



how we adapt

CALL FOR RESEARCH PROPOSALS

GHANA

Just Energy Transition: Localisation, decent work, Small, Micro and Medium Enterprises (SMMEs) and sustainable livelihoods.

June 2023

1. Summary of the call

The [Institute for Economic Justice \(IEJ\)](#), [How We Adapt](#), and the [Congress of South African Trade Unions \(COSATU\)](#) hereby submits this call for applications for research partners for the 2023 – 2025 “Just Energy Transition: Localisation, Decent Work, Small-Micro and Medium Enterprises (SMMEs) and Sustainable Livelihoods” Project (IDRC Grant No. 110090 – 001). The successful in-country research organisation/consortium of organisations herein called in-country research partner will work under the oversight of the IEJ, How We Adapt and COSATU to undertake research and policy advocacy in the renewable energy value chains in Ghana and Kenya. The research organisation/consortia recruited will conduct research, and present the findings in terms of research reports, policy briefs, factsheets, op-ed pieces, background papers, etc. as specified by the project plan. This call targets organisations, as well as consortia, in the respective countries with proven track record conducting similar research. Interested organisations shall provide information on their qualifications and experience demonstrating their ability to undertake the assignment (documents, reference to similar services, experience in similar assignments, etc.). The estimated duration of the partnership is 24 calendar months and the estimated starting date is September 2023.

Research Funding Award: The project will fund successful bidders for the period 2023-2025 for all research related costs such as travel, per diems for field missions in accordance with the funding body’s rules, policies, and procedures as stipulated in the budget which will be made available to the successful bidder. The successful bidder will be considered as a partner to this project.

2. Rationale and background

For the African continent, climate change poses dire risks. The low-carbon or net-zero global transition, and related policies and investments, present a range of additional risks,

as well as opportunities. Among these, is the potential to harness global and local resource mobilisation for renewable energy generation and associated value chains, to support local (and regional) economic and industrial development and employment creation. In Ethiopia, Kenya, and South Africa, for example, investment in urban low-carbon transitions is anticipated to generate US\$1.1 trillion for the economy by 2050¹. The International Energy Agency has projected that investments in distributed renewable energy technologies (mini-grids and solar home systems) could produce 900,000 job-years of employment in Africa over just three years, commencing in 2020².

Potential employment creation, green industrialisation (through firm and sector development), and the expansion of domestic economic value added in transition sectors are key levers in 'just transition' policy responses. Broadly, the 'just transition' refers to the transition to a low-carbon and climate resilient economy in a manner that also manages transition risk, and prioritises the needs of workers and affected communities. This requires the management of unemployment and economic losses arising from the shift away from fossil fuels, livelihood and other support for those affected, and the amelioration of the destructive social, labour, and ecological legacies these value chains have shaped.

It also requires attention as to who captures the potential economic gains from renewable energy transitions and whether workers, marginalised groups such as women, and developing countries benefit. Without pointed intervention, it is likely that costs and benefits would be distributed along the lines of existing global economic structures, with the countries and companies in the Global North reaping the benefits. Clean energy transitions do, however, offer an opportunity to reconfigure these economic relations. Much of this promise turns on the realisation of the localisation of renewable energy value chains, as well as the accessibility of the resultant power, to drive developmental priorities in Global South countries. As identified in this call, SMMEs stand to play a critical role in renewable energy value chains and hence their local development is central to achieving just transitions. Any efforts at localisation must grapple with the nature of clean energy SMMEs and the structural barriers they confront.

In the African context, of particular importance is the imperative of structural transformation. This refers to production shifting towards higher value-added and higher productivity activities, often in combination with a greater share of increasingly formal sector employment. It points to the critical need to move away from commodity-dependent economies embedded within neocolonial networks of extraction often dominated by multinational corporations. For example, more than three quarters of African countries rely on commodity exports for more than 70% of their total merchandise export revenues³. The energy transition has the potential to disrupt entrenched colonial dependencies and produce more reciprocal geopolitical and international economic exchange.

This research goes beyond the traditional boundaries of structural transformation, to centre the importance of harnessing employment opportunities and ensuring that new renewable energy sector jobs, many within SMMEs, meet the International Labour Organization (ILO)

¹ Haddaoui, C., and Gulati, M. 2021. Financing Africa's urban opportunity: The 'why, what and how' of financing Africa's green cities. FSDAfrica, Nairobi. (Accessed on: 26 June 2023).

² IRENA, 2020. Renewable Energy and Jobs – Annual Review 2020, International Renewable Energy Agency, Abu Dhabi. (Accessed on: 26 June 2023).

