers such as perceived risks, lack of clear incentives, and regulatory hurdles can limit private sector participation in financing and implementing NDC activities (EPA Ethiopia, 2023).

3.3.2 Opportunities to Inform NDC 3.0:

Several opportunities exist to inform NDC 3.0. Firstly, growing political will and high-level recognition from the Ethiopian government, evidenced by high-level participation in international fora and domestic initiatives like the Green Legacy Initiative, provide a strong political foundation. The increasing prominence of MoPD in the climate portfolio signals a strategic shift towards more integrated planning. Secondly, the emerging participatory spaces for NDC 3.0 development, particularly through the MoPD, offer a critical opportunity for a more inclusive process than previous NDCs. This openness can be leveraged to integrate the perspectives of trade unions, civil society, youth groups, and informal sector workers, ensuring that NDC 3.0 is more reflective of diverse needs and priorities. Thirdly, the Ministry of Labor and Skills’ “Green TVET” initiatives represent a practical starting point for building a skilled workforce for a green economy. These programs can be significantly scaled up and formalized within NDC 3.0 to directly address skills gaps and create pathways for workers in transitioning sectors, a core component of Just Transition. Fourthly, strong partnerships with international organizations like FES, ILO, and various UN bodies provide crucial technical assistance, capacity building, and platforms for knowledge exchange on Just Transition best practices, vital in bridging knowledge gaps and supporting the implementation of more ambitious and equitable climate policies. Fifthly, many ongoing adaptation efforts already focus on building local community resilience and safeguarding livelihoods in climate-vulnerable areas, providing valuable lessons and models for integrating Just Transition principles directly into community-level climate action plans. Lastly, Ethiopia’s vast renewable energy potential (hydro, geothermal, wind, solar) offers significant opportunities for green job creation. Similarly, sustainable agriculture, waste management, and reforestation efforts can generate employment and improve livelihoods, contributing directly to a Just Transition if accompanied by decent work principles.

By addressing the identified challenges and strategically leveraging these opportunities, Ethiopia can significantly enhance the integration of Just Transition principles into NDC 3.0, leading to climate policies that are not only environmentally ambitious but also socially just and inclusive.

The global imperative for a Just Transition has been unequivocally recognized at the highest levels of international labor governance. In 2023, the International Labour Organization (ILO), at its 111th International Labour Conference, undertook a comprehensive general discussion on a just transition, encompassing considerations of industrial policies and technology, towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all. The tripartite conclusions emanating from this seminal discussion specifically highlight the crucial roles of governments and employers’ and workers’ organizations. It emphatically calls upon these stakeholders to “integrate measures into environmental and climate policies such as nationally determined contributions

to the Paris Agreement and net-zero targets, and into coherent, integrated and comprehensive employment, social protection and industrial policies to advance a just transition.” This global consensus underscores the necessity of robust social dialogue and the active participation of unions in shaping national climate commitments like Ethiopia’s NDC 3.0.

3.3.3 Ensuring Gender Equality in Ethiopia’s Just Transition

While gender considerations are woven throughout this report, a truly transformative Just Transition requires elevating gender equality as a strategic priority, moving beyond a “cross-cutting” issue to a foundational pillar of climate action. Women, especially those in rural areas, informal sectors, and those with disabilities, face disproportionate climate impacts and unique barriers to participating in and benefiting from the green economy.

To address these disparities and unlock women’s full potential, the following measures are essential:



Addressing Unpaid Care Work: Recognize and address the burden of unpaid care responsibilities that often limit women’s access to green jobs, training, and participation in governance. This includes:

- Expanding social protection to include support for care services (e.g., childcare, eldercare).
- Designing flexible training schedules and accessible childcare support within skills development and green employment schemes.



Sector-Specific Gender Analysis: Integrate a gender-differentiated risk and opportunity matrix within key sectors. For instance:

- Agriculture: Acknowledge women’s often limited access to land, finance, and technology. Propose specific interventions like promoting women-led sustainable agriculture cooperatives, providing tailored financial literacy, and ensuring access to climate-resilient seeds and tools.

- Renewable Energy: Identify opportunities for women to be not only users but also entrepreneurs and technicians in renewable energy projects (e.g., solar mini-grid management, clean cookstove production).



Robust Gender Indicators and Accountability: Move beyond gender-disaggregated data collection to establish clear gender-specific targets, indicators, and robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) mechanisms. These should include:

- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for green job creation, disaggregated by gender.
- M&E indicators for women’s participation rates in social dialogue platforms, climate decision-making bodies, and Green TVET programs.
- Mandatory annual reporting on gender outcomes in NDC implementation, ensuring transparency and accountability.



Intersectional Approach: Conduct intersectional gender impact assessments in all NDC implementation strategies. Prioritize marginalized women (e.g., rural women, disabled women, young women, informal workers) in targeted training, green job placement, and social protection schemes to ensure no one is left behind.

