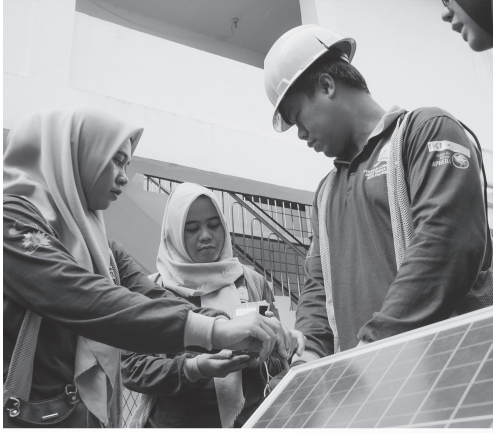
Just Energy Transition in Coal Regions

A Just Energy Transition Advocacy Guide:

The Experience of Trade Unions in Coal Regions









Union Aid Abroad APHEDA
The global justice organisation of the Australian union movement

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KONFEDERASI SERIKAT PEKERJA INDONESIA

A Just Energy Transition Advocacy Guide: The Experience of Trade Unions in Coal Regions

This handbook is adapted from the Trade Union Guide for Planning and Implementing Just Transition Programs available at *jetknowledge.org/unions4jet.org*, written by Louise Goldman, Union Aid Abroad APHEDA.

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Training on solar panels for trade unions' members in Palembang, South Sumatra



Coal transportation activities on the Mahakam River, East Kalimantan



Coal transportation activities on the Musi River, Palembang, South Sumatra



Participants from trade unions took part in a competency-based training program in Palembang, South Sumatra.



Coal transportation in Bengalon, East Kalimantan

Published by:

Union Aid Abroad APHEDA
The global justice organisation of the Australian union movement

in collaboration with

progresip

Implemented by

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KONFEDERASI SERIKAT PEKERJA INDONESIA

This publication was produced with the financial support of the International Climate Initiative of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Climate Action, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMUKN) under a Grant Agreement with GIZ. Its contents are the sole responsibility of their authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of BMUKN or GIZ.

On behalf of:

Federal Ministry
for the Environment, Climate Action,
Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety

IKI INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE INITIATIVE

of the Federal Republic of Germany

2026

List of Abbreviations

ILO - International Labour Organisation
CBA - Collective Bargaining Agreement
JETP - Just Energy Transition Partnership
OSH - Occupational Health and Safety
KSBSI - Confederation of All Indonesian Trade Union
KSPI - Indonesian Trade Union Confederation
NGO - Non-governmental organisation
NDC - Nationally Determined Contribution/Nationally Determined Emission Reduction Contribution
GRDP - Gross Regional Domestic Product
RPJMN - National Medium-Term Development Plan
MSMEs - Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises

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Foreword

Across Indonesia's coal regions, the energy transition is no longer a distant policy discussion or global aspiration. For workers, families, and communities whose livelihoods depend on coal, the shift toward a low carbon economy raises urgent questions about jobs, security, skills, and the future. Whether the transition delivers new opportunities or deepens inequality will depend on the choices made today, and on whose voices shape those choices.

This Just Energy Transition Advocacy Guide was developed in response to this moment. It is grounded in the experiences of trade unions and workers in coal-dependent regions who are already confronting the impacts of change. Their stories remind us that the energy transition is not only an environmental or economic project, but a social one - about dignity at work, fairness, and ensuring that no one is left behind.

Indonesia has committed to achieving net zero emissions by 2060 or sooner, and to retiring coal as the backbone of its energy system. These commitments will reshape industries, regions, and labour markets. Without proactive planning, meaningful social dialogue, and strong worker participation, the transition risks repeating familiar patterns: job losses without protection, informalisation of work, and growing insecurity for workers and surrounding communities. A just transition offers a different path - one that protects workers' rights, creates decent work, and supports communities to diversify and thrive.

Trade unions have a critical role to play in shaping that path. As representatives of workers, unions are uniquely placed to identify risks, raise awareness, organise workers, negotiate protections, and advocate for policies that place people at the centre of the transition. This guide is intended as a practical tool to support that work.

The guide draws on international just transition principles, while remaining firmly rooted in local realities. It recognises that transitions are not abstract processes, but deeply human ones - felt in job security, household incomes, access to social protection, and hopes for the future. By amplifying workers' voices and experiences, this guide aims to support unions to engage confidently and constructively with employers, policymakers, and communities.

A just energy transition will not happen automatically. It must be organised, negotiated, and fought for. We hope this guide will contribute to strengthening union capacity, building collective power, and ensuring that workers and communities in coal regions are not only protected, but actively shaping the future of Indonesia's energy transition.

Clare Middlemas
Executive Officer, Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA

CHAPTER 1

Trade Union Guide for Planning and Implementing Just Transition Programs



Training on solar panels for trade unions' members in Palembang, South Sumatra.

1.1 About & Objectives

This **Trade Union Guide for Planning and Implementing Just Transition Programs** serves as a framework and practical learning resource for trade unions and their members advocating for a just transition. It contains essential elements to consider in the process of planning, advocating, and negotiating a fair transition towards an emissions-free economy. This guide prioritises and focuses on the needs and interests of workers and communities affected by the energy transition process.

This guide also integrates the experiences of trade unions in East Kalimantan and South Sumatra, two provinces that are economically dependent on coal, while also drawing upon the principles of just transition from the International Labour Organization (ILO).

Through this guide, trade unions can ensure that workers' interests are heard in policy planning, prepare for negotiating Collective Bargaining Agreements, promote re-skilling programs, and uphold the 'No One Left Behind' principle, ensuring that no worker or affected group is left behind in the energy transition process.

In this **Trade Union Guide for Planning and Implementing Just Transition Programs**, you will find:

1. Practical guidance for trade unions on advocacy and planning for a just transition.

It contains strategic steps, from planning and implementing to negotiations, and prioritises the interests of workers and affected communities.

