



## 28th Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC (COP 28)

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### Delivering a gender-responsive just transition for all

#### A high-level dialogue

3 December 2023, Dubai UAE, Meeting Room 02, Zone B1

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#### **Executive summary**

On 3 December 2023, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) will organize a one-day high-level dialogue in response to the 27<sup>th</sup> United Nations Climate Change Conference request (COP 27). This dialogue will explore the nexus between climate change action, gender equality, inclusion and the world of work. The outcomes of the workshop will inform the Gender Equality Day on 4 December 2023<sup>1</sup> and will link with the Finance, Trade and Accountability Day to promote modalities and accountability around increased finance flows and resource allocations to women and girls, including through women's organizations.

This concept note provides background information for the workshop, outlining the rationale for adopting a gender-responsive just transition, as well as its contents.

#### **Mandate**

In the intermediate review of the implementation of the Gender Action Plan (GAP), COP 27 noted the ILO technical paper exploring linkages between gender-responsive climate action and just transition for promoting inclusive opportunities for all in a low-emission economy<sup>2</sup> and invited the organization to consider organizing a workshop or dialogue focused on the topic.<sup>3</sup>

#### **Context of just transition in the UNFCCC**

Since the adoption of the Paris Agreement, the just transition of the workforce and the creation of decent work and quality jobs have been discussed in the UNFCCC process under the [forum on the impact of the implementation of response measures on matters related to response measures](#). The forum and its Katowice Committee of Experts on the Impacts of the Implementation of Response Measures have produced technical papers and case studies that consider the gender-related aspects of just transition.<sup>4</sup>

The imperative of the just transition for the workforce and the creation of decent work and quality jobs was taken into account in the adoption of the first Gender Action Plan at COP 23 and in the preamble to the enhanced Lima Work Programme on Gender, adopted at COP 25. The programme notes that gender-responsive implementation and means of implementing climate policy and action

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<sup>1</sup> According to the [current schedule](#), which may still undergo changes.

<sup>2</sup> ILO, [Just transition: An essential pathway to achieving gender equality and social justice](#), 2022.

<sup>3</sup> UNFCCC, [Decision 24/CP.27](#), para. 7.

<sup>4</sup> For instance, see the publication UNFCCC, [Implementation of just transition and economic diversification strategies. A compilation of best practices from different countries](#), 2023.



can raise ambition and enhance gender equality and just transition.<sup>5</sup> The activities under the GAP contribute to the development and implementation of actions for a gender-responsive just transition.

COP 27, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, adopted important decisions regarding just transitions. The Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan established a Work Programme on Just Transition Pathways as referenced in relevant paragraphs of decision 1/CMA.4. The plan also called for the convening of an annual high-level ministerial round table on just transition, beginning at CMA 5/COP 28. The same decision encouraged Parties ‘to increase the full, meaningful and equal participation of women in climate action and to ensure gender-responsive implementation and means of implementation, including by fully implementing the on gender and its gender action plan, to raise climate ambition and achieve climate goals.’

### Why a gender-responsive just transition is needed?

Despite the progress made towards gender equality over the past century, women, in all their diversity, continue to face exclusion, discrimination, and disproportionate exposure to socio-economic vulnerabilities. Climate change risks are exacerbating existing gender inequality gaps, particularly in the world of work. Without bold and coordinated action, along with policies and investments aimed at achieving a “gender-just” transition, climate and just transition goals will not be achieved.

The ILO estimates that 1.2 billion jobs, or 40 per cent of the global labour force, are directly or heavily dependent on ecosystem services and are thus at serious risk due to global warming and environmental degradation.<sup>6</sup> The increasing impacts of climate change on employment, productivity and working conditions are threatening workers and enterprises across the globe. Climate action is essential to secure sustainable development and decent work and will involve a far-reaching restructuring of economies and labour markets. While it presents large-scale potential for job creation, upgrading and more inclusive economies, climate action also carries risks of adverse social impacts. The concept of Just Transition is a response to this multi-faceted challenge: it provides a framework to maximize opportunities for decent work and social justice while minimizing and mitigating negative impacts, ensuring fair and inclusive outcomes and a process based on social dialogue and stakeholder engagement. This was recently reaffirmed in the ILO [proposed resolution and conclusions](#) of the General Discussion Committee on a Just Transition adopted by the 111<sup>th</sup> session of the International Labour Conference.

A growing body of evidence points to the differentiated impacts of climate change on women and men in all their diversity and groups who are further disadvantaged through discrimination, such as indigenous peoples, ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities, people living with HIV, people of African descent, and LGBTIQ+ persons.<sup>7</sup> For instance, 80 per cent of people displaced by climate change are women<sup>8</sup>. Climate shocks such as induced water scarcity can lead to increased unpaid care work, primarily affecting girls and young women. This translates into a reduction in time dedicated to study and a higher risk of dropping out of school.<sup>9</sup> Conversely, women are rarely at the decision-

<sup>5</sup> UNFCCC, [Decision 3/CP. 25](#), preamble and para. 9.