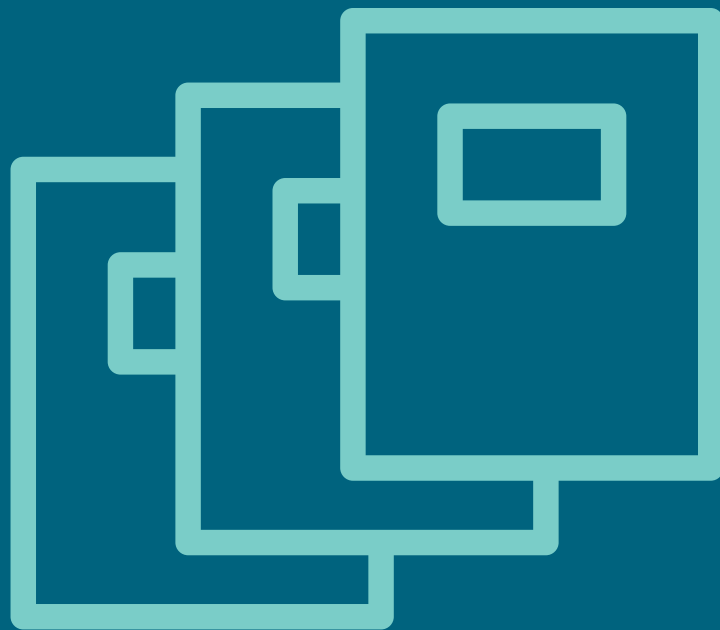


Internal Gender Mainstreaming within CETU: Beyond encouraging women’s engagement in social dialogue, CETU should proactively mainstream gender within its own structures. This involves:

- Conducting internal gender audits to identify and address biases.
- Developing dedicated women’s leadership and advocacy programs within the union.

Proposing quotas or targets for women’s representation in CETU’s climate task forces and leadership positions.

Section 4: Regional Case Studies in Just Transition



Understanding how other nations, particularly those within Africa, are navigating their own Just Transition pathways provides invaluable insights and practical lessons for Ethiopia. This section examines two distinct but highly relevant case studies: South Africa, which has developed a comprehensive national Just Transition Framework, and Somalia, where labor advocacy has played a pivotal role in advancing Just Transition principles despite significant challenges. These examples highlight diverse approaches to integrating social justice into climate action, offering transferable experiences for Ethiopia's NDC 3.0.

4.1 South Africa - South Africa's Just Transition Framework: Policy Ambition Meets Implementation Realities

South Africa's Just Transition Framework, developed under the guidance of the Presidential Climate Commission (PCC), provides an innovative approach to addressing the socio-economic impacts of transitioning from a fossil-fuel-dependent economy to a low-carbon and climate-resilient one. As one of the world's largest coal producers, South Africa faces significant challenges in balancing economic imperatives with environmental goals. Recognizing the need to protect vulnerable workers and communities while advancing climate action, the framework is anchored in principles of distributive, restorative, and procedural justice

(PCC, 2022).

The framework outlines policies that place people at the center of South Africa's climate response, particularly those disproportionately affected by climate change and mitigation measures, such as women, youth, and marginalized groups. It builds on decades of research, policy development, and consultations with stakeholders across the country, including labor unions, civil society, and academia. Drawing inspiration from international best practices and guidelines such as those from the International Labor Organization (ILO, 2015), it aims to foster an equitable and inclusive transition while contributing to broader developmental objectives of poverty reduction, job creation, and social equity.

A critical focus of the framework is on managing the risks and opportunities within key at-risk sectors and value chains, including coal, agriculture, tourism, and the auto industry. The coal sector, which directly employs thousands of workers, is identified as particularly vulnerable due to declining global demand and the shift to renewable energy sources. The framework emphasizes the importance of reskilling coal workers and investing in renewable energy manufacturing to support affected communities, avoiding

ghost towns and economic dislocation in coal-reliant areas (PCC, 2022). Similarly, the auto industry faces challenges in adapting to the global transition to electric vehicles, prompting policy recommendations for developing infrastructure for e-vehicles and exploring battery management and recycling opportunities.

Community engagement is a cornerstone of South Africa's Just Transition Framework, advocating for participatory decision-making processes that empower affected workers and communities to define their own development pathways and livelihoods. This sentiment of "nothing about us without us" is particularly strong in consultations facilitated by the PCC, where social partners articulated their visions for a just and inclusive economy. Additionally, the framework incorporates gender-responsive approaches, ensuring that women and youth are supported and empowered to benefit from emerging opportunities in the green economy (PCC, 2022). The financial aspect of implementing the Just Transition Framework is also addressed, with emphasis on mobilizing both domestic and international resources to fund social protection schemes, workforce development initiatives, and infrastructure projects. The framework underscores the need for effective governance and coordinated efforts to align economic, social, and environmental policies for a successful transition.

However, despite these robust policy intentions and the comprehensive framework on paper, the practical implementation of South Africa's Just Transition has encountered significant hurdles, falling short in delivering adequate social protection and tangible benefits for affected workers and communities. Early signs from pilot projects and sector-based case studies, such as the social conflicts over Uber's operations or grievances from communities impacted by coal power station shutdowns, reveal worrying trends. Policy measures intended to manage the externalities of low-carbon and digital transitions have not consistently provided adequate social protection interventions or alternative livelihoods for those most affected. This resistance to change, as articulated by civil society and trade unions, often illuminates underlying socio-economic distributional concerns that are crucial for creating truly inclusive transitions.

South African civil society and trade unions strongly advocate for expanding social protection first in structural shifts towards a low-carbon and digital-driven economy. This call is rooted in the context of South Africa's persistent high unemployment, structural inequalities, and minimal social cohesion. They argue that dominant global policy frameworks often over-emphasize macro-economic indicators like GDP and foreign investment, while perceiving labor market and social protection measures as peripheral, despite their profound impact on human development (World Bank, 2018). The South African experience highlights the need for concrete demands, including introducing a Universal Basic Income Grant (UBIG), employment guarantees, compensating care activity, and strengthening universal access to

public goods and services, to cushion workers and the broader working class from transition-related socio-economic costs.

