



STRATEGY

2023-2027

**STRATEGY SUMMARY &
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

The Institute for Economic Justice's (IEJ) Strategy 2023-2027, lays out an ambitious framework for how the IEJ will contribute towards achieving systemic and lasting social and economic change.

This Summary and Implementation Plan summarises the Strategy 2023-2027 and unpacks further details on how these objectives will be realised, and what concrete work the IEJ will do over this strategy period. It sets out:

- The projects we will implement to achieve these.
- How we have redesigned our organisation to advance our objectives.
- Where we stand in our learning journey.
- How resources will be allocated to drive the strategic plan forward.



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STRATEGY AT A GLANCE



OBJECTIVES



OBJECTIVE 1

Advancing inclusive macroeconomic and development frameworks for the just distribution of resources, equitable access to public goods, and advancement of human rights.



OBJECTIVE 2

Growing communities of practice around the development and advancement of new, progressive forms of economic thinking and action.



OBJECTIVE 3

Supporting workers and marginalised communities to build just economic systems in response to the climate crisis and the changing nature of work.



OBJECTIVE 4

Popularising and building support for policies and new economic thinking that build collective power to advance economic justice.



OBJECTIVE 5

Strengthening and positioning the organisation as a progressive force for systemic change and economic justice.

CROSS CUTTING

- Across all of these objectives – and associated projects and activities – priority is given to adopting a **feminist and intersectional analytical lens**. Through this we centre how workers, women, the unemployed, rural communities, and other marginalised groups, are subjected to multiple forms of dispossession, and develop alternatives aimed at overcoming this.
- The IEJ will prioritise strengthening its work across the **African continent** in all appropriate programmatic areas. This will be undertaken through building strong and equitable partnerships and alliances. As economic justice is a global endeavour, international and Global South partnerships will also be developed where appropriate.

THEORY OF CHANGE

The IEJ conducts rigorous and collaborative research to **produce knowledge** geared at advancing economic justice and shares this in a collaborative, timely, informative, and mutually empowering manner with progressive social forces. This **empowers progressive social forces** to use their collective power to **contest orthodox policy thinking** and **shift policy** and policy discourses towards privileging and embedding progressive proposals. In doing so, the policy process is democratised and policy proposals that advance economic justice are implemented. This leads to **irreversible systematic transformation of the economy and society** in a manner that advances rights, ensures human and planetary wellbeing, and the equitable distribution of resources and opportunities.

CULTURE

At IEJ, we are a value-driven and inclusive organisation that provides a space where we collaboratively practise social justice, and value each other as human and intellectual beings who operate with integrity and respect.

VALUES

At IEJ, we value each other while prizing open communication; collaboration and creativity; justice, diversity, and inclusion; rigorous work; and boldness and solidarity.



PROJECTS

Since the finalisation of the Strategy the IEJ team was tasked with producing concept notes and project plans for priority projects to be undertaken.

Six programmatic projects, one communications-focused project, and one organisational development project have been identified. These are not necessarily the only projects that will be undertaken during the Strategy implementation period but provide a starting point.

During strategy reviews additional projects may be added, or existing projects judged to have reached completion. In all instances, projects must be pursued on the basis of meeting the objectives laid out in the Strategy (the Strategy itself is subject to a mid-strategy review and limited possible amendments).



Resourcing for Rights Realisation



Basic Income



African Feminist Economic Research and Policy Networks



Challenging Economic Orthodoxies



Just Energy Transition



Building Resilience through a Just Transition in the Food System



OBJECTIVE 1

Advancing inclusive macroeconomic and development frameworks for the just distribution of resources, equitable access to public goods, and advancement of human rights.

IEJ views the prevailing macroeconomic and development frameworks as particularly entrenched, insufficiently challenged, and systematically producing, and reproducing, inequities and rights deprivations. Achieving inclusive macroeconomic and development frameworks requires developing policy alternatives and contesting systems of power, rooted in a rigorous understanding of both the status quo and an articulation of the future we want. Advancing a just distribution of resources requires both a more equitable distribution at the point of production, and redistribution thereafter. Particular attention must be paid to lifting the burden of social reproduction from women.



