

CENTRAL ORGANIZATION OF TRADE UNIONS -KENYA



REPORT

THE ROLE OF TRADE UNIONS IN FACILITATING A JUST TRANSITION TO RENEWABLE ENERGY AND SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRIES

2024

Main Objective:

To analyze the role of trade unions in facilitating a just transition to renewable energy and sustainable industries, with a focus on advocating for workers' rights, job security, and fair labour practices during the shift away from fossil fuels.

Objectives:

1. Understand how trade unions advocate for workers' rights, job security, and fair labour practices during the transition away from fossil fuels.
2. Investigate the strategies employed by trade unions to ensure that workers are not left behind in the shift to a greener economy.
3. Examine case studies of successful collaborations between trade unions, governments, and environmental organizations to achieve a just transition.
4. Identify challenges and barriers faced by trade unions in advocating for a just transition and propose potential solutions.

Expected Outcomes:

1. Insights into the role and effectiveness of trade unions in addressing labor issues during the transition to renewable energy and sustainable industries.
2. Recommendations for policymakers, trade unions, and other stakeholders on better supporting workers and ensuring a fair transition.
3. Case studies highlight successful collaboration models between trade unions, governments, and environmental organizations that can serve as examples for future initiatives.
4. Awareness of the importance of social justice and equity in climate change mitigation efforts, particularly concerning workers' rights and livelihoods.

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Abstract

The transition to renewable energy and sustainable industries is imperative for combating climate change, but it must be executed in a manner that ensures social justice and equity for workers. This research analyzed the role of trade unions in facilitating a just transition, with a focus on advocating for workers' rights, job security, and fair labour practices during the shift away from fossil fuels. The study addresses four key objectives:

1. Understanding how trade unions advocate for workers' rights, job security, and fair labour practices during the transition away from fossil fuels.
2. Investigating the strategies employed by trade unions to ensure that workers are not left behind in the shift to a greener economy.
3. Examining case studies of successful collaborations between trade unions, governments, and environmental organizations to achieve a just transition.
4. Identifying challenges and barriers faced by trade unions in advocating for a just transition and proposing potential solutions.

This research provides insights into the role and effectiveness of trade unions in addressing labour issues during the transition to renewable energy and sustainable industries. The key recommendations addressed to policymakers, trade unions, and other stakeholders on better supporting workers and ensuring a fair transition. Additionally, the research highlighted case studies that showcase successful collaboration models between trade unions, governments, and environmental organizations in German, Ethiopia, Kenya, and South Africa which can serve as examples for future initiatives. Ultimately, this research seeks to raise awareness of the importance of social justice and equity in climate change mitigation efforts, particularly concerning workers' rights and livelihoods.

INTRODUCTION

Background and Context:

Transition to Renewable Energy and Sustainable Industries

The global economy is undergoing a profound transformation driven by the urgent need to address climate change and promote environmental sustainability. Central to this transition is the shift from fossil fuel-based energy systems to renewable energy sources such as wind, solar, hydroelectric, and geothermal power. This shift is essential for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, which are the primary contributors to global warming, but also for ensuring long-term energy security and economic stability.

Renewable energy technologies have experienced rapid advancements and cost reductions over the past decade, making them increasingly competitive with traditional fossil fuels. Solar and wind power have seen significant growth, supported by technological innovations, economies of scale, and favourable policy frameworks. These developments have positioned renewable energy as a viable and sustainable alternative to fossil fuels, capable of meeting the world's growing energy needs while minimising environmental impacts.

Alongside the growth of renewable energy, there is a parallel movement towards sustainable industries. Sustainable industries are characterised by practices that reduce environmental impact, improve resource efficiency, and promote social equity. This includes adopting cleaner production techniques, utilising sustainable materials, reducing waste, and enhancing energy efficiency. Integrating sustainability principles into industrial processes is critical for mitigating climate change, preserving natural resources, and fostering long-term economic resilience.

Sustainable industries contribute to the broader goal of sustainable development, which seeks to balance economic growth with environmental protection and social well-being. By adopting sustainable practices, industries can reduce their carbon footprint, lower operational costs, and enhance their competitiveness in a market that increasingly values sustainability. Moreover, sustainable industries can drive innovation, create green jobs, and support the transition to a low-carbon economy.

