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Labour
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► **Fostering a Just Transition in Jamaica - Collaborative approaches to sustainable development**

A narrative report



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► Executive summary

The Just Transition (JT) Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue, held under the theme “Fostering a Just Transition in Jamaica: Collaborative Approaches for Sustainable Development,” convened a diverse and engaged group of stakeholders to deliberate on equitable and sustainable development pathways. Participants included representatives from the Government of Jamaica, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), trade unions, private sector leaders, academia, and civil society organizations. The forum provided a structured platform for robust discussions on strategies that ensure a Just Transition while balancing economic growth, environmental sustainability, and social equity.

The dialogue aimed to explore and identify inclusive mechanisms for fostering a sustainable and resilient economy in Jamaica, recognizing the country’s position as a Small Island Developing State (SIDS). Given the vulnerabilities faced due to climate change, economic shifts, and global market transitions, discussions emphasized the need for policies and initiatives that prioritize equity, inclusivity, and economic opportunity for all, especially marginalized and vulnerable groups.

Throughout the sessions, participants engaged in expert-led discussions and interactive exchanges that addressed key topics, including:

- The socio-economic and environmental implications of transitioning to a low-carbon economy.
- Policy frameworks necessary to facilitate a Just Transition to ensure alignment with national development goals.
- The critical role of trade unions and the private sector in securing labour rights and job security in emerging industries.
- The importance of community engagement and participatory decision-making in shaping transition strategies.
- Lessons learned from regional and international experiences in managing economic and climate-related transitions.

The discussions underscored the necessity of a collaborative, multi-stakeholder approach, where Government, business, labour, and civil society actively engage to develop and implement strategies that mitigate social and economic disparities while promoting resilience and sustainability. Key recommendations that emerged include:

- Strengthening policy and regulatory frameworks to support a fair and equitable transition.
- Investing in skills development and workforce reskilling to prepare workers for emerging green and sustainable industries.
- Enhancing social protection mechanisms to cushion vulnerable populations against economic disruptions.

- Promoting public-private partnerships to drive investment in sustainable infrastructure and clean energy solutions.
- Encouraging regional cooperation within CARICOM to share best practices and resources for achieving Just Transitions across the Caribbean.
- Integrating gender-responsive approaches to ensure that women and other underrepresented groups benefit equitably from transition initiatives.

This report provides a comprehensive overview of the key discussions, insights, and strategic recommendations presented during the Just Transition Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue. It serves as a critical resource for policymakers, industry leaders, and civil society actors seeking to advance a just and sustainable transition in Jamaica, ensuring that economic progress aligns with social and environmental priorities while leaving no one behind.

► Opening

The opening ceremony provided a powerful introduction to the objectives and anticipated outcomes of the dialogue. It set the stage for the dialogue, with speakers from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and International Labour Organization (ILO) underscoring the importance of innovative thinking and collaborative approaches in achieving Jamaica's sustainable development goals. The focus was on integrating Just Transition principles into national planning to ensure that no one is left behind in the shift to a low-carbon economy.

Mr. Kishan Khodey, the Resident Representative of UNDP, delivered an inspiring call for bold and innovative thinking, highlighting the Organization's commitment to reducing carbon footprints through sustainable policy development, financial investments, and green job creation. Think boldly, collaboratively and outside the box he urged, underscoring the importance of collaboration across public and private sectors to achieve Jamaica's Vision 2030.

The Just Transition initiative is not just an academic pursuit, it's a tool to inform policy implications and guide our policy framework

► **Kishan Khodey**, Resident Representative, UNDP Jamaica

Dr. Joni Musabayana, Director of the ILO Decent Work Team and Office of the Caribbean, joining virtually, emphasized that "the concept of Just Transition represents a collective commitment which ensures that the shift that will happen is fair and inclusive", such that the transition should not leave anyone behind in the transition to a greener economy. He outlined the Organization's ongoing collaboration with UNDP and other stakeholders, including the launch of a new Just Transition Project (2024-2026) focused on Policy coherence, social dialogue and social protections.

The concept of just transition represents a collective commitment that ensures that the shift which will happen is fair and inclusive... ensuring no one is left behind.

► **Joni Musabayana**, Director, ILO DWT and Office for the Caribbean

Both speakers reinforced the need for a participatory approach that aligns Jamaica's local priorities with global sustainability standards, ensuring equitable outcomes for all stakeholders.

