

# A GENDER-RESPONSIVE JUST TRANSITION FOR PEOPLE AND PLANET

## Summary

The case for a gender-responsive just transition towards low-carbon economies with quality, decent jobs is grounded in the Paris Agreement and a growing body of data and evidence that underscores the necessity of incorporating gender equality considerations in just transition policies and initiatives. The policy brief discusses robust pathways to a gender responsive just transition and calls for governments and other stakeholders to make explicit commitments and actions, and to be held accountable for them. The brief also makes recommendations for actions and investments to build sustainable economies and societies that support the survival and flourishing of the planet and present and future generations.



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The [Paris Agreement](#) calls for “a just transition of the workforce and the creation of decent work and quality jobs”, which is reinforced by the International Labour Organization (ILO) [Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all](#) on managing transition to environmentally sustainable, low-carbon economies to create decent jobs at scale, minimize impacts on affected workers, make the economy more inclusive, eradicate poverty and promote social protection. The key priority should be support to least developed countries and small island developing states, which have historically contributed least to global greenhouse gas emissions while suffering disproportionate climate change impacts, to pursue gender-responsive just transitions.

Mounting evidence has revealed the differentiated impacts of climate change and environmental degradation on women and girls, especially those in vulnerable and marginalized situations, including Indigenous women, ethnic minorities, those living with disabilities and with HIV, women of African descent and LGBTIQ+ persons (as synthesized in the latest IPCC

reports). These impacts are compounded by women’s persistently unequal access to decent work, land and natural resources, finance, technology, knowledge, mobility and other assets which constrain their ability to respond and build resilience to climate and environmental crises and disasters. As such, women are most susceptible to climate impacts and most at risk of being left out of the process and benefits of a just transition.

Yet the just transition to low-carbon, sustainable economies presents opportunities for addressing gender inequalities in the labour market through the creation of decent work in sectors and value chains that have typically been dominated by men. To be truly equitable, inclusive and fair, a just transition must take a human rights-based, intersectional approach with social protection and care at the centre. A gender-responsive just transition centres on gender equality and care in policies and programmes towards an economy that works for all people and the planet while upholding rights and the principle of leaving no one behind. This is the foundation of a gender-responsive just transition.

## Key recommendations for a gender-responsive just transition

Governments and other stakeholders should undertake the following actions and investments, with the support of UN agencies and civil society, to realize gender-responsive just transitions, giving priority to least developed countries and small island developing states:

### Overall

- Ensure that gender considerations and human rights are fully integrated in climate action, as recognized by the Paris Agreement.
- Integrate gender equality perspectives in just transition plans, policies and programmes, including through Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), National Action Programs on Land Degradation Neutrality and National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs).

### On decent work and social protection

- Promote the right to work and rights at work, including through the elimination of violence and harassment against women and gender-diverse people in the workplace, and ensure women's equal access to decent work in low-carbon, sustainable economies.
- Eliminate occupational segregation and gender pay gaps to level the playing field for women.
- Formalize jobs in the informal economy, supporting decent work and social protection for women.
- Invest in universal social protection systems to undergird just transitions.
- Invest in sectors with high potential for creating jobs for women, including in the care economy.
- Expand quality public care services and infrastructure.

### On climate finance

- Increase access to climate finance for women and women's organizations through targeted direct funding channels, prioritizing funding for women and girls most affected by climate change.
- Address the crippling debt crisis in developing countries by calling for debt cancellation and an overhaul of the global debt architecture, to allow countries to make the investments necessary for gender-responsive just transitions.

### On women's voice, agency and skills

- Promote women's voice, agency and full, equal and meaningful participation and leadership in the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of just transition initiatives, policies and programmes.
- Support women's and girls' access to training, skill building and education towards their equal access to new quality jobs created in just transitions.

### On data and accountability

- Invest in the collection, analysis and generation of more and better gender data and statistics, including time-use surveys, with an emphasis on interlinkages between gender equality, climate change and environmental degradation.
- Facilitate the key role of civil society and gender equality advocates in ensuring accountability for gender-responsive just transition policies and initiatives and their implementation, by holding governments and other stakeholders, such as the private sector, to account.



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