A critical dimension of this comprehensive social protection system is its support for **care work**, which is often overlooked in policy design. Black women, in particular, are drivers of South Africa's economy through their unpaid care work and contributions to community social reproduction. A just social protection framework for the transitions must explicitly support and compensate care providers, especially black women, for their socially reproductive labor. This focus can address historic injustices and integrate crucial gendered dimensions into transition policy debates. Furthermore, augmenting social protection is seen as essential for social justice itself, acknowledging and addressing the longstanding racial, class, and gender disparities embedded in the country's history. Challenging the conservative view that expanding social protection strains the fiscus, civil society and trade unions have made an evidence-based case for increased public spending through measures like a wealth tax, prescribed assets, and increased corporate tax. Overall, the justice principle in South Africa's Just Transition framework must rapidly introduce new patterns of socio-economic redistribution, moving beyond theoretical policies to impactful, worker-centric implementation.

South Africa's Just Transition Framework, particularly its implementation challenges and the robust advocacy from civil society and trade unions, offers invaluable lessons for Ethiopia as it seeks to enhance its NDC 3.0. Its emphasis on a comprehensive policy but also the crucial need for effective, people-centered implementation, workforce reskilling, genuine stakeholder inclusivity, gender-responsive strategies, and particularly the prioritization of social protection, demonstrates the importance of not just having a good policy on paper but ensuring it delivers justice for workers on the ground. By internalizing these insights, Ethiopia can ensure that its transition to a low-carbon economy not only addresses environmental concerns but also truly advances sustainable development and equity for all its citizens.

4.2 Somalia – Advancing Just Transition Through Labor Advocacy

Somalia, though grappling with significant socio-economic and environmental challenges, has seen commendable efforts in promoting Just Transition principles through the Federation of Somali Trade Unions (FESTU). With recurrent climate shocks such as droughts, floods, and desertification severely impacting livelihoods, FESTU has emerged as a pivotal force in advocating for equitable and worker-centered approaches to climate action. Recognizing the unique vulnerabilities of Somali workers, FESTU has championed the integration of labor rights and social protections into Somalia's climate policies.

One of FESTU's landmark initiatives was organizing the National Workshop on Climate Change and Its Impact in

Mogadishu in July 2021. This workshop brought together stakeholders, including labor representatives, government officials, and civil society organizations, under the theme of "Climate Change and Its Impact: Just Transition in Somalia." It emphasized the disproportionate effects of climate change on lower-income groups, informal sector workers, women, and children, and underscored the critical need for sustained investment in resilience-building efforts (FESTU, 2021). Through this platform, FESTU called for the development of a comprehensive Just Transition framework that prioritizes human and labor rights while advancing Somalia's climate goals.

FESTU's influence extends beyond national borders, as seen in its active participation in international forums such as COP27. Representing Somali workers, FESTU advocated for Just Transition principles to be embedded in global climate agreements. The organization urged policymakers to establish a clear strategy integrating social protections, workforce development, and equitable green economic opportunities for Somali workers (ILO, 2022). These efforts align closely with global guidelines, including the International Labor Organization's (ILO) Just Transition framework, which underscores the importance of creating decent work opportunities while ensuring inclusivity (ILO, 2015).

Social dialogue has been central to FESTU's approach, enabling participatory policymaking that reflects the realities of workers and communities most impacted by climate change. FESTU has been instrumental in facilitating discussions with the Somali government and international partners, advocating for policies that address workforce reskilling, community development, and access to social protection mechanisms. Its focus on implementing Somalia's Social Protection Policy illustrates the organization's commitment to mitigating socio-economic disruptions while fostering long-term resilience (FESTU, 2021).

In addition to these efforts, FESTU has championed gender-responsive approaches, emphasizing the empowerment of women and marginalized groups in Somalia's green transition. By advocating for workforce development programs that are inclusive and accessible, FESTU aims to ensure that emerging opportunities in renewable energy and sustainable sectors benefit all segments of society. These initiatives highlight the transformative potential of integrating gender equity into climate and labor policies. Despite Somalia's ongoing challenges, including limited institutional capacity and financial constraints, FESTU's advocacy demonstrates the critical role labor unions can play in advancing the Just Transition agenda. By prioritizing social dialogue, resilience-building, and international collaboration, FESTU's efforts serve as a compelling model for Ethiopia to consider. As Ethiopia develops its NDC 3.0, the lessons from FESTU's work highlight the importance of ensuring climate policies are not only environmentally ambitious but also socially inclusive and equitable.

Section 5:

Actionable Recommendations for Enhancing NDC 3.0 with a Just Transition Perspective



The development of Ethiopia's NDC 3.0 presents a critical opportunity to explicitly integrate Just Transition principles, ensuring that climate action not only achieves environmental goals but also champions social equity, protects workers' rights, and fosters inclusive economic growth. Drawing upon international best practices and the insights from organizations at the forefront of Just Transition advocacy (ILO, ITUC, FES) and specific research on gender justice (ODI), this section provides actionable recommendations for policy makers and stakeholders, particularly the Ethiopian Confederation of Trade Unions (CETU). These recommendations are designed to address the observed gaps in previous NDCs and the prevailing awareness deficits identified during consultations.