A "just transition" refers to a framework that seeks to achieve a balance between environmental sustainability and social equity. It emphasizes the importance of protecting workers' rights, securing job opportunities, and ensuring fair labour practices as economies shift towards greener industries.

The transition from fossil fuel-based industries to renewable energy and sustainable sectors presents significant challenges for workers. Many workers in traditional energy sectors face job displacement and the need for reskilling to adapt to new roles. Ensuring these workers are not left behind requires comprehensive strategies that include education, vocational training, and social protection measures. Addressing these challenges is essential for maintaining social cohesion and

achieving an equitable transition, hence this shift is not only about technological change but also involves significant social and economic.

Trade unions have historically played a vital role in advocating for workers' rights and ensuring fair labor practices. In the context of a just transition, trade unions can be instrumental in negotiating with employers, influencing policy, and providing support to workers. They can help ensure that new green jobs are decent, secure, and well-paid, and that workers have access to the necessary training and support to transition to these jobs.

Role of Trade Unions in a Just Transition

Trade unions have historically been at the forefront of advocating for workers' rights, ensuring fair labor practices, and promoting social justice. As the world transitions to renewable energy and sustainable industries, the role of trade unions has evolved to meet new challenges and opportunities. This multifaceted role is crucial in facilitating a just transition—a concept that aims to secure workers' livelihoods, protect their rights, and promote social equity during the shift towards greener economies. Trade unions' involvement spans advocacy and policy influence, where they lobby for worker-friendly policies and legislative frameworks; training and reskilling initiatives that equip workers with the skills needed for emerging industries; and social dialogue and negotiation, ensuring fair labor practices and conditions. Moreover, they provide indispensable support for workers displaced by the transition, advocating for social safety nets and comprehensive support programs. Through these efforts, trade unions ensure that the benefits of the green transition are equitably distributed, mitigating the adverse impacts on workers in traditional energy sectors and fostering a more inclusive and sustainable future.

Trade unions have long been at the forefront of advocating for worker-friendly policies, and this advocacy extends to the realm of renewable energy transitions. By lobbying governments and participating in policy-making processes, unions ensure that the shift towards renewable energy includes provisions for fair labor practices, job creation, and protection for workers in traditional energy sectors. For instance, the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) was instrumental in incorporating the concept of "just transition" into the preamble of the Paris Climate Agreement at COP21. This inclusion underscores the commitment to creating decent work and quality jobs in line with national development priorities, highlighting the crucial role of trade unions in shaping international climate policy.

As industries evolve due to technological advancements and the move towards sustainability, trade unions play a critical role in providing training and reskilling programs for workers. These programs are essential for equipping workers with the skills needed for new roles in renewable energy and other emerging industries. In countries like Germany, trade unions have collaborated with educational institutions and government agencies to offer comprehensive training programs for workers transitioning from coal mining to renewable energy sectors such as wind and solar power. These initiatives not only enhance employability.

Engaging in social dialogue and negotiation is another fundamental aspect of trade unions' involvement in a just transition. Through collective bargaining, unions negotiate with employers and governments to secure better working conditions, fair wages, and job security for workers in new industries. This process is vital for ensuring that the benefits of the transition to renewable

energy are equitably distributed. For example, in South Africa, trade unions have been active in the Presidential Climate Commission, working to ensure that the country's transition to a low-carbon economy is inclusive and addresses the needs of workers.

The shift to renewable energy can lead to job losses in traditional energy sectors. Trade unions provide crucial support for displaced workers through various initiatives and programs. This support includes advocating for social safety nets, such as unemployment benefits and job placement services, as well as facilitating access to retraining programs. In addition, unions often work with governments to develop transition plans that include financial assistance and career counseling for affected workers. By offering comprehensive support, trade unions help mitigate the adverse impacts of the transition and ensure that workers are not left behind.

In summary, trade unions are integral to the process of achieving a just transition to renewable energy and sustainable industries. Their advocacy, training initiatives, negotiation efforts, and support programs are essential for ensuring that the transition is fair, inclusive, and beneficial for all workers.