► Introduction to Just Transition perspectives

The concept of a **Just Transition** (JT) is rooted in the idea of ensuring that the shift towards a sustainable and low-carbon economy is fair and inclusive for all stakeholders involved. *This means addressing the social, economic, and environmental impacts of transitioning to greener practices, particularly for those who are most affected, such as workers in fossil fuel industries, vulnerable communities, and small businesses.* This session contextualized JT as a global movement with local implications. It focused on embedding equity, inclusion, and environmental justice into climate policies and economic reforms.

Dr. Moustapha Kamal Gueye, Director, Priority Action Programme Just Transition, speaking virtually, articulated the critical link between climate ambition and human well-being, stating: "Climate ambition is about people, not just numerical targets." He emphasized the opportunities inherent in JT, such as green jobs, clean energy investments, and circular economies, while cautioning against potential challenges like job displacement and wage disparities in the renewable energy sector. The foundation of **Dr Gueye's** presentation was on the following quote: "Prioritizing equity, climate justice, social justice, inclusion and just transition processes can enable adaptation and ambitious mitigation actions and climate resilient development", IPCC, AR6.

Climate ambition is about people, not just numerical targets.

► **Moustapha Kamal Gueye**, Director Priority Action Programme Just Transition, Global

Mr. Omar Alcock, Climate Change Division of the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation (MEGJC), presented on the crucial relationship between Jamaica's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and Just Transition principles. He emphasized several key priorities including green job creation, economic diversification, public participation and the need for climate financing mechanisms.

"Our NDCs must address how we stop greenhouse gas emissions while preparing ourselves for future climate challenges," **Mr. Alcock** stated, highlighting the essential role of community engagement and skills development.

Our NDCs must address how we stop greenhouse gas emissions while preparing ourselves for future climate challenges..."

► **Omar Alcock**, Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, Jamaica

In discussing the Paris Agreement, **Mr. Alcock** drew attention to a single but significant line that intersects with all climate action sectors and activities: "taking into account the imperatives of a Just Transition of the workforce and the creation of decent work and quality jobs in accordance with nationally defined development priorities."

The session concluded with a clear message: the time has come to move beyond theoretical discussions and implement actionable strategies that simultaneously address climate change and ensure social justice. He detailed key priorities, including green job creation, economic diversification, public participation, and climate financing mechanisms. "Our NDCs must address how we stop greenhouse gas emissions while preparing ourselves for future climate challenges," he noted, emphasizing the importance of community engagement and skills development.

Mr. Alcock gave the timeline of Jamaica's NDC journey starting with 2015 when Jamaica produced their first INDC – Intended NDCs. In 2017, once the INDC was ratified, it became Jamaica's first NDC. This NDC has subsequently been updated, and a submission was made in 2020 which included the preservation of our forest. Just Transition being introduced at COP 27 (2022), Mr Alcock noted there is responsibility now for the next iteration of NDC in 2025 to include the concept of Just Transition. This iteration, which will cover the period up to 2035, will show more ambition when compared to the previous versions.

This session underscored the urgency of moving beyond theoretical discussions to actionable strategies that address climate change while ensuring social justice.

► Jamaica's current National Development Plans and Just Transition

Jamaica's Vision 2030 was examined in relation to Just Transition strategies. Key points included the role of policy coordination, workforce upskilling, and economic diversification in ensuring an inclusive and sustainable transition. Discussions also addressed the role of trade unions, employer engagement, and youth perspectives on climate resilience and employment opportunities.

Moderator:

- Ms. Nicola Boy, Social Policy Planning and Research Division, Planning Institute of Jamaica

Panellists:

- Mr. Travis Reid, Economic Development Specialist, The Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ)
- Ms. Bernita Locke, Second Vice President, Jamaica Employers Federation (JEF)
- Mr. Shamir Brown, Vice President, Jamaica Confederation of Trade Unions
- Ms. Dahvia Hylton, Jamaica Climate Change Youth Council

Jamaica's National Development Plan, **Vision 2030**, serves as the country's long-term roadmap for economic, social, and environmental sustainability. It is structured around four core goals —empowering individuals, fostering a secure and just society, achieving economic prosperity, and preserving the environment — operationalized through 15 national outcomes. The plan emphasizes economic diversification, job creation in green industries, and workforce upskilling to prepare Jamaicans for emerging opportunities. It also integrates social protection measures to ensure that vulnerable populations are supported during economic transitions. **Just Transition** aligns with these objectives by advocating for policy coherence, inclusive governance, and strategic financing to facilitate a fair shift towards sustainable development. Key sectors such as energy, agriculture, manufacturing, and mining are identified for targeted interventions, including investment in renewable energy, climate-resilient infrastructure, and re-skilling initiatives to prevent job displacement.