5.1 Overarching Principles for Just Transition Integration in NDC 3.0

For Ethiopia's NDC 3.0 to genuinely embody a Just Transition, it must be guided by a set of foundational principles that permeate all its sections and proposed actions. Firstly, social dialogue must be a cornerstone, recognizing that a Just Transition is fundamentally achieved through robust, inclusive, and continuous social dialogue among governments, employers' organizations, and workers' organizations (ILO, n.d. "Guidelines for a Just Transition"; ITUC, n.d. "A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR UNION ENGAGEMENT"). This implies that climate policies should be co-designed and co-implemented by these tripartite partners (government, employers, and workers' organizations), ensuring that solutions are not simply imposed on affected communities and workers, but rather developed collaboratively with them from the outset.

Secondly, decent work must be at its core, meaning all climate actions, whether mitigation or adaptation, must strive to create and promote decent work opportunities by ensuring fair wages, safe working conditions, social protection, and respect for fundamental workers' rights, including freedom of association and collective bargaining (ILO, n.d. "Green Jobs").

Thirdly, a "no one left behind" principle is essential, where the transition explicitly identifies and protects the most vulnerable workers and communities, especially women and youth, from adverse impacts, ensuring that the costs of climate action do not disproportionately fall on those least responsible for climate change or with the least capacity to adapt. Fourthly, the transition must be forward-looking and transformative, not merely about managing decline but about proactively seizing new opportunities for green economic development, fostering innovation, and building a sustainable future through systemic changes that integrate environmental, social, and economic dimensions.

Lastly, it must be gender-responsive and inclusive, meaning climate policies must explicitly address the differential impacts on women and men, recognizing their unique roles,

vulnerabilities, and contributions. This requires specific, actionable measures to promote gender equality, ensure women's full and equitable participation in all stages of the transition (from policy design to implementation and monitoring), and proactively address gender-specific barriers to accessing green jobs, skills training, and social protection. (Samman, 2024).

5.2 Policy Recommendations for Mainstreaming Just Transition in NDC 3.0

To translate these principles into concrete action, the following policy recommendations should be integrated into Ethiopia's NDC 3.0.

5.2.1 Safeguarding Workers' Rights and Livelihoods

The NDC 3.0 must explicitly outline how workers' rights and livelihoods will be protected and advanced amidst climate action, ensuring no one is left behind in the transition. This requires:

- **Explicit Recognition of Workers' Rights:** Integrate a dedicated section or cross-cutting commitment in NDC 3.0 that explicitly recognizes and upholds fundamental workers' rights (ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work), including freedom of association, the right to collective bargaining, non-discrimination, and occupational safety and health, across all climate-related sectors. The NDC 3.0 should therefore include clauses that mandate adherence to national labor laws and international labor standards in all green economy investments and projects, **extending these protections to informal sector workers through formalization pathways and tailored support.** This also involves **proactive economic transition measures**, such as supporting the diversification of local economies in regions heavily reliant on carbon-intensive industries, and fostering new green industries to absorb displaced labor.
- **Comprehensive Livelihood Security Measures:** Develop and commit to specific strategies within NDC 3.0 to ensure livelihood security for workers in sectors potentially

impacted by climate policies (e.g., agriculture, traditional energy sectors). This must include outlining robust provisions for **social protection**, such as income support during transition periods, comprehensive re-employment services, and support for alternative livelihood generation for workers and communities facing job displacement or economic restructuring due to climate action. **For example, this could involve establishing a dedicated Just Transition Fund to provide temporary income support for displaced workers, alongside vocational training programs tailored to emerging green industries like renewable energy maintenance or sustainable agriculture.**

- **Gender-Responsive Safeguards:** Implement approaches that recognize the disproportionate impact of climate change on women workers and ensure their rights and livelihoods are specifically safeguarded (Samman, 2024). This entails including gender-disaggregated data collection targets to monitor the impacts of climate policies on women's employment and income and prioritizing women's access to new green job opportunities, skills training, and social protection schemes. **For example, in agricultural transitions, ensuring women farmers have access to climate-resilient technologies and resources, such as drought-resistant seeds and efficient irrigation systems, alongside training in their use. Another example would be creating dedicated mentorship programs and providing childcare support to enable women to participate in Green TVET programs for sectors like solar panel installation or waste management, ensuring they can access and thrive in these new roles.**

Integrating the Informal Economy into Just Transition

A truly inclusive Just Transition in Ethiopia must explicitly address the vulnerabilities and opportunities within the informal economy, which constitutes a significant portion of the workforce. Workers in sectors such as informal waste picking, street vending, and small-scale agriculture are particularly susceptible to the impacts of climate policies and economic shifts.

To ensure their effective integration and protection, the following tailored interventions are recommended:

- **Legal Recognition and Formalization Pathways:** Develop clear legal frameworks and policies that recognize informal workers, particularly waste pickers, and facilitate their gradual integration into formal municipal waste management systems. This includes providing official identification, access to formal contracts, and social security benefits.
- **Safety and Equipment:** Implement programs to provide informal workers with appropriate safety equipment (e.g., gloves, masks, protective clothing) and training on safe working practices, especially for those handling waste.

- **Access to Green Opportunities:** Design specific initiatives to enable informal workers to transition into emerging green sectors. For example, informal waste pickers can be trained and integrated into composting facilities, recycling cooperatives, or bio-energy projects. Street vendors could be supported with designated, green-friendly spaces within new urban developments.

- **Targeted Social Protection:** Extend and adapt social protection schemes to cover informal workers, ensuring they have access to health insurance, unemployment benefits (where applicable), and climate-sensitive adaptive social safety nets that can respond to climate-induced shocks.

- **Participatory Planning:** Ensure direct representation and meaningful participation of informal worker associations and community leaders in all Just Transition planning and implementation committees.

