



SAIIA-AFD Concept Note: G20 Social Summit side-event

Advocacy for a Whole-of-Society Just Transition: Strategies and Recommendations

18 November 2025, 9:00-11:00

**Radisson Blu OR Tambo Airport Hotel, Estate 154, Corner 3rd & 6th Avenue, Bredell,
Kempton Park, 1619, Johannesburg, South Africa**

Background and Context

The G20 Social Summit, taking place 18–20 November 2025, is the key platform for integrating civil society into G20 decision-making. It aims to promote global solidarity, inclusive development, and a Declaration reflecting citizens' realities, especially the most vulnerable. The Summit offers South Africa a chance to highlight the African Agenda and Global South priorities. As a people-centred forum, it will elevate social development, equity, and inclusion alongside economic and financial issues, bringing together governments, civil society, labour, youth, women, persons with disabilities, philanthropy, and grassroots organisations to ensure citizens' experiences shape G20 outcomes.

In addition to the formal groups and official events, a side-event specifically dedicated to Advocacy for a Whole-of-Society Just Transition will be organized on 18 November 2025, prior the main agenda of G20 Social Summit.

The importance of facilitating an inclusive and just energy transition has been an important element under the South African G20 presidency, linking to its overarching theme of solidarity, equality and sustainability. Supporting the energy transition means not only promoting the decarbonization of the economy or supporting the green economy, but also ensuring that it is inclusive, just and transformative. This requires us to recognize the most vulnerable social groups and place them at the core of public policymaking. This includes supporting policies that improve access to employment and training for young people, the unemployed, and women, particularly in areas already affected — or likely to be affected — by the energy transition. Such support is crucial as it contributes to strengthening the social acceptance of energy transition policies.

Objectives and Agenda

Linked to the G20 Social Summit commitment, the main aim of the event is to explore **advocacy strategies for a whole-of-society just transition and provide a set of recommendations to the South African G20 presidency.**

The discussion will also focus on **South Africa's experience in implementing its energy transition, highlighting that the transition cannot succeed without social acceptance.**

This two-hour event will present insights from South African stakeholders' experience in engaging in the advocacy process for a just energy transition. Insights on research, advocacy and policy engagement activities conducted SAIIA and the Public Affairs Research Institute (PARI) will set the foundation for a discussion on how to realise an inclusive just transition. The second part of the event will bring together leaders and practitioners to identify concrete recommendations to the South African G20 presidency for strengthening the social acceptance of the transition.

Segment	Lead/host	Duration
Welcome and Opening Remarks	SAIIA/AFD	9:00 – 9:15 (15 min)
Advocacy process session: Showcase of findings	Programme Lead: Presidential Employment Stimulus: Dr Kate Philip Presidential Climate Commission: Lebogang Mulaisi PARI: Dr Tracy Ledger Moderator: Slim Dali	9:15 – 10:00 (45 min)
Roundtable Discussion: Recommendations for a Whole-of-Society Just Transition	ILO: Simphiwe Mabhele Seriti: Yashila Govender SAIIA: Alex Benkenstein Moderator: Adrian Joseph	10:00 – 10:30 (30 min)
Q&A with Participants	All panellists and audience	10:30 – 10 :55 (25 min)
Closing Reflections	SAIIA/AFD	5 min

Target Audience: The event will be open to a broad audience, including:

- Policymakers and planners in social protection, climate, energy and finance
- Researchers, academics, and development partners
- Civil society and community organizations
- Donors and financiers
- G20 Working Groups and informal platforms