2. First-hand experiences and lessons learned from Indonesian trade unions working on coal transition issues.

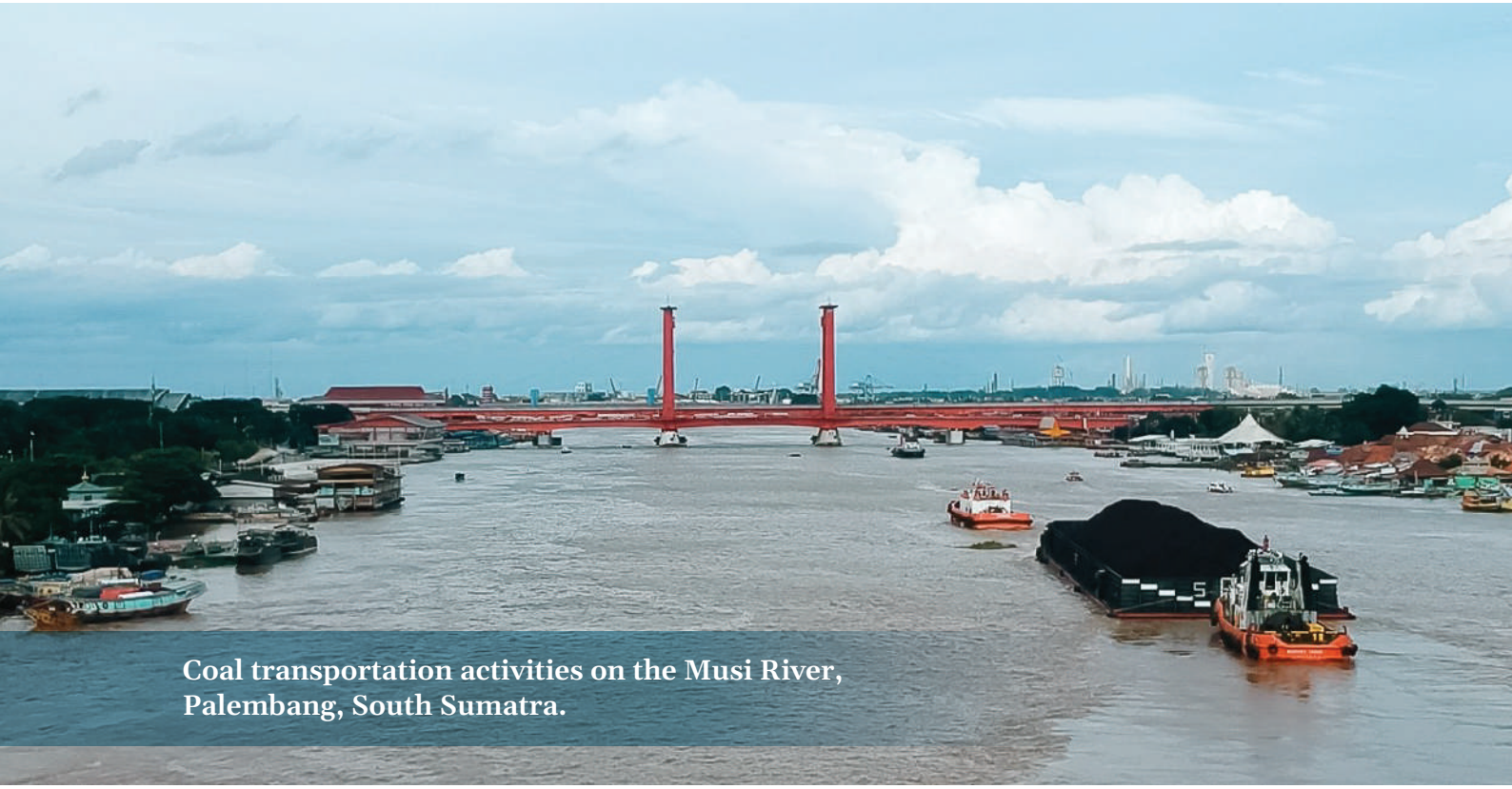
It draws on the experiences of the Indonesian Trade Union Confederation (KSPI) and the Confederation of All Indonesian Trade Union (KSBSI) in the coal regions of East Kalimantan and South Sumatra. Trade unions in these two provinces are currently facing coal production reductions and economic diversification amid Indonesia's commitment to achieving net-zero emissions by 2060 and declining global demand for coal.

3. Education support for trade unions in conducting campaigns and organising efforts in coal mining regions.

This guidance includes references and practical resources, such as:

- an educational video documenting the experiences and lessons learned from Indonesian trade unions preparing for the phasedown of coal
- a website: unions4jet.org
- relevant research reports
- other useful references to support education for trade unions

1.2 Energy Transition in Indonesia



Coal transportation activities on the Musi River, Palembang, South Sumatra.

1.2.1 Commitments to Reduce Carbon Emissions

Indonesia has committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, while pursuing net-zero emissions by 2060, or sooner, as outlined in its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC). The NDC outlines the actions Indonesia and other countries that are signatories to the Paris Agreement will take to mitigate climate change.

While achieving their stated emissions reduction targets will help address global climate change, it will also have significant implications for Indonesia's economy and require extensive transformation across the energy sector. It will be necessary to reduce reliance on fossil fuel (coal, oil and gas) – with coal being the primary energy source in Indonesia, which currently provides more than 60% of electricity generation, and increase generation from new and renewable energy (NRE) sources.

The Coal Phase-Out and its Impact to the Economy

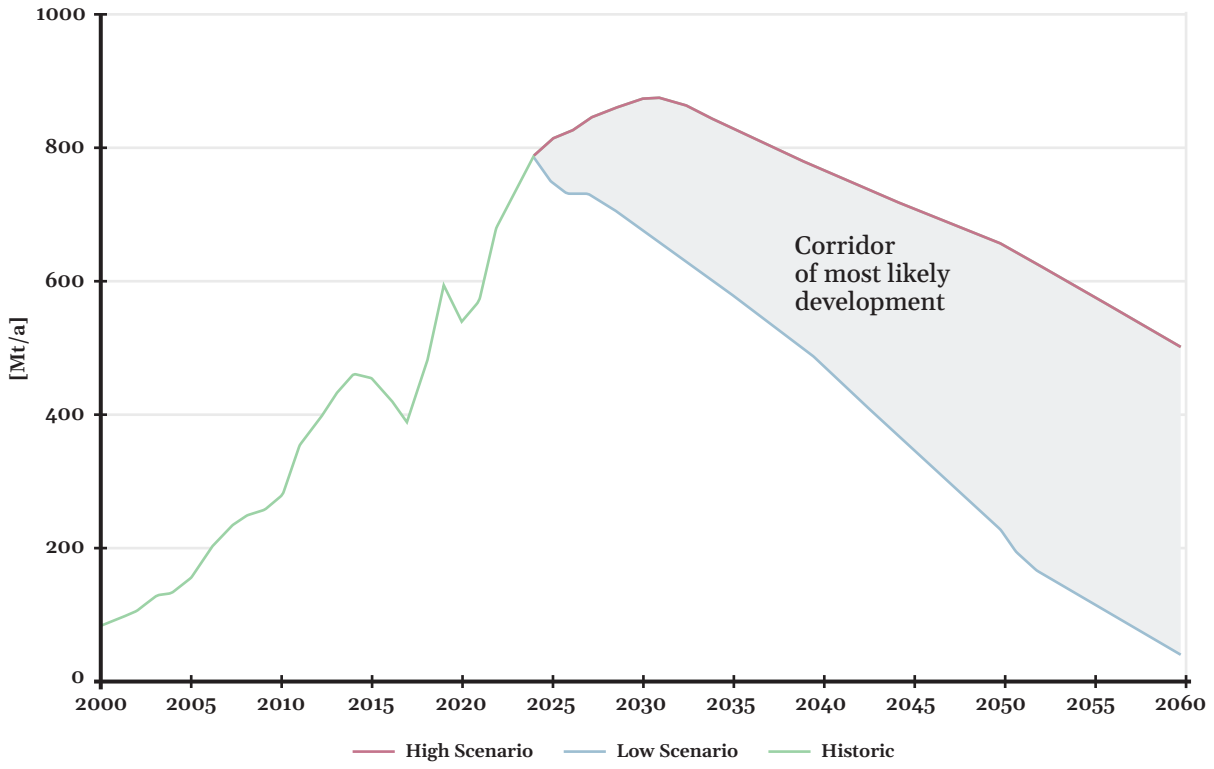
As countries around the world strive to meet emissions reduction targets and transition to renewables, it is anticipated that worldwide coal use will plateau and decline by 2030. As Indonesia is one of the world's largest coal producers and thermal coal exporters, this is also expected to impact the country's coal-fuelled economy. Data from the first half of 2025 already suggests a turning point, showing a 6% decline in Indonesia's coal exports compared to the same period in 2024 (Wuppertal Institute, 2025).

Coal production in Indonesia has also been declining. The Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources (ESDM) reported that coal production fell to 790 million tons in 2025, down from 836 million tons the previous year. Of this, according to data from the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources (ESDM), approximately two-thirds was exported in 2024, whilst Indonesia's Domestic Market Obligation (DMO) requires at least 25% of total coal production to be supplied to the domestic market.

