JUST TRANSITION FORUM ASIA 2026

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1. OVERVIEW

The Just Transition Forum Asia (JTFA) takes place at a pivotal moment for climate and energy governance in Asia and globally, where questions of fairness, voice, and protection for affected communities have moved to the center of policy and advocacy debates. Since its inception, JTFA has offered a springboard where just transition is framed through social dialogue, energy democracy, labour rights, gender equality and environmental justice; enabling youth, workers and communities to articulate how systems not originally built for them should be transformed.

Over five previous editions, JTFA has evolved into a regional platform that builds cumulative knowledge and coalitions. The first forum in 2021 established foundational links between labor, gender, environment and energy democracy in Asia. JTFA 2022 moved from ideas to implementation through sector-focused labs on energy, mobility, agriculture, corporate accountability and inclusive climate action. JTFA 2023 connected global just transition frameworks with local realities, highlighting action by cities, workers, youth and affected communities. In 2024, the forum examined how climate finance and the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage can reach vulnerable communities fairly, quickly and accessibly; anticipating debates that have since intensified at Conference of the Parties (COP) 29 and beyond, as the Fund's operational details and access modalities are further developed. JTFA 2025 then explored how Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) 3.0 can deliver ambitious, locally grounded and people-centred climate transitions, aligning regional conversations with evolving global expectations on the NDCs.

JTFA 2026 carried this trajectory forward by responding directly to new global negotiation moments and regional experiments. Under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Parties have been negotiating on a Just Transition Work Program since 2023 with regular high-level roundtables and technical dialogues designed to explore country-driven, socially just pathways that integrate mitigation, adaptation, decent work, and poverty eradication. In parallel, Just Energy Transition Partnerships (JETPs) in countries such as South Africa, Indonesia, Vietnam and Senegal have emerged as flagship and contested packages for coal phase-down and power-sector decarbonization, raising complex questions about participation, governance, and social justice.

Against this backdrop, JTFA 2026 convened an online forum on 3-4 September 2026 with two plenary policy panel discussions and nine transformational labs under the theme "Mechanism. Phase Out. Finance." Fifty speakers from governments, trade unions, civil society, academia, and international organizations were featured. Labs explored GEDSI-integrated pathways, accessibility of urban spaces for women's work, youth-trade union collaboration and collective bargaining, underscoring the centrality of gender equality, social inclusion and decent work. Sessions on community co-ownership and models such as the IKI JET Indonesia project highlight asset democracy and local control as important dimensions of justice, while the continued presence of labor, youth and affected communities reflects social dialogue and inclusive climate action. Together, JTFA 2026 weaved cross-cutting perspectives into concrete energy and mobility transition pathways that build a greener, fairer and more inclusive future in Asia.

2. JTFA 2026 IN NUMBERS

JTFA 2026 maintained robust growth and expanding international engagement across its two-day virtual program. Nine hundred fifteen individuals registered as participants and speakers, comprising a demographic breakdown of 49.1% male, 48.3% female, and 2.6% non-binary or other gender identities. This represented a substantial 19.58% increase in registrations compared to JTFA 2025. The turnout rate was 67.47%, equivalent to 618 unique attendees who joined live sessions and/or watched recordings.

Figure 1. Number of registrations for JTFA: 2021-2026

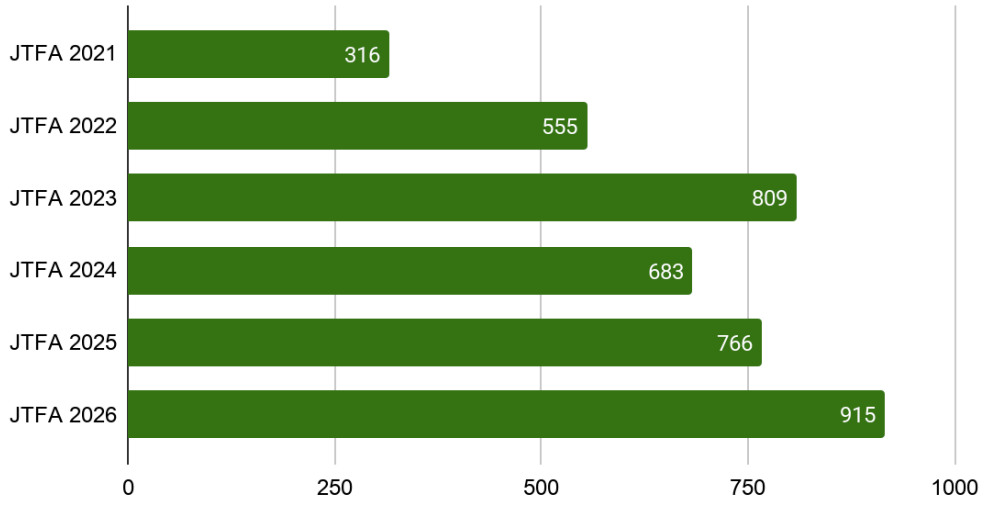
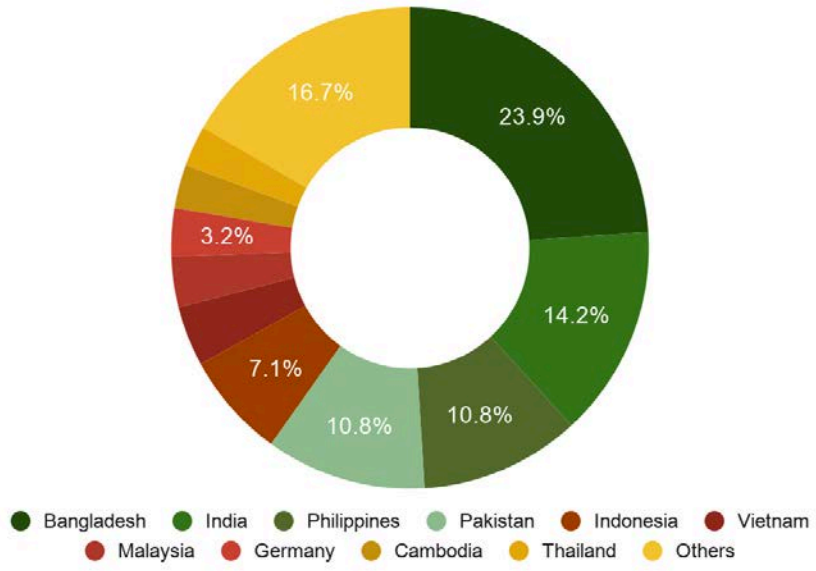


