

Insight Brief: **Global South Peer Learning Workshop on Country Platform and Just Energy Transition**





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Key Messages

Context

APRI - Africa Policy Research Institute and key partners convened 150+ participants from peer countries in Abuja (April 29–30, 2025) to learn from JETPs and design a fit-for-purpose Country Platform for Climate Action and Just Energy Transition.

Multiple recent reforms (Electricity Act 2023, Petroleum Industry Act, ETP, Climate Change Act) have created a complex, fragmented policy environment that must be harmonized.

Without clear leadership, institutional coordination, and stakeholder buy-in, overlapping strategies risk undermining private investment, donor confidence, and coherent climate action.

Designing a Reflective Country Platform

- **Beyond JETP Emulation:** Nigeria needs a development-rooted, multi-stakeholder platform—not simply a donor-driven replica of other JETPs.
- **State- Owned & Deliberative:** The platform must be politically anchored (preferably under presidential mandate) yet open to subnational, private, and civil society inputs.
- **Alignment & Flexibility:** Climate objectives should align with economic growth, job creation, and energy access, while modularity allows attention to energy, agriculture, transport, industrialization, and finance.
- **Formal Governance:** Drawing lessons from South Africa's Presidential Climate Commission, the platform needs clear accountability, social compacting mechanisms, and real-time linkage between vision and implementation.

Political Settlements

- **Presidential Leadership:** High-level political buy-in (President or NEC) is critical to issue clear mandates across MDAs and reconcile competing interests.
- **Federal Dynamics:** Nigeria's federal structure requires vertical coordination—ensuring states, especially oil-producing ones, have incentives and voice.
- **Oil-Region Bargains:** Given dependency on fossil revenues, transitions must be negotiated with oil-producing states, labour unions, and political elites to build legitimacy.
- **“Elite Bargain” for Development:** Climate agendas should be reframed as part of a new national development compact that balances winners/losers and secures social license.
- **Government-Led Mobilization:** Experiences from Indonesia and Vietnam show domestic leadership—rather than external partners—drives cohesive, national action.

Finance & More Financing

- **Coherence Over Abundance:** Nigeria's challenge is not lack of funds but weak coordination and institutional readiness to deploy them effectively.
- **Commitments vs Disbursements:** Even well-funded JETPs (e.g., South Africa's \$8.5 billion) struggle to translate pledges into on-the-ground projects; Nigeria must avoid similar pitfalls.
- **Access & Capacity Bottlenecks:** No single “front door” exists to interface with climate funds, carbon markets, development finance, and blended instruments—creating fragmentation.
- **De-Risking & Clarity:** Private investors demand clear return profiles, streamlined regulations, and project pipelines with high readiness; a national financing strategy must

crowd in local capital (pensions, banks, green bonds) and align macroeconomic policy (exchange rate stability) with climate signals.

- **Integrated Solution:** “Finance is part of the solution,” but must be coupled with institutional readiness, political credibility, and market confidence to unlock transformative impact.

Development Approach

- **Reframe Climate as Development:** Transition must prioritize co-benefits—jobs, industrial growth, energy access, food security, social protection—rather than focusing solely on emissions.
- **Balance Adaptation & Mitigation:** Address Nigeria’s underlying development deficits by integrating adaptation measures (e.g., resilience in vulnerable communities) with mitigation targets.
- **Align with National Plans:** Country Platform design must dovetail with Nigeria’s National Development Plan, ETP, and sectoral roadmaps, ensuring climate and development converge.
- **National Ownership:** Donors must align behind Nigeria’s defined priorities, while Nigerian institutions assert leadership, ensuring climate policy feels indigenous rather than imposed.

Inclusivity & Justice

- **People-Centered Transition:** Local communities—especially in oil-producing areas—must be meaningfully included in decision-making, not just consulted.
- **Youth, Women, Marginalized:** Embed these groups in governance structures (e.g., youth councils, women’s representation) rather than relegating them to token roles.
- **Reskilling & Social Protection:** Design reskilling programs and safety nets for workers displaced by the transition, ensuring no one is left behind.

- **Geographic Fairness:** Prevent deepening North-South or urban-rural divides by ensuring equitable resource allocation and program delivery.
- **Multi-Stakeholder Governance:** Draw on South Africa’s social compact model to institutionalize conflict resolution, grievance redress, and long-term accountability.