According to the Ministry of ESDM records in 2025, the New and Renewable Energy (NRE) mix has already reached 15.75% of overall energy generation and, based on more recent announcements, has now surpassed the target of 15.9% set in the National Electricity General Plan (RUKN).

Indonesia's coal production is projected to peak within the next decade (Wuppertal Institute,2025). Wuppertal Institute has developed scenarios for both slower (high scenario) and more rapid declines of coal production (lower scenario), based on current policy commitments and historical data. The *high scenario* predicts coal production will peak around 2031 before a moderate decline to 500 Mt by 2060. Meanwhile, the low scenario predicts it will peak in 2024 and decline steeply to 36 Mt by 2060.

As shown in the graph below, the reality will most likely be somewhere in the middle, labelled as the "*corridor of most likely development*".



Source: Wuppertal Institute (2025). Scenarios of Coal Production in Indonesia.

The slower decline (high scenario) will mean less economic disruption in the near future, but slower effective climate action, while the more rapid decline of coal use (lower scenario) - which assumes that global climate actions align with the Paris Agreement commitments - would have more immediate impacts for the local economy in regions heavily dependent on coal production. In either case, if the phase-out of coal is not well managed and accompanied by feasible economic diversification plans, which provide for new job opportunities for workers currently employed in coal-related jobs, this will have significant economic implications and job losses in coal regions.



Members of Nikeuba-KSBSI joined a training on CBA preparation in South Sumatra.

1.2.2 The Impact to Workers and Communities

Safeguarding Jobs from the Coal Phase Out

The closure of coal-fired power plants is anticipated to result in workers being laid off due to the direct impact of the phase-out. Based on global analysis, Indonesian think tank IESR has projected that about 30 thousand workers might be laid off in Indonesia from 2020 to 2040 (IESR, 2024).

Coal-dependent regions, such as East Kalimantan and South Sumatra, will face significant economic restructuring challenges as the country implements its climate commitments, with direct impacts on workers and communities.

In East Kalimantan, approximately 8.59 percent of the workforce, or around 169,000 people, were employed in the mining and quarrying sector as of November 2025. During the period, the sector was also the largest contributor to job creation by adding 46,000 new jobs (Nomorsatu Kaltim, 2025).

If the transition is not managed properly, social risks such as mass unemployment and economic shocks in the region could emerge rapidly. Therefore, it is crucial that planning for the transition begins now.

In interviews with the **Indonesian Trade Union Confederation (KSPI) and the Confederation of All Indonesian Trade Union (KSBSI)** –both representing workers in coal regions– it was noted that the energy transition presents both a threat to job security and income and an opportunity. However, many workers, employers and companies are not yet prepared, in terms of awareness or readiness for the closure of coal mines. Furthermore, national regulations do not yet fully support this transition, while the rise of short-term contract work and outsourcing worsens workers′ vulnerability.

The threats faced by workers during the energy transition include mass layoffs, loss of social protection, and uncertainty regarding the future of workers′ families. However, new opportunities can emerge with:

- **meaningful consultation** with workers and the community
- **planning and investment** in emerging industries that provide for decent work and quality jobs
- **accessible skills training programs** that respond to evolving labour market needs

1.2.3 Indonesia's Commitment to a Just Transition



Participants from trade unions took part in a competency-based training program in Palembang,

In 2025, Indonesia submitted its second NDC, which details its revised mitigation plans to limit global warming and commits to new emission reduction targets. Indonesia's ability to reach its targets depends both on domestic actions and international support.

The second NDC has also included, for the first time, a dedicated sub-chapter on **just transition, defining it** as an energy transition where social, economic, and environmental risks and opportunities are fairly distributed among stakeholders based on their capacities and conditions.

The second NDC also affirms **Indonesia's commitment to a fair and inclusive shift toward low carbon development** by:

1. addressing challenges faced by sectors, cities and regions in transitioning to low-carbon development and in **ensuring a decent future** for affected workers.
2. promoting low-emission and sustainable economic activities that **create quality jobs.**
3. **enhancing workforce capacity** to facilitate access to decent work and quality jobs, taking into account gender and intergenerational equalities, and the needs of vulnerable groups.
4. strengthening **participatory public dialogue** to foster high employment rates, adequate social protection, strong labour standards, and the wellbeing of workers and their communities.

It will be essential for Indonesia to adhere to these commitments to ensure that the transition is not only environmentally sound but also socially just. **Trade unions have a crucial role** to play in shaping transition plans, monitoring implementation, and ensuring accountability.

This advocacy guide is designed to support unions and workers in that process.

CHAPTER 2

A Just Transition: What Are Unions Fighting For?



Coal transportation in Bengalon, East Kalimantan.

2.1 Definition of a Just Transition

"A just transition involves greening the economy in a way that is as fair and inclusive as possible to everyone concerned, creating decent work opportunities and leaving no one behind." (International Labour Organisation, 2024)

2.2 The Essential Elements of a Just Transition



Kahar S. Cahyono, Vice President of KSPI, spoke at a regional consultation forum in Palembang, South Sumatra.

Energy transition carries profound consequences for workers. Although it offers new opportunities for workers in environmentally sustainable jobs, there will be job losses in coal-dependent industries and communities; making it essential that those most affected are at the heart of shaping its course. Workers and their unions must therefore be central actors in planning and decision-making.

Based on inputs from trade unions who contributed to the development of this advocacy guide and the ILO guidelines and resolutions concerning a just transition (International Labour Organisation, 2015; ILC 2023), the key guiding principles underpinning a "just" transition must include:

1. **Timely Transition Planning** - Adequate and timely planning is necessary to assess the available options and the potential positive and negative impacts on communities, workers and jobs. Management of the transition cannot be left to the market. It requires

proactive strategies, detailed planning and investment, including public ownership, and intervention by all levels of government to plan for and support affected workers and communities as they transition to new opportunities.

2. **Meaningful Participation & Social Dialogue** - Building a strong social consensus requires a transparent, well-structured consultation process that ensures active, meaningful participation from all affected groups, particularly trade unions representing workers. This process should provide timely access to relevant information, enabling informed contributions to social dialogue that guide decisions on transition planning, policy development, and implementation.

3. **Respect for Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work** - Respecting fundamental labour rights is a cornerstone of a just transition. This includes guaranteeing workers' freedom to organise and form unions, exercise their full labour rights, and bargain collectively—without fear of retaliation. Upholding these principles ensures that trade unions can actively engage in and monitor transition processes and effectively represent and negotiate on behalf of workers.

4. **Decent Work and Skills Development** - Transition strategies must prioritise investment in emerging industries which provide quality jobs that uphold decent working conditions and respect for labour rights. Skills development programs should anticipate future labour force needs and align with broader economic priorities and prioritise preparing workers for low-carbon, environmentally sustainable jobs. Unions play a critical role in negotiating paid training time and securing employer or public funding for reskilling initiatives. Unions should also advocate for involvement in the design of training programs and skills pathways to ensure they meet workers' needs, monitor working conditions in new sectors to prevent the rise of precarious work and campaign for investment in sustainable industries that create decent, secure jobs.



Kodri, a former coal miner, underwent electrical skills training in Palembang.