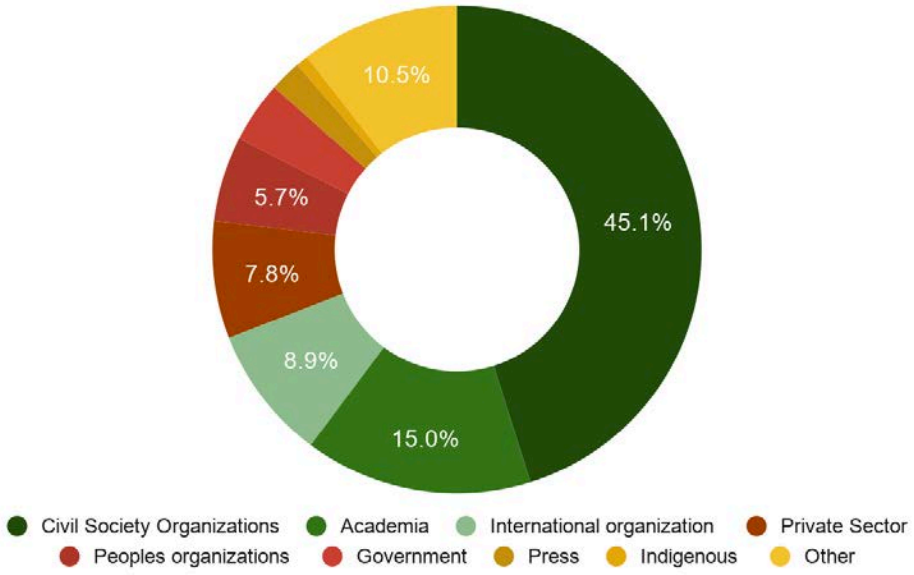
Figure 2. JTFA 2026 participants by countries



Geographic representation spanned over 64 countries, reflecting both deep regional integration across Asia and growing cross-continental participation. The majority of participants originated from South and Southeast Asian nations facing acute climate vulnerabilities and rapid energy transformations, led by Bangladesh (148), India (88), the Philippines (67), Pakistan (67), and Indonesia (44). The continued involvement of delegates from the African Group of Negotiators, and attendees from Europe and Latin America reaffirmed JTFA's unique role in bridging global policy discourses with subnational and regional implementation frameworks.

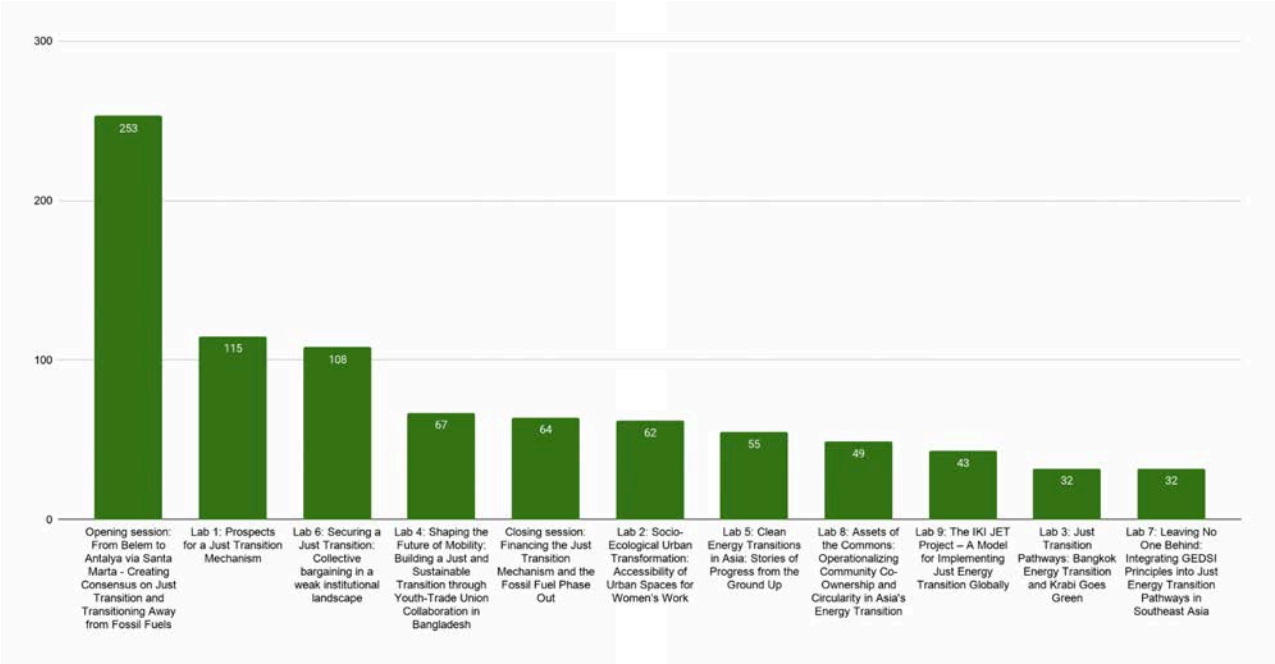
Among participants, 279 (45.1%) were from civil society organizations, 93 (15%) from academic and research institutions, 55 (8.9%) from international organizations, and 48 (7.8%) from the private sector. The remainder represented people's organizations, government bodies, the press, indigenous representatives, among others.