Climate change remains a pressing concern for Jamaica, particularly as a **Small Island Developing State (SIDS)** vulnerable to extreme weather events and economic disruptions. The country's **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)** outline commitments to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 25-29 per cent by 2030, focusing on clean energy investments and sustainable land management. Integrating Just Transition principles into climate policies ensures that economic shifts do not disproportionately impact marginalized groups, particularly women and low-income workers. Regional collaboration through CARICOM and lessons from international best practices further strengthen Jamaica's approach to balancing economic growth with environmental responsibility. Stakeholders stress the urgency of moving beyond policy discussions to tangible actions, emphasizing workforce training, gender inclusion, and public-private partnerships as critical enablers of a Just Transition.

Summary of insights from panellists

Upskilling of workers

Mrs. Bernita Locke highlighted the importance of upskilling workers, noting the strong relationships with institutions like HEART/NSTA Trust. **Mrs. Locke** pointed out that while there is significant training, many trainees migrate or are recruited by other countries. She suggests promoting the concept of Just Transition extensively. It needs to reach every corner of Jamaica, ensuring that every parish, from Trelawny to Hanover, is aware. This calls for a robust public educational campaign, possibly through media, and initiating change within the teacher training experience.

Role of trade unions

On the role of trade union **Mr. Shamir Brown** shared that trade unions have begun efforts to equip workers, but these efforts need reinforcement. Every Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) should include sections on Just Transition, upskilling, and training. This responsibility should not rest solely on employers and external agencies. **Mr. Brown** emphasized that the tripartite meetings, which include discussions on strategies, will now incorporate the Just Transition, marking a significant step forward for Jamaica.

Youth perspective

From the youth perspective, **Ms. Dahvia Hylton** of the Jamaica Climate Change Youth Council stressed that addressing climate change is critical as the youth will inherit its impacts. They are concerned about their economic future, humanity, and the planet. While training is crucial, there are phases to achieve these goals, and it is time to move from discussions to actions. Youth-led community initiatives, such as implementing solar panels for homes, exemplify their efforts. **Ms. Hylton** called for decentralization, building resilience, and inclusion in broader dialogues to ensure a comprehensive approach to these challenges.

Mr. Travis Reid: Recognizing the importance of applying the Just Transition across all sectors is crucial. It is applicable and significant for every industry. Moving forward, we need to enhance collaboration and identify entry points to ensure the Just Transition is effectively utilized to assess current practices.

► Regional perspectives on Just Transition

Caribbean nations face unique challenges and opportunities in implementing Just Transition strategies due to their geography, economies, and climate vulnerabilities. The panel highlighted regional best practices, common challenges, and opportunities for collaboration among Caribbean nations in pursuing Just Transition goals.

Representatives from Barbados, the CARICOM Secretariat, and Jamaica provided insights on regional challenges and best practices. Topics included trade union involvement, economic vulnerability, renewable energy initiatives, and the role of legislative frameworks in protecting workers during transitions. The need for regional collaboration to share knowledge and resources was emphasized.

Moderator:

- Marissa Sheppard, Just Transition Officer, The International Labour Organization

Panellists:

- Sustainable Development, Directorate of Economic Integration, Innovation and Development, CARICOM – Ms. Amrikha Singh
- Ministry of Labour, Social Security and the Third Sector - Mr. Imran Best
- Barbados Workers' Union - Mr. Cheyne Jones

The regional perspectives on Just Transition emphasized the critical role of inclusive policies, workforce development, and climate resilience in shaping a sustainable future. **Mr. Cheyne Jones** of the Barbados Workers' Union underscored that Just Transition is not just a policy goal but a survival strategy, particularly for vulnerable communities. Barbados has made significant strides through the establishment of its Green Jobs Council, integrating differently abled individuals into the workforce, and fostering regional collaboration. A best practice that can be replicated is the National Training Institute's (NTI) online learning hub, which provides accessible, skills-based training in green industries. Mr. Jones also emphasized the need for measurable outcomes to ensure that Just Transition efforts lead to tangible benefits for workers, reinforcing the importance of trade unions as key stakeholders in the transition process.

Mr. Imran Best highlighted Barbados's approach to sustainable development, focusing on renewable energy projects and economic diversification. While the nation faces challenges such as financing constraints and balancing economic growth with sustainability, its proactive policies — such as solar and wind power investments — offer a roadmap for other Caribbean nations. Notably, the shift in terminology from "climate change" to "climate crisis" underscores the urgency required for action. Another key initiative awaiting implementation is the Green Jobs Council, which, once approved, will serve as a structured platform for job creation and workforce transition. Barbados's experience demonstrates that Just Transition requires not only policy commitments but also strong institutional frameworks and regional cooperation to share knowledge and best practices.