Private Sector & Labour

- **Fragmented Engagement:** Private sector actors feel excluded or unclear on incentives. JETP lessons underscore the need for consistent policy signals—tax reforms, subsidy alignment, and regulatory coherence—to spur decarbonization investments.
- **Labour Concerns:** Workers in oil-dependent jobs worry about lack of transition planning; labour unions call for structured reskilling and social safety nets.
- **Structured Engagement:** The country platform should create formal engagement windows (e.g., sectoral roundtables, labour seats on governance boards) to reconcile private-sector ambitions and labour interests.

Geopolitics & Global Realities

- **Global Fragmentation:** Nigeria must navigate shifting global dynamics—US political uncertainty, EU’s CBAM, and China’s green diplomacy—while avoiding “hypocrisy traps” where major polluters expand fossil activities.
- **Interest-Based Cooperation:** Define Nigeria’s interests for climate cooperation across blocs (West, BRICS, Gulf) to attract partnerships aligned with national development goals.
- **Continental & Regional Leverage:** Leverage a unified position in AU, ECOWAS, and OPEC negotiations to secure fairer terms for financing, technology transfer, and market access.

An Ideal vs. Practical Scenario

- **Ideal Platform:** Fully institutionalized under presidential mandate, cross-sectoral, legally backed, resourced, and inclusive—linking long-term vision with real-time implementation.
- **Realistic Pathway:** Start with a lean secretariat housed in an existing structure (e.g., Ministry of Planning or ETP Office), secure clear political support (President and NEC), and coordinate donors/private sector via technical working groups.
- **Phased Implementation:** Pilot key sectors or state platforms while building capacity, refining institutional arrangements, and demonstrating early wins to build momentum.

Conclusion

- **Tailored Design:** Nigeria's country platform must reflect its unique political economy, development priorities, and socio-economic realities rather than replicate existing models.
- **Core Requirements:** Secure genuine political buy-in; bridge funding commitments with project readiness; frame climate action as an enabler of inclusive development and social justice.
- **Operational Principles:** Foster transparent coordination, equitable participation, and pragmatic, phased implementation. Balance ambition with political pragmatism to avoid stalling.
- **Adaptive & Sovereign:** The platform must remain flexible as global geopolitics and domestic conditions evolve—leveraging international partnerships without compromising national sovereignty.



01

Overview of the Global South Peer Learning Workshop on Country Platform for Climate Action and Just Energy Transition



The Global South Peer Learning Workshop on Country Platforms for Climate Action and Just Energy Transition, held in Abuja from April 29–30, 2025, convened over 150 participants across Nigeria and peer countries—including South Africa, Indonesia, Vietnam, Senegal, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the United Kingdom (UK), and the United States of America (USA).

Organized by the Africa Policy Research Institute (APRI), in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning (FMBEP), the National Council on Climate Change Secretariat (NCCCS), the Nigerian Economic Summit Group (NESG), and the Shehu Musa Yar'Adua Foundation (SMYF), the workshop provided a timely platform for advancing inclusive dialogue on how Nigeria can design and implement a fit-for-purpose country platform to drive its climate ambitions and energy transition agenda.

The workshop was structured to facilitate strategic dialogue, knowledge exchange, and cross-sector collaboration. By bringing together diverse perspectives from policymakers to the private sector and civil society, it created a platform for identifying practical entry points and co-developing solutions tailored to Nigeria's national context. With this foundation, the workshop pursued the following core objectives:

- **Improving understanding among key government and non-government stakeholders of the processes involved in developing effective Country Platforms for climate action and energy transition.**
- **Informing the development of a Nigerian Country Platform that channels coordinated technical support for creating a just, comprehensive, inclusive, and actionable energy transition pathway for Nigeria.**
- **Supporting the mainstreaming of climate action and energy transition priorities into Nigeria's national economic planning and development priorities, feeding into the planned development of Nigeria's National Development Plan (2026–2030) this year.**

The first day of the workshop featured a high-level session that explored the rationale and progress of Just Energy Transition Partnerships (JETPs) in South Africa, Vietnam, Indonesia, and Senegal. It also examined the future of climate finance in the Global South and highlighted the critical roles of the private sector and civil society in shaping and sustaining effective country platforms.