5.2.2 Promoting Green and Decent Jobs

A skilled workforce is fundamental for a successful and just transition. This necessitates a national green skills strategy, which involves developing a comprehensive plan that anticipates future labor market needs, identifies skill gaps, and outlines pathways for both new entrants and existing workers. The NDC 3.0 should integrate commitments to expand and formalize "Green TVET" initiatives (as highlighted by the Ministry of Labor and Skills) to cover a broader range of green sectors and skill levels, including curriculum reform and teacher training. This expansion must be gender-responsive, actively promoting women's participation in traditionally male-dominated green sectors (e.g., renewable energy installation, green construction) through targeted outreach, flexible training schedules, and the provision of childcare support to overcome traditional barriers. Furthermore, robust re-skilling and up-skilling programs should be established, specifically targeted at workers in sectors that may face restructuring or decline due to climate policies. The NDC 3.0 should propose mechanisms for early identification of affected workers, even in contexts with limited comprehensive labor market data. This can be achieved by utilizing qualitative assessments, rapid sectorial analyses, and engaging directly with trade unions, informal worker associations, and community leaders to gather on-the-ground insights into potential job disruptions and skill needs. This should be followed by offering accessible and affordable training opportunities to facilitate their transition into green or other viable sectors, with particular emphasis on specific outreach and support for women and youth.

5.2.3 Skills Development and Capacity Building

A skilled workforce is fundamental for a successful and just transition. This necessitates a national green skills strategy, which involves developing a comprehensive plan that anticipates future labor market needs, identifies skill gaps, and outlines pathways for both new entrants and existing

workers. The NDC 3.0 should integrate commitments to expand and formalize “Green TVET” initiatives (as highlighted by the Ministry of Labor and Skills) to cover a broader range of green sectors and skill levels, including curriculum reform and teacher training. This expansion must be gender-responsive, actively promoting women’s participation in traditionally male-dominated green sectors (e.g., renewable energy installation, green construction) through targeted outreach, flexible training schedules, and the provision of childcare support to overcome traditional barriers. Furthermore, robust re-skilling and up-skilling programs should be established, specifically targeted at workers in sectors that may face restructuring or decline due to climate policies. The NDC 3.0 should propose mechanisms for early identification of affected workers, even in contexts with limited comprehensive labor market data. This can be achieved by utilizing qualitative assessments, rapid sectorial analyses, and engaging directly with trade unions, informal worker associations, and community leaders to gather on-the-ground insights into potential job disruptions and skill needs. This should be followed by offering accessible and affordable training opportunities to facilitate their transition into green or other viable sectors, with particular emphasis on specific outreach and support for women and youth.

5.2.4 Social Protection Mechanisms

Robust social protection is crucial for cushioning the impacts of transition and building resilience. This means expanding social protection floors, strengthening and extending national social protection to cover workers and communities most vulnerable to climate change impacts and economic restructuring. The NDC 3.0 should explore integrating climate-sensitive social protection measures, such as adaptive social safety nets, unemployment benefits for climate-induced job losses, and health insurance, into the national climate strategy (ILO, 2024; NDC Partnership, 2025). Additionally, climate-sensitive social safety nets should be designed to respond effectively to climate shocks, providing timely support to affected individuals and households. This includes establishing robust emergency programs that can rapidly disburse aid, food, or temporary employment opportunities in the aftermath of climate-induced disasters like floods or droughts, ensuring immediate relief and preventing further livelihood erosion. The NDC 3.0 should outline how existing social protection programs can be leveraged or adapted to address climate-induced income instability, displacement, and food insecurity.

5.2.5 Inclusive Governance and Social Dialogue

Meaningful participation of all stakeholders, especially labour, is paramount for a legitimate and effective Just Transition. This requires formalizing social dialogue platforms, establishing and formalizing multi-stakeholder platforms for continuous social dialogue on climate policy at national, sectoral, and local levels, explicitly including government, employers’ organizations, and workers’ organizations (ILO, n.d. “Just Transition Policy Brief”). The NDC 3.0 should mandate the systematic inclusion of CETU and its federations in all stages of its development, implementation, and monitoring, ensuring genuine co-creation rather than mere consultation. Specific guidance for an inclusive NDC 3.0 preparation process should be provided, ensuring maximum inclusivity, particularly for trade unions. This involves organizing dedicated workshops and technical sessions specifically for CETU and its federations to build their understanding of Just Transition concepts and their relevance to Ethiopia’s climate context. Technical support, potentially from ILO, FES, or national experts, should be offered to CETU to help them analyze NDC drafts, formulate concrete proposals, and articulate their demands effectively. Furthermore, a schedule of regular, formalized consultative meetings between the MoPD (and other relevant ministries like MoLS) and CETU should be established throughout the NDC 3.0 development process. Simultaneously, capacity building for government officials on the importance of social dialogue and engaging labor in climate policy is crucial, given the previous limited participatory experience. Lastly, gender-responsive approaches must be integrated into governance, ensuring women’s voices and perspectives are systematically included in all social dialogue and policy-making processes related to NDC 3.0 (Samman, 2024) by promoting the active participation of women from trade unions and other civil society groups in climate governance bodies and ensuring that gender-disaggregated data informs policy decisions at all levels.

These actionable recommendations provide a robust framework for Ethiopia’s NDC 3.0 to genuinely embrace a Just Transition. By prioritizing workers’ rights, fostering decent green jobs, investing in skills, strengthening social protection, and ensuring inclusive governance, Ethiopia can build a climate-resilient economy that is equitable and leaves no one behind.