Ms. Amrikha Singh provided a broader regional perspective, highlighting the Caribbean's long-standing commitment to climate advocacy and Just Transition. She noted that while many CARICOM Member States have already embraced green economy policies, challenges such as high unemployment and workforce displacement remain. Trinidad and Tobago's approach to Just Transition, with a focus on workforce planning and retirement policies, serves as a model for balancing economic shifts with worker protections. **Ms. Singh** emphasized the importance of educational reform, technical training, and legislative support in facilitating Just Transition across industries such as tourism, agriculture, and fisheries. The University of the West Indies (UWI) and the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (5Cs) play a crucial role in providing research-backed strategies to guide policymaking. A key takeaway for other territories is the need for data-driven, science-based policies that ensure a fair and equitable transition, while also strengthening the region's global climate advocacy efforts.

During the Q&A session, when asked about regional assertion in Just Transition, **Ms. Singh** highlighted the Caribbean's strength in advocacy. She pointed to CARICOM's forward-thinking approach and the region's ability to adapt, emphasizing the critical role of loss and damage considerations. She praised the contributions of institutions like UWI and the 5Cs in providing research and analysis that strengthen the region's international position. She concluded by emphasizing the importance of data-driven and science-based policies, leveraging both regional and international institutional support to advance the Caribbean's Just Transition agenda.

► Presentation of Jamaica's gender assessment

Presenter:

► Dr Asha Kambon, Economist/Researcher

A gender assessment provides crucial baseline data for planning Just Transition strategies. This session familiarized participants with the current state of Jamaica's gender context workforce, key economic sectors, and initial projections for green job potential, setting the stage for more detailed discussions and action.

Dr Asha Kambon is an economist, researcher and public policy expert, with over forty years of experience working in the field of development at the national, regional and international levels. Her work during the last twenty years focused on gender equality, social and gender impact assessment, disaster risk management (DRM), climate change and variability and as a macro socio-economic assessor and trainer.

Dr. Kambon, outlined the country's commitment to the Paris Agreement, which aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25-29 per cent by 2030, with significant emphasis on the energy sector. **Dr. Kambon** highlighted the necessity of integrating gender-responsive approaches into climate action, stressing that any Just Transition must be inclusive and promote economic diversification. Her analysis provided vital baseline data for developing inclusive just transition strategies, situated within Jamaica's climate commitments and national development goals.

The assessment revealed alarming trends regarding gender inequality in Jamaica's labour market. Women not only experience higher unemployment rates than men but also account for a larger portion of those outside the labour force. Specifically, among youth, more females are unemployed compared to their male counterparts. In agriculture, which employs 13.8 per cent of the workforce but has a staggering informality rate of 97.7 per cent, men dominate with a ratio of nearly three to one over women. Additionally, in the fishing and forestry sectors, women comprise just 6 per cent of the workforce. **Dr. Kambon** emphasized the importance of addressing these disparities through targeted training programmes and policies that empower women, particularly in the emerging green job sectors. She called for a cultural shift alongside educational reforms to ensure that women can fully participate in and benefit from the Just Transition initiatives, thereby preventing families from falling into poverty and ensuring sustainable economic growth for all citizens.

Policy context and national commitments

Jamaica's commitment to climate action has evolved significantly, with the country enhancing its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) targets from a 10 per cent emissions reduction by 2030 to an ambitious 25-29 per cent reduction relative to business-as-usual scenarios. This commitment, coupled with the Government's dedication to gender-responsive climate action, establishes a framework for ensuring an inclusive just transition that promotes economic diversification while addressing gender inequalities.

Current labour market dynamics

The research revealed several significant gender disparities in Jamaica's labour market:

- The labour force comprises approximately 1.3 million people, with a notable gender imbalance (54 per cent male and 46 per cent female).
- Women face higher unemployment rates and are more likely to be outside the labour force.
- Youth employment shows particular gender disparity, with young women facing greater barriers to labour market entry.
- Approximately 60 per cent of the workforce is considered unskilled, presenting both challenges and opportunities for green skills development

Sector-specific gender analysis

Dr. Kambon's assessment of priority sectors revealed significant gender gaps:

Agriculture

- Reflects the highest informality rate at 97.7 per cent
- Significant gender disparity with men outnumbering women 3:1
- Women own only 33.7 per cent of agricultural landholdings and 19 per cent of agricultural enterprises

Fishing and aquaculture

- Extreme gender imbalance with women comprising only 6 per cent of the workforce
- Notable data gaps in forestry and watershed management participation

Energy Sector

- Women represent 27 per cent of the workforce
- The renewable energy sector shows promise for greater female participation, with global trends indicating higher female representation (32 per cent) compared to traditional energy sectors (22 per cent)

Educational paradox and barriers

Recent analysis reveals a complex relationship between gender, education, and employment outcomes, particularly among young adults. Women in the 25-34 age bracket have demonstrated remarkable academic achievements, with one in four completing tertiary education compared to just 15 per cent of their male counterparts. This significant education gap, with women exceeding men's attainment by 10 percentage points, underscores a positive trend in female academic achievement.

