

South African Cities Dialogue

Building City Resilience through
a Just and Equitable Transition

Outcomes Report

**C40
CITIES**



8 SALGA
SOUTH AFRICAN LOCAL
GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION
Inspiring service delivery

Acknowledgements

This report brings together the conclusions drawn from the South African Cities Dialogue on Building City Resilience Through a Just and Equitable Transition co-hosted by C40 Cities, the Presidential Climate Commission, the South African Local Government Association and the City of Johannesburg on 25 and 26 March 2024.

We are grateful for the participation and contributions of local government representatives of Cape Town, Ekurhuleni, Emalahleni Local Municipality, eThekweni Municipality, Govan Mbeki Municipality, Johannesburg, Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality and Tshwane.

Many thanks to those who contributed to the event as expert speakers, presenters and moderators.

The principal authors of the report are: **Marta Stencel, Yaseen Salie, Ahmed Mokgopo**, C40 Cities

Many thanks also to our partners and city staff for their comprehensive review: **Dhesigen Naidoo**, Presidential Climate Commission; **Dorah Marema**, South African Local Government Association; **Marnus Botha**, City of Cape Town; **Lizanda van Rensburg**, City of Cape Town; **Alizwa Majikija**, eThekweni Municipality; **Tebogo Sharon van Rensburg**, C40 Youth Hub. **Khwezikazi Windvoel**, South African Presidential Climate Commission.

We are grateful for the contributions and strategic guidance from the following **C40 Cities colleagues**: Silvia Marcon, Krisztina Campbell, Jazmin Burgess, Dorah Modise and Gifti Nadi.

Designed by: Reforma, Tom Hampson

About C40 Cities

C40 is a network of nearly 100 mayors of the world's leading cities working to deliver the urgent action needed right now to confront the climate crisis and create a future where everyone, everywhere, can thrive.

Mayors of C40 cities are committed to using a **science-based and people-focused approach** to help the world limit global heating to 1.5°C and build healthy, equitable and resilient communities.

We work alongside a broad coalition of representatives from labour, business, the youth climate movement and civil society to support mayors to halve emissions by 2030 and help phase out fossil use while increasing urban climate resilience and equity.

The current co-chairs of C40 are Mayor Sadiq Khan of London, United Kingdom, and Mayor Yvonne Aki-Sawyerr of Freetown, Sierra Leone; three-term Mayor of New York City Michael R. Bloomberg serves as President of the Board. C40's work is made possible by our three strategic funders: Bloomberg Philanthropies, Children's Investment Fund Foundation and Realdania.

To learn more about the work of C40 and our cities, please visit [our website](#) or follow us on [X](#), [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

About the Presidential Climate Commission

The PCC is a multi-stakeholder body established by the President of the Republic of South Africa to advise on the country's climate change response and pathways to a low-carbon climate-resilient economy and society. In building this society, South Africa needs to ensure decent work for all, social inclusion, and the eradication of poverty. Those most vulnerable to climate change, including women, children, people with disabilities, the poor and the unemployed need to be protected, and workers' jobs and livelihoods also need protection.

The PCC's mandate emanates from the Presidential Jobs Summit held in October 2018, when social partners agreed that a statutory entity should be formed to coordinate and oversee the Just Transition towards a low-carbon, inclusive, climate-resilient economy, and society. Through a multi-stakeholder process, the PCC successfully delivered the first [Just Transition Framework for South Africa](#), adopted by the Commission in May 2022, and approved by Cabinet in July 2022.

The commission consists of Government Ministers, Mayors, and 22 Commissioners that represent diverse perspectives of these social partners, including: academia, business, civil society, labour, and youth. The PCC facilitates dialogue between social partners on these issues and, in particular, defining the type of society we want to achieve and detailed pathways for how to get there.

About South African Local Government Association (SALGA)

The South African Local Government Association (SALGA) is a member-based association that acts as a unifying body that represents the interests of local government authorities in South Africa. SALGA serves as a collective voice for municipalities, advocating for their needs and priorities at the national and provincial levels of government. SALGA's main purpose is to promote, strengthen, and advance the interests of local government by supporting and advising municipalities to fulfil their mandate.

July 2024

Contents

Glossary	5
1. Introduction and structure of the report	6
2. Background	8
3. The role of local governments in delivering a just transition and building resilience	10
4. Accelerating a Just Transition: Insights from the South African Cities Dialogue	12
4.1. Accelerating local climate actions and just transitioning through good green jobs and skills development	16
4.2. Unlocking investment for a green economy and improved quality of life in municipalities	18
4.3. Incorporating a just transition perspective in climate resilience efforts	20
5. Recommendations	22
Annex: List of participants and speakers	26

Glossary

Climate resiliency: The capacity of a community, business, or natural environment to prevent, withstand, respond to and recover (adapt, reorganise and evolve) from a disruption related to climate change.

