



Concept note

Advancing climate action, a just transition, and decent work in Africa

Regional launch: Climate Action for Jobs Initiative and “the social dimension of the ecological transition” project

1. Background and Context

The ILO and its Tripartite Constituents are committed to ensure that a just transition to a sustainable future takes place and addresses the imperatives of decent work.

In 2015, the Governing Body of the International Labour Organization (ILO) adopted a decision concerning *Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all*. The Guidelines aim at enabling governments, workers and employers around the globe to leverage the process of structural change towards a greener, low-carbon economy, create decent jobs at a large-scale and promote social protection. They put forward that macroeconomics and growth policies, industrial and sectoral policies, enterprises policies, skills development, occupational safety and health, social protection, active labour market policies, rights and social dialogue and tripartism are all key policies areas for a just transition for all.

At the **2019 Climate Action Summit** convened by the UN Secretary-General António Guterres, **46 countries** committed to support a **just ecological transition**, putting jobs and livelihoods at the heart of ambition action **for a greener future**. Nine countries in Africa committed to formulate just transition policies alongside a scaling up of their climate action. Policies for a **just transition** aim inter alia to facilitate the **redeployment of redundant workers**, to equip people with appropriate and **upgraded skills** for new job creation, and to introduce **innovative social protection measures**.

To turn this agenda into concrete action, the UN Secretary-General and the Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO), with leaders from governments, employers' and workers' organizations, **launched a Climate Action for Jobs (CA4J) Initiative**. The ILO has been tasked to spearhead the Initiative. It is designed to:

- enable **ambitious climate action** that delivers **decent jobs** and **advances social justice**.



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- support **countries** on **bold solutions** for a **transition** towards a **sustainable future** that is **just** and **enjoys broad-based support**.
- Facilitate an **inclusive and sustainable recovery** from the **COVID-19** crisis.

The CA4J initiative offers support to countries to meet their just transition commitments in all key policy areas. At the global level, the Initiative also provides a **global innovation** hub on just transition, a **mechanism** for **pooling funding** for country-level technical assistance and a **facility for advocacy** and outreach.

In 2020, the CA4J's governance and its 2020-2030 Implementation Strategy - designed to contribute to the Decade of Action on the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the UNSG's six areas of action for a climate-positive recovery from the COVID-19 crisis - were established. Following these first steps and building on the *Abidjan Declaration on Advancing Social Justice: Shaping the future of work in Africa*, an **initial engagement** with development partners from the EU (France and Sweden) enables the Initiative to **begin** now **operations** in Colombia and in three West-African countries, namely Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria and Senegal.

Within this framework, the **project** the '*Social Dimension of Ecological Transition*' funded by France¹ aims to make a just ecological transition possible through support to analysis of the nature and impact of climate change on employment and income, as well as to the development of measures and policies to promote job creation and social inclusion while mitigating economic and social risks in the context of climate change. The project will take place in Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria and Senegal and involve knowledge-sharing activities in Algeria, Ghana, Morocco and Niger. It will support targeted countries on just transitions in three main areas:

- Strengthening institutional structures for social dialogue
- Anchoring and strengthening research and development capacity for assessing social and employment impact of climate policies
- Supporting the formulation and implementation of policies based on inclusive social dialogue and integrated analytical models. These may include policies in the field of social protection, skills, enterprises, investment.

2. Objectives of the event:

Overall objective: Mobilise governments, workers' and employers' organizations as well as development partners to accelerate climate action with decent work and a just transition for all.

Specific objectives:

1. Present the offer of the Climate Action for Jobs through country-level interventions in Africa, addressing the social dimension of the ecological transition.

¹ The 'Social Dimension of Ecological Transition' has been included in the France-ILO 2020-2024 partnership.

2. Engage with tripartite constituents on their just transition contexts, needs and priorities.
3. Foster interest among partners, including funding partners, to support the implementation of the Initiative and achieve synergies with other similar initiatives.

3. Modalities:

- *Date:* 21 April 2021 – 10:00 – 12:00 UTC
- *Format:* 2-hour virtual event, with interpretation French-English
- *Target countries:* Algeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Zimbabwe
- *Participants:*
 - Tripartite constituents of all target countries: Ministers and representatives of employers' and workers' organizations
 - CA4J International Advisory Board members
 - CA4J International Technical Group members
 - Development and funding partners: EU, France, Germany, Spain, Sweden, UK, US, Development Banks.
 - UN Resident Coordinators in targeted countries
 - Representatives of civil society, youth organizations and academia
 - Others: the event will be public and open all interested participants
- ILO participation:
 - Regional Office Director
 - Enterprises Department Director
 - Country Office Directors
 - Global Coordinator for the Green Jobs Programme
 - Interested staff at Headquarters and Field offices
- Interactivity: The event will aim to maximise interactions with participants and to provide a space for tripartite constituents to provide feedback on their priorities in the area of just transition, the CA4J Initiative and the implementation of the project.

4. Draft Agenda:

- Curtain Opening Video setting the context (3min)
- Opening remarks (30 min)
 - Cynthia Samuel-Olonjuwon, ILO Assistant Director-General, Regional Director for Africa
 - CA4J International Advisory Board Members
 - Ms Anousheh Karvar as Member of Advisory Group and France delegate to the ILO – tbc



- Mr Ignatius Baffour Awuah, Minister of Employment and Labour Relations, Ghana – tbc
 - Ms Innocence Ntap N'diaye, President, High Council of social Dialogue, Senegal – tbc
 - Ms Sharan Burrow, General Secretary, International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) – tbc
 - Mr Roberto Suárez Santos, Secretary General, International Organisation of Employers (IOE) – tbc
- Short Presentation of the CA4J Initiative and the project and the “social dimension of the ecological transition” project (2 min video format)
- Session 1 the needs and priorities in meeting the countries’ just transition commitments (40min)
 - Moderated discussion with the following speakers:
 - 1 Government representative (Minister from **Nigeria**)
 - 1 Worker representative from **Niger**
 - 1 Employer representative from **Morocco**
 - 1 representative of academia (Margaret Chitiga-Mabugu, Co-chair, International Technical Group, CA4J, Director of the School of Public Management and Administration, University of Pretoria, **South Africa** – tbc);
 - Q&A (managed by the secretariat through a chat function. Questions directed to the moderator for consideration).
- Session 2: How to actualize the just transition opportunities for Africa (40 min)
 - Panel discussion with the following speakers:
 - 1 Government Representative (**Cote d’Ivoire**)
 - 1 Representative of development partners (Diana Acconcia, Head of the EU Delegation to **Ghana** – tbc)
 - UN Resident coordination **South Africa**
 - 1 Representative of the African Development Bank
 - 1 Employer Representative from Zimbabwe (ideally a youth business leader)
 - 1 Worker Representative from **Senegal**
 - Q&A (managed by the secretariat through a chat function. Questions directed to the moderator for consideration).
- Concluding remarks (5 min)
 - Summary of main take outs from the day
 - Cynthia Samuel-Olonjuwon, ILO Assistant Director-General, Regional Director for Africa ILO Regional Director