Despite their higher qualifications, women continue to face obstacles in translating their academic achievements into career success. This disconnect between educational attainment and employment success points to deeper structural challenges within the labour market that disproportionately affect women.

Perhaps most concerning is the prevalence of young women who find themselves neither engaged in education, employment, nor training (NEET). The NEET rate among young women stands at 30 per cent, surpassing that of young men by nearly five percentage points. This disparity is particularly striking considering women's superior educational outcomes, suggesting persistent barriers to female workforce participation despite higher academic qualifications. The pattern indicates that addressing educational gaps alone may not be sufficient to ensure equitable employment outcomes, and that targeted interventions may be needed to help women successfully transition from education to employment.

Challenges and opportunities

Key challenges identified were:

- Persistent cultural barriers limiting women's participation in technical fields
- Rural-urban divide in access to training and employment opportunities
- High informality rates in priority sectors
- Data gaps in emerging green sectors

Solutions and recommendations

The session produced several actionable recommendations:

Educational reform

- Challenge traditional gender norms within the education system
- Ensure equal access to technical training for emerging green sectors
- Develop targeted programmes for women in rural areas

Support for formalization

- Expand HEART/NSTA Trust's support for entrepreneurs
- Develop frameworks to support informal sector workers during transition
- Enhance funding and incubation programmes for nano enterprises

Sector-specific interventions

- Target rural youth for training in the forestry and fisheries sectors
- Develop specialized programmes for female-headed households

- Create pathways for women to enter renewable energy sectors

Policy integration

- Strengthen alignment between gender equality policies and climate action
- Address intersectional inequalities in programme design
- Enhance data collection on gender participation in emerging green sectors

► Education and skills development and workforce transition in a greener economy

A skilled workforce is crucial for a successful transition to a green economy, requiring significant changes in education and training systems. Panellists were asked to identify key skills gaps, propose strategies for updating education and training programmes, and develop sector-specific skills roadmaps to guide workforce development efforts.

Moderator:

- Marissa Sheppard, Just Transition Officer, The International Labour Organization

Panellists:

- HEART/NSTA Trust – Dr. Marcia Rowe-Amonde
- The University of the West Indies – Dr. Andre Coy
- Jamaica Climate Change Youth Council – Ms. Dahvia Hylton

The session revealed encouraging insights about youth engagement in environmental sustainability. **Ms. Dahvia Hylton** from the Jamaica Climate Change Youth Council highlighted a notable disconnect between current job opportunities and youth aspirations. However, she observed that young people demonstrate significant enthusiasm when introduced to green job opportunities, suggesting a crucial need to enhance awareness and education about sustainable career pathways.

The HEART/NSTA Trust, represented by **Dr. Marcia Rowe-Amonde**, showcased their comprehensive approach to preparing both young and adult learners for the green economy. Their initiatives span multiple sectors, including water harvesting, renewable energy, and agriculture, with sustainability principles deeply embedded in their training programmes. The Institution's commitment to environmental stewardship is evidenced by their adoption of UNESCO UNIVOC TVET guidelines and successful implementations, such as the Cardiff Hotel's achievement of the Green Globe Award and their innovative approach to nature-based landscaping solutions.

Dr. Andre Coy from UWI emphasized the importance of aligning higher education with just transition principles. UWI has adopted a strategic Triple A approach - Access, Alignment, and Agility - to ensure their educational offerings remain relevant and responsive to the evolving needs of a green economy. This includes developing short-term programmes, aligning research with industry requirements, and maintaining adaptability in their curriculum design.

Several challenges emerged during the discussions. A significant barrier identified was employer resistance to implementing sustainable practices due to cost concerns, despite graduates' eagerness to apply their environmental skills. This highlights a critical need for enhanced employer education about the long-term benefits of sustainable practices. Additionally, youth participants expressed scepticism about the current education system's effectiveness, though they see potential in partnerships with vocational institutions like HEART/NSTA Trust.