Figure 3. JTFA 2026 participants by sectors



From the start of the forum, active engagement was reflected in high traffic across the virtual platform. Peak attendance was recorded during the opening plenary panel (253 attendees) addressing multilateral mechanisms and regional cooperation under the COP frameworks and the historic Santa Marta conference on transitioning away from fossil fuels. The parallel transformational labs focusing on mechanisms (Lab 1), labor and practical pathways (Lab 6) drew concentrated participation and active discussions that connect global COP30 outcomes with workers' rights and implementation. Labs on youth-trade union collaboration, clean energy stories, GEDSI-integrated pathways, and community co-ownership also recorded solid turnout, reflecting participants' appetite for grounded, country-specific examples of just transition in practice.

Figure 4. Number of attendees per session



Post-event evaluations confirmed high levels of participant satisfaction and institutional relevance. Over 54% of survey respondents gave the highest level of satisfaction for event organization and delivery, while 71% affirmed that the technical discussions and case studies were directly applicable to their professional and policy work. Respondents highlighted new networks and inspiration from interactive sessions as well as a comprehensive understanding of how just transition can be made practical through inclusive policies, community participation, and collaboration across sectors. Looking ahead, attendees called for more real-life case studies, interactive small group discussions, and deeper focus on topics such as community-led renewable energy models, workers' participation in just transition policies, social protection, reskilling and upskilling, partnership building, and impact measurement.

3. OPENING AND CLOSING PANEL SESSIONS - HIGHLIGHTS

OPENING PANEL: From Belem to Antalya via Santa Marta: Creating Consensus on Just Transition and Transitioning Away from Fossil Fuels

In his opening remarks, Timo Rinke, Resident Representative of Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Vietnam, highlighted the need to examine the political economy of a just transition, moving beyond emissions targets to consider how quickly the transition should proceed, under what conditions, and whose interests it serves. Recent disruptions in the Middle East and the Strait of Hormuz have exposed the vulnerabilities of fossil-fuel dependence, with impacts varying across Asian countries. Rinke stressed the need to address structural barriers, including finance, technology transfer, capacity building, and social protection, while noting that the current pace of transition remains mismatched with the scale and urgency of the climate crisis. Given Asia's central role in global energy demand and industrial production, protecting workers and affected communities, strengthening international cooperation, and ensuring meaningful participation should remain central to the transition.

Keynote speaker Senator Sherry Rehman, Chair of the Standing Committee on Climate Change, Senate of Pakistan, emphasized that climate change is a transboundary crisis, with impacts in one country inevitably affecting others. Referring to the glacial lake outburst floods in Nepal and Tibet, she drew parallels with Pakistan's experience and stressed that no country is immune to climate impacts. With the 1.5°C guardrail established under the Paris Agreement having been exceeded, she stressed that climate change is already a lived reality for marginalized and displaced communities. Identifying Asia as a major climate hotspot where many impacts remain insufficiently documented, Rehman called for labor concerns to be integrated more fully into climate policy, including through International Labor Organization (ILO) standards and tripartite dialogue. She further linked climate, carbon, and conflict, noting that armed conflict can compound environmental destruction, displacement, and humanitarian pressures. These interconnected impacts, she argued, should be central to the just transition agenda.

On the energy transition, Rehman identified debt and limited access to finance as major structural barriers for developing countries. She questioned the ability of initiatives such as JETPs to address these constraints, noting that private capital tends to prioritize profitability while public financing is increasingly limited. At the same time, she highlighted the rapid, people-driven growth of rooftop solar, while noting persistent challenges related to the aging electricity grid and continued fossil-fuel investment. She argued that a just transition ultimately requires financial and institutional systems that place vulnerable communities at the center of the transition.

Dr. Heike Henn, Director General for International Climate Action, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Climate Action, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety of Germany, affirmed Germany and the EU's unwavering commitment to the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) targets of $300 billion and $1.3 trillion. Dr. Henn stressed that urgent structural reforms of the International Monetary Fund and Multilateral Development Banks must be paired with strong domestic policy frameworks and active public participation through the Just Transition Mechanism to guide private capital. Therefore, she advocated for a dual-track approach - aggressively advancing UNFCCC multilateral negotiations while

simultaneously mobilizing a "coalition of the willing" to deliver concrete, accountable progress in emissions' reduction and resilience building on the ground.



Angelina Mensah, Lead Coordinator for the African Group of Negotiators on Just Transition Work Program (JTWP) at UNFCCC, emphasized that the COP30 Belém decision critically transformed the JTWP into a formal, operational institution. She demanded this mechanism be rooted in historical responsibility, utilizing non-debt, grant-based funding to protect vulnerable communities, manage hazardous stranded assets, and safeguard Africa's 11 million informal workers. Despite contributing under 4% of global emissions, Africa faces disproportionate transition costs exacerbated by structural trade barriers like the EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism, she noted. Citing UNFCCC Article 4.7, Mensah stressed that economic development and poverty eradication remain overriding priorities for developing nations. She firmly rejected externally driven fossil fuel phase-out timelines that precede industrialization or universal energy access, insisting that equitable transition commitments must be negotiated directly within the UNFCCC's consensus-based architecture rather than through external presidential initiatives.