Resourcing for Rights Realisation

This project seeks the adoption by African governments of policies that re-integrate our countries, both jointly and separately, into the global financial system on just terms so that we are able to mobilise the maximum available domestic and international resources in an equitable, transparent, and growth-enhancing manner to realise socio-economic rights. The project focuses on three areas of work: 1. tax justice, and the taxation of financial assets, incomes, and trading in particular; 2. debt justice, and the prioritisation of developmental forms of international debt financing and a fair debt architecture; 3. climate finance, with specific reference to South Africa's trend-setting Just Energy Transition climate financing partnership (JET-P) and similar agreements in the Global South.



Basic Income

The goal of this project is the realisation of a universal basic income for all in South Africa aged 18-59, indexed to the upper-bound poverty line and financed through progressive taxation. The project has four main components. First, achieving immediate policy wins, including that the original Covid-19 Social Relief of Distress grant is, in 2023 and 2024, retained and improved to provide basic income to more beneficiaries. Second, building collective power within South African civil society and enhanced knowledge within the public. Third, strengthening our international networks, in particular those in the Global South. Fourth, producing the necessary policy research and advocacy to see the South African government adopt a clear pathway towards a universal basic income funded through progressive taxation.



OBJECTIVE 2

Growing communities of practice around the development and advancement of new progressive forms of economic thinking and action.

The IEJ appreciates that challenging and changing economic systems, and the associated embedded configurations of power, means contesting the modes of economic thinking and policy making that support them. The dominance, in Africa and elsewhere, of neoclassical and neoliberal “market fundamentalism” underpins the prevalence of “market-based” solutions, and the exclusion of a meaningful rights-based approach, in policy making. Contesting this, in order to build more just futures, requires progressive paradigms of knowledge production. This must involve tools of analysis that centre race, gender, class, and other intersecting lines of marginalisation. Feminist and class analysis are particularly important in this regard.



African Feminist Economic Research and Policy Networks

The overall goal of this project is to tackle the systematic exclusion of feminist-centred approaches to economics and economic policy making. It addresses power asymmetries in the field by directly intervening in systems of knowledge production and practices of policy making. It does so by bolstering feminist economic analysis, teaching, and policy application, and the structural position of feminist scholars and policy influencers. It has four key components: 1. capacity building, strengthening knowledge of feminist economic approaches to economic research, teaching, and policy, particularly for those not already utilising feminist approaches; 2. undertaking collaborative action to work with partners to see those approaches implemented; 3. supporting networking between those applying feminist economic approaches within particular policy areas; and 4. “mainstreaming” particular feminist economic approaches across the policy work of the IEJ. The three thematic focus areas are feminist approaches to: a. resource mobilisation; b. climate policy, in particular food systems; and c. the intersection of care work and social protection.



Challenging Economic Orthodoxies

This new economies project works to see heterodox economic paradigms utilised as the basis for progressive African economics education and policy making. A critical subcomponent of this is the Rethinking Economics for African student movement. Our work in this space aims to see a regional network of university students implement heterodox reforms in economics teaching and learning, and grow their knowledge of heterodox, pluralist economics alternatives for the region, continent, and planet. University chapters conduct activities such as public seminars and webinars, curriculum reviews and workshops to learn more about heterodox economic thinking and heterodox economic policy proposals. Other elements include IEJ’s contribution to the budding African Heterodox Economics Network.



OBJECTIVE 3

Supporting workers and marginalised communities to build just economic systems in response to the climate crisis and the changing nature of work.

Two of the major challenges facing humanity, with particular consequences for workers, women, and marginalised communities, are climate breakdown and disruptions to traditional modes of work, production, and social reproduction. Achieving a just transition to an economy that centres planetary wellbeing – including human wellbeing – by shifting towards a low carbon, climate-resilient, and ecologically sustainable economy, in a manner that contributes to the creation of decent work and social inclusion, is critical. This transition must centre the needs and voices of workers and women.