Section 6:

Empowering the Ethiopian Confederation of Trade Unions (CETU) for Just Transition Advocacy



The success of a truly just transition in Ethiopia hinges significantly on the active, informed, and sustained engagement of the labor movement. The Ethiopian Confederation of Trade Unions (CETU), as the primary representative of workers' interests, holds a unique and vital position in ensuring that climate policies, particularly the forthcoming NDC 3.0, safeguard livelihoods and promote decent work. While previous sections have highlighted the historical limited involvement of trade unions in climate policy discourse and the existing awareness gaps regarding "Just Transition" within CETU, recent developments signal a nascent but crucial opportunity for change. The assignment of a focal point within CETU dedicated to Just Transition is a commendable initial step, demonstrating a burgeoning recognition of the issue's importance. However, this designation, while positive, currently stands largely as an individual responsibility, not yet fully embedded or mainstreamed into the broader organizational structure and strategic priorities of the Confederation. This calls for deliberate and sustained efforts to build internal capacity and integrate Just Transition principles into CETU's core mandate.

To achieve this, CETU should undertake immediate, actionable steps to build internal capacity and ensure sustained advocacy. This includes conducting baseline assessments of existing awareness on climate issues among its members, particularly at regional levels, and initiating basic awareness and advocacy training/education programs for regional leaders, with a strong emphasis on gender inclusivity. These programs should equip union representatives with the knowledge to articulate the links between climate action, employment, and workers' rights. Furthermore, CETU should set short-term advocacy goals, such as securing formal representation in NDC 3.0 drafting committees and other relevant national climate policy forums. For sustained Just Transition advocacy, CETU could establish a dedicated 'Climate and Just Transition Committee/Task-force' within its governance structure, supported by permanent staff and a dedicated budget. This would provide a clearer organizational model for consistent engagement.

Moreover, CETU's engagement can be significantly amplified by actively participating in and leveraging global campaigns led by international labor organizations, such as the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)'s campaigns for climate justice and decent work in green economies. Such participation would not only enhance CETU's advocacy capacity but also connect its national efforts to a powerful global movement, allowing for knowledge exchange and shared strategies.

The role of CETU's women's committee and the broader gender aspect within the Confederation's Just Transition advocacy are paramount. This committee should be empowered to lead initiatives that specifically address the unique vulnerabilities and opportunities for women workers in the climate transition. This includes advocating for gender-responsive policies within NDC 3.0, promoting women's access to green skills training and employment, and ensuring their meaningful participation in social dialogue platforms. CETU should also consider conducting internal gender audits and developing dedicated women's leadership and advocacy programs within the union, potentially setting quotas or targets for women's representation in its climate task forces and leadership positions to ensure true gender mainstreaming.

6.1 Strengthening CETU's Capacity for Climate Advocacy

For CETU to effectively champion the cause of Just Transition, a fundamental shift in internal understanding and capacity is required. The first and most critical step involves a comprehensive program to enhance the Confederation's internal expertise on climate change and the intricate concept of Just Transition. This is particularly vital given that, as revealed through consultations, climate change is not yet widely perceived by the organization as an immediate threat demanding their full attention. Educational

initiatives must be designed to demystify climate science, illustrating its direct and tangible impacts on workers' daily lives, health, and job security across various sectors, from agriculture to manufacturing. Training programs should go beyond theoretical explanations of Just Transition, offering practical insights into how shifts towards a low-carbon economy will specifically affect Ethiopian industries and the workforce. This could involve workshops on identifying climate risks in workplaces, understanding green job opportunities, and recognizing the need for social protection measures. To institutionalize this knowledge, CETU should consider establishing a dedicated unit or a specialized committee focused on climate change and Just Transition within its organizational structure. Such a unit would serve as a hub for research, policy analysis, and advocacy, ensuring continuity and expertise in this critical area. Equipping this unit with the necessary resources and training would allow them to analyze policy documents like the NDC 3.0 from a labor perspective, identify potential impacts on workers, and formulate concrete, evidence-based proposals.

6.2 Strategies for Effective Engagement in NDC 3.0 Development and Implementation

With enhanced internal capacity, CETU can then adopt proactive and strategic approaches to engage effectively in the development and subsequent implementation of NDC 3.0. The observed widening of participatory spaces under the Ministry of Planning and Development presents a fertile ground for such engagement. CETU should seize this opportunity by actively seeking and securing formal representation in all relevant national climate policy committees, task forces, and consultation forums related to NDC 3.0. Their participation should go beyond mere attendance; it must involve robust preparation to propose specific text, clauses, and commitments within the NDC 3.0 that explicitly enshrine Just Transition principles. This includes advocating for specific provisions on workers' rights, gender equality, skills development, and social protection.