Climate bonds: Climate bonds are fixed-income financial instruments linked to climate change solutions. They are issued to raise finance for climate change solutions. These might be greenhouse gas emission reduction projects ranging from clean energy to energy efficiency, or climate change adaptation projects. Like normal bonds, climate bonds can be issued by governments, multi-national banks or corporations. The issuing entity guarantees to repay the bond over a certain period of time, plus either a fixed or variable rate of return. Adapted from [Climate Bonds Initiative](#).

Climate budgeting: A climate budget is a governance system that mainstreams climate commitments and considerations into decision-making on policies, actions and budget. This is done by integrating climate targets from the city’s Climate Action Plan (CAP) into the financial budgeting process and assigning responsibility for implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting across the city government. It creates transparency and accountability, and highlights deviations from targets.

Equity: This term refers to fairness and justice and is distinguished from equality in that equality means providing the same to all, whereas equity means recognising that we do not all start from the same place and must

therefore acknowledge and make adjustments to imbalances. The process of achieving equity is ongoing, requiring us to identify and overcome intentional and unintentional barriers arising from bias or systemic structures.

Just transition: A just transition means greening the economy in a way that is as fair and inclusive as possible to everyone concerned, creating decent work, skills building and re-skilling opportunities and leaving no one behind. It involves maximising the social and economic opportunities of climate action, while minimising and carefully managing any challenges – including through effective social dialogue among all groups impacted, and respect for fundamental labour principles and rights.

Loss and damage: This term refers to the residual impacts of the climate crisis that cannot be averted through mitigation, nor minimised through adaptation or disaster risk reduction (DRR). This includes adverse events related to both rapid-onset extreme weather phenomena, such as extreme heat, flooding, droughts, or cyclones, and slow-onset ones, such as sea-level rise, desertification, or drought, whose adverse effects are protracted over time. Damages are usually quantifiable in monetary terms—e.g., destruction of housing, public buildings, or infrastructure—while losses can be both non-economic—e.g., forced displacement, loss of life, biodiversity, or cultural heritage—and economic—e.g., loss of productivity. Losses are understood to be irreversible, while damages can be repaired.

1

Introduction and structure of the report

This report consolidates the findings from the South African Cities Dialogue, convened in Johannesburg in March 2024.

It aims to enhance collective understanding of the role of South African local governments toward facilitating a just transition within the country and to offer recommendations for accelerating equitable climate action at the local level. These actions are critical to reducing poverty and unemployment, improving livelihoods and safeguarding the lives of communities and workers in South Africa.

2

Section 2 provides an overview of the partnership between C40 Cities, the Presidential Climate Commission and the South African Local Government Association and introduces the work of C40 with South African cities.

3

Section 3 looks at the urban dimension of a just transition and the role local governments play in achieving the national just transition vision.

4

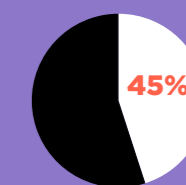
Section 4 discusses the key takeaways of the South African Cities Dialogue, highlighting essential areas for advancing both local and national actions.

5

Section 5 proposes a set of recommendations for cities, other levels of government and key stakeholders to accelerate a just transition and resilience building locally.

Over 30% of South Africans are unemployed, **rising to 45% among youth**

Source: *Stats SA, 2024*

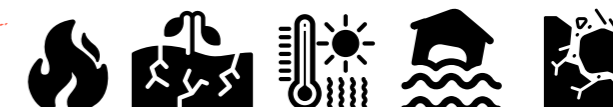


South Africa's informal sector employed **over 7.8 million in 2023**

Source: *Statista, 2023*



South Africa ranks **96th out of 182** on the ND-GAIN index, indicating high climate vulnerability.
Source: *ND-GAIN, 2022*



Ambitious urban climate action

could create and support over

1.8 million green jobs

in South Africa by 2030.

Source: *C40 Cities, 2021*

2 Background

South Africa is **highly urbanised**, with about 67% of its population residing in urban areas, and projections suggest this could rise to nearly 80% by 2050. South African cities, historically designed for segregation and marginalisation, are now among the most unequal globally, leaving vulnerable populations exposed to heightened climate-related risks.

Moreover, the country currently faces high unemployment levels, with over **30% of South Africans out of work**, and this figure climbs to **45% among young people**. As the country emphasises its commitment to a transition towards a low-carbon, prosperous future that is fair and inclusive and addresses these challenges, municipalities have emerged as centres for just transition implementation.