Case Study

Electrical Training Provides Kodri with New Job Prospects

In Musi Rawas Utara (Muratara), South Sumatra, Kodri used to work as a pump operator at a coal mine, hired through a contractor. He was a member of NIKEUBA North Musi Rawas, KSBSI. But in October 2025, he was laid off when coal prices dropped on the global market. That's when the union offered him a spot in an electrical training program at the provincial government Vocational Training Center (BLK).

"My first goal was personal—I wanted to learn electrical skills. Second, I wanted new job opportunities, maybe with PLN or in the private sector," Kodri says.

In his village, few people know much about electricity, so the skill is in high demand. The shift from mining to electrical work hasn't been easy.

"In mining, you don't feel the danger right away. With electricity, even a small brush can kill you," he says.

After more than 28 days of training, Kodri feels far more prepared.

"Before, I knew zero about electricity. Forget wiring—I wouldn't even dare change a light switch. Now I'm about 90 percent ready to help people in the community."

Kodri plans to start by offering his services around his own neighborhood, then slowly expand to nearby villages. He stresses the importance of having more than one skill.
"It's best to have at least three skills. If one fails you, you've got another. Mining, electrical, whatever."

He also has a message for workers who are still dependent on coal mining.

"By 2060, we won't be able to use coal anymore. We have to get ready with other skills—electrical, AC repair, computers, and other fields."

Kodri hopes the government will push for similar training for everyone, including informal workers, so they can get the same opportunities.

5. **No One Left Behind** - Energy transitions will have wide-reaching impacts, and planning must be inclusive to understand the needs of everyone affected, including women, youth, older workers, informal workers, indigenous communities and other marginalised groups. This means they must be engaged from the outset in consultations, social dialogue, and program design, so that policies and measures taken meet the needs of all parties and leave no one behind. For those who cannot transition, social protection measures are essential.

CHAPTER 3

Key Steps for Workers Advocating for a Just Transition



KSBSI and KSPI members joined a Training on CBA Just Transition Clauses in Palembang, South Sumatra.

3.1 The Union Role in Just Transition Planning



KSBSI, KSPI, and Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA meet to kick off the IKIJET project and plan their activities.

Unions play a critical role in ensuring that the shift to a low-carbon economy is fair, inclusive, and centred on the needs of workers and communities. A just transition cannot be achieved without the involvement of unions as worker representatives playing an active role throughout the planning and implementation process and advocating for policy coherence, including:

- **Early and Continuous Involvement** - Unions need to be involved from the earliest stages of planning. Unions should push for formal structures—such as tripartite mechanisms at national, regional, sectoral, and enterprise levels—that guarantee workers' voices in decision-making.
- **Centering Worker and Community Interests** - Union engagement with policymakers is crucial to advocate for the needs of all impacted workers and communities to be considered in inclusive policies that aim to reduce, rather than exacerbate, social inequities and maximise the benefits of the transition for all workers and the broader community.

Indonesian unions calling for a public pathway to Just Transition

Unions around the world, especially in the Global South, are calling for a public pathway as fundamental to achieving a just transition - pushing back against the "privatise to decarbonise" agenda which assumes that private investments are necessary to fund new and renewable energy sources. Instead, they argue that what's needed is a global public goods model in which public utilities and services, including new and renewable energy sources, are publicly owned and serve the public good rather than generate profit for investors.

In Indonesia, unions took the issue of energy privatisation to the constitutional court in January 2024 to challenge electricity sector reform provisions in Law Number 6 of 2023 arguing that they would undermine Article 33 of the country's 1945 constitution which protects state control of the country's vital resources.

- **Active Engagement in Social Dialogue** - Unions have a responsibility to engage in and shape social dialogue, which should be informed by consultations with their own membership to ensure that transition policies will reflect real worker concerns. Unions should aim to engage at every level including local-level discussions, regional consultation forums, economic transformation planning processes, and national policy formation providing their perspective on:
  - Transition plans and timelines
  - Economic diversification strategies
  - Investment plans
  - Skills development and employment programs
  - Social protection

Assessing and providing feedback on proposals

When engaging in dialogue, unions should:

- Draw on union's relevant experience and evidence to assess proposed options
- Identify which proposals they do and do not support, with clear reasoning
- Request additional information when it is insufficient
- Ask critical questions: For example - does this option provide for quality jobs and decent work? Will this option provide workers with long-term, secure employment with social protections? How will labour and OSH standards be upheld?

- **Advocating Transparency and Access to Information** - Access to accurate and timely data is essential for unions to engage effectively and for workers to make informed decisions about their future. Transition plans prepared by governments and policy-makers should include detailed mapping of job potential, skills development needs, potential worker migration, and social protection measures for affected communities. If information is not provided, ask for it, e.g.
  - How has evidence informed this proposed option?
  - Who will benefit?
  - How will this be financed?
  - Is this option aligned with sustainability goals?

- **Identify and coordinate with allies to develop joint positions and strengthen advocacy** - Coordinate with other unions, civil society, environmental groups, and community organisations to develop common positions, unified messaging and joint advocacy strategies.

3.2 Needs Assessment: Analysis & Mapping

Before planning and commencing union work on a just transition, it is important for unions to understand and assess the specific circumstances in the target location, as well as the needs and priorities of the impacted workers and community. A robust **needs assessment** ensures that union strategies are evidence-based, inclusive, and responsive to local realities.



A coordination meeting among SPKEP-KSPI (local union) members in Muara Enim, South Sumatra.

By completing a needs assessment, unions will have:

- A clear picture of **who is impacted** (workers—formal and informal—and communities), **how** they are impacted, and any **knowledge/awareness gaps** that need to be addressed
- The evidence necessary to inform **organising strategies** and to determine **just transition campaign and advocacy priorities**, and
- Identified the **key policy-makers and stakeholders** who they should advocate with

In summary, a needs assessment should include at a minimum:

- analysis of relevant government policy and existing transition plans
- mapping of the workers and communities who will be impacted by transition
- details of the available support for workers impacted by the transition - such as skills training programs, job placement services and social protection that affected workers (both formal and informal) would be eligible to receive

The needs assessment should also focus on determining the level of awareness among workers and the community about the proposed transition. The gaps the union identifies can inform awareness and education priorities for the target group/s, campaign priorities, and whom the union should advocate to address gaps in relevant policies to ensure a just transition. The needs assessment can also inform the development of strategies for union organising in both current, and emerging sectors to ensure workers are prepared for new opportunities.

These components of the preparatory phase can be divided into:

A. Analysis

1. **Impact on workers:** Assess how carbon emission reduction plans will impact specific sectors
2. **Economic diversification:** Identify economic diversification plans for the region and the union's assessment of what alternative employment this will generate in impacted communities
3. **Government commitment and support:** What are the government commitments, plans and available supports for impacted workers related to the proposed transition, e.g.:
    - Are there skills training programs available to support workers to reskill for new employment, and how can they be accessed?
    - Are there adequate plans in place to ensure new employment opportunities are available and job transfer schemes to facilitate redeployment?
    - Are there social protection schemes or other income supports accessible to formal and informal workers who cannot transition, and what are the relevant criteria and limitations? Who is included/excluded?
    - How have those commitments and plans been communicated? If information has been disseminated, how has this been done? Who has been included/excluded?