The second day offered a deep dive into the political structures, technical capacity, financing strategies, and social inclusion frameworks underpinning country platforms. Discussions were organized into three concurrent thematic tracks—government, private sector, and civil society—each addressing the institutional, technical, financial, and participatory dimensions of platform design and implementation.

Workshop participants emphasized key lessons: the need for institutional clarity (as in South Africa), nationally driven priorities (Vietnam), fit-for-purpose financing (Nigeria), and de-risking tools to mobilize private capital (Indonesia). Civil society's role in legitimacy and justice (Senegal), the importance of blended finance and local banks, and politically realistic business models were also underscored.

Importantly, the workshop occurred amid growing global convergence around country platforms as a foundational model for climate finance. Recent signals from the IMF–World Bank Spring Meetings, the G20 Summit in South Africa, and the upcoming COP30 in Brazil indicate that country platforms are moving from innovation to mainstream—emerging as the default institutional mechanism for aligning national climate strategies with global financial flows.

02

Context and Overview of Nigeria's Climate and Energy Transition



Since 2015, Nigeria has made significant strides in establishing an enabling environment for its climate energy transition, with the support of international partners. These efforts have resulted in key policy and regulatory instruments across key sectors such as power, transport, industrialization, agriculture, to improve the enabling environment for climate investment, which has laid the groundwork for off-grid electrification and commercial renewable energy projects. Recent philanthropic partnerships, particularly with the Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet (GEAPP), have reinforced this momentum by supporting policy development and catalyzing investments.

Since 2021, the Federal Government has accelerated reforms in the energy sector, culminating in the passage of the Electricity Act 2023 and the implementation of the Petroleum Industry Act. These reforms have signaled Nigeria's intent to diversify from petroleum dependence and integrate gas and renewables into its energy mix, aligning with its net-zero target by 2060. However, the fast-paced rollout of multiple frameworks—including the Energy Transition Plan (ETP), Climate Change Act, Long-Term Strategy, and Renewable Energy Roadmap—has led to fragmented approaches and policy inconsistencies.

This proliferation of uncoordinated strategies has caused overlaps, competing priorities, and institutional confusion - and in many cases lack of key stakeholder buy-in and ownership especially in key government institutions. An example is the misalignment between the Climate Change Act and the Petroleum Industry Act, and between the promotion of gas as a transition fuel and the long-term viability of renewables. These inconsistencies not only affect donor confidence and implementation by MDAs but also create uncertainties for private sector investment and carbon market development.

Emerging transition issues such as electric vehicles, carbon trading rights, and access to rare earth minerals are also surfacing without cohesive governance frameworks. The private sector is already engaging through ESG-driven investments, yet, policy gaps and misalignment remain obstacles.

Nigeria's energy and climate transition will require the harmonization of its multiple strategies, clear leadership from the current administration, and a coordinated, whole-of-government approach to deliver a coherent, inclusive, and investable transition pathway.



03

Insights from the Global South Peer Learning Workshop



3.1 Designing a Reflective Country Platform

Nigeria's country platform must go beyond the conventional JET-P framework that countries such as South Africa, Senegal, Indonesia and Vietnam have adopted. While JET-Ps provide a useful entry point, Nigeria needs a broader, development-rooted and multi-stakeholder platform—one that is not solely donor-driven but reflects national ambitions and sectoral realities. A Just Climate Transition Country Platform designed around the country's economic development priorities and ambition.

An ideal Nigeria country platform:

- Is state-owned and politically anchored, but also open and deliberative.
- Aligns climate objectives with Nigeria's national development priorities, such as inclusive economic growth, job creation, and energy access.
- Acts as a coordination hub across federal ministries, subnational governments, private sector, civil society, labour unions, and financiers.
- Should also be flexible and modular—capable of accommodating multiple transitions: energy, agriculture, transport, industrialization, and finance.

South Africa's experience, as discussed during the workshop, demonstrated the importance of building a formal governance and delivery mechanism (the Presidential Climate Commission) that institutionalizes accountability, fosters social compacting, and links long-term visioning with real-time project implementation. There were strong cautions against platforms becoming symbolic or extractive—serving primarily external actors without securing genuine domestic ownership or impact.

Key design considerations include:

- Clarity of purpose and ownership;
- Embedded coordination mechanisms;
- Long-term institutional sustainability;
- Clear pathways to drive national policy change, attract financing, and foster inclusion.