Since 2020, C40 Cities has been partnering with Cape Town, Ekurhuleni, eThekweni, Johannesburg, and Tshwane to pilot local just transition and collaborate with national and local actors to understand and align perspectives on the roles of local governments and other key stakeholders.

This is critical in delivering a just transition, creating green jobs opportunities for better livelihoods and building community resilience. Working with the South African Local Government Association (SALGA), C40 has partnered with the Presidential Climate Commission (PCC) to highlight the crucial role municipalities play in achieving national just transition goals.

This partnership has emphasised the importance of local governments in co-delivering a just transition in South Africa. It



Illustrations: Tom Hampson

also demonstrated the value of open dialogue among mayors, local stakeholders, and the national government.

In March 2024, to build on this momentum, C40 Cities, PCC, SALGA, and the City of Johannesburg hosted the South African Cities Dialogue on 'Building City Resilience Through

a Just and Equitable Transition', providing a platform for exchanging best practices and accelerating the transition toward a fair and climate-resilient future.

The event clarified how South Africa's municipalities are confronting the complex challenge of combating the climate emergency while building a fairer society.



© One Way Up Productions - C40

3 The role of local governments in delivering a just transition and building resilience

Local governments play a crucial role in ensuring that mitigation and adaptation strategies, regulations, and policies are based on the principle of a just transition for several reasons:

- They have formal powers including public procurement over key sectors which can influence decarbonisation, such as electricity reticulation, public transportation, urban development, urban planning, housing, buildings and construction, and waste management.

- Due to their proximity to residents, they are best equipped to ensure that communities, including marginalised groups, are protected from climate change impacts, the livelihoods of workers affected by the transition are safeguarded, historical inequities addressed and the potential for creating jobs through climate action initiatives is maximised.
- As conveners, cities partner in social dialogue with unions, employers and other key stakeholders to drive the creation of jobs and training programmes and shape emerging green markets, with special attention given to historically marginalised groups, including women, youth, informal workers, migrants and people experiencing poverty.
- As autonomous public institutions, local governments have powers to define their own growth trajectory and drive meaningful change. They are able to attract investment in climate-friendly economic activities linked to their own integrated development and spatial plans.

For further insight into the role of local governments in just transitions, please consult the following C40 resources: [Achieving the Just Transition: A Toolkit for City Leaders Across the Globe](#) and [Exploring the just transition: South Africa](#).



“ ”

A just transition requires a whole-of-society, whole-of-economy, and whole-of-government approach. The proximity of local governments to their residents places them at the center of integration and joint implementation. Collaboration between local and national government entities ensures vertical and horizontal integration, fostering shared learning among stakeholders.

Dorah Modise

Regional Director, Africa, C40 Cities

“ ”

Urban climate action offers more than emission reductions; it can build thriving, equitable societies.

By engaging communities, workers, and stakeholders, we can reduce inequalities and expand opportunities for marginalised groups, women, and youth.

Makoma Lekalakala

Director of Earthlife Africa Jhb and Commissioner at the Presidential Climate Commission



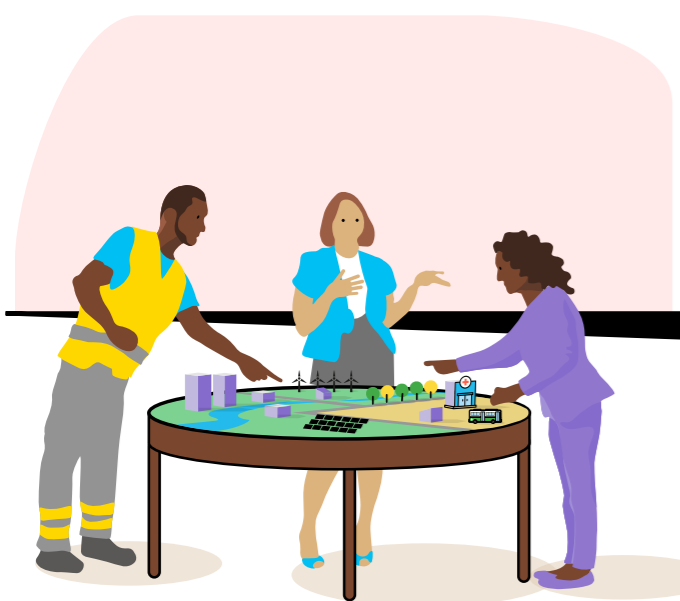
4 Accelerating a Just Transition: Insights from the South African Cities Dialogue

From fostering social dialogue and ensuring equitable benefits to catalysing green job creation, securing finance for just transitions, and bolstering climate resilience, the Dialogue was a platform for fruitful conversations and best practice sharing.