B. Mapping

1. **Impacted workers:** Who are the formal and informal workers along the supply chain and in the surrounding communities who will be impacted by the proposed transition? What is the union density in the target areas and the profile of those who are organised and un-organised?
2. **Marginalised groups:** Who are the marginalised groups in the supply chain (e.g. women[1], youth[2], older workers, indigenous, migrants) and what are their unique risks and support needs?
3. **Enterprises and businesses:** Who are the enterprises and businesses that would be impacted by the proposed transition, and what is their awareness/response? What are the opportunities for social dialogue and collective bargaining with these companies?
4. **Policy makers:** Who are the key local and national-level policy-makers whom trade unions need to influence or coordinate with?
5. **Forums:** What are the established forums or channels, if they exist, where unions are invited to provide input on just transition plans?
6. **Potential allies:** Who are the union's potential allies (e.g. civil society, local NGOs) who are also advocating for a just transition?

C. Transition Program Priorities

Based on the information gathered in the analysis and mapping, the trade union can identify and prioritise the focus areas of their just transition activities, including:

1. **Awareness and education:** what are the key messages to address knowledge gaps among workers and the community, and how will the union plan deliver information and tailor content to target groups?
2. **Advocacy priorities and approach:** what are the gaps and limitations in the existing transition planning which undermine a 'just' transition and how will the union advocate for these to be addressed? Which policy-makers or organisations does the union need to influence to address these shortcomings?
3. **Organising strategies:** what does the union need to do to grow an informed and active membership base who can strongly advocate for a just transition and negotiate for better protections and conditions for workers? Which emerging sectors should the union focus their organising efforts?
4. **Campaigning:** identifying where public pressure is needed or could have an impact and designing campaigns connected to concrete worker demands (job transfer, reskilling support, social protection).

[1] Female employment in the energy sector in Southeast Asia remains on average at 15%, significantly lower than women's participation in the overall workforce, International Energy Agency

[2] Around 31% of the population in Southeast Asia is aged 15-34 years, and this is projected to rise to 50% by 2050, International Energy Agency.

3.3 Just Transition Awareness and Education



KSBSI and KSPI join climate justice and just transition training in Jakarta, facilitated by Colin Long from Victorian Trades Hall.

Drawing on the findings of the needs assessment, awareness and education programs and materials need to be developed which are relevant to the target group and contextualised to the issues workers face.

There is no "one size fits all" approach - each transition will be different depending on the specific set of circumstances, and the union's program should be responsive to this, and the findings of their needs assessment.

Tip - Ensuring your program is relevant to the group's needs

*If this is in the early stages of the union's work on these issues, the initial focus of awareness and education will need to first build an understanding of the "**why**" the transition is happening. This can be done by engaging participants themselves in discussions about the effects of climate change and how this impacts them in their daily lives and the world of work, and what is needed to address climate change impacts (adaptation and mitigation measures) now, and for the future, and linking this to the necessity of decarbonisation.*

*If the target group **is already well-informed**, awareness and education efforts can build on this foundation and focus on facilitating discussions about proposed adaptation, and mitigation measures—examining whether these measures are likely to advance progress to netzero targets and are supported by workers and the community and secured a "social license" for implementation.*

Guiding questions for developing education and awareness materials

To ensure awareness and education materials are tailored and responsive to the needs of the target group/s, unions can organise initial ***focus groups discussions*** and/or ***participatory workshops*** with unions and workers.

Questions outlined below can be used by a facilitator to guide these initial conversations and clarify workers' awareness of climate-related issues, their key concerns, and hopes and expectations for what can be done about it:

1. **What are the impacts of climate change you are aware of?**
    - *Participants may highlight issues such as unpredictable weather patterns, more frequent and severe storms, hotter days than usual, environmental degradation/pollution, cost of living increases related to challenges in agricultural production.*
2. **How do you experience these impacts in your daily life (at home and at work)?**
3. **What are your key concerns in relation to climate change impacts now, and for the future?**
4. **What do you think can be done to address these concerns?**
    - *Depending on the group, discussion here may range from a sense of hopelessness, through to proposing adaptation measures (such as how to prevent heat stress) and mitigation measures (such as the need to decarbonise industries and transition to renewable energy sources) and/or measures to compensate or support people impacted by climate change issues (social protection/loss and damage).*

A note on introducing the proposed transition

If decarbonisation and energy transition have already been raised, the facilitator can move on to the next question. If not, the facilitator should provide information at this point about the necessity of decarbonisation to mitigate against worsening climate change, and some details about the proposed energy transition that the union is organising around.

5. **What information, if any, have workers received about the planned transition?**
6. **How is the proposed transition expected to change things for them, their work, family, community?**
    - *What do they perceive to be the potential positive and negative impacts of the proposed transition?*
    - *Are they aware of any available supports or services which will help people impacted by the proposed transition?*
7. **What are their key concerns regarding the proposed transition?**
    - *The union should ensure that concerns are documented and that they agree on ways to report back to workers on issues raised.*
    - *What remains unclear or uncertain? (e.g. timeframes, specific sectors and workplaces that might be affected, how workers can prepare to transition to different jobs, what happens to those who don't transition to new jobs)*

8. **What does a "just" vs an "unjust" transition look like? How can we ensure what happens?**
    - *This question can provide space for participants to discuss and explore their hopes for the future.*
    - *What does a **"just"** vs an **"unjust"** transition look like? This is an opportunity to engage participants in defining a just transition and agreeing on key principles of what constitutes a just transition.*

The discussions and feedback gathered during FGDs and participatory workshops can then be used to inform the development of the union's ongoing program of awareness and education, which may include:

- training materials
- fact-sheets and posters
- social media campaigns, and
- other awareness materials that are tailored to reflect the issues identified by workers.

These are also important opportunities to document workers' and the community's concerns and inform the union's just transition advocacy priorities, ensuring they are responsive to the feedback workers have provided.

Four key questions

In summary, the union's awareness and education program should aim to address **four key questions** - at varying depths, depending on existing levels of knowledge and awareness of the target group, and which stage the transition is at:

1. **WHY** is a transition necessary?
2. **WHAT** is proposed or expected to happen
3. **WHO** is likely to be impacted?
4. **HOW** is the union responding, and **HOW** can workers and the community be involved?

These interactions also present an important opportunity to build awareness of the union and the crucial role of the union in advocating and negotiating for better outcomes for impacted workers and the wider community, and to outline the union's advocacy plan - for example, who will they be taking these concerns to and what do they hope to achieve, and mobilising workers to support related campaigns.

3.4 Inclusive Organising for a Just Transition



KSBSI and KSPI trade unions join a workshop to develop a joint regional consultation forum.

The role of trade unions in just transition processes ranges from providing awareness and education to workers, advocating for and representing workers' interests in just transition planning processes, and negotiating for workplace agreements and government policy and programs that ensure workers are adequately supported.

