Kigali Reflections on African Just Transition Perspectives.

Kigali, Rwanda | 4 March 2021

CONCEPT NOTE

What is just transition? The answer usually depends on whom you ask. In its early conceptualization among North American unionists, just transition was understood as a framework for reconciling job protection and climate outcomes associated with the decarbonization of certain productive sectors. These days, the expression encompasses a range of concerns over the likely negative effects of the decarbonisation of multiple sectors on equality, human rights, access to resources and other developmental challenges. It has, therefore, come to be understood as planning and acting to minimize the risks of and spread the benefits of transitioning to a low carbon future, both for people and the planet. As these risks and benefits are localized, just transition is in practice highly case specific.

Just Transition, Climate Justice and Just Development

There is now an increasing need for a broader conversation that includes questions around development rights, as nations forgo certain types of productive activities to align with global decarbonisation goals. This includes risks of asset stranding as nations and other actors phase out fossil fuels and certain extractive sectors (upon which most developing economies rely). Analysts in certain fields have coined the expression "just development" to embrace this burgeoning scope. Just transition questions have also arisen among environmental and climate justice advocates; where it has

been further expanded to integrate questions about whose duties and responsibilities it is to minimize the risk and maximize the benefits of a transition to a resilient, low carbon future. The later debate is rooted in the disproportional nature of the current and past emissions at the heart of the climate crisis.

Creating a just future

Given the broadening scope, the overarching goal of just transition advocacy is to secure just outcomes from the variety of policy and practical responses to the world's pressing problems. This requires conceptualizing just transition across multiple sectors or as "just system transitions". The field thus widens further to include addressing existing structural problems as part of the transition package. This creates room for even more considerations, gender, for example. This way of thinking is useful because, in part, a low carbon future will not only require plans and actions to phase out dirty energy but include system-wide structural, institutional and governance changes to accommodate the peculiarities of a new society that is both socially and environmentally harmonious.

African Just Transition Perspectives

Contemporary just transition debate has its origins in Northern America. A more African understanding – that integrates local realities, is needed. The Kigali Reflections on African Just Transition Perspectives aims at collecting, as much as is possible, the experiences and views of stakeholders to elucidate what just transition is and how it might be achieved in the African context. Participants will share their fears, hopes and vision for an Africa in transition.

Outputs

- A first attempt to conceptualise African perspectives of just transition
- A set of just transition principles applicable in the African Context
- 01 policy paper/brief on African Just Transition Perspectives

Agenda

Slot	**Action**	**Facilitator**
08:30 – 09:00	Online and In-person registration	Afanyu/Hope
09:00 – 10:00	Scene Setting and Remarks - ED, PACJA - CO, ACSEA Introductions, Expectations, Aims	Eugene

10:00 – 10: 30	Coffee Break	Meeting Logistics
10:30 – 11:00	Unpacking Just Transition: Origins and Scope	WRI/FES
11:00 – 11:30	Just Energy Transition in Africa: Key Issues for Policy and Practice	Eugene N Nforngwa
11:30 – 12:00	A Gender Analysis of Just Transition	Melania Chiponda
12:00 – 13:00	General Discussions	
13:00 – 14:00	LUNCH	Meeting Logistics
14:00 – 16:00	African Just Transition Perspectives Group Reflections, Reporting Back and Discussions - Group One: - Group 2: - Group 3	Charles Mwangi Eugene N Nforngwa
16:00 – 16:15	Closing: Next Steps - ED PACJA - CO ACSEA	Eugene/Charles