Participants included representatives from local governments, the organising partners, youth leaders, the International Labour Organization, the Development Bank of Southern Africa, the South African Cities Network, Business Unity South Africa, the South Africa Climate Action Network, the Just Energy Transition Investment Plan Projects Management Unit, and the South African Weather Service.

The following overarching and cross-cutting insights emerged from the Dialogue:

- Stakeholders recognised **cities and municipalities as essential partners in implementing a just transition** and agreed on the need for a strengthened and more coordinated collaboration between all levels of government, C40 Cities, SALGA and other key stakeholders on how to implement the national just transition vision locally.
- Achieving a just transition requires **collaborative working methods** within local administrations, fostering cross-sectoral collaboration and integrated governance systems, extending beyond municipal boundaries to avoid entrenching inequalities. Additionally, **integrating just transition objectives into key strategies**, such as climate action plans or Integrated



Development Plans, reinforces other urban policies, promotes strategy and delivery cohesion, and maximises impact.

- Effective urban climate action **relies on active community involvement** in creating climate programmes and policies. By directly and meaningfully involving key stakeholders in social dialogue from the outset and moving at their pace, diverse perspectives can be integrated, leading to more inclusive solutions and addressing structural inequities by **rectifying historical and ongoing injustices**.
- Bringing people on board by clearly communicating climate action and its benefits** is crucial for helping residents understand a just transition and the needed upfront investment. Catchphrases like “leave no one behind” should be translated into actionable initiatives and tangible examples of municipal actions.
- Recognising the potential of peri-urban areas in planning and policy narratives in South Africa and actively engaging with these areas is crucial for a just transition.** For example, Tshwane, which is 58% rural, leaving it vulnerable to intensified climate impacts. Viewing peri-urban regions as marginalised has shifted focus away from their potential to contribute to sustainable urban development.
- Climate change is affecting environmental, social, and economic systems, showing how interconnected these systems are.** To effectively tackle the key challenges, we need a transdisciplinary approach that combines knowledge and methods from different disciplines. This will help us maximise opportunities and balance trade-offs.



We need to make sure that just transition policies that are designed at the national and international levels speak to the unique realities of local governments.

Cllr. Kenalemang Rose Phukuntsi

Mayor of Tswelopele Local Municipality

By aligning with integrated development plans, we can merge various strategies like climate resilience or water service development to paint a clear picture of key components and actions needed for a just transition at the local level.

Dhesigen Naidoo

Climate Adaptation Lead, South African Presidential Climate Commission

“ ”

The urban transition goes beyond the Just Energy Transition and intertwines with many developmental goals of municipalities and South Africa. Applying a just transition lens goes beyond mitigation, it is essential for building resilience and addressing climate impacts.

Dorah Marema

Head Municipal Sustainability Portfolio, South African Local Government Association

“ ”

We must embed equity into every facet of municipal operations, recognising that climate change is not just an environmental concern—it’s an equity imperative that spans across all departments. Establishing the proper institutional frameworks is key to making this a reality.

Liteboho Makhelele

Programme Manager: Sustainable and Resilient Cities, South African Cities Network



© One Way Up Productions - C40



© TheGift777, Getty

Ekurhuleni

With the support of C40, **Ekurhuleni** has launched South Africa’s first local Just Transition Commission through its “Building Resilience and Working Towards Just Transition” forum. This commission **serves as a platform for multi-stakeholder dialogue**, ensuring all voices, including communities, workers, businesses, government, youth, and academia, are considered in local just transition planning. Additionally, the consultations are grounded in modelling aimed at analysing the impact of the just transition on economic growth and local labour market. The commission aims to develop a Just Transition Action Plan and contribute to broader provincial and national dialogues, promoting inclusivity and local context consideration. Ekurhuleni sets a model for others in similar transitions, with Dialogue participants agreeing on the benefits of forming similar commissions in other municipalities.

“ ”

Stakeholder engagement isn’t a one-and-done deal; it’s something that kicks off from the start and stays with us every step of the way. Think of it as a journey that moves at the pace of the stakeholders involved.

Thando Lukuko

National Node Coordinator, South Africa Climate Action Network

“ ”

We, as city officials, tend to operate within silos and sometimes overlook the importance of cross-sectoral collaboration within our city. The collaboration at the event assisted in broadening thinking to include other aspects into our daily projects.

Marnus Botha

Professional Officer: Strategic Planning, City of Cape Town

Building on the cross-cutting insights, the following section highlights key thematic takeaways.