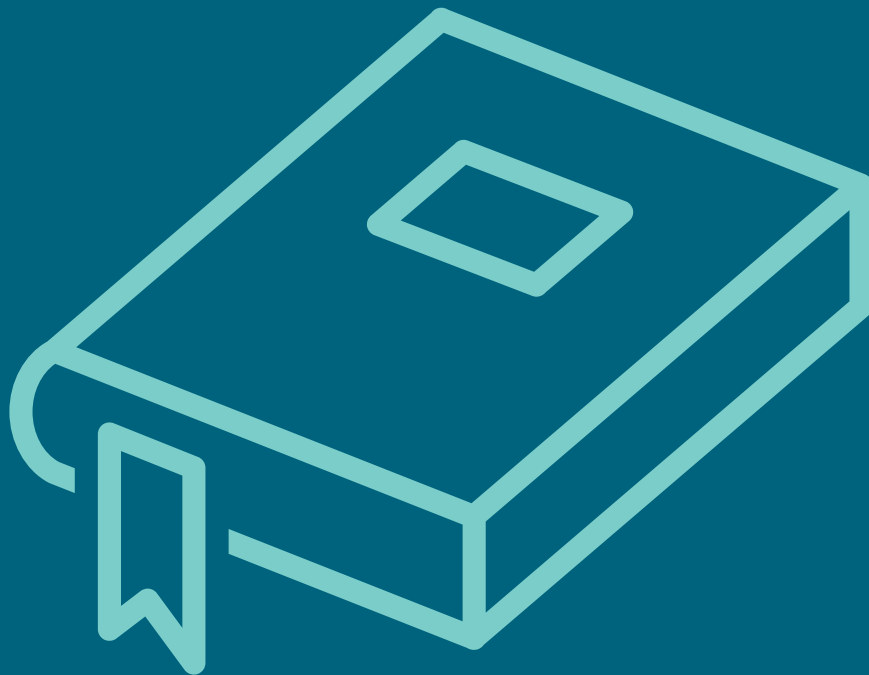
Furthermore, CETU must develop a robust advocacy strategy that leverages various channels. This could involve issuing public statements, engaging with media to raise awareness about the workers' dimension of climate action, and preparing detailed policy briefs articulating their positions. As the NDC 3.0 moves from drafting to implementation, CETU's role must evolve to include rigorous monitoring and evaluation. They should establish mechanisms to track whether the Just Transition commitments within the NDC are being fulfilled, whether green jobs are truly decent, and

if social protection measures are adequately supporting affected workers. Regular reports on these findings, shared with government and the public, would hold institutions accountable and drive continuous improvement. Given the previously noted limited understanding, initial engagement should also focus on clarifying the why of Just Transition in tangible terms that resonate with workers' everyday concerns, linking climate action to job security, health, and economic stability.

6.3 Building Alliances and Partnerships

No single actor can achieve a Just Transition alone. CETU's influence and effectiveness will be significantly amplified through the strategic formation of alliances and partnerships. Strengthening existing collaborations with international organizations like the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) and the International Labor Organization (ILO-ACTRAV) is paramount. This should also extend to other relevant ILO programs such as ILO-ProAgro, focusing on rural and agricultural workers, and the broader ILO Decent Work Programme, ensuring comprehensive support. Furthermore, partnerships with international NGOs like ActionAid, which often have strong grassroots presence and advocacy experience, can provide valuable complementary support. These partners can continue to provide invaluable technical expertise, financial support for capacity building, and platforms for knowledge exchange, drawing lessons from global best practices in trade union engagement in climate action. Beyond international partners, CETU should actively cultivate stronger relationships with national civil society organizations (CSOs), youth groups, and environmental advocates who share a common vision for a sustainable and equitable future. Forming broad-based coalitions can create a powerful, unified voice for advocating comprehensive Just Transition measures. Dialogue with academic institutions like Addis Ababa University's Institute of Climate and Society or the Ethiopian Civil Service University's Public Policy and Development Studies programs and research bodies can also provide CETU with the evidence and data needed to bolster its policy positions. Critically, identifying and engaging with progressive employers and private sector actors who are committed to sustainable and responsible business practices can open avenues for social dialogue at the enterprise and sectoral levels, leading to practical solutions for green job creation and skills development. By strategically forging these diverse partnerships, CETU can ensure that its advocacy for a Just Transition resonates across society and effectively shapes Ethiopia's climate future.

Section 7: Conclusion and Policy Lessons



Ethiopia stands at a pivotal juncture, navigating the dual imperatives of robust economic development and urgent climate action. As this report has explored, ensuring that the nation’s ambitious climate plans, particularly the NDC 3.0, are underpinned by a strong “Just Transition” framework is not merely an option but a fundamental necessity. This approach guarantees that the shift towards a low-carbon, climate-resilient economy is equitable, inclusive, and protective of its most vulnerable citizens, especially its workers. While past climate policy development processes in Ethiopia have largely been centralized, an encouraging shift towards greater participation is evident in the lead-up to NDC 3.0, particularly with the Ministry of Planning and Development at the helm of the climate portfolio. This provides a crucial opening to embed Just Transition principles more deeply and comprehensively than ever before.

7.1 Recapitulation of Key Findings and Conclusions

The assessment of Ethiopia’s NDC 2.0 revealed commendable commitments to climate mitigation and adaptation, yet also identified significant gaps in the explicit integration of Just Transition principles. Specifically, the NDC 2.0 largely lacked dedicated provisions for safeguarding workers’ rights, promoting decent green jobs, or establishing robust social protection mechanisms during the transition. Furthermore, the systematic inclusion of crucial stakeholders like trade unions in climate policy formulation was notably absent. Consultations highlighted a prevailing lack of understanding of “Just Transition” and even the direct threat of climate change among some local stakeholders, including within the Ethiopian Confederation of Trade Unions (CETU). This awareness gap, coupled with limited formal participatory channels, has historically hindered the labor movement’s ability to advocate effectively for its members’ interests in the climate arena.