The session identified several collaborative opportunities. The dialogue emphasized the importance of strengthening industry-academia partnerships to shape relevant curricula and track graduate outcomes. The panellists stressed the need for civil society inclusion in the just transition process, as highlighted by Ms. Hylton.

Dr. Marcia Rowe-Amonde called for expanded awareness campaigns around greening initiatives, while **Dr. Coy** emphasized that successful implementation would require careful planning, strong partnerships, and sustained commitment.

Moving forward, the stakeholders agreed that success in transitioning to a greener workforce would require a multi-faceted approach - combining educational reform, industry engagement, and broader public awareness. The session underscored the importance of maintaining open dialogue among educational institutions, industry partners, and youth representatives to ensure that skills development programmes effectively support Jamaica's transition to a sustainable economy.

Panellists were asked to give final words to close off the discussion on “Education and skills”:

Ms. Dahvia Hylton: Emphasized the importance of civil society inclusion in the Just Transition process.

Dr. Marcia Rowe-Amonde: Called for greater sensitization and awareness around greening.

Dr. Andre Coy: Highlighted the need for planning, partnership, and persistence to achieve the goals of Just Transition.

Social protection and green jobs and Just Transition

Effective social protection measures are essential to ensure that the transition to a green economy doesn't exacerbate existing inequalities or create new ones. In this session participants gained insight into challenges in designing comprehensive social protection measures and discussed balanced solutions that could address diverse stakeholder needs.

Moderator:

Dr Andre Coy, Senior Lecturer, Faculty Science and Technology Physics - The University of the West Indies

Panellists:

- Ms. Bernita Locke, Jamaica Employers' Federation
- Mr. Shamir Brown, Jamaica Confederation of Trade Unions representative
- Ms. Marilyn McDonald, Jamaica Public Service (JPS)
- Mr. Imran Best, Ministry of Labour, Social Security and the Third Sector

Skit: *The Ministry of Labour and Social Security, along with members of the Jamaica Household Workers' Union, participated in a skit on social protection and Ministry programmes in relation to the recent Hurricane Beryl that affected Jamaica.*

The session opened with moderator **Dr. Andre Coy** emphasizing the increasing importance of social protection within the framework of Just Transition initiatives. He highlighted the necessity for robust systems to safeguard vulnerable populations as economies shift towards greener practices.

The session revealed several significant challenges facing the region. A startling statistic from the ILO presentation highlighted that 3.8 billion people globally lack social protection, with 1.8 billion of these being children. Within the local context, the dialogue exposed issues with existing social protection mechanisms, particularly the PATH programme's accessibility. A telling example emerged during the role-playing exercise, where a citizen affected by Hurricane Beryl was previously denied PATH's benefits due to rigid computerized assessment criteria, despite a clear need. The growing prevalence of non-traditional employment arrangements, particularly among youth who increasingly prefer self-employment and participation in the gig economy, presents another challenge in designing comprehensive social protection measures.

During the discussions potential solutions emerged from the panellists and participants. The Jamaica Public Service Company (JPS) demonstrated a proactive approach through their partnership with HEART/NSTA Trust and universities for training programmes, while the concept of "trained trainers" was proposed as a cost-effective method for scaling up workforce development.

Union representative, **Mr. Shamir Brown**, emphasized the importance of modernizing collective bargaining agreements to address emerging challenges like AI and technology integration. The Ministry of Labour and Social Security showcased various support mechanisms, including compassionate grants of JMD100,000 and business restart assistance, though these programmes require streamlining and better communication to reach affected populations.

The session particularly highlighted the evolution of labour relations and social protection needs, as noted by **Mr. Brown** in a significant statement: *"It is imperative that we revisit the collective bargaining agreement to meet the needs of what is happening in the world... Ensure people are placed over profit and not vice versa."* This sentiment underscores the necessity of adapting traditional labour protection mechanisms to address contemporary challenges. The discussion also emphasized the importance of protecting informal sector workers and addressing the unique needs of vulnerable groups, with Barbados sharing their experience in supporting young people aged 16-24 with limited work experience.

Stakeholders in attendance agreed on several priority areas:

- enhancing education about Just Transition opportunities,
- developing more inclusive social protection mechanisms,
- preparing for both job losses and new employment opportunities in green sectors, and
- ensuring better coordination among Government agencies, particularly with the Ministry of Science, Energy, Transport and Technology.

The discussion underscored that successful social protection in the context of Just Transition requires a balanced approach that considers the needs of all stakeholders while remaining adaptable to emerging workplace trends and environmental challenges.