Representing the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), Climate Policy Officer Bert De Wel warned that workers worldwide are increasingly trapped in a false conflict between job security and environmental protection, a crisis exacerbated by ineffective climate actions and global conflicts. He welcomed the COP30 Belém decision, stressing that a just transition must move beyond voluntary, unaccountable private-sector initiatives to become a binding framework for genuine policy implementation. De Wel urged negotiators to treat fundamental labor rights as an essential toolbox for climate action. This requires securing freedom of association for collective bargaining and ensuring robust Occupational Health and Safety standards to protect workers from escalating climate risks, such as extreme heat and flooding. Emphasizing that just transition principles must universally apply to both formal and informal workers in the Global North and South, he called for the ILO to hold a formal

oversight role within global mechanisms. Ultimately, De Wel emphasized the urgent need to rebuild workers' eroded trust in multilateralism. He urged civil society and trade unions to pressure the incoming Australian and Turkish COP presidencies to bypass routine procedural delays and deliver concrete, actionable outcomes at COP31.

Harjeet Singh, Strategy Advisor to the Fossil Fuel Treaty Initiative, stressed that official UNFCCC negotiations and external dialogues like the Santa Marta Conference must operate as complementary mechanisms. Because geopolitical resistance blocked a fossil fuel phase-out roadmap at COP30, these external spaces are critical for addressing practical transition barriers. Singh warned that national climate plans remain insufficient without robust international cooperation, emphasizing that global support must encompass both climate finance and social protections for frontline workers. To bridge current architectural gaps, he highlighted the Fossil Fuel Treaty Initiative, which governs the supply side of mitigation currently missing from the Paris Agreement. Moving forward, Singh urged the global community to systematically transition from dialogue to establishing concrete, binding implementation frameworks.

Anabella Rosemberg, Senior Advisor on Just Transition in Climate Action Network International, defined just transition as the practical "how" of climate action, bridging fossil fuel phase-outs, climate justice, and economic prosperity. Stating that dialogue alone is insufficient, she called for establishing an ambitious Belem-Antalya Mechanism at COP31 to mobilize resources and grant civil society, trade unions, and frontline communities a direct role in global governance. Rosemberg warned that current frameworks like JETPs are failing both communities and governments, requiring urgent re-evaluation under COP30 principles. Expressing deep concern over the slow pace of UNFCCC negotiations, she urged parties to establish concrete modalities at COP31, responding directly to ground-up demands from workers and climate-vulnerable communities.

CLOSING PANEL: Financing the Just Transition Mechanism and the Fossil Fuel Phase Out

Dr. Amanda Cahill, Founder of The Next Economy, Australia, began the closing plenary discussion by highlighting that financial capital alone was insufficient to deliver a just transition; governments must actively fund the ground-level engagement processes required to build community capacity. Pointing to Australia, where a federal transition fund was cut after going underutilized, she noted that funding goes unused when governments fail to build local awareness or assist impacted groups, including low-income households, women, and workers. Consequently, reforming international financial institutions and establishing a global Just Transition Mechanism are essential to ensure policies and funding streams explicitly resource these ground-level engagement processes. Cahill also emphasized defending the public commons against private capital over-reliance and land grabs, expanding climate resilience to encompass holistic social protections, including health, housing, and First Nations rights amidst severe heat, and utilizing strategic litigation and campaigns like "Make Big Polluters Pay" to eliminate fossil fuel subsidies and enforce corporate workforce transparency.

Shaligram Bhandari, Senior Divisional Engineer and Under-Secretary, Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation of Nepal, highlighted Nepal’s acute climate vulnerabilities, pointing out that recent catastrophic flooding severely damaged critical energy infrastructure and triggered widespread energy

shortages. He noted that despite generating roughly 90% of its electricity from clean hydropower, recent devastating floods severely damaged Nepal's energy grid and triggered power shortages. To build lasting resilience, Bhandari urged international partners to move away from short-term, project-based aid toward predictable, accessible grant financing and technology transfer. He emphasized that meeting the scale required for Nepal's NDC 3.0 mitigation targets - estimated at $73.74 billion, with 75% expected from external climate finance - will require tightly coordinated mechanisms among climate funds, Multilateral Development Banks, and bilateral partners.



Farzana Faruk Jhumu, Climate Justice Activist and Youth Advisor on Climate Change to the United Nations Secretary-General, emphasized that climate finance flows from the Global North to the Global South represent clear legal commitments rather than acts of charity. She called on international financial frameworks to prioritize speed and direct access for frontline communities over bureaucratic diplomacy and slow system processes. Highlighting the severe delays caused by heavy diplomatic channels, she noted that funding can take up to four years to deliver after catastrophic cyclones or floods, leaving communities stranded when they need immediate relief. Jhumu argued that routing money through central governments fails to reach the most vulnerable, including children, youth, women, elders, and persons with disabilities, due to systemic bottlenecks on the ground. Therefore, financial cooperation must be restructured to judge success by how quickly and directly resources reach local communities and young people. Jhumu also warned that unfunded adaptation directly translates into loss and damage for future generations, while challenging capitalist models in favor of decentralized, community-governed energy systems.

Lidy Nacpil, Coordinator of the Asian People's Movement on Debt and Development, highlighted the structural flaws of the global financial architecture, criticizing that over 50% of international climate finance, which is delivered as loans, would actively worsen the Global South's debt crisis rather than offering genuine support. She argued that offering loans to nations facing acute climate and

humanitarian disasters force them deeper into debt servicing when they urgently require non-debt-creating public funds. Nacpil emphasized that delivering climate finance is an enforceable legal obligation under the UNFCCC rooted in historical responsibility; however, actual North-to-South flows remain drastically below commitments, and strong South-South cooperation must never be used by wealthy nations as an excuse to avoid fulfilling their liabilities.