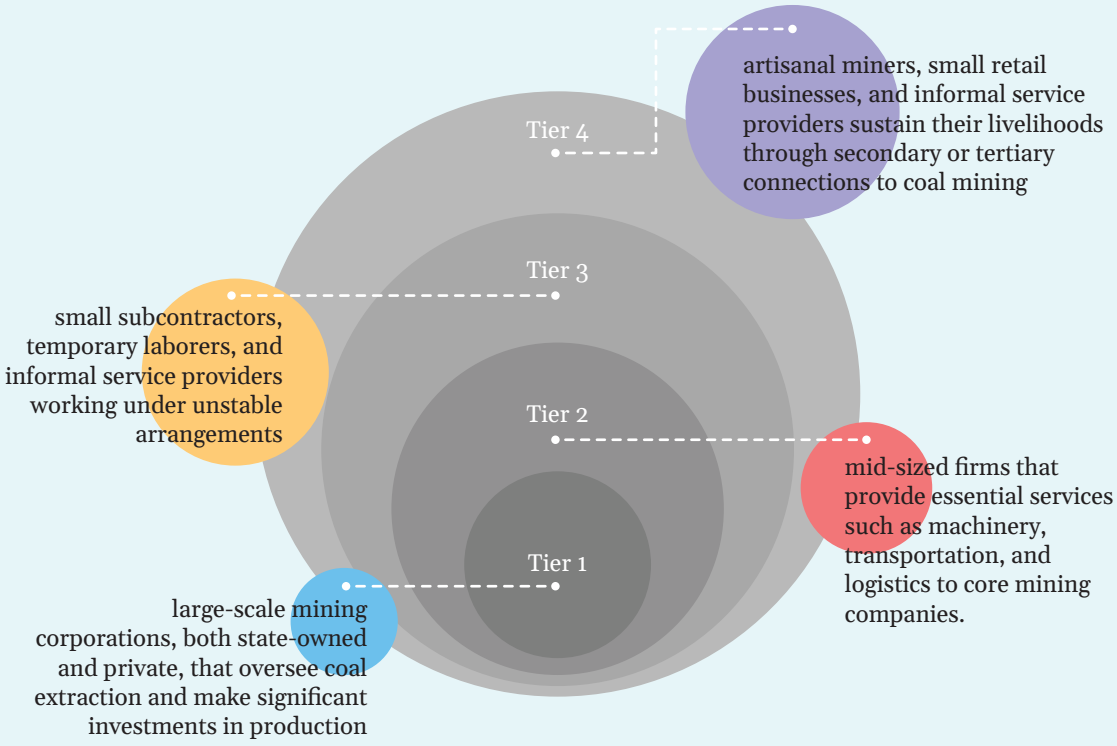
The union's power and capacity to negotiate the best outcomes for workers are strengthened and emboldened by the strength of the membership it represents. Therefore, when designing a just transition program, a fundamental component must be an inclusive organising strategy that will grow the union's membership, who can support and benefit from the union's campaigns for a truly **just** transition for impacted workers and the wider community.

In many parts of the world, including Asia, Africa, the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, the informal economy accounts for more than half of total employment. Therefore, in the context of the increasing informalisation of work, it is essential that unions go beyond traditional organising approaches to also engage informal workers who are impacted by transition and understand their vulnerabilities (i.e., precarious work arrangements, lack of access to social security).

Informal Workers in Indonesia's Coal Regions

The study *Beyond the Mines* maps the informal economy surrounding coal mines in East Kalimantan (Sangatta and Berau) and South Sumatra (Rawas Ilir) and found four levels of economic dependence, from highly dependent, such as core mining companies (Tier 1), to peripheral micro-enterprises and informal workers (Tier 4). While Tier 1 workers enjoy formal contracts, union representation, and social security, most workers in tiers 2–4 operate under precarious conditions: short-term contracts, exclusion from social security and employment insurance, no severance, and limited collective bargaining. Last, these informal workers—including street vendors, boarding house owners, app-based drivers, and small-scale farmers—are highly dependent on the spending of mining employees and face acute vulnerability to mine closures, yet remain largely invisible in transition planning.

Tiered framework maps the structure of coal town economies and work arrangements (Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA, 2026)



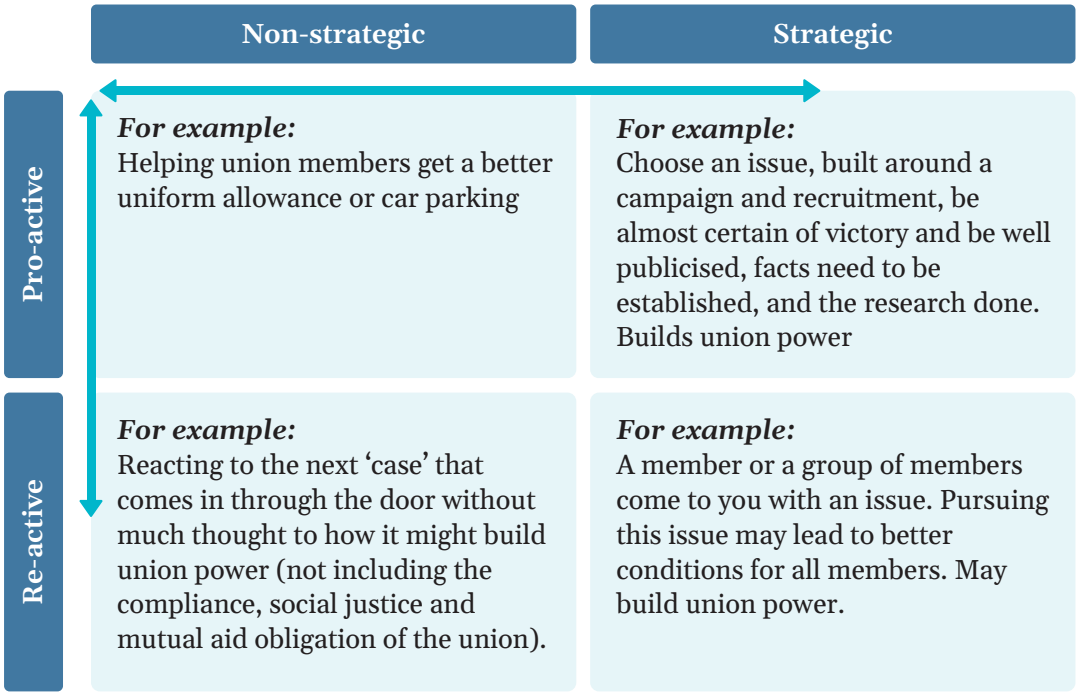
The study concludes **organising must expand to include informal and contracted workers**, advocating for inclusive social protection, and coordinating engagement in local just transition dialogues to ensure no one is left behind. Therefore, it is also essential to adapt their organising and membership models to include informal workers, to support them with information and training and facilitate the representation of their interests in just transition advocacy and negotiations.

Trade Union Organising Strategy

The fundamental steps:

- **Mapping workers and companies**
  - Identify key companies which are likely to be impacted by the transition (e.g. coal mines, coal transportation companies…)
  - Analyse the profile of workers in the enterprises where the union is already established, and especially where this is an opportunity to grow membership and/or win a CBA. What is the profile of members vs non-members? (e.g. job roles, employment arrangements/ contract type). Where possible, collect data on gender and age to assist in disaggregation.
  - Analyse the profile of other workers (formal and informal) in the supply chain who will be impacted by the transition (e.g. coal phase-out) in target geographic areas. Where possible, also include data on gender and age profile.
- **Defining and setting targets for organising goals**
  - E.g. growing union membership, winning Collective Bargaining Agreements with just transition clauses, registering new unions in strategic enterprises, mobilising a campaign to improve transition support for impacted formal and informal workers
- **Developing a plan**
  - Establish organising committees to engage with and organise target groups (ensure to involve organisers who are also representative of the target groups, especially women and youth and informal workers).
  - Determine key messaging and tailor it to the specific target groups.
  - Clarify the call to action - what is the union asking workers to do?
- **Documenting key issues to inform campaign priorities**
  - Facilitate discussions with a diverse range of workers to understand key concerns and issues they face - related to the transition, general working conditions or any specific vulnerabilities, such as gender, age (young and older workers) and informality.
- **Confirming campaign priorities, agreeing and implementing tactics**
  - Campaign priorities should be responsive to the issues identified by workers, e.g.,
    - *campaigning for the inclusion of trade unions in transition planning decisions*
    - *addressing climate-related occupational health and safety concerns (e.g. heat stress, safe work during flooding or severe storms)*
    - *ensuring planning and support for workers to participate in skills training and to facilitate transition to new employment opportunities*
    - *addressing social protection gaps*

- Take a proactive and strategic approach to developing campaigns and tactics. The table below provides examples of pro-active/reactive and strategic/non-strategic union work:



[4]

- Also refer to the section on *Collective Bargaining for a Just Transition* for more specific guidance

[4] *Source:* Colin Long, Victorian Trades Hall

3.5 Collective Bargaining for a Just Transition



Leaders of the PUK FSPKEP KSPI trade union agreed on a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) with a just transition clause with the management of PT AECI.