1. Accelerating local climate actions and just transitioning through good green jobs and skills development

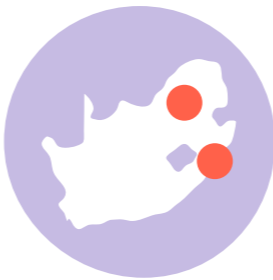
Ambitious urban climate action could create and support over [1.8 million green jobs in South Africa by 2030](#). As “green job creation hubs,” local authorities hold the key to leveraging their influence to forge connections between labour unions, employers, civil society, academia and training institutions addressing potential skill gaps, fulfilling demand for jobs and supporting informal workers, youth and women.

City delegates and expert speakers discussed how to ensure that these green jobs are accessible to all and address historical inequities.

Key takeaways

- **Municipalities can harness climate action to uplift unemployed South African youth by focusing on creating green jobs accessible to young people.** This involves conducting outreach to marginalised youth communities to understand their unique needs and aspirations, investing in skills training, apprenticeships, and job placement programmes to prepare youth for green jobs and the low-carbon economy, and collaborating with the private sector and civil society.

- **Coordinated efforts of all levels of government, communities and social partners** can foster defining good green jobs and skills opportunities and establishing a robust and uniform monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework across South African municipalities. This includes formulating a comprehensive understanding of green employment across all municipalities with the aim to prevent greenwashing and establishing clear decent job skilling criteria.
- **‘Good, green jobs’ lens and equity needs to be integrated into municipal procurement** to stimulate the local economy and to ensure accessibility to green jobs for youth, women, and marginalised groups.
- **Emphasise the need for systems thinking and foster collaboration between different departments,** including education and workforce, to facilitate change and efficiency, striving to avoid single solutions and consider multiple approaches simultaneously.
- **Incorporating social protection measures as part of the just transition** will ensure that workers and vulnerable groups have support during periods of economic change and from climate shocks.
- **Recognising the gender dimension of good green jobs** and the importance of considering the gender lens is needed in all aspects of green job creation and implementation.



Johannesburg, eThekweni and Tshwane

In January 2023, the [Green Jobs Youth Expo](#) was held in **Johannesburg** to address youth unemployment and foster the development of a talented and diverse workforce for a just transition to a green economy. The event focused on youth energy in the city’s green initiatives and showcased a variety of career paths within the burgeoning green economy.

Meanwhile, **eThekweni** in collaboration with KwaZulu-Natal Education Development Trust and with the Renewable Energy Institute for Southern Africa aims to train 6 000 young people in job opportunities available in the renewable energy sector to accelerate a just transition.

Tshwane’s, on the other hand, is delivering a training programme for young women to cultivate vegetable gardens, tackling climate change and enhancing food security.

“ ”

By investing in education, skills development, and job creation programmes tailored to the green economy, we can empower our youth.

Tebogo Sharon van Rensburg
C40 Youth Hub Member

“ ”

When working on good green jobs, it’s crucial not to focus on a single solution. We need a systems thinking approach, where multiple solutions run in parallel.

Gamelihle Sibanda
Chief Technical Advisor, International Labour Organisation

2. Unlocking investment for a green economy and improved quality of life in municipalities

Investing in urban climate action that is joined up with equitable policies and programmes for well-paid job creation, skills development, and good labour conditions has major returns on improving quality of life for all. City delegates and expert speakers discussed actions needed to ensure finance flows meet the identified local government climate needs.

Key takeaways

- **Local governments have the power to enable green economic investments, drive green job creation and stimulate local economies.** They have significant buying powers (e.g. city can own PV plants and procure renewable energy via IPPs) and regulatory powers (e.g. can facilitate the update and investment into small-scale embedded generation) and play a key partnering and knowledge sharing role with the private sector (e.g. by enabling green tech manufacturing).
- **Mobilising just transition finance encounters hurdles** such as risk-averse finance structures, difficulty attracting funding for smaller projects, information and data gaps across government levels and lack of comprehensive frameworks
- **Innovative financing solutions** such as public-private partnerships, climate bonds,

and climate budgeting are being explored to overcome financial barriers to just transition projects.

- **Developing standardised criteria and mechanisms to establish a baseline understanding for both the private and public sectors regarding what constitutes a just transition project in municipalities is key.** This includes creating a standardised matrix that outlines key criteria and indicators to identify and evaluate projects effectively, and inhibit “justice washing” to address poverty and inequality.
- **Tangible social protection key performance indicators are needed to guide investment decisions,** ensuring that social safeguards are integrated into all aspects of the transition process. This includes measures to protect vulnerable populations and provide support during economic changes and job transitions.
- **Initiatives such as the Municipal JET Support Programme play a vital role in assessing municipalities’ readiness for implementing a just transition.** They assist municipalities in developing a pipeline of bankable projects and mapping existing resources within municipalities. This helps identify gaps in financial, technical and skills capacity. However, challenges persist, including a disconnect between project needs, specific timelines and available financing. Insights gained from the first iteration of the programme should be used to expand support to more municipalities in the future.