His Excellency Soung Sophorn, Secretary of State of the Council of Ministers of Cambodia, in his closing keynote address, formally endorsed the forum's focus on financing the Just Transition Mechanism and accelerating a fossil fuel phase-out. Stressing that climate commitments cannot be decoupled from financial backing, Sophorn declared that transition policy and resources are fundamentally inseparable, warning that "ambition without finance is a promise a country cannot keep". Sophorn detailed Cambodia's proactive leadership under its submitted NDC 3.0, which commits to cutting greenhouse gas emissions by 55% against business-as-usual levels by 2035. Under this plan, Cambodia aims to expand renewable energy to 72% of installed capacity, reaching up to 80% with international support, and achieve 70% renewable power generation by 2030. By targeting full carbon neutrality by 2050, Cambodia aimed to become the first Asian nation to submit a Long-Term Strategy for Carbon Neutrality to the UNFCCC. Reaffirming this momentum, Sophorn highlighted Cambodia's official endorsement of the Fossil Fuel Treaty Initiative at COP30, making it the 18th country globally and the second in Southeast Asia to support the initiative.

Nithi Nesadurai, Director and Regional Coordinator for Climate Action Network Southeast Asia, affirmed that actionable solutions to climate challenges already exist, reiterating that "it's not rocket science", and echoed opening keynote speaker Senator Sherry Rehman's point that platforms like JTFA are vital for building the critical mass needed to drive advocacy and implementation forward. To conclude the two-day online event, Nesadurai expressed a formal vote of thanks to all participants, speakers, moderators, communications, technical and design staff, and the FES organizing team, before officially inviting attendees to reconvene for JTFA 2027.

4. TRANSFORMATIONAL LABS – HIGHLIGHTS

TRANSFORMATIONAL LAB 1 - Prospects for a Just Transition Mechanism

Host: FES Berlin



Lab 1 examined the functional modalities, strategic roadmap, and institutional requirements of the newly mandated Just Transition Mechanism established at COP30. Presenting findings from a recent FES policy paper "The just transition mechanism: driving socially just transitions worldwide", Yvonne Blos and Carmen Wabnitz underscored that while the Just Transition Mechanism represents a historic win, current global decarbonization efforts remain plagued by institutional fragmentation, divergent conceptual definitions, and significant financing shortfalls. Carmen argued that, at this stage, the mechanism is only a mandate with no definitive answer on its design. Yvonne Blos emphasized that, in the context of backlash against ambitious climate policies, Just Transition Mechanism's potential lies in its ability to serve as a coordinating bridge rather than a duplicating institution. Jonathan Krull, speaking from a German government perspective, outlined a pragmatic implementation-oriented approach that complements existing bilateral and multilateral frameworks like JETPs. Dr. Amira Sawas from Fossil Fuel Treaty Initiative added that, in a context of debt distress, recurrent climate disasters, and high capital costs, the mechanism must prioritize grant-based, non-debt finance, institutionalization and oversight to respond to real country needs. Representing the labor voice, Satoshi Tamai called for phasing out fossil-fuel subsidies and redirecting public resources towards clean energy, social protection, and green jobs. He shared examples of how unions across Asia are already negotiating just transitions in practice such as skills programs in coal companies in Indonesia and insurance schemes for informal women workers facing extreme heat in India.

TRANSFORMATIONAL LAB 2 - Socio-Ecological Urban Transformation: Accessibility of Urban Spaces for Women's Work

Host: FES Pakistan



> Driving ***a just urban transition in Pakistan*** requires gender-responsive planning, safe and affordable mobility, decent work protections, and targeted green-economy opportunities that ***empower women to fully participate.***

FES Pakistan and its associates examined socio-ecological urban transformation and women's access to work in Pakistan, highlighting how mobility, urban infrastructure, and informal employment interact to shape women's economic participation. With 76% of Pakistan's workers in the informal economy, women are disproportionately represented and often lack contracts, social protection, and workplace protections. Speakers argued that care infrastructure should be treated as labour-market infrastructure, as its absence limits women's ability to access and remain in employment. They also stressed that the green transition must include women through skills training, formalization, finance, and stronger labor protections. Meanwhile, unsafe, unreliable, expensive, and rigidly designed urban mobility systems have been directly restricting Pakistani women's physical access to employment, education, healthcare, and economic participation. To achieve gender-responsive urban transformation, the speakers recommended mandating care infrastructure in development approvals, disaggregating user data, and retrofitting urban corridors with lighting and footpaths. They further urged policymakers to formalize informal labor, extend social security protections, enforce equal pay, provide green skills training, lower transit fares, and expand feeder transit networks.

TRANSFORMATIONAL LAB 3 – Just Transition Pathways: Bangkok Energy Transition and Krabi Goes Green

Host: FES Thailand



Moderated by Dr. Matthew Robson from Chiang Mai University, this session contrasted how the Bangkok megacity and a small coastal Krabi province in Thailand are experimenting with people-centred energy transitions and climate action models. Dr. Chariya Senpong from C40 Cities showed how Bangkok relies on municipal leadership, international partnerships, and climate databases like Bangkok Solar Energy Dashboard to advance clean mobility and net-zero targets while confronting intensifying floods and heat. She then traced the "Krabi Goes Green" pathway back to a grassroots, community-led movement that successfully pushed back against a proposed coal power plant and utilized strategic environmental assessments and local renewable energy resources (e.g., biomass, biogas, solar, small-scale wind, mini hydro) to safeguard traditional livelihoods in fisheries, agriculture, and eco-tourism. Dr. Boonwara Sumano from the Thailand Development Research Institute situated these local models within the broader experiment of Bangkok Climate Action Week. She described a whole-of-society approach to reframe climate action from top-down mandates into empowering community-driven economic solutions. She underscored the critical need to engage informal workers, who make up a substantial portion of the urban workforce, and integrate local resilience into municipal master planning. Further interactive discussions with participants showed consensus that future progress in both cases will depend on deeper community participation in decision-making, fairer distribution of benefits, and local institutional capacity.