Purpose of the Study

This research aims to analyze the role of trade unions in facilitating a just transition to renewable energy and sustainable industries. The main objective is to explore how trade unions advocate for workers' rights, job security, and fair labor practices during the shift away from fossil fuels. By examining the involvement of trade unions, the study seeks to understand their strategies, identify challenges, and propose solutions to ensure that workers are not left behind in the green economy.

Research Questions

To achieve the main objective, this study addresses the following key research questions:

- I. How do trade unions advocate for workers' rights, job security, and fair labor practices during the transition away from fossil fuels?
- II. What strategies do trade unions employ to ensure that workers are not left behind in the shift to a greener economy?
- III. What are the successful collaboration models between trade unions, governments, and environmental organizations in achieving a just transition?
- IV. What challenges and barriers trade unions face in advocating for a just transition, and what potential solutions can be proposed?

This research is significant in its potential to contribute to a more equitable and just transition to a sustainable economy. By focusing on the role of trade unions, the study underscores the importance of incorporating workers' perspectives and needs into the transition process. Ensuring that the move to renewable energy is fair and just is not only a matter of social justice but is also crucial for the long-term success and societal acceptance of sustainable policies. This research aims to bridge the gap between environmental sustainability and social equity, providing a roadmap for a transition that benefits both the planet and its people.

2. Literature Review

The historical role of trade unions has been deeply rooted in labour rights, worker protection, and social justice. Since their inception, trade unions have been pivotal organizations advocating for fair wages, safe working conditions, and comprehensive benefits for workers. Through collective bargaining and political lobbying, unions have achieved significant milestones in securing rights and protections that have contributed to broader social equity and economic stability. These traditional roles have laid a strong foundation for unions to engage in contemporary issues, including environmental sustainability and the transition to renewable energy.

The concept of a "just transition" has gained prominence as a critical framework for addressing the socio-economic impacts of shifting from high-carbon industries to greener alternatives. This framework was formally recognized in the 2015 Paris Agreement, highlighting the need for creating decent work and quality jobs in accordance with national development priorities. The just transition framework involves several key components, including social dialogue, economic diversification, skills development, and social protection measures. These elements are designed to ensure that workers and communities dependent on carbon-intensive industries are not left behind in the transition to a sustainable economy.

Research indicates that successful implementation of this framework requires an integrated approach that addresses both the immediate concerns of workers and the broader socio-economic transformation needed to achieve environmental goals.

The involvement of trade unions in environmental advocacy has evolved significantly over the past decades. Initially, unions were primarily concerned with protecting jobs, which often seemed to conflict with environmental objectives. However, as the urgency of climate change has become more apparent, unions have increasingly recognized the importance of sustainability and have begun to advocate for policies that align labour rights with environmental protection. The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) has been a leader in this movement, promoting the integration of labor and environmental policies and advocating for a just transition that supports both climate action and worker rights. This shift in focus reflects a broader understanding that sustainable economic development is essential for long-term worker welfare.

Global case studies illustrate the critical role of trade unions in facilitating just transitions. In Germany's Ruhr region, for instance, a collaborative approach involving the federal and state governments and the European Union helped transition from coal through social protection for workers and regional economic diversification. Similarly, Canada's Sustainable Jobs Plan outlines measures for creating green jobs and industries, addressing the needs of a sustainable labour market and supporting workers transitioning from high-carbon sectors. In South Africa, the Presidential Climate Commission developed a Just Transition Framework that identifies job market risks and opportunities, recommending skills programs and social protection measures through stakeholder engagement.

In summary, trade unions have historically been champions of labor rights and social justice. Their evolving role in environmental advocacy and the just transition framework underscores their importance in balancing worker needs with sustainability goals. Through active participation in policy development and negotiation, unions are crucial in ensuring that the transition to renewable energy and sustainable industries is both fair and inclusive, thereby contributing to a broader socio-economic transformation that benefits all.

3. Methodology

The methodology for this research on the role of trade unions in facilitating a just transition to renewable energy and sustainable industries involves a mixed methods research design. This approach combines both qualitative and quantitative methods to capture the multifaceted role of trade unions and provide a comprehensive understanding of the just transition process.