Navigating information and coordination challenges in municipal just transition projects is vital, especially regarding access to finance. Without clarity on project scope and reliable data, we risk

“just washing”, similar to greenwashing, where projects are misrepresented to gain financing. Establishing robust criteria is essential to ensure equitable access to funding for genuine projects.

Khwezikazi Windvoel

Municipal Project Finance Manager, South African Presidential Climate Commission



Cape Town

Cape Town, in partnership with national and regional entities, developed a green industrial manufacturing hub in the economically disadvantaged Atlantis area. This effort, aligned with the principles of just transition, resulted in Africa’s first Greentech Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Atlantis, attracted ZAR 700 million in investment and created 322 permanent jobs. The SEZ aims to attract an additional ZAR 6 billion in investments and generate 3,000 more jobs by 2030.

© Poco_bw, Adobe



3. Incorporating a just transition perspective in climate resilience efforts

Addressing climate disasters requires a just transition approach to mitigate the impacts on the poorest and most vulnerable who have the least adaptive capacity. By using a just transition lens for climate adaptation, local governments can ensure the most affected communities can respond better to extreme events and progressively improve their resilience in the face of crisis. City delegates and expert speakers discussed actions needed to integrate the approach into their climate resilience-building efforts.

Key takeaways

- **Recognising and minimising vulnerabilities related to communities and infrastructure in urban areas is an essential first step to building resilience.** This includes addressing data gaps for informal settlements, low-income households, and informal workers and improving infrastructure and service delivery data.
- **Participatory processes** in data collection, planning, decision making and implementation, involving youth, workers, employers, civil society, and residents, particularly low-income and marginalised groups, are essential for resilience building in urban areas.
- **Expansion of early warning systems and promotion of proactive behaviours** in partnership with local leaders help minimise impacts on communities and save lives. Education and clear dissemination of information in multiple languages, along with pre-identifying safe havens, are vital. Promoting community-led early warning and response mechanisms will empower communities, ensuring they can respond rapidly and effectively.
- **Social protection is central to just transition and climate resilience-building efforts,** shielding workers and the urban poor from health risks and income loss. It helps prevent poverty and supports adaptation and mitigation strategies in response to climate disasters.
- **Recognition of the growing need for financing and investment - in cities and municipalities - rooted in the principles of a just transition in climate resilience and addressing loss and damage** needs to be coupled with improved institutional governance in municipalities and cross-sectoral collaboration to enhance preparedness and response to climate events.
- **Municipal cooperation is essential to prepare for, respond to, and address the impacts of climate events, as climate disasters cross boundaries.**



When discussing resilience, it's crucial to question the idea of people 'bouncing back' to their previous state, as for many, the status quo itself is already a

high-risk situation in the face of disaster. We want people to improve their livelihoods and help them to bounce better so they can overcome challenges.

Dr Miriam Murambadoro

Lead Scientist Social Economic Applications, South Africa Weather Service



Johannesburg and Ekurhuleni

Cities are increasingly prioritising integrating a just transition into adaptation and resilience building efforts, recognising the urgency posed by climate impacts like extreme heat, droughts, storms, and flooding. In **Johannesburg** and **Ekurhuleni**, a recent [urban heat assessment study](#) is guiding strategies for relief during extreme heat, including awareness campaigns, expanding green spaces, and addressing heat-related health impacts.



5 Recommendations

Based on the key takeaways from the discussions, this report outlines five priority recommendations for cities, municipalities, national government and other actors. These recommendations aim to accelerate resilience building through a just and equitable transition in South Africa at the national and local levels.



National governments
Local and international organisations
Cities and municipalities

Continue to strengthen engagement, consultation and partnership with municipalities and mayors in National Just Transition processes.

Despite the growing recognition of the role of local governments in Just Transition processes, there is a need to strengthen collaboration with the national government as well as between local governments and other levels of governance.

This can be achieved by:

- Involving a wider set of municipal actors in regular and coordinated consultations regarding national just transition policies, implementation and finance.
- Working towards replicating Ekurhuleni's social dialogues and Just Transition Commission in other municipalities to elevate local transition needs to the national level.

5. Recommendations

National governments
Local and international organisations
Cities and municipalities
Businesses
Civil society

Raise awareness for the recognition of the urban dimension of a just transition nationally, regionally and in multilateral processes.