Collective bargaining is a key tool for unions to negotiate binding agreements with employers. A well-negotiated CBA can go beyond wages to shape companies' responses to climate change, the adoption of new technology, and other changes in the business. Through CBAs, unions can secure worker participation in transition planning and embed climate justice and just transition principles in workplace policies.

CBAs with just transition clauses offer an opportunity to incorporate climate justice and just transition principles into the workplace agreement. Globally, this practice is increasing, with a recent study finding that 11% (58/512) of reviewed collective agreements included just transition clauses (ILO 2025).

It provides an opportunity for workers and companies to work together, through social dialogue, to develop and agree on climate adaptation and mitigation measures and include measures to protect workers affected by climate impacts and ensure they are meaningfully consulted and empowered during transitions. For companies – by providing legal certainty, good conditions of work, alongside transparent planning and clear dispute-resolution processes, they can foster positive and productive workplace relations and reduce operational and financial risks.

Preparing to negotiate a CBA:

- **Organise** to meet membership thresholds (e.g., 50% workforce in Indonesia).
- **Form** a strong bargaining committee.
- **Consult members** to confirm priorities - such as climate-related challenges (e.g. heat stress, natural disasters), and how to prepare for decarbonisation and related business transitions.
- **Understand company priorities** and transition plans and identify areas of alignment.
- **Maintain** constructive and productive communication with management to secure agreements that protect workers and support business continuity.
- **Establish** joint committees for transparent implementation.

Just Transition Clauses Proposed by Indonesian Trade Unions

Examples of just transition clauses developed by the Indonesian Trade Union Confederation (KSPI) and the Confederation of All Indonesian Trade Union (KSBSI) include:

- Define **"just transition"** to ensure a shared understanding of key principles between the company and the union.
- Establish a **Climate Change & Just Transition Committee** that ensures the union has input on measures to address climate change and participation in planning for related business changes or transition
- Raise **climate and just transition awareness** within the company and among employees.
- **Recognise climate-related OSH issues** and implement measures to protect and monitor worker health and safety.
- Implement **concrete actions** to reduce carbon emissions, such as company-level emissions reduction targets and measures.
- Support workers to **upskill or reskill** in readiness for changes in the business and/or transition to green jobs.
- Secure **binding commitments** that provide worker protections such as redeployment, severance, and social protection.
- Establish an **effective grievance mechanism** to resolve related disputes.

Collaboration with allies:

Where multiple unions exist, coordination is essential. Joint advocacy can strengthen bargaining power and foster shared understanding. Cooperation with unions in neighbouring companies or supply chains can also amplify influence and can be an opportunity to connect issues to regional and national policies.

Advocacy and accountability:

Unions must ensure commitments—whether in CBAs or public policy—are binding and monitored, and may include:

- Establishing joint monitoring bodies.
- Publishing just transition scorecards tracking training, redeployment, OSH adaptation, and grievance resolution.
- Advocating for linking compliance to incentives: companies benefiting from green subsidies or tax breaks should meet negotiated just transition standards.

As KSPI emphasises: *"just transition is not just discourse, but a real struggle in the workplace. Unions must ensure every worker has a decent future amid the climate crisis and energy transition by negotiating CBAs that include just transition clauses."* KSPI has developed a Practical Guide on Employer Agreement Negotiations with Just Transition Clauses, its link can be found in the Section 4.



Naimatul Jannah, a negotiator for the Chemical, Energy, and Mining Workers Union (SP KEP) KSPI East Kutai.

Case Study

Naimatul Jannah: Speaking Up for Women Workers' Rights Amid Mining Uncertainty

Naimatul Jannah, known to everyone as Naima, first set foot in the mining industry of East Kalimantan only a year ago. She is young, her experience still fresh, yet her path has already led her to a crucial arena: collective bargaining negotiations between workers and the company. Naima serves as a negotiator for the Chemical, Energy, and Mining Workers Union (SP KEP) KSPI East Kutai.

At first, her heart pounded. Nervous. Anxious. Her work experience was brief, her horizons were still narrow. But one thing gave her confidence: the support of a manager who not only gave permission but also encouraged her to join the union. "My feelings were mixed, nervous, anxious... but my manager was very supportive, so I was happy, even though it was a bit heavy," she said, her voice trembling slightly, though her eyes kept their spark.

At the bargaining table, Naima spoke for women workers. "Maternity leave must be provided. And women should not be treated differently when it comes to voicing their aspirations," she affirmed.

She emphasised basic rights: social security such as BPJS, decent working hours, annual leave, maternity leave. Equality in the union was also a focus. Women must have an equal space to make their voices heard.

In 2025, the company and union inked a collective agreement after a negotiation which Naimatul participated in. In the agreement, the company and the union agreed to form a just transition committee to plan, supervise, and ensure the implementation of the just transition with the interest and welfare of the workers as its main consideration. In addition, the company also agreed to mitigate and adapt to climate change by providing PPEs and donations for workers affected by climate change. Furthermore, the company committed to upskilling and reskilling the workers to adapt to the changing job market as a result of the energy transition and climate change.

Though the negotiation process was brief and tense, for Naima the agreement is an essential space, a place where workers can communicate, consult, and raise objections against unfair company rules.

“This agreement, it truly gives us workers an opportunity to express our aspirations,” she said.

But beneath that courage, the shadow of uncertainty never fully lifts. The mines could close. Her life as a migrant worker still depends on coal. This job offers no guarantee of tomorrow.

“If the mine shuts down, of course I’d be worried … maybe I’d move to another sector, start a small business,” she said, gazing toward the horizon.

Naima has already begun mapping an alternative route: small-scale enterprise, marketing, and creativity. She wants to sharpen her skills so she can run a small business.

“I have a vision—starting a small business. I’m learning how to promote things, how to catch a customer’s interest in my products,” she explained.

Her hope is simple: that more workers will find the courage to join the collective bargaining process, to claim their rights without fear. Moreover, the collective agreement that the just transition clause will be included in the future CBAs. “I hope my friends will come forward, that they’ll be brave enough to voice their aspirations and their rights,” she said.

3.6 Ensuring No One Left Behind



Workshop on just transition for union members of KSBSI.

The energy transition is a process that affects many people. To be a "just" energy transition the full diversity of communities in coal regions must be considered in planning, to ensure that no one is left behind. Therefore, trade unions also have a responsibility to represent the interests of their membership, in all their diversity—especially the most marginalised.
These include women, Indigenous communities, young workers, informal workers, and older workers.

Women have been underrepresented in traditionally male-dominated sectors such as coal mining and formal employment. Nevertheless, they play a significant role in the economy—often in informal work along supply chains or in supporting services (*see the informal worker mapping study* Beyond the Mines: The Tiered Economy of Coal and Its Local Dependence). The report found that informal workers are more vulnerable to the transition because they lack protection.