The research design employs a mixed methods approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative data. This allows for a robust analysis by triangulating data from various sources, thereby offering a deeper insight into the complexities of the transition to renewable energy. Data collection involved surveys, interviews, and document analysis. Surveys distributed to trade union members and workers in industries undergoing transition to gather quantitative data on their experiences and perceptions. Interviews with trade union leaders, policymakers, and expert in labor and environmental issues provided qualitative data on the strategic roles and challenges faced by unions. Additionally, document analysis conducted on policy documents, union reports, and case studies to contextualize the findings and validate the data collected through surveys and interviews.

Sample selection involved stratified sampling to ensure representation from different sectors and regions undergoing transition. This included workers from traditional high-carbon industries, such as coal and oil, as well as emerging renewable energy sectors like wind and solar. Interview participants purposively selected based on their expertise and roles in trade unions, policy-making, and environmental advocacy. Case studies chose based on their relevance and the extent to which they illustrate successful or challenging transitions. Key cases from countries such as Germany, Ethiopia, South Africa and Kenya.

By employing a mixed methods research design, this study aims to provide a holistic understanding of the role of trade unions in facilitating a just transition to renewable energy and sustainable industries. The integration of quantitative and qualitative data, alongside rigorous analysis and visual representation, will ensure a comprehensive and nuanced exploration of the topic, offering valuable insights for policymakers, trade unions, and other stakeholders involved in the transition to a sustainable economy.

4. Research question:

- I. How do trade unions advocate for workers' rights, job security, and fair labor practices during the transition away from fossil fuels in Kenya?

Trade unions in Kenya, particularly the Central Organization of Trade Unions (COTU), have been instrumental in advocating for worker-friendly policies during the transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy. They actively participate in policy formulation to ensure that the transition includes protections for workers' rights, job security, and fair labor practices. Specifically:

COTU engages in policy discussions surrounding renewable energy to ensure that policies support the creation of decent jobs and protect workers in traditional energy sectors.

They push for social protection measures such as unemployment benefits, retraining allowances, and job placement services for workers affected by the transition from high-carbon industries (COTU - EATUC Research).

COTU is also involved in training programs in collaboration with the government and international organizations, aimed at equipping workers with skills needed for the renewable energy sector, particularly in geothermal, wind, and solar projects (COTU - EATUC Research).

- II. What strategies do trade unions employ to ensure that workers are not left behind in the shift to a greener economy?

Kenyan trade unions employ several key strategies to ensure workers are not left behind in the green economy transition:

Advocacy and Social Dialogue: Trade unions in Kenya, including COTU, engage in social dialogue with employers and the government. This involves negotiating for policies that secure job opportunities in the renewable energy sector while addressing workers' concerns about job losses in traditional sectors .

Training and Reskilling Programs: COTU collaborates with the government and international organizations to implement training programs that help workers transition into roles in the green economy. These programs focus on developing skills in renewable energy technologies like wind and solar power.

Collaborations with Stakeholders: COTU and other trade unions form partnerships with environmental groups

4. Challenges and Opportunities

As the world shifts towards renewable energy and sustainable industries, trade unions play a crucial role in ensuring that this transition is fair and inclusive. The concept of a "just transition" emphasizes the need to protect workers' rights, provide adequate training and reskilling opportunities, and support those displaced by the transition. However, the path to achieving a just transition is fraught with challenges and opportunities. Trade unions face significant hurdles, such as resistance from entrenched industries and financial constraints, which can impede their efforts. At the same time, there are numerous opportunities for trade unions to enhance their role through strategic partnerships, government support, and leveraging the growing momentum towards sustainability. Understanding these challenges and opportunities is essential for developing effective strategies that promote a fair and equitable transition to a sustainable future.