3.2 Political Settlements

Climate transitions were underscored as inherently political, requiring strategic navigation of power dynamics, vested interests, and institutional alignments. In Nigeria—an oil and gas-based economy with entrenched interest groups—a successful country platform must be underpinned by a clear-eyed understanding of political settlements. Who wins? Who loses? Who decides?



The following were highlighted at the Workshop:

- Political buy-in must go beyond rhetorical commitments. Presidential-level leadership, with clear mandates across MDAs, was cited as crucial.
- Nigeria's complex federal structure and power devolution to states require a country platform that navigates vertical power dynamics, incentivizes state-level action, and integrates subnational voices.
- Given the economic dependence on fossil revenues, any transition agenda must be negotiated in tandem with oil-producing regions, labour unions, and politically connected energy interests.
- Climate transition must be framed not as an external agenda but as part of a new national development compact—an "elite bargain" rooted in political and social legitimacy.

Lessons from Indonesia and Vietnam showed that leadership from within the government—not just international partners—was the single most critical factor in mobilizing aligned national action.

3.3 Finance & More Financing

Finance was the most hotly debated theme during the workshop. While climate finance is critical, Nigeria's core challenge lies less in the availability of funds and more in the lack of coherence, credibility, and institutional readiness to mobilize and deploy them effectively.

**Core insights included:**

- Commitments ≠ Disbursements: There is a major gap between pledged climate funds and actual delivery. South Africa, despite its \$8.5 billion JETP, still struggles to move funds into implementable projects.
- Access and capacity bottlenecks: Nigeria lacks a clear, coordinated interface for engaging with multiple finance streams (climate funds, carbon markets, development finance, blended instruments).
- Private sector actors emphasized the need for project de-risking, streamlined regulatory approval, and clarity on return profiles.
- A national financing strategy is needed to:
 - Crowds in local capital (e.g. pension funds, commercial banks, green bonds),
 - Connects macroeconomic policy (e.g. exchange rate stability) to investment signals,
 - Builds bankable project pipelines with high readiness.

The consensus: ***"Finance is not the solution. It's part of the solution—alongside institutional readiness, political credibility, and market confidence."***

3.4 A Development Approach

A key theme emerging from multiple sessions was the need to reframe climate as a development imperative, not just an environmental obligation.



Nigeria's pathway must:

- Prioritize developmental co-benefits: jobs, industrial growth, energy access, food security, and social protection.
 - Balance adaptation and mitigation while addressing the underlying development deficits.
- Align the country platform with Nigeria's existing planning tools: the National

Development Plan, Energy Transition Plan (ETP), and sectoral roadmaps.

Donors and international partners must align with nationally defined priorities, while Nigerian institutions must assert leadership and ownership over the climate and development agenda. A senior delegate noted: ***"This is not about energy alone. It's about a new growth model. If we don't get that right, climate policy will always feel imposed."***

3.5 Inclusivity and Justice

The concept of a just transition resonated strongly across sessions. Nigeria's transition must be people-centered, not just technology- or finance-driven.

**Key reflections included:**

- The voices of local communities, especially in oil- and gas-producing states, must be meaningfully included—not just consulted.
- Youth, women, and marginalized groups should be embedded into decision-making structures, not relegated to token consultations.
- There is a pressing need for reskilling programmes and social protection measures to support communities and labour groups that will be affected by transition policies.
- Justice also means geographic fairness—ensuring the transition doesn't deepen the North-South development gap or urban-rural inequality.

Examples from South Africa's social compacting process demonstrated how multi-stakeholder governance and conflict resolution mechanisms can ensure fair transition outcomes. Nigeria's platform should similarly provide space for inclusive dialogue, grievance redress, and long-term social accountability.

3.6 Private Sector and Labour

Private sector actors expressed frustration at limited visibility and fragmented engagement in the climate space.

Key insights:

- Many Nigerian firms are exploring decarbonization but need clearer incentives, signals, and policy coherence.
- Tax regimes, subsidies, and regulatory barriers remain major hurdles to clean energy investment.
- Labour unions voiced concern about lack of transition planning for oil-dependent jobs and called for reskilling frameworks and social safety nets.



The country platform should include structured engagement windows for both the private sector and labour—such as sector-specific roundtables or formal representation within the platform's governance structure.

3.7 Geopolitics & Global Realities

The global climate landscape is increasingly fragmented.

