Real People, Real Change: Strategies for Just Energy Transitions
Case of Canada

Presented by Yuliia Oharenko
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What is a just transition?

- JT is context-dependent: it is a shared, negotiated vision and process supported by a set of guiding principles
- JT mentioned as “imperatives” in the Paris Agreement
- ILO’s *Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all* focus on workers in all sectors
- International Trade Unions Confederation (ITUC) and other organisations stress the importance of social dialogue in the JT process
- Different groups interpret JT differently
What do we mean by Just Energy Transitions”?

- Energy transitions are about people who make decisions that lead to transitions and are ultimately affected by them.

- IISD’s “Real People, Real Change: Strategic for just energy transitions” stresses the commonality of approaches and lessons learned from energy transitions for protecting both fossil fuel industry workers and fossil fuel consumers.

## IISD’s “Four Cs” Framework

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<th>Context (e.g.)</th>
<th>Champions (e.g.)</th>
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<td>• Energy sector structure and ownership</td>
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<td>• Resource endowment</td>
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<td>• International commitments</td>
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<td>• Beliefs and values</td>
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<td>• Politicians</td>
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<td>• Trade unions</td>
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<td>• Government officials</td>
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<td>• Industry</td>
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<td>• Broad-based consultations with stakeholders</td>
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<th>Case for Reform</th>
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<td>• Health</td>
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<td>• Climate change</td>
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<td>• Energy security</td>
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<td>• Alternative solutions</td>
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<td>• Social protection</td>
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<td>• Retraining, early retirement and new jobs</td>
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<td>• Targeted support to consumers</td>
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<td>• Support to renewable energy and energy efficiency</td>
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Ontario’s coal power phase-out
Alberta's coal power phase-out

• In November 2015, the Canadian province of Alberta committed to a phase-out of coal power by 2030:
  => retirement of over 40% of installed capacity and the de facto phase-out of local thermal coal mines.

• Coal phase-out is part of the province's wider Climate Leadership Plan. Funding for 1 and 2 comes from carbon tax revenue.

• Alberta's government relies on three pillars:
  1. CAD 1.1 billion payout to coal power companies under Off-Coal Agreements;
  2. CAD 45 million has been allocated in programming to transition coal workers and communities
  3. Launched a new electricity market design to bring in replacement power.

  => This gained the support of organized labour organisations, power companies, public health advocates, environmental non-governmental organizations and the federal government
Decision of the federal government on coal power phase-out by 2029
Example of the Canadian Just Transition Task Force for Coal Power Workers and Communities

• Task Force was launched by Environment and Climate Change Minister Catherine McKenna on April 25, 2018

• 11 member task force representing Labour, Industry, ENGOs, Academics

• Mandated to engage stakeholders and offer suggestions on: scale and impacts of coal phase out; Opportunities to transition workers and communities; leveraging funds to support transition; and gaps in policy and programs to support transition

• Visited 15 communities, met with 80 stakeholders, hosted 8 public engagement sessions across the country; toured five generating stations, two coal mines and one port.
  
  o Key approach in listening intently to stakeholder concerns and identifying potential responses - workers and communities must be at the heart of decision-making
Key recommendations of the Task Force

On 10\textsuperscript{th} of March 2019 TF released report with their findings recommends federal spending “well into the hundreds of millions of dollars” on a long list of new infrastructure, financial and jobs programs, employment training and other solutions. Examples of recommendations:

- "pension bridging program" for workers who will retire earlier than planned due to the phase-out;

- a jobs program to provide affected workers with employment insurance benefits of up to 75 per cent of income for two years, and wage top-ups of up to 90 per cent of previously-earned income for up to two years for workers that get lower-wage jobs;

- establishment of locally-run transition centres are an important resource, serving as a hub where information on re-employment and skills training can be shared, connections can be made and education and financial services offered

- Other recommendations include funding for continuing private healthcare coverage, for education and skills building and to offset the expense of travel or relocating for new employment.
Conclusion: How to Enable Just Transitions?

- Communicating the right message to the right audience can create buy-in from the broad base of stakeholders.
- Transparency and consultation ensure decisions are not taken behind “closed doors”.
- Understanding the local context is key: there is no blueprint to a Just Transition.
- It is important to mainstream Just Transition in other economic sectors as well.
Thank you for your attention!

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#JustTransition #CoalTransition #FossilFuelSubsidies
Further reading from IISD

Bridle et al. (2017). **At the Crossroads: Balancing the financial and social costs of coal transition in China.**


Zinecker et al. (2018). **Real people, real change – strategies for just energy transitions.**

Beaton et al. (2013). **A guidebook to fossil-fuel subsidy reform for policy-makers in Southeast Asia.**

Gerasimchuk, Gass (2018) **The End of Coal: Alberta’s coal phase-out**

Harris, Beck, Gerasimchuk (2018) **The End of Coal: Ontario’s coal phase-out**


Stanley Foundation. (2017). **Setting and international policy agenda for just transitions.**

UNFCCC Secretariat. (2017). **Just transition of the workforce, and the creation of decent work and quality jobs.**