Trade unions encounter several significant challenges in promoting a just transition to renewable energy and sustainable industries. One of the primary challenges is resistance from industries that are heavily invested in fossil fuels and other high-carbon sectors. These industries often have significant political and economic influence, making it difficult for unions to advocate for policies that prioritize environmental sustainability and workers' rights simultaneously. For example, fossil fuel companies may lobby against stringent environmental regulations or transition plans that threaten their profitability, thereby creating a substantial barrier for trade unions pushing for a greener economy. In Kenya through the Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Education Institutions and Hospitality, Kenya association of hotel and caterers (KAHC) have been facing resistance in the inclusion of a CBA clause that guarantees social security of works in time of climate disaster since the sectors experiences stand still of work during floods or adverse climatic conditions, KAHC argument is that it has financial implication to the reforms demanded by the union in a long term.

Financial constraints also pose a significant challenge for trade unions. The transition to renewable energy requires substantial investments in training and reskilling programs, social support systems for displaced workers, and advocacy efforts. Many trade unions, especially in developing countries, operate with limited financial resources, which hampers their ability to effectively support their members through the transition. This financial strain can also limit their capacity to engage in comprehensive policy advocacy and negotiation processes. Despite these challenges, COTU-K has made significant strides in policy advocacy and capacity building, particularly through joint programs with its affiliates that have focused on integrating just transition principles into labor agreements, enhancing members' skills for green jobs, and actively participating in national and international climate policymaking spaces.

Another challenge is the potential loss of jobs in traditional energy sectors, such as coal mining, oil, and gas. Workers in these sectors often face uncertainty and fear about their future employment prospects, which can lead to resistance against the transition. Trade unions must address these fears by advocating for robust social safety nets, retraining programs, and policies that ensure job

security in new industries. However, achieving these goals requires overcoming significant political and economic obstacles. This brings an example of the coal mine that was shut down at Lamu, in Kenya that rendered a lot of workers jobless due to the reduction of the carbon foot print and its effects to the environs.

Despite the challenges, there are numerous opportunities for trade unions to enhance their role in facilitating a just transition. One such opportunity lies in forming partnerships with environmental groups and other stakeholders. By collaborating with organizations that share a commitment to sustainability, trade unions can amplify their advocacy efforts, share resources, and develop comprehensive strategies that address both environmental and labor concerns. These partnerships can also help build broader public support for a just transition, increasing pressure on governments and industries to implement worker-friendly policies. COTU (K) has had significant collaboration with DTDA, ILO, Solidarity Center and ITUC on addressing Climate Change Issues at National and international Level.

Government support is another crucial opportunity for trade unions. Governments can play a significant role in providing the necessary financial resources and policy frameworks to support a just transition. By advocating for government investments in renewable energy infrastructure, training programs, and social safety nets, trade unions can help ensure that workers are not left behind in the transition. Additionally, engaging in social dialogue with government representatives can lead to the development of policies that balance economic, social, and environmental goals.

In Kenya, government support for a just transition has been growing, particularly in the renewable energy sector, but challenges remain. The Kenyan government has made significant investments in renewable energy infrastructure, such as the Lake Turkana Wind Power project and the Olkaria Geothermal Plant, demonstrating a commitment to reducing the country's reliance on fossil fuels. These projects are critical to advancing the country's green economy and have been areas where trade unions, like COTU-K, have advocated for worker inclusion in policy discussions.

However, financial resources for comprehensive training programs and social safety nets for workers affected by the transition are still limited. Trade unions, including COTU-K, continue to push for greater government investments in reskilling initiatives, aiming to ensure that workers in high-carbon industries are not left behind.

In terms of social dialogue, COTU-K has played an active role in engaging with government representatives through platforms such as the National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP) and Kenya's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) process. These dialogues have enabled trade unions to advocate for policies that strike a balance between economic development, environmental sustainability, and workers' rights. Additionally, COTU-K has engaged with employers, negotiating green clauses in Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs), ensuring that environmental considerations are embedded in workplace agreements.

Despite this progress, there is still room for more structured government support, especially in terms of policy frameworks that address workers' social protections and the financial commitments necessary to achieve a fair and equitable transition for all workers in Kenya.

Trade unions can also leverage the growing global momentum towards sustainability to strengthen their role. As awareness of climate change and environmental issues increases, there is a greater demand for sustainable practices and green jobs. Trade unions can capitalize on this trend by positioning themselves as key advocates for a just transition, thereby attracting support from a broader range of stakeholders, including businesses, policymakers, and the public.