As the closest level of government to communities, municipalities are taking the lead in integrating equity, just transition, and resilience into climate plans and strategies, prioritising the needs of the most vulnerable. They leverage their authority over key sectors and employ soft power where they lack formal mandates. If the efforts of local governments were formally recognised and supported by the national government and other key stakeholders, they could achieve even more in these areas.

This can be achieved by:

- Enhancing the urban aspect of a just transition in South African Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and the National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, amongst others. This involves bolstering just transition principles, processes, and financing, and including concrete implementation measures to boost equitable climate action.
- Advocating for the inclusion of local governments and community perspectives in just transition processes at the international level (e.g. NDCs, Just Transition Work Programme, Just Transition Energy Partnerships).
- Showcasing tangible, locally-led just transition actions, such as creating good, green jobs

and building climate resilience, to diverse audiences—including national governments, funders, and the general public—while elevating examples of just transition in South African municipalities in global processes and discussions to demonstrate how and why municipalities are key to achieving a just transition is crucial.

National governments
Local and international organisations
Cities and municipalities
Businesses
Civil society

Accelerating municipal action to drive the creation of good, green jobs is essential to a just transition.

Cities and municipalities take ambitious steps to accelerate climate action while creating well-paid and accessible green jobs. Maximising their potential for creating jobs through climate action initiatives in tandem with social justice is critical to the national vision of a just transition.

This can be achieved by:

- Prioritising the creation of accessible green jobs for youth, in collaboration with the private sector and civil society to reduce young people's unemployment levels and improve livelihoods.
- Defining a common good, green jobs definition and establishing a robust and uniform monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework across South African municipalities, ensuring diverse perspectives.
- Integrating the 'good green jobs' lens and equity into municipal procurement to stimulate the local economy and to ensure accessibility.

National governments

Local and international organisations

Cities and municipalities

Finance institutions

Equip municipalities with the technical capacity and data to accelerate the implementation of just transition and resilience-building initiatives to further the implementation of the [Just Transition Framework](#).

Insufficient local resources and/or the lack of trained municipal staff can significantly hinder the implementation of the national just transition vision. Additionally, cities and municipalities experience gaps in data crucial for applying for funding that supports the most vulnerable populations and for setting up efficient and inclusive strategies.

This can be achieved by:

- Creating shared platforms for providing information, including specific guiding documents tailored to urban contexts and establishing working groups or networks for the purpose of facilitating continued exchange and mutual learning.
- Investing, with budget allocation across all government levels, in capacity building and skills development at the municipal level for effective implementation of the just transition agenda.
- Enhancing access to qualitative and quantitative intersectional data for cities and municipalities to bolster resilience

efforts, address losses and damages, and foster equitable workforces. Prioritise gathering data from informal settlements and sectors often overlooked in formal censuses.

National governments

Finance institutions

Funders

Significantly increase funding and access to climate finance for local governments for a just transition and resilience-building.

Aligning financing pathways with just transition principles ensures investments and climate actions address inequities, support resilience-building and anticipate and minimise potential negative effects of the transition.

This can be achieved by:

- Establishing common principles and metrics for just transition finance including clarity on what constitutes just transition finance will help to guide investors, accelerate investments on international, national and local levels, and enable measuring progress towards a just transition for all.
- Developing tailored financial strategies for cities and municipalities to address their diverse financial needs in facilitating just transitions and additionally support project pipeline creation.



© One Way Up Productions - C40

“ ”

Cities in South Africa are uniquely positioned to deliver local just transitions by leading programmes and policies that make real reductions in emissions whilst ensuring that communities at greatest risk of climate change impacts are protected.

Kabelo Gwamanda
Executive Mayor of Johannesburg



Annex: List of participants and speakers

Local Government Representatives		
Marnus Botha	Professional Officer, Strategic Planning Branch, Department: Policy and Strategy, Directorate: Future Planning and Resilience	Cape Town
Lizanda van Rensburg	Senior Professional Officer: Climate Change Planning, Risk and Resilience Department	Cape Town
Malwande Vumazonke	Researcher, Policy and Strategy	Cape Town
Is'haaq Akoon	Acting DH, Strategic Planning Division	Ekurhuleni
Portia Dibela	Head, Organisational Performance, Monitoring and Evaluation	Ekurhuleni
Mankgodhi Hlongwane	Senior Specialist Biodiversity and Conservation, Environmental Resource & Waste Management	Ekurhuleni
Nandi Khumalo	Senior Manager, Design and Review Management, Property Development Division, Real Estate Department.	Ekurhuleni
Nelisiwe Kunene	Environmental Educator	Ekurhuleni
Nisa Mthombeni	Specialist Transport Planning	Ekurhuleni
Life Mahlaule	Manager: Environmental Management	Emalahleni Local Municipality
Nonkululeko Makua	Director: Environmental and Waste Management	Emalahleni Local Municipality