► Recommendations for advancing Just Transition in Jamaica

The Dialogue Session achieved its objectives of informing and getting feedback from key stakeholders, who had gained significant knowledge and insights on the issues which impact Just Transition. The panellists, speakers and participants contributed valuable ideas and perspectives and proposed actionable items to take advantage of opportunities, deal with the challenges and potential risks and proactively develop programmes to achieve the desired outcomes.

As Jamaica navigates the transition towards a greener and more sustainable economy, it is essential to ensure that this transformation is inclusive, equitable, and well-supported by robust policies, research, and capacity-building initiatives. A Just Transition framework provides the necessary structure to mitigate socio-economic disruptions while maximizing opportunities for economic growth, environmental sustainability, and social equity. This document outlines key recommendations in three critical areas — Research and knowledge generation; Capacity development; and Policy support — aimed at fostering a resilient and forward-looking workforce, strengthening institutional capacities, and ensuring policy coherence across all sectors.

1. Research and knowledge generation

To ensure an evidence-based approach to Just Transition in Jamaica, it is critical to strengthen research and knowledge generation efforts. The following actions are recommended:

- **Develop a National Just Transition research agenda:** Establish a multi-stakeholder research group, including universities, Government agencies, and private sector partners, to study the socio-economic and environmental impacts of the transition to a green economy.
- **Enhance data collection and accessibility:** Strengthen national data systems to capture employment trends, environmental impacts, and skills gaps within key sectors such as energy, agriculture, tourism, and waste management.
- **Support applied research and pilot projects:** Encourage collaboration between academic institutions and industry to develop and test innovative solutions for green job creation, sustainable resource management, and climate adaptation strategies.
- **Conduct regular labour market assessments:** Establish mechanisms to track the impact of Just Transition policies on workers, particularly vulnerable groups, to inform future workforce development and social protection policies.
- **Promote regional knowledge exchange:** Strengthen partnerships with CARICOM and other Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to share best practices, lessons learned, and policy innovations in Just Transition implementation.

2. Capacity development

A well-trained and adaptable workforce is essential for a successful Just Transition. The following recommendations aim to enhance skills development and capacity building:

- **Expand Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET):** Align TVET programmes with emerging green job opportunities by incorporating climate-resilient agriculture, renewable energy, sustainable construction, and waste management training.
- **Enhance public awareness and education:** Launch national awareness campaigns to educate workers, businesses, and communities about the opportunities and challenges of Just Transition and the importance of sustainable development.
- **Support workforce reskilling and upskilling:** Establish Government-supported training programmes to reskill workers in declining industries and prepare them for employment in green sectors.
- **Strengthen social dialogue and stakeholder engagement:** Facilitate continuous dialogue among trade unions, employers, Government agencies, and civil society to ensure that transition policies are inclusive and equitable.
- **Empower youth and marginalized groups:** Develop targeted initiatives for women, persons with disabilities, and informal sector workers to ensure equitable participation in green job opportunities.

3. Policy support

To create an enabling environment for Just Transition, strong policy frameworks and governance structures must be in place. The following policy actions are recommended:

- **Integrate Just Transition into national development planning:** Ensure alignment with Vision 2030 Jamaica, Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), and climate action strategies.
- **Develop comprehensive green job policies:** Introduce legislation and incentives to promote green entrepreneurship, foster business investment in sustainable industries, and protect workers' rights in transition sectors.
- **Strengthen social protection systems:** Expand unemployment insurance, pension schemes, and retraining grants to support workers transitioning to new employment sectors.
- **Enhance climate financing mechanisms:** Establish public-private financing models, green bonds, and international partnerships to support Just Transition investments.
- **Promote policy coherence across sectors:** Foster inter-ministerial coordination to ensure that labour, environmental, and economic policies work together to facilitate a smooth transition.

By implementing these recommendations, Jamaica can advance a Just Transition that is inclusive, sustainable, and aligned with national and global development objectives.

► Annex 1: Event agenda

Just Transition Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue Sessions

Fostering a Just Transition in Jamaica: Collaborative approaches for sustainable development