³ UNCTAD, 2022. Global Trade Update (December 2022). United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Geneva. (Accessed on: 26 June 2023).

standard for decent work⁴. This means that they should: retain the hard-won protections and rights for workers; ensure reasonable social protection; maintain workers' growth and advancement; and allow for labour to organise to advance collective interests. Particular attention should be paid to employment and livelihood opportunities for those traditionally excluded. This constituency must be understood in a multi-dimensional and intersectional manner that understands the cross-cutting dispossessions experienced by women, low-paid and exploited workers, youth, informal economy workers, the unemployed, and those in mining-affected communities. Interventions must tackle the resulting gender and other structural inequalities. In addition, SMMEs offer the potential for diverse ownership structures, with the potential for employee ownership, thus changing the nature of asset ownerships within African countries.

The research tackles these issues in the context of three African countries - South Africa, Kenya, and Ghana - interrogating existing dynamics and development opportunities with the aim of advancing concrete policy change. The research not only fills knowledge gaps vis-a-vis clean energy production in these countries but does so through bringing together a variety of often disparate concerns: structural transformation, localisation, SMMEs, and decent work and sustainability livelihoods for workers and women, thereby giving greater clarity as to what is needed to ensure just transition pathways. The research is designed and conducted with those who stand to be most impacted in mind, particularly workers and women. It is deliberately policy-centric, seeking to generate the evidential basis for sustained engagement in (active and future) policy process. It supports the voices and agency of these constituencies within these policy processes⁵.

3. Objective of the assignment

The overall objective of this Project is to develop public policy interventions, and advocacy support, necessary to cement decent work and sustainable livelihoods, particularly for workers and women and youth, through the localisation of clean energy value chains, with a focus on SMMEs capability development in Kenya, Ghana, and South Africa. The specific objectives are to:

1. Identify and develop public policy interventions to support the localisation of clean energy value chains and provide decent work and sustainable livelihoods for workers, particularly women and youth engaged in SMMEs;
2. Empower relevant stakeholders to participate in on-going policy processes at the national and multilateral levels through concrete evidence developed on the potential, needs, and policy options for achieving localisation, decent work, and sustainable livelihoods within clean energy value chains; and
3. Strengthen public policy for increased localisation of clean energy value chains in selected African countries, particularly via SMMEs, in a manner that promotes decent work and sustainable livelihoods for the most vulnerable groups of workers, particularly women and youth.

⁴ ILO, (Date unknown). [The ILO's Decent Work Agenda](#). International Labour Organization, Geneva. (Accessed on: 26 June 2023).

⁵ Note: We speak often of the research generating (in the first instance) policy "options". This is because we believe that transitioning from research evidence and policy options to concrete policy proposals is a collaborative process to be undertaken with the relevant stakeholders. The researchers should not suggest inflexible policy directives too early in the process. Of course, for specificity and policy-relevance, targeted proposals will need to be developed at the appropriate point in the process.

4. Primary research question

What public policy interventions are necessary to cement decent work and sustainable livelihoods, particularly for women and youth, through the localisation of clean energy value chains that include SMMEs capability development in Ghana?

5. Country of research: Ghana

Budget: ZAR 5 400 000.00 over 27 months

Scope: Key activities, deliverables, and time schedule

Under the oversight of, and in partnership with, the IEJ, the successful research organisation/consortia in the respective countries are expected to undertake research in Ghana whose overall objective is to develop public policy interventions, and advocacy support, necessary to cement decent work and sustainable livelihoods, particularly for workers and women, through the localisation of clean energy value chains, with a focus on SMMEs capability development. The organisation/consortia recruited will conduct research, and present the findings in terms of research reports, policy briefs, factsheets, op-ed pieces, background papers, etc. as specified by the project plan. The following are the expected work activities and deliverables:

Work Package 1: Building blocks

	Activity/Output
WP1. ACT 3	Research team inception workshop.
WP1. ACT 4	Stakeholder engagement inception workshops.
WP1. ACT 5	Opening symposium preparation
WP1. ACT 6	Opening symposium
WP1. OUT 1	Conceptual Framework
WP1. OUT 2	Continental context analysis draft and final reports.
WP1. OUT 3	Research design report: background report and country specific research designs

Work Package 2: Country case studies

	Activity/Output
WP1. OUT 4	1 Policy brief
WP1. OUT 5	Localised seminar series
WP2. ACT 1	Conducting Firm level survey
WP2. ACT 2	Desktop quantitative data analysis using primary and secondary data sources.
WP2. ACT 3	Semi-structured interviews amongst key informants

WP2. ACT 4	Workshops, testing frameworks, gathering data, sharing drafts and findings, and receiving feedback.
WP2. ACT 5	Documentary analysis of government policies, company reports, grey literature etc.
WP2. ACT 6	Peer review workshop.
WP2. OUT 1	Background papers, including desktop research on the structure and performance of the renewable energy value chain and policy environment in the selected country cases, including baseline gender analysis of the sector and relevant policies.
WP2. OUT 2	Detailed case analysis reports analysing the findings of the documentary analysis, field work, and workshops.
WP2. OUT 3	1 Policy brief plus seminar