TRANSFORMATIONAL LAB 4 - Shaping the Future of Mobility: Building a Just and Sustainable Transition through Youth-Trade Union Collaboration in Bangladesh

Host: OSHE Foundation and YouthNet Global



Lab 4 explored how Bangladesh can advance a just and sustainable mobility transition while protecting workers, livelihoods, and communities affected by technological and climate-related change. Prof. Md. Hafizur Rahman provided the context of Bangladesh, with a highlight on the vulnerability of informal transport workers to extreme heat, recurrent flooding, poor road conditions, and limited safety and social protection. Meanwhile, electrification presented not only environmental opportunities but also serious risks, with informal lead-acid battery contamination from electric three-wheelers and auto-rickshaws seriously threatening the environment and public health.

The human dimension of urban transport reform revealed workforce vulnerabilities arising from electrification, digitalization, and transport modernization, leaving the rickshaw pullers, auto-rickshaw drivers, conductors, and ticketing staff acutely vulnerable to job displacement from electric vehicle deployment and automation. Delegates stressed that mobility transition is fundamentally a labour-market transition. Therefore, sustainable progress requires moving beyond basic consultation toward genuine co-ownership defined by worker representation, decision-making power, and institutional accountability. Speakers emphasized that achieving this long-term sustainability would rely on pairing youth digital capabilities and climate leadership with the lived experiences of informal transport workers, expanding decision-making structures while suggesting an inclusive "Tripartite-Plus" initiative that incorporates civil society organizations and youth leaders directly into urban transport policy planning.

TRANSFORMATIONAL LAB 5 - Clean Energy Transitions in Asia: Stories of Progress from the Ground Up

Host: Fossil Fuel Treaty Initiative, CANSEA, NGO Forum on Cambodia

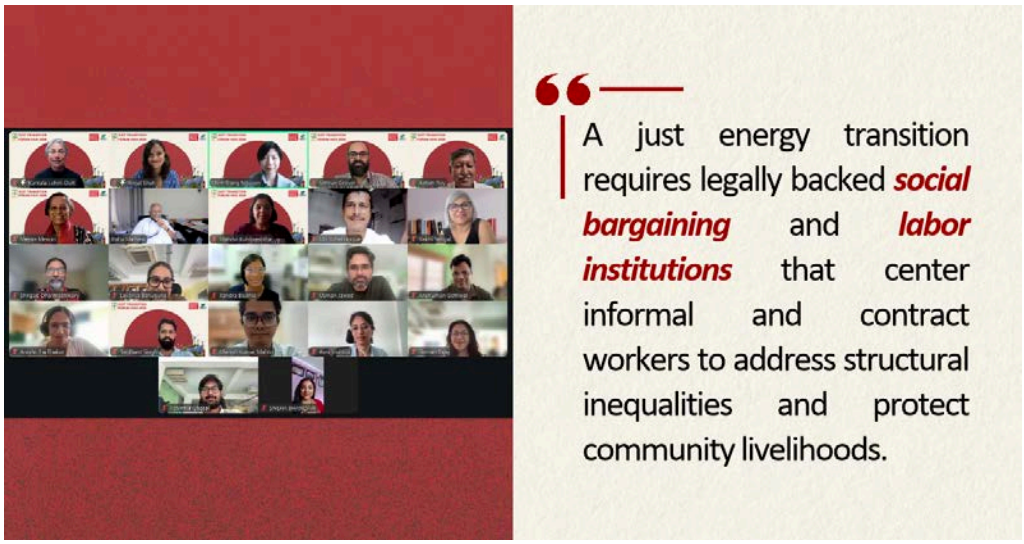


This lab was designed to shift the narrative from Asia, as only climate vulnerable and energy intensive, to a region of emerging leadership by highlighting renewable energy, e-mobility and community-led initiatives across the continent. Kushal Gurung detailed Nepal's remarkable progress in achieving 99.1% electricity access driven by hydropower expansion, rapid electric vehicle adoption, community-led microhydropower, e-cooking, and biogas initiatives. He also highlighted potential future applications like green hydrogen for fertilizer production, multi-stakeholder partnerships and cross-border electricity trade plans from Nepal to Bangladesh through India to align surplus hydropower with regional NDC needs. From Indonesia, Fabby Tumiwa contrasted Central Java's industrial decarbonization with Bali's tourism-focused resilience and net-zero roadmap, pointing to persistent gaps between national emission and transition plans, and subnational implementation.

Presenting Bangladesh's energy transition, Kawsar Ahammad argued for a people-centred approach that explicitly considers skills needs, new jobs for youth and women, and support for communities. He stated that international climate finance and technical transfer from major polluters are a legal and moral responsibility rather than mere aid or charity. Finally, Dr. Zulfikar Yurnaidi outlined how ASEAN's cooperation framework and the ASEAN Plan of Action for Energy Cooperation provide a guiding structure for differentiated and coordinated national transitions. He highlighted initiatives such as the ASEAN Power Grid and multilateral electricity trading such as the Laos-Thailand-Malaysia-Singapore pilot, as well as tailored support to newer members like Timor-Leste through data, statistics and energy outlook capacity building. Throughout the discussions, panelists underscored that successful energy transitions across Asia depend on multi-level governance, decentralized planning, concessional financing, and genuine regional cooperation and solidarity.