14-15 October 2024

Monday 14 October	
9:30 – 10:00 AM	Opening Ceremony Welcome Remarks ▶ The United Nations Development Programme, Mr. Kishan Khoday, Resident Representative, United Nations Development Programme ▶ ILO Decent Work Team and Office of the Caribbean – Dr. Joni Musabayana, Director, ILO Decent Work Team and Office of the Caribbean
10:30 – 10:45AM	<i>Coffee break</i>
10:45 – 11:30AM	Introduction to Just Transition ▶ Global Perspective on Just Transition and Green Jobs – Mr. Moustapha Kamal Gueye, Director, Priority Action Programme, Just Transition, International Labour Organization ▶ Jamaica's Nationally Determined Contributions – Mr. Omar Alcock, Principal Director (Actg.), Climate Change Division, Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation, Jamaica
11:30 – 12:15PM	Panel Discussion Regional outlook: ▶ CARICOM Just Transition and Climate Focus: How to prepare for Climate Challenges in the World of Work – Ms. Amrikha Singh, Directorate of Economic Integration, Innovation and Development, CARICOM ▶ Just Transition and Labour market Adaptation in Barbados: Ensuring Workforce resilience – Mr. Imran Best, Ministry of Labour, Social Security and the Third Sector and Mr. Cheyne Jones, Barbados Workers' Union ▶ Jamaica and Just Transition- Ms. Andrea Miller-Stennett, Ministry of Labour and Social Security, Jamaica
	Q&A
12:30 – 1:45PM	Lunch

1:45 - 2:15PM	Jamaica's Current National Development Plans and Just Transition Panellists ► Mr. Travis Reid, Economic Development Specialist, The Planning Institute of Jamaica ► Ms. Bernita Locke, Second Vice President, Jamaica Employers' Federation ► Mr. Shamir Brown, Vice President, Jamaica Confederation of Trade Unions ► Ms. Dahvia Hylton, Jamaica Climate Change Youth Council • Interactive Session: Small group discussions (15 minutes) • Participants divided into groups of 5-6 • Each group discusses one aspect of Jamaica's development plans and how it relates to Just Transition • Groups prepare a brief summary to share with the larger audience
2:30 – 3:30PM	Stakeholder Perspectives on Just Transition ► Discussion with representatives from different sectors ► Interactive element: Audience participation through live polling or Q&A app
3:30 - 4:30PM	Mapping Just Transition challenges and opportunities Interactive activity: World café format ► Set up stations for different sectors (e.g., energy, agriculture, tourism) ► Participants rotate through stations, discussing challenges and opportunities ► Facilitators at each station capture key points
4:30 - 5:00PM	Day one wrap-up and reflection ► Brief presentations from each World Café station ► Open floor for participants to share key takeaways

Tuesday 15 October - Developing Strategies for Just Transition	
9:30 – 9:30AM	Recap of day 1 ► SLIDO activity to review key concepts
9:30 – 10:30AM	Education and skills development and workforce transition in a greener economy Panellists ► Dr. Marcia Rowe-Amonde - Senior Director of the Standards, Curriculum and Learning Resources Dept HEART/NSTA Trust ► Dr. Andre Coy – Senior Lecturer, Faculty Science and Technology Physics - The University of the West Indies ► Ms. Dahvia Hylton, Youth Representative, Jamaica Climate Change Youth Council Education and skills development and workforce transition in a greener economy ► Breakout sessions (30 minutes) • Groups discuss specific skills needed for green jobs in Jamaica • Each group presents a "skills roadmap" for one sector
10:30 – 10:45AM	<i>Coffee break</i>
10:45 – 11:45 AM	Social protection and green jobs and Just Transition Panellists ► Ms. Bernita Locke, Second Vice President Jamaica Employers' Federation ► Mr. Shamir Brown, Vice President Jamaica Confederation of Trade Unions ► Representative, Ministry of Labour and Social Security Role-playing exercise (20 minutes) Participants take on roles of different stakeholders Simulate a negotiation for implementing social protection measures
11:45 - 12:45 PM	Just Transition and the labour market ► Case study analysis (30 minutes) • Real-world examples of labour market transitions presented • Small groups analyze and present lessons learned
12:45 - 1:45PM	Lunch

1:45PM - 3:15PM	Developing a Just Transition roadmap for JamaicaPanellists ► Group Exercise • Participants divided into sector-specific groups • Each group develops a draft roadmap for their sector • Groups present their roadmaps for feedback
3:30 - 4:30PM	Policy recommendations and action planning ► Facilitated discussion to synthesize ideas from the two days ► Collaborative document creation: draft key policy recommendations
4:30PM - 5:00PM	Closing session: commitments and next steps ► Individual reflection: Participants write personal commitments ► Plenary sharing of key commitments and discussion of follow-up actions
5:00PM - 5:30PM	Closing remarks and evaluation ► Official closing statements ► Participants complete evaluation forms <i>(include questions about most valuable sessions and suggestions for future events)</i>

► Annex 2: List of participants

	Name	Entity	Designation	Contact
1	Marissa Sheppard	The International Labour Organization	Just Transition Officer	sheppard@ilo.org
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