<sup>6</sup> ILO, [World Employment and Social Outlook. Greening with jobs](#), 2018.

<sup>7</sup> IPCC, 2023: [Climate Change 2023: Synthesis Report. A Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#) [Core Writing Team, H. Lee and J. Romero (eds.)]. IPCC, Geneva, Switzerland, (in press).

<sup>8</sup> United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), [Gender and climate change - Overview of linkages between gender and climate change – World](#), 2017.

<sup>9</sup> ILO, [Gender equality, labour and a just transition for all](#), 2022.



making table in terms of response measures and often have limited access to critical information. Furthermore, there is mounting evidence that climate-induced disasters lead to increased gender-based violence<sup>10</sup> and heat stress can worsen working conditions for the many women employed in subsistence agriculture and for men working in construction sites.<sup>11</sup> In some countries, the tasks of collecting firewood and water, which traditionally fall to women and girls as part of unpaid care work, are heavily affected by adverse climate change impacts, which force women and girls to travel further from their homes thus increasing their exposure to gender-based violence outside the home.<sup>12</sup> While evidence of the gender-differentiated impacts of climate change has grown in recent years, better gender-disaggregated data is still needed to fully understand the gendered implications of climate change and climate policy in the world of work.<sup>13</sup>

Research indicates that climate response measures, despite their potential for inclusive and equitable development, require explicit design, advocacy and commitment from leadership. The persistent gender wage gap, sectoral and occupational segregation mean that women lag behind men in both job quantity and quality.<sup>14</sup> If these challenges are not addressed, there are indications that women, in particular those belonging to groups vulnerable to discrimination and exclusion, those working in the informal economy and those migrating because of climate change, will not benefit from job opportunities emerging from the shift to greener economies. This continued exclusion is exacerbated by existing imbalances in access to skills, technology and assets, unequal distribution of care responsibilities and provision of care policy and service packages, together with protracted lack of investment in 'feminised' sectors with high potential for decent green job creation, such as the care and agriculture sectors and the persistence of harmful stereotypes and discrimination.

### What needs to happen – and how?

The [ILO proposed resolution and conclusions on a just transition](#) towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all calls for a just transition that entails a strong gender and inclusive dimension to address environmental challenges and leverage potential opportunities. Gender equality, social inclusion and equity should be promoted, paying particular attention to indigenous and tribal peoples and groups in vulnerable situations. Governments, in consultation with the most representative employers' and workers' organizations should, amongst others, formulate, implement, monitor and evaluate gender-responsive, inclusive, integrated and coherent just transition frameworks aligned with relevant economic, social and environmental policies. The proposed resolution also encourages the provision of universal access to comprehensive, adequate and sustainable social protection systems, including social protection floors, to safeguard populations against adverse impacts, reduce vulnerability and strengthen resilience to facilitate a just transition. It also calls for investing in sustainable infrastructure and quality public services to provide a foundation for a just transition.

The environment and women's time have often been treated as infinite resources, and both unpaid and paid work performed by women have either been ignored or undervalued despite being essential to the well-being of societies and economies. Unless gender-responsive and inclusive measures are in place, women in all their diverse circumstances will not benefit equitably from the just transition

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<sup>10</sup> UNFCCC, [Dimensions and examples of the gender-differentiated impacts of climate change, the role of women as agents of change and opportunities for women. Synthesis report by the secretariat](#), 2022.

<sup>11</sup> ILO, [Working on a warmer planet: The impact of heat stress on labour productivity and decent work](#), 2019.

<sup>12</sup> UNFCCC, [Dimensions and examples of the gender-differentiated impacts of climate change, the role of women as agents of change and opportunities for women. Synthesis report by the secretariat](#), 2022.

<sup>13</sup> ILO, [Gender equality, labour and a just transition for all](#), 2022.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.



process, and gender inequalities and discrimination at work are likely to persist or worsen.<sup>15</sup> The [ILO Guidelines](#) for a Just Transition towards Environmentally Sustainable Economies and Societies for All clearly present the need for gender equality to be ensured and addressed across policy fields. This includes extending the notion of green jobs beyond the traditional male-dominated energy, waste management and transportation sectors and recognizing the vital contribution of care jobs to workforce sustainability, to preserve and or improve the well-being of current and future generations. The care and education sectors can also offer sustainable job opportunities for workers transitioning from polluting jobs to new jobs. This further points to the urgent need to address gender-based occupational segregation so that women and men can benefit from green jobs across sectors.

Women in all their diversity are central actors for environmental protection. Their knowledge, capabilities, and effective networks can influence production and consumption, and drive market and environmentally sustainable solutions. Women's contributions to just transition are thus vital. They have demonstrated leadership in advocating, designing, and implementing just adaptation and mitigation measures that are tailored to the specific needs of their communities. Therefore, it is crucial to ensure women's full and equitable participation and leadership needs in all stages of the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of just transition policies and programmes.