Key sessions noted the following:

- The perceived hypocrisy of major polluters who continue fossil expansion while urging developing countries to decarbonize.
- The US political uncertainty, EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), and China's green infrastructure diplomacy—all shaping Nigeria's transition calculus.
- Nigeria must navigate this landscape by:
- Defining its own interest-based approach to climate cooperation;
- Engaging with multiple blocs—West, BRICS, Gulf—based on mutual benefit
- Using the platform to attract strategic partnerships that align with its development goals.



A unified Nigeria position in regional blocs (AU, ECOWAS, OPEC) was also recommended as a way to enhance leverage and negotiate fairer transition support.

3.8 An Ideal vs Practical Scenario

There is a recognized tension between what is desirable and what is realistically deliverable, underscoring the need to balance ambition with institutional and political pragmatism.

An ideal country platform would be:

- Fully institutionalized, legally backed, and cross-sectoral;
- Centrally coordinated from the Presidency but with decentralised operational anchors;
- Adequately financed, inclusive, and outcomes-focused.

But the practical path may involve phased implementation, starting with:

- A lean secretariat housed in an existing structure (e.g. Ministry of Planning or ETP Office),
- Clear political support from the President and National Economic Council,
- Donor and private sector coordination via technical working groups,
- Pilots in key sectors (e.g. energy, transport, agriculture) or states.

The key is to start small but start right, with flexibility to evolve. Without a credible delivery mechanism, even the most ambitious transition vision will stall.

04

Conclusion



The insights generated from the Global South Peer Learning Workshop provide a compelling blueprint for Nigeria’s climate and just energy transition country platform. It is clear that Nigeria’s pathway must be tailored to its unique political economy, development priorities, and socio-economic realities, rather than simply replicating existing JET-P models. The platform must be a politically anchored, inclusive, and multi-sectoral institution that integrates governance, finance, development, private sector, and community voices to drive transformative change.

Success hinges on securing genuine political buy-in, bridging the gap between climate finance commitments and project readiness, and positioning climate action as an enabler of sustainable development and social justice. The platform should foster transparent coordination, equitable participation, and pragmatic implementation—balancing ideal aspirations with practical steps forward.

As Nigeria confronts evolving global geopolitics and domestic challenges, the platform must remain adaptive, reflecting diverse interests and leveraging international partnerships while safeguarding national sovereignty and priorities. Ultimately, a well-designed and operationalized country platform can serve as the engine for Nigeria’s transition, ensuring that climate ambition translates into tangible, just, and sustainable outcomes for all Nigerians.



05

Next Steps



- 01 Institutional Alignment and Mandate:** Secure formal presidential endorsement for the establishment of a national country platform, ideally housed within a central coordinating ministry or office with clear authority to convene across sectors and levels of government.
- 02 Multi-Stakeholder Engagement Framework:** Develop inclusive governance structures incorporating federal and state government representatives, private sector actors, labour unions, civil society, and vulnerable communities to ensure broad ownership and legitimacy.
- 03 Political Economy Mapping and Consensus Building:** Conduct detailed political economy analysis to identify key interest groups, potential conflicts, and opportunities for political settlement around the transition agenda, prioritizing oil-producing states and labour stakeholders.
- 04 Climate Finance Strategy Development:** Design a comprehensive financing roadmap that mobilizes both local and international resources, addresses bankability of projects, and establishes clear channels for climate fund access and coordination.
- 05 Pilot Implementation and Capacity Building:** Initiate pilot programs in priority sectors and states to test institutional arrangements, finance mechanisms, and inclusion processes; simultaneously invest in building capacity within government agencies and partner institutions.
- 06 Communication and Advocacy:** Develop a strategic communications plan to promote the platform's role, foster public understanding of the just transition, and enhance transparency and accountability.
- 07 Geopolitical Engagement and Partnerships:** Map and engage with international partners reflecting Nigeria's geopolitical priorities, seeking to diversify collaboration and leverage emerging climate finance and technology opportunities.
- 08 Monitoring, Reporting, and Learning:** Establish a robust M&E framework to track progress, incorporate lessons learned, and adapt platform operations and strategy accordingly.

By moving decisively along these steps, Nigeria can transform workshop insights into concrete action—building a resilient, inclusive, and impactful country platform to navigate its just energy transition journey.