Trade unions in Kenya, particularly COTU-K, have effectively leveraged the growing global momentum toward sustainability by positioning themselves as key advocates for a just transition. This strategic approach has attracted support from a broad range of stakeholders, including businesses, policymakers, and the public. COTU-K has successfully engaged with international cooperating partners, such as the International Labour Organization (ILO), Danish Trade Union Development Agency (DTDA), and Solidarity Center, which have provided critical financial and technical assistance to advance their just transition agenda.

Through these partnerships, COTU-K has been able to strengthen its role in promoting sustainable practices and securing green jobs. For instance, collaborating with the ILO has helped develop capacity-building programs for trade union members, equipping them with the skills necessary for transitioning into green jobs. The DTDA has supported initiatives aimed at integrating just transition principles into Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs), ensuring that labor contracts include environmental considerations and protection for workers in evolving industries. Moreover, COTU-K's collaboration with the Solidarity Center has enabled the union to participate actively in international climate forums, such as SB60 in Bonn, where they advocate for the inclusion of labor concerns in global climate policies.

These partnerships have not only provided financial support but have also enhanced COTU-K's capacity to influence policy discussions and align their agenda with global climate and labor movements, further strengthening their leadership in promoting a just transition.

In conclusion, while trade unions face significant challenges in promoting a just transition, there are also substantial opportunities for engagement and growth. By overcoming resistance from entrenched industries, securing financial resources, and forming strategic partnerships, trade unions can play a pivotal role in ensuring that the transition to renewable energy and sustainable industries is fair, inclusive, and beneficial for all workers.

5. Case Studies

Case Study 1: Germany

Germany's energy transition, known as the *Energiewende*, represents one of the most comprehensive efforts globally to shift from fossil fuels and nuclear energy to renewable energy sources. Trade unions in Germany have played a significant role in ensuring that this transition is fair and inclusive for workers.

Key Initiatives and Strategies:

- I. ***Training and Reskilling Programs:*** German trade unions, particularly IG Metall and IG BCE, have been at the forefront of developing training and reskilling programs for workers

transitioning from traditional energy sectors to renewable energy industries. These programs provide technical training in renewable energy technologies such as solar and wind power, as well as broader skills development to enhance employability.

- II. ***Social Dialogue and Negotiation:*** Trade unions in Germany engage in extensive social dialogue with employers and the government. They have successfully negotiated labor agreements that secure job security, fair wages, and safe working conditions in the renewable energy sector. This process has been facilitated by Germany's strong tradition of social partnership, which promotes cooperation between labor, business, and government stakeholders.
- III. ***Policy Advocacy:*** German trade unions have been active in advocating for supportive policies that promote a just transition. They have lobbied for government investments in renewable energy infrastructure and social safety nets for displaced workers. Their advocacy has been crucial in shaping inclusive and worker-friendly energy policies.

Case Study 2: South Africa

South Africa presents a contrasting case where trade unions are navigating the complexities of transitioning from a coal-dependent economy to renewable energy. Despite the challenges, trade unions have been proactive in advocating for a just transition.

Key Initiatives and Strategies:

- I. ***Engagement with the Presidential Climate Commission:*** South African trade unions, including the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), have been actively involved in the Presidential Climate Commission. Their participation ensures that workers' voices are heard in the planning and implementation of the country's climate policies.
- II. ***Support for Displaced Workers:*** Trade unions in South Africa have been advocating for comprehensive support for workers displaced by the transition from coal to renewable energy. This includes pushing for retraining programs, financial assistance, and job placement services to help workers transition to new employment opportunities in the green economy.
- III. ***Partnerships with Environmental Groups:*** South African trade unions have formed strategic partnerships with environmental groups to strengthen their advocacy efforts. These partnerships help build broader public support for a just transition and push for policies that balance environmental sustainability with social equity.

Case Study 3: Kenya

Kenya has been a leader in renewable energy in East Africa, with significant investments in geothermal, wind, and solar power. Trade unions have begun to play a more prominent role in ensuring that the transition benefits workers.