Clear commitments and language highlighting the gender dimension of just transition plans, policies, and programmes need to be introduced in a more systematic way in nationally determined contributions (NDCs), national adaptation plans (NAPs) and national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs). To this end, sound statistical information grounded in international statistical standards must be enhanced to ensure better understanding of the gendered implications of transitions, as well as for adequate monitoring and evaluation of just transition commitments.

### What do we aim to achieve?

This event is an opportunity to discuss and advance the agenda on delivering a gender-responsive and inclusive just transition in the world of work. It will focus on the needs of women in all their diversity, including the most vulnerable. The mandated event will:

- Analyse issues relating to barriers for women to fully and equally participate in just transition processes including a reflection on care policies and services and social protection needed to support women and men to be more active in the labour market. This involves recognizing, reducing and redistributing care responsibilities and rewarding and representing care workers and care givers in decision making processes.
- Discuss how activities under the Gender Action Plan have contributed and can further contribute to a gender-responsive just transition.
- Exploring avenues to advance the adoption and implementation of commitments towards a gender-responsive financing for gender responsive just transition, which:
  - Include women's agency in environmental protection, through their own knowledge, capabilities, and effective networks to drive real solutions in a just transition by influencing production, consumption, and market sustainable solutions.
  - Discuss the fulfilment of rights at work in the context of a gender transformative and inclusive just transition for ensuring decent work and quality jobs, which encompass safe, healthy working conditions, equal opportunities and treatment and equitable outcomes.

## Programme

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<sup>15</sup> ILO, [Skills for a greener future: a global view](#), 2019.



09:30 – 10:00	Registration, tea and coffee
10:00 – 10:05	Opening – Ms Femi Oke, moderator
10:05 – 10:25	Welcoming remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ms Celeste Drake, Deputy Director-General, ILO</li> <li>- Ina Parvanova, Director, Communications and Engagement Division, UN Climate Change</li> </ul>
10:25 – 10:32	Statement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mr Dirk Meyer, Director of Directorate General 4, Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (Germany)</li> </ul>
10:32 – 10:45	Fireside chat <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ms Michele Parmelee, President, International Organisation of Employers (IOE)</li> <li>- Ms Kaira Reece, Secretary for Sustainable Development, International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)</li> </ul>
10:45 – 11:35	High level panel : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mr Dirk Meyer, Director of Directorate General 4, Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (Germany)</li> <li>- Ms Angelica Ponce, Executive Director at the Plurinational Authority for Mother Earth (Plurinational State of Bolivia)</li> <li>- Ms Gina Cortés, Global South representative, UNFCCC Women &amp; Gender Constituency</li> <li>- Ms Maria Selin, Head of Regional Development Cooperation, Embassy of Sweden in Amman (Sweden)</li> </ul>
11:35 – 12:00	Q&A
12:00 – 12:30	Key messages on gender and just transition from Regional Climate Weeks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mwanahamisi Singano (Tanzania), WEDO Senior Policy Lead, WGC Co-Focal Point</li> <li>- Fatma Khafagy (Egypt), Arab States CSOs &amp; Feminist Network Co-founder</li> </ul>
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 – 14:15	<b>Keynote speech</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Ms Barbara Creecy, Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment Affairs (South Africa)</b></li> </ul>
14:15 – 15:45	Gender and just transition world café: Participants can explore good policies and practices related to developing gender-responsive, inclusive, integrated and coherent just transition frameworks.  Issues for discussion, related to the technical topics to be discussed on Gender Day:



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Gender-responsive sectoral policies, including the care economy</li><li>- Gender-responsive social protection to a just transition</li><li>- Ensuring meaningful participation through rights and social dialogue</li><li>- Existing opportunities for financing gender-responsive just transitions and climate action</li></ul>
15:45 – 16:15	Health break and a <a href="#">display of a video on a gender-responsive just transition</a>
16:15 – 16:25	Lightning talk: Disability and Just Transition celebrating International Day of Persons with Disabilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Ms Pratima Gurung, General Secretary, Indigenous Persons with Disabilities Global Network (IPWDGN)</li></ul>
16:25 – 16:50	Report back from world café: Recommendations for action <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(i) identify areas and actions to be prioritized</li><li>(ii) identify areas for collaboration</li></ul>
16:50 – 17:00	Inspiring talk <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Ms Sima Bahous, Executive Director of UN Women</li></ul>
17:00 – 17:15	Lightning talk: Indigenous and tribal peoples and just transition <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Ms Asikaralu Okafor, Executive director, Village Farmers Initiative (VFI)</li></ul>
17:15 – 17:20	Closing remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Ms Aysin Turpanci, SBI Rapporteur</li></ul>

**The event will be conducted in English, French, Spanish and Arabic. It will be broadcast live, and International Sign Language interpretation will be available.**