TRANSFORMATIONAL LAB 6 – Securing a Just Transition: Collective Bargaining in a Weak Institutional Landscape

Host: Centre for Energy, Environment and People (CEEP)



The session examined how collective bargaining and stronger labour institutions can secure a just energy transition in India, amid widespread informality and the restructuring of coal-dependent industries. In his keynote address, Simran Grover highlighted that 90% of India's workforce is in the unorganized sector, while 60-75% of workers in thermal power are contractual or non-permanent. Four in five of these workers are multidimensionally vulnerable and at risk of falling into long-term poverty following job loss. His message is clear: A just transition must move beyond reskilling and job replacement to address the structural inequalities shaping workers' livelihoods and bargaining power.

The discussion illustrated these challenges across historical, institutional, and community levels using three key examples. First, the decline of Mumbai's textile mills, driven by liberalization, deindustrialization, and industrial closures, eroded not only jobs and incomes, but also workers' collective organization and community life. Second, ongoing de-unionization and the expansion of contract labor leave an estimated 70% of the coal-sector workforce outside conventional organization. Third, evolving labor-law frameworks threaten to exclude up to 93% of the broader workforce. Speakers then argued for a broader understanding of "everyday justice," emphasizing the lived realities of coal-dependent communities and the need to consider wider social impacts, including mobility, data infrastructure, and access to essential services, alongside the shift from coal to renewables. They also called for stronger collective bargaining, greater inclusion of informal and contract workers, and a broader rights-based approach to protect livelihoods and community well-being.

TRANSFORMATIONAL LAB 7 - Leaving No One Behind: Integrating GEDSI Principles into Just Energy Transition Pathways in Southeast Asia

Host: CANSEA



Lab 7 centered on the critical questions of who gains access, who exercises decision-making power, who shares in the benefits, and who bears the negative costs during the regional energy transition. Moderator Nachatira Thuraichamy linked these questions to the rights-based framework underpinning the Just Transition Mechanism agreed at COP30, which references human and labour rights, Indigenous and community rights, free, prior and informed consent, gender equality, and meaningful participation. Yeni Rosa Damayanti highlighted that persons with disabilities must be recognized as active workers, entrepreneurs, and consumers who should have power in decision-making, rather than only as vulnerable groups needing protection. She illustrated systemic accessibility barriers in green infrastructure and discriminatory green job recruitment criteria, urging that disability inclusion be integrated as a core design requirement across policy and investment cycles.

Sandra Winarsa cited ASEAN Center of Energy data showing that women remain significantly under-represented in the energy workforce, approximately 8%, and highlighted the lack of gender-disaggregated energy data. She introduced a practical "GEDSI stress test" to evaluate whether energy projects transform power dynamics across public procurement, climate finance, asset ownership, and grievance remedy mechanisms. Adrian Lasimbang then shared insights from developing community-owned renewable energy mini-grids in remote indigenous territories across Sabah and wider Southeast Asia. He stressed the importance of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent, respecting indigenous governance systems, and treating decentralized energy as a vital community common that enhances local resilience. Finally, Beverly Besmanos addressed the severe socioeconomic and environmental impacts of transition mineral extraction, particularly nickel mining in Tawi-Tawi, the Philippines. She cautioned against turning local territories into sacrifice zones for global decarbonization goals, demanding rigorous human rights standards, transparent supply chains, fair revenue sharing, and accessible remedies.

TRANSFORMATIONAL LAB 8 - Assets of the Commons: Operationalizing Community Co-Ownership and Circularity in Asia's Energy Transition

Host: FES Philippines and Responsible Energy Initiative (REI) Philippines



Lab 8 explored operationalizing community co-ownership and circular supply chains to foster a resilient, regenerative renewable energy transition. Framing the discussion around the "decarbonization dilemma", where rapid energy deployment without safeguards triggers local friction, the session highlighted how land conflicts and data silos have already stalled over 5 GW of Philippine projects. Speakers introduced the Bayanihan Co-Ownership framework as a solution to transform host communities from passive receptors into co-equal, rights-based transition partners alongside developers and local governments. This model structures four flexible capital streams - community, nature-based commons, public, and private/social finance - across a seven-stage project lifespan, evaluating success through core metrics like trust, bankability, and community wealth.

Circular RE Futures extended this logic to the physical lifecycle of renewable energy infrastructure, including the impending clean-tech e-waste crisis. With rapid growth in solar, wind, and storage, cumulative renewable energy waste could reach the equivalent of 40 Mall of Asia complexes by 2075. Speakers highlighted a critical disparity: while wind infrastructure and inert materials dominate waste mass, high-value critical minerals sit in minute, hard-to-recover fractions, leaving zero of nine national circularity readiness dimensions currently operational. Through the simulation games, experts called for early community participation, shared ownership, circularity-by-design, and full-lifecycle governance to ensure that accelerating the energy transition does not create new social or environmental bottlenecks.

TRANSFORMATIONAL LAB 9 - The IKI JET Project - A Model for Implementing Just Energy Transition Globally

Host: CANSEA



This session convened institutional advisors, senior researchers, climate and energy experts to thoroughly evaluate how the four-year consortium-led IKI JET project provides a practical Just Energy Transition blueprint for Indonesia's highly coal-dependent provinces of East Kalimantan and South Sumatra where mining contributes roughly 34% and 24% to their respective gross domestic products. A central innovation was the establishment of Regional Consultation Forums (RCFs), described as the first legally mandated multi-stakeholder platforms in Indonesia specifically designed to steer economic transformation in coal regions. Dina Novita Sari stressed that RCFs were structured to ensure active local participation from planning through monitoring, with commitments embedded in provincial mid-term development plans, sectoral strategic plans and annual work programmes, and supported by governor decrees and regulations to sustain implementation beyond the project term. Adding a macro-analytical lens, Timon Wehnert argued that, while geopolitical fluctuations can cause temporary surges in coal demand and prices, the underlying trend points towards decline because of climate policies and the growing competitiveness of renewable energy. Since transforming a coal-dependent economy can take decades, governments must balance immediate responses to layoffs and falling revenues with sustained investment in infrastructure, education and new industries.