Alizwa Majikija	Climate Change Adaptation Graduate	eThekweni Municipality
Itumeleng Masenya	Manager: Climate Change Mitigation, Energy Office	eThekweni Municipality
Bheki Kubheka	Senior Manager, Office of the Municipal Manager	Govan Mbeki Municipality
Themba Phungwayo	Deputy Director, Planning and Economic Development	Govan Mbeki Municipality
Sabelo Vilakazi	LED Manager, Planning and Economic Department	Govan Mbeki Municipality
Olga Chauke	Head of Energy	Johannesburg
Maruping Broderick Chiloane	Building Control Officer: Development Planning	Johannesburg
Faranani Gethe	Chief Building Inspector	Johannesburg
Mzukisi Gwata	Principal Specialist - Climate Change Adaptation	Johannesburg
Thabo Mahlatsi	Director Energy	Johannesburg
Given Mbara	Principal Specialist Climate Change Mitigation	Johannesburg
Tebogo Modiba	Head: Transformation and Energy Efficiency	Johannesburg
Lebo Molefe	Director: Air Quality & Climate Change	Johannesburg
Ipfi Muedi	Chief Engineer: Energy Efficiency	Johannesburg
Lunelle Joy Serobatse	Director: Strategic Coordination & Reporting	Johannesburg
Daluxolo Adams	Acting Senior Director: Occupational Health, Safety, Wellness.	Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality
Christopher Dyani	Chief Operating Officer	Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality
Tabiso Mfeya	Executive Director: Human Settlements	Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality

Joseph Tsatsire	Director Water Distribution: Infrastructure and Engineering Directorate in the Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality.	Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality
Dennis Madumo	Economic Development and Spatial Planning Department	Tshwane
Kgahliso Namane	Specialist: FET – Job creation and consolidated reporting	Tshwane
Mphakiseng Zuma	Finance Specialist and Support, Treasury Section	Tshwane
Expert Speakers		
Kabelo Gwamanda	Executive Mayor	Johannesburg
Makoma Lekalakala	Director	Earthlife Africa Jhb
Thando Lukuko	Director and National Node Coordinator	South African Climate Action Network
Sue Lund	Programme Manager	Just Energy Transition Investment Plan Projects Management Unit (JETIP PMU) in the Presidency
Liteboho Makhele	Programme Manager: Sustainable and Resilient Cities	South African Cities Network
Mookho Mathaba	Climate Finance Specialist	Development Bank of South Africa
Kgaugelo Mkumbeni	Climate Risk and Human Security Project Intern	Institute for Security Studies
Dr Miriam Murambadoro	Lead Scientist Social Economic Applications	South African Weather Service
Mona Naicker	Manager: Energy and Environment Policy	Business Unity South Africa
Councillor Kenalemang Phukuntsi	Mayor	Tswelopele Local Municipality
Gamelihle Sibanda	Chief Technical Advisor	International Labour Organization

Dr Wendy Wadzanayi Tsoriya	Researcher	WDDP Consultants
Tebogo Sharon van Rensburg	Member	C40 Youth Hub
Organising Partners		
Mandy Jayakody	Just Urban Transition Manager	Presidential Climate Commission
Dhesigen Naidoo	Climate Adaptation Lead	Presidential Climate Commission
Khwezikazi Winvoel	Municipal & Project Finance Manager	Presidential Climate Commission
Dorah Marema	Portfolio Head – Municipal Sustainability Infrastructure Delivery, Spatial Transformation Services, and Inclusive Communities	South African Local Government Association
Tilden Mosha	Advisor: Climate Change & Environmental Management	South African Local Government Association
Emma Blunt	Senior Business Manager, Inclusive Climate Action	C40 Cities
Jazmin Burgess	Director, Inclusive Climate Action	C40 Cities
Phumelele Makhanya	City Adviser, Waste - Ekurhuleni	C40 Cities
Dorah Modise	Regional Director, Africa	C40 Cities
Ahmed Mokgopo	Youth Engagement and Campaigns Manager	C40 Cities
Tintswalo Motena Cathrine Mathe	Knowledge Sharing Manager, Renewable Energy	C40 Cities
Hlengiwe Radebe	Renewable Energy Technical Advisor	C40 Cities
Marta Stencel	Global Leadership Manager, Inclusive Climate Action	C40 Cities
Yaseen Salie	Senior Manager, Inclusive Climate Action (South Africa)	C40 Cities