Key Initiatives and Strategies:

- I. ***Engagement in Policy Formulation:*** The Central Organization of Trade Unions (COTU) in Kenya has been involved in policy discussions regarding renewable energy. They have

advocated for policies that ensure job creation and protection of workers' rights in the renewable energy sector.

- II. Training Programs:* Kenyan trade unions have partnered with the government and international organizations to develop training programs for workers in renewable energy sectors. These programs aim to equip workers with the necessary skills to transition from traditional energy sectors to new roles in geothermal, wind, and solar power projects.
- III. Social Protection for Workers:* COTU has pushed for social protection measures for workers affected by the transition, including unemployment benefits, retraining allowances, and job placement services. These measures are intended to mitigate the negative impacts of the transition on workers and ensure a just transition.

Case Study 4: Ethiopia

Ethiopia's ambitious plans to become a green economy by 2025 involve significant investments in renewable energy. Trade unions are working to ensure that these plans include provisions for worker protection and fair labor practices.

Key Initiatives and Strategies:

- I. Policy Advocacy:* The Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions (CETU) has been actively advocating for policies that ensure the creation of decent jobs in the renewable energy sector. They have lobbied for the inclusion of labor standards and worker protection measures in national energy policies.
- II. Training and Skills Development:* CETU has been involved in developing training and skills development programs in collaboration with the government and development partners. These programs aim to prepare the workforce for new opportunities in the renewable energy sector, focusing on solar and wind energy technologies.
- III. Support for Displaced Workers:* Ethiopian trade unions have called for comprehensive support for workers displaced by the transition, including retraining programs, financial assistance, and social safety nets. These efforts are aimed at ensuring that the transition does not leave any workers behind.

Comparative Analysis

Comparing the case studies of Germany, South Africa, Kenya, and Ethiopia reveals both common strategies and unique approaches employed by trade unions in facilitating a just transition.

Common Strategies:

- *Advocacy for Worker-Friendly Policies:* In all countries, trade unions have been instrumental in advocating for policies that protect workers' rights and promote job creation in the renewable energy sector.
- *Training and Reskilling Programs:* Trade unions emphasize the importance of training and reskilling programs to equip workers with the necessary skills for new roles in the green economy.

- ***Social Dialogue and Negotiation:*** Engaging in social dialogue and negotiation with employers and governments is a common strategy used by trade unions to ensure fair labor practices and secure better working conditions for workers in the new industries.

Unique Approaches:

- ***Germany:*** The extensive collaboration between trade unions, educational institutions, and government agencies has been a key factor in the success of their training and reskilling programs. The strong tradition of social partnership has also facilitated effective negotiations and policy advocacy.
- ***South Africa:*** The involvement of trade unions in the Presidential Climate Commission and their partnerships with environmental groups are unique aspects of the South African approach. These strategies have helped to ensure that the transition is inclusive and that the needs of workers are considered in national climate policies.
- ***Kenya:*** Trade unions have been proactive in engaging in policy formulation and developing training programs in collaboration with international organizations, focusing on geothermal, wind, and solar power projects.
- ***Ethiopia:*** Trade unions have emphasized policy advocacy and training and skills development programs, with a focus on creating decent jobs and ensuring labor standards in the renewable energy sector.

6.Recommendations

- I.* Inclusion of trade unions in decision making processes - The government should create space for the unions to be included in decision making process, Trade union should continue to lobby to be included in national committees and other working groups on climate change,
- II.* Strengthening collaborations at national and international levels – Trade unions should continue to strengthen collaborations with other trade union confederations, civil society organizations and cooperating partners who provided supports on climate change programs.
- III.* Training and Retraining workers – From the case study above, we have seen the unique practice from German trade unions working with education institutions, this best practice should be replicated to our unions in developing training curriculum, retraining workers.

Conclusion,

Trade unions in Germany, South Africa, Kenya, and Ethiopia play a vital role in facilitating a just transition to renewable energy and sustainable industries. While they face different challenges and operate in distinct contexts, their efforts to advocate for worker-friendly policies, provide training and reskilling programs, and engage in social dialogue are crucial for ensuring that the transition is fair and equitable for all workers.