For young people, the impacts of climate change, the future of work, and employment opportunities in the green economy are key concerns. As coal is phased out, jobs in coal regions are shrinking, pushing young people to seek new opportunities. However, the green economy may not absorb them easily, as jobs in that sector often require specific skills. Older workers, meanwhile, may face challenges in finding new employment and reskilling for new sectors—especially since many have spent their careers in the established coal industry.

A just transition offers an opportunity to increase the engagement of women (and rebalance gender inequities), youth, and other marginalised groups in emerging sectors. The transition also creates opportunities to build more inclusive workplaces through broader participation.

To ensure no one is left behind, unions can take several steps:

First, unions need to make a concerted effort to ensure diverse participation in awareness-raising and education activities. They should actively involve vulnerable groups and help organise them. This includes considering different times, venues, and other practical factors to give everyone a genuine opportunity to take part.

Second, unions should identify gaps between the ideal of a just transition and existing conditions, in order to advocate (along with allies) for assistance to impacted workers, communities, and marginalised groups—ensuring that no one is left behind.

Third, unions must uphold the importance of compliance with labour laws. Marginalised groups, such as older workers, tend to be more vulnerable when labour laws are not enforced. They risk being targeted for layoffs without receiving their legal entitlements or severance. Therefore, unions must struggle to ensure justice.

Fourth, unions can advocate for the role of social protection and the importance of clear criteria for affected communities. A critical assessment of social protection schemes is necessary to understand gaps and how to address them. Under current systems, many will be left out due to informality and varying degrees of vulnerability.



Nurfaidah, a member of the Indonesian Workers' Union (ASPEK) East Kutai, KSPI.

Case Study

Nurfaidah: Hopes for Social Security for Bengalon's Farmers in the Energy Transition

Nurfaidah lives in Bengalon, East Kalimantan. She is known as the head of a group of farmers, a driving force behind the Sepasobarat small-scale enterprises, and a member of the Indonesian Workers' Union (ASPEK) East Kutai, KSPI. In the mornings, she tends to her garden, selling vegetables to local shops and housewives. It seems like a simple life. But beneath that routine, her existence is deeply intertwined with coal mining. Her customers are not just ordinary residents—they are mining workers' families, people whose livelihoods depend on company paychecks.

"My sales are strongly related to the mining industry because most of my customers are from mining families," she says.

When the mines run well, her goods sell briskly. But when production slows or layoffs hit, the vegetable market goes quiet too. Purchasing power drops, and Bengalon's economy feels the slump.

"If the mines are sluggish or there are layoffs... automatically our sales decline, and some of our customers go," she explains.

Past experience has sharpened her awareness. Before becoming a farmer in 2016, she once worked for a mining company. From that time, she understood that any volatility in the mining sector directly affects the lives of ordinary people.

"What I know is, we're scared—because most of Bengalon's income comes from mining. So many people work in mining," Nurfaidah says.

To stay afloat, she has reached out to the community, helping form small-farmers and small-business groups. Solidarity, she believes, is the key to weathering uncertainty.

"I've been reaching out to community members to create a group, because a group can help each other—whether in marketing or in mutual support," she explains.

She has also taken part in energy-transition training. Through that, she has begun to picture a shift to other sectors: farming, animal husbandry, or other ventures. But she knows enthusiasm alone isn't enough. New capital and new skills are needed. "It would be enough if we were given capital to start a business… we shouldn't only know how to farm; we need other skills at least," she emphasises.

Nurfaidah points to the gap in social security. Mining workers have coverage; farmers and small-scale entrepreneurs do not. She once witnessed a friend struck by lightning in a rice field—without any insurance.

"Take what happened the other day: a friend's family member was out in the fields in the rain and got struck by lightning. There was no protection at all," she says with concern.

Her hope is that training, social security, and start-up capital can become a foundation so that peasants and small business owners can survive the energy transition.

"That's what I hope for from the government. Not just the farmers themselves. If our farming income drops, we need to be able to shift to something else," she concludes. Nurfaidah's story underscores one thing: a just energy transition must ensure that no one is left behind—from mining workers to the surrounding communities. Without protection and new skills, they remain vulnerable. Her voice serves as a reminder that a fair transition must create space for people to endure and to grow—from the mine pit to the green fields.

CHAPTER 4

Reading Material

Other guidance and resources:

unions4jet.org: Trade Union Guide for Planning and Implementing Just Transition Programs

KSPI (Konfederasi Serikat Pekerja Indonesia). (2025). *Practical Guide on Employer Agreement Negotiations with Just Transition Clauses.* Retrieved from: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HPOFQeLr3hUU0kSQ8BegccqPYF5E_ESM/view?usp=drive_link

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Drawdown Explorer provides science-based analysis of climate solutions, and provides detailed information on 140-plus technologies and practices proven or proposed to effectively reduce greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere. The Drawdown Explorer analyses solutions in four categories: Highly Recommended,; Worthwhile, ;Keep Watching,; and, Not Recommended. Link: https://drawdown.org/explorer

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The Innovations Regions for a Just Energy Transition project is jointly funded by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Climate Action, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMUKN) under the International Climate Initiative (IKI) and by the European Commission's Directorate-General for International Partnerships (DG INTPA) for the Just Energy Transition in Coal Regions Interregional Platform (JET-CR). The project is implemented by a consortium of organisations led by GIZ as Joint Project Coordinator and with the Climate Action Network (CAN), International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), International Labour Organisation (ILO), Wuppertal Institute für Klima, Umwelt, Energie GmbH, Solidarity Center, and APHEDA as implementing partners.

IKI JET and its JET-CR Platform aim to support and accelerate just energy transitions away from coal to renewable energies and other sustainable economic activities in Colombia, Chile, South Africa, Indonesia, Vietnam, Thailand, and Mongolia.

The **Just Energy Transition in Coal Regions (JET-CR) Knowledge Hub** is an online platform building bridges between experts, policymakers, coal industry, trade unions and civil society organizations. It's a space to bring together different perspectives, share real stories and search for effective tools and solutions.

It aims to particularly amplify the voices of workers and communities dependent on coal showing how knowledge can work in practice. It also turns practice into knowledge by bringing local experience into global conversations and advancing just energy transition expertise.

Providing regular digests of articles, research papers, news stories and events it serves as a "one-stop shop" for collecting up to date information related to just energy transitions away from coal around the world.

jetknowledge.org / unions4jet.org

Implemented by

On behalf of:

Federal Ministry
for the Environment, Climate Action,
Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety

of the Federal Republic of Germany

IKI INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE INITIATIVE

This publication was produced with the financial support of the International Climate Initiative of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Climate Action, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMUKN) under a Grant Agreement with GIZ. Its contents are the sole responsibility of their authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of BMUKN or GIZ.

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Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA is the global justice organisation of the Australian trade union movement. We work globally in partnership for the achievement of dignity at work, social justice, economic equality and the realisation of human rights. We work to achieve this through strong unions and social movements, sustainable development programs, global solidarity, and support at times of crisis.

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A Just Energy Transition Advocacy Guide: The Experience of Trade Unions in Coal Regions

May 2026

Acknowledgements

Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA would like to especially acknowledge and appreciate the inputs of the **Confederation of All Indonesian Trade Union (KSBSI)** and the **Indonesian Trade Union Confederation (KSPI)** in the development of this resource. The experience and insights of both the national confederations and their local affiliates working in the coal regions in South Sumatra and East Kalimantan have directly informed this guidance. Their ongoing efforts to organise, advocate, and push for a just transition for workers and communities are at the heart of this guide, and it is our hope that this will be a valuable resource in supporting this crucial work.

Just Energy Transition in Coal Regions