Work Package 3: Policy and engagement

	Activity/Output
WP2. OUT 3b	1 Policy brief plus seminar
WP2. ACT 6	Peer review workshop.
WP3. ACT 1	Workshopping relevant stakeholders.
WP3. OUT 2	Advocacy toolkit for trade unions and training
WP3. OUT 4	Popular summaries of the policy outputs.
WP3. ACT 2	Engagement in active country-level and regional policy processes.
WP3. ACT 3	Cross-country conference planning
WP3. ACT 4	Cross-country conference event
WP3. ACT 5	Development of policy-relevant material
WP3. OUT 1	1 policy brief
WP3. OUT 2	Localised seminar series

6. The proposal

The proposal should be 3500 words (max) and should detail the following:

1. Restate the primary research question (section 4 above) and state two complementary secondary research questions
2. Provide relevant literature review addressing the research questions and include the gaps in the literature.
3. Provide methodology which includes the theoretical lens to be used and methods to be used to undertake the study.

4. Describe the potential policy processes that the research can influence in Kenya and the relevant key policy targets
5. Using the activities in section 3, please come up with a two year work plan
6. Time to completion and chronogram: stating deadlines for both a mid-term and a final report.
7. Brief details about your partners and networks you work with e.g. research partners, trade unions, industry associations - provide references
8. Additional information: Status with ethics committee of the country (include references)
9. Resume of each member of the project team.

7. The Project Team

- The research firm should have traceable experience in relevant research and advocacy work, collaboration with, SMMEs, unions, CSOs and relevant organisations.
- The firm should be in good standing with the relevant ethical requirements within a country
- An institution affiliated to a recognised reputable university is preferable
- The team should include at least three (3) experts, amongst whom are the team leader, and two renewable energy experts and researchers. Their general qualifications are described below.

7.1. The team leader (expected commitment: 100 percent)

- PhD in economics; sociology, engineering or any related advanced degree (e.g Masters) with equivalent experience.
- History peer reviewed publications and policy-relevant outputs.
- Experience in research project coordination and working with partners.
- Experience in policy advocacy
- Committed to progressive economic transformation in Africa.
- English language fluency with strong research and writing ability.
- Extensive understanding of the national and international context of the research in just energy transitions.
- Good track record in managing or coordinating project teams preferably for strategy development.
- Relevant experience from interaction with non-governmental stakeholders, including private sector, civil society, and multilateral development organisations.
- A strong publication record on energy strategies and policies
- Strong analytical skills and proven expertise in qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis.

7.2. Renewable energy expert/researcher (expected commitment: 50 percent)

- A Master's Degree in development economics; geography or environmental management; sociology (or a Masters with appropriate compensating experience).
- Research experience in issues of energy and intersecting social concerns (e.g. energy justice, just transition, etc.) including existing publications and the production of policy-relevant outputs.
- Experience in research project coordination and working with partners.
- Committed to progressive economic transformation in Africa.
- English language fluency with strong research and writing ability.

- Extensive understanding of the national and international context of the research in just energy transitions.
- Good track record in managing or coordinating project teams preferably for strategy development.
- Relevant experience from interaction with non-governmental stakeholders, including private sector, civil society, and multilateral development organisations.
- A strong publication record on energy strategies and policies
- Strong analytical skills and proven expertise in qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis.

7.3. Research assistant (commitment 50%)

- A master's level qualification (completed or in progress) would be desirable, in economics, social sciences, or related to energy systems or environmental sustainability.
- Basic research and writing skills
- Knowledge about development economics (heterodox is preferable)
- Some stakeholder management
- Proficient in ICT

7.4. Project communications support (commitment 10%)

- A postgraduate degree, preferably in a related field.
- Not less than 3 years of work in strategic advocacy or communications work.
- Experience in implementing strategic and creative communication plans.
- Experience in developing a communications strategy.
- Strong writing, media design, editing and general communication skills.
- Possess a strong media/journalist network.
- Advocacy management skills and experience.
- Good sense of process management.
- Track record of popular or other publications.

8. Evaluation of research proposal

Criteria	Score
Technical strength of research proposal (i.e. 6.1-6.5 above)	30%
Research experience in relevant subject area	15%
Advocacy experience in relevant subject area	15%
Experience of support team (communications and administration)	10%
Project plan and project management experience	30%

9. Submission requirements

Expressions of interest that meet the above specifications must be received by email to the address below no later Tuesday, 8 August 2023 at 17:00 hours South African local time. Emails must specifically mention, "Expression of Interest: "Just Energy Transition:

Localisation, Decent Work, Small-Micro and Medium Enterprises (SMMEs) and Sustainable Livelihoods” Project. Grant No. 110090 – 001”.

Email: applications@iej.org.za

Interested organisations may also obtain further information at the address above.