However, the ongoing development of NDC 3.0 presents a significant opportunity for redress. The increased openness to broader stakeholder participation, spearheaded by the Ministry of Planning and Development, signals a promising shift towards more inclusive governance. While CETU has taken a foundational step by appointing a Just Transition focal point, institutionalizing this role and building comprehensive internal capacity on climate issues remains critical. This report concludes that to achieve a truly just transition, Ethiopia’s climate policies must intentionally bridge these historical gaps through proactive policy design and strengthened social dialogue.

7.2 Policy and Political Lessons for Stakeholders

The journey towards a Just Transition in Ethiopia offers several vital policy and political lessons for all key stakeholders, including the government, trade unions, civil society, and private sector actors.

Firstly, **awareness is the bedrock of action.** The observed limited understanding of “Just Transition” and the direct threats of climate change among key local actors, particularly within the labor movement, underscores the urgent need for targeted and continuous capacity building. For climate policies to be truly owned and implemented effectively, all stakeholders must understand their relevance to their specific mandates and constituencies. This means breaking down complex climate concepts into tangible impacts on livelihoods, jobs, and communities.

Secondly, **inclusion is not an add-on; it’s a necessity for legitimate and effective policy.** The shift towards greater participatory space for NDC 3.0 is a positive political lesson. Governments must commit to formalizing robust social dialogue mechanisms that ensure the meaningful participation of workers’ and employers’ organizations from the earliest stages of policy development. This extends beyond mere consultation to genuine co-creation, recognizing that those directly affected by transition processes hold invaluable insights into practical solutions and potential challenges.

Thirdly, **a Just Transition must be strategically proactive, not merely reactive.** It’s about designing policies that anticipate socio-economic impacts, invest in new opportunities, and build resilience. This means explicitly defining what “decent green jobs” look like in the Ethiopian context, developing national green skills strategies, and embedding comprehensive social protection floors within climate frameworks. Policies should not only mitigate emissions but also deliberately foster inclusive economic growth that benefits all segments of society, with a particular focus on empowering women and youth. The South African experience powerfully illustrates that while strong policy frameworks are essential, their effectiveness hinges on robust implementation that prioritizes social protection, directly addresses livelihood impacts, and acknowledges the crucial role of care work, ensuring that the “justice” in Just Transition is realized on the ground for workers and communities.

Fourthly, inter-ministerial coordination and cross-sectoral planning are paramount. Climate action cuts across all sectors of the economy and society. Effective implementation

of a Just Transition requires seamless collaboration among ministries, local governments, and non-state actors. The Ministry of Planning and Development's central role in the climate portfolio presents an opportunity to champion this integrated approach, ensuring that climate goals are synchronized with national development objectives and labor market considerations.

Finally, **alliances are power**. The collaborative efforts of international organizations like FES and ILO with national stakeholders are vital in bridging knowledge gaps and providing technical support. Trade unions, in particular, should actively build broad alliances with civil society organizations, youth networks, and progressive businesses to amplify their advocacy. These collective efforts can create a powerful impetus for a Just Transition, fostering shared ownership and accelerating progress towards a sustainable and equitable future for Ethiopia.

7.3 Future Outlook

As Ethiopia embarks on the formulation and implementation of its NDC 3.0, the opportunity to champion a truly Just Transition is unprecedented. By intentionally integrating comprehensive social safeguards, promoting decent work, fostering skills development, and ensuring inclusive governance, Ethiopia can set a powerful example of how ambitious climate action can go hand-in-hand with social justice. The path ahead requires sustained political will, continuous capacity building, and unwavering commitment to dialogue among all stakeholders. Ultimately, a successful Just Transition will not only secure Ethiopia's climate future but also build a more resilient, prosperous, and equitable society for all its citizens.



Side Event at the Second African Climate Summit (ACS2) "Social Dialogue for Climate and Jobs: Unions, Employers, Government, and Civil Society in Just Transition"
Date and Time: 09 September 2025
Source: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung e.V.

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Annex I:

Recent development

Recent developments illustrate a crucial shift in CETU's engagement with national climate policy. Following a training series facilitated by FES Ethiopia for CETU leadership and representatives from nine trade federations, a concrete step was taken to raise awareness and identified capacity gaps. The training focused on the intersections of climate change, Just Transition, and the future of work that were previously underexplored within the union movement. As an outcome, CETU formally appointed three focal persons to lead its work on climate change and Just Transition and submitted a request to the Ministry of Planning and Development (MoPD) to participate in the development of Ethiopia's NDC 3.0. This marks the first time the Confederation has proactively requested institutionalized inclusion in national climate processes. CETU's intention to influence Ethiopia's climate agenda was extended on the continental stage during the Second Africa Climate Summit (ACS2) held in Addis Ababa (8–10 September 2025), where it co-hosted a side event with FES Ethiopia titled "Social Dialogue for Climate and Jobs: Unions, Employers, Government, and Civil Society in Just Transition." These efforts underscore a growing recognition within the trade unions of the importance of shaping climate policy not only to safeguard existing jobs but also to promote sustainable employment strategies aligned with a Just Transition framework.

Integrating a Just Transition for Workers' Rights and Livelihoods: Enhancing Ethiopia's NDC 3.0

Ethiopia's NDC 3.0 presents a critical opportunity to embed a Just Transition that protects workers' rights, promotes decent green jobs, and ensures inclusive, gender-responsive climate action. Current gaps include limited stakeholder awareness—especially among trade unions—and insufficient integration of social protections and labor considerations in climate policy. The report recommends explicit Just Transition commitments in NDC 3.0, stronger social dialogue, green skills development, and enhanced social safety nets to build a fair and resilient low-carbon economy.

Further information on this topic can be found here:

➔ ethiopia.fes.de