Steve Mullins brought the labour perspective. Utilizing a four-tiered dependency framework "Beyond the Mines", Mullins highlighted how trade unions must interrogate transition plans, negotiate protective clauses into collective labor agreements, and secure robust social protections. Dicky Edwin Hindarto connected these policy and labour processes to community realities, noting the psychological hurdles of building trust among groups with limited economic choices. He underscored the role of mobilizing women and youth as active "green movement" agents and advocated for pushing consultation forums down to the regency level where local mining impacts are directly felt. Finally, Philip Gass placed these

local lessons within a global knowledge-sharing framework. He explained how the Just Transition Knowledge Hub documented project experiences and created a trusted platform for governments, researchers, workers, practitioners and civil society to exchange knowledge internationally. Together, the discussions showed that the IKI JET approach is not a fixed template, yet its transferable value lies in combining evidence, legally anchored participation, worker and community empowerment, and long-term planning. As the moderator, Nithi Nesadurai concluded the lab, he said this IKI JET project provided various good practices which could serve elements of a model for implementing JET globally.

APPENDIX 1: JTFA 2026 PROGRAM

Day 1 (3 September 2026)	
2:00 - 2:10 PM	***Opening and welcome remarks*** By ***Timo Rinke*** - Resident Representative, FES Vietnam
2:10 - 3:30 PM	***OPENING PANEL: From Belem to Antalya via Santa Marta: Creating Consensus on Just Transition and Transitioning Away from Fossil Fuels*** ● Keynote address: ***Sherry Rehman*** - Chair of the Standing Committee on Climate Change, Senate of Pakistan ● ***Dr. Heike Henn*** - Director General for International Climate Action, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Climate Action, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Germany ● ***Angelina Mensah*** - Lead Coordinator for African Group of Negotiators, Just Transition Work Programme, UNFCCC; and Environment Protection Authority, Ghana ● ***Bert De Wel*** - Climate Policy Officer, International Trade Union Confederation ● ***Harjeet Singh*** - Strategic Advisor and Asia Lead, Fossil Fuel Treaty Initiative ● ***Anabella Rosemberg*** - Senior Advisor on Just Transition, Climate Action Network International Moderated by ***Nithi Nesadurai*** - Director and Regional Coordinator, Climate Action Network Southeast Asia
3:30 - 4:50 PM	***Transformational labs (parallel sessions)*** ***LAB 1 - Prospects for a Just Transition Mechanism*** Host: FES Berlin ***LAB 2 - Socio-Ecological Urban Transformation: Accessibility of Urban Spaces for Women's Work*** Host: FES Pakistan ***LAB 3 - Just Transition Pathways: Bangkok Energy Transition and Krabi Goes Green*** Host: FES Thailand
4:40 - 6:00 PM	***Transformational labs (parallel sessions)*** ***LAB 4 - Shaping the Future of Mobility: Building a Just and Sustainable Transition through Youth-Trade Union Collaboration in Bangladesh*** Host: OSHE Foundation and YouthNet Global ***LAB 5 - Clean Energy Transitions in Asia: Stories of Progress from the Ground Up*** Host: Fossil Fuel Treaty Initiative, CANSEA, NGO Forum on Cambodia
Day 2 (4 September 2026)	
2:00 - 3:20 PM	***Transformational labs (parallel sessions)*** ***LAB 6 - Securing a Just Transition: Collective bargaining in a weak institutional landscape***

	Host: Centre for Energy, Environment and People (CEEP) ***LAB 7 - Leaving No One Behind: Integrating GEDSI Principles into Just Energy Transition Pathways in Southeast Asia*** Host: CANSEA
3:20 - 4:40 PM	***Transformational labs (parallel sessions)*** ***LAB 8 - Assets of the Commons: Operationalizing Community Co-Ownership and Circularity in Asia's Energy Transition*** Host: FES Philippines and Responsible Energy Initiative (REI) Philippines ***LAB 9 - IKI JET Project – A Model for Implementing Just Energy Transition Globally*** Host: CANSEA
4:40 - 5:50 PM	***CLOSING PANEL: Financing the Just Transition Mechanism and the Fossil Fuel Phase Out*** ● Keynote address: ***H. E. Soung Sophorn*** - Secretary of State, Council of Ministers, Royal Government of Cambodia ● ***Shaligram Bhandari*** - Senior Divisional Engineer and Assistant Spokesperson, Under-Secretary, Ministry of Energy, Water Resources and Irrigation, Nepal ● ***Dr. Amanda Cahill*** - Founder, The Next Economy, Australia ● ***Lidy Nacpil*** - Coordinator, Asian Peoples' Movement on Debt and Development, Philippines ● ***Farzana Faruk Jhumu*** - Climate Justice Activist and Youth Advisor on Climate Change to the United Nations Secretary-General Moderated by ***Nguyen Hoang Ngan*** - Regional Coordinator, FES Climate and Energy Project in Asia
5:50 - 6:00 PM	***Closing remarks and vote of thanks*** By ***Nithi Nesadurai*** - Director and Regional Coordinator, Climate Action Network Southeast Asia

***Media discussions and follow-up interviews:**

Climate Tracker Asia, *"Life after coal: What happens to the communities that powered Southeast Asia?"*

Available at: https://climatetracker.asia/life-after-coal-southeast-asia-communities/