Just Energy Transition

This project seeks to achieve a just energy transition that reduces energy poverty, provides decent work through localisation, and achieves structural transformation of the energy system. It does this by undertaking robust critical and targeted research and advocacy designed to support the labour movements and community organisations committed to advocating for a just energy transition. The project has two critical arms. Regionally, the project explores the potential for the localisation of renewable energy value chains in a manner that provides decent work and economic empowerment for marginalised groups including women and youth. This work is initially focused on Kenya, Ghana, and South Africa. In South Africa, the project focuses on the on-going energy crisis, developing strategies for: the provision of affordable and reliable energy that reduces energy poverty; the resourcing of the state owned enterprise; and the social ownership of renewable energy.



Building Resilience through a Just Transition in the Food System

The ultimate goal of this project is that public policy and discourse gives greater prominence to a just transition in the food system, reflecting an awareness of the need to ensure mitigation and adaptation in the food system to build transformative resilience. The intermediate outcome is that the Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development adopts at least two policies that reflect key aspects of a just transition agenda, are agreed to by the Presidential Climate Commission, are appropriately resourced, and are coordinated with other relevant Departments like Labour and Trade and Industry. The project deepens knowledge on pathways and strategies to achieving equitable and decent work and livelihoods, the right to food and nutrition, and ecological integrity in the food system; seeks alignment between labour and civil society organisations; and builds collective power. After piloting work in South Africa, the project plans to expand regionally.



OBJECTIVE 4

Popularising and building support for policies and new economic thinking that build collective power to advance economic justice

Effectively communicating the IEJ's vision is crucial for driving economic justice. We must actively shape and present a compelling alternative future, infusing our advocacy with purpose, while ensuring our work resonates with diverse audiences.

The goal is to position the IEJ effectively for reach, visibility, and impact, prioritising the concerns of workers, women, youth, the unemployed, rural communities, and marginalised groups.

In order to achieve this the IEJ will focus on improving internal advocacy and communications processes while refining external target audience identification and segmentation to enable, inform, and determine the following:

1. Tailored messaging.
2. Efficient communication strategies.
3. Effective platform (email, social media, and website) utilisation.
4. Focused engagements (webinars, workshops, and meetings).
5. The fostering of trust and credibility.

Additionally, efforts to refine the IEJ's voice and optimise engagement across all activities will be prioritised.

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OBJECTIVE 5

Strengthening and positioning the organisation as a progressive force for systemic change and economic justice

Pursuing the ambitious agenda this strategy sets out requires the strengthening of organisational capabilities and capacities. This builds on the foundations of existing committed and capable staff, strong governance processes, robust organisational policies and procedures, and a well-developed physical infrastructure.

This project has identified 10 outcomes to be achieved by its conclusion:

1. Stronger strategic political and intellectual depth and coherence is achieved.
2. Well-developed and properly resourced project plans drive the work of the IEJ in line with the organisational strategy.
3. A culture of assessment and learning is engendered through establishing and utilising monitoring, learning, and evaluation processes.
4. An organisational culture that affirms and lives out the organisational values is established by actively ensuring necessary mechanisms are put in place.
5. A staff composition, leadership approaches, and operating processes that embody and ensure the principles of equity and justice are secured.
6. Hiring to fill programmatic and institutional gaps is well managed through a clear staffing plan carefully suitable to the stipulated organisational design.
7. Staff are provided opportunities to learn, grow and develop in a structured manner.
8. A remuneration structure that takes account of organisational values, organisational resources, and sector norms is implemented.
9. Adequate resources are secured through the adoption of a clear funding strategy with mobilisation targets in line with the strategic priorities of the organisation.
10. The organisation's work - internally and externally – is strengthened through the development, implementation and improvement of systems and procedures.

Implementation plans for each outcome have been, or are being, drawn up. Work has already commenced on a number of these outcomes.









WORKING ACROSS PROJECTS

The IEJ is strengthening efforts to build collaborations and synergies across projects. This includes framing shared goals, cementing common political and theoretical approaches, and undertaking joint activities and outputs. A particular focus of this is the ‘mainstreaming’ of feminist economics across the IEJ projects. This is being piloted through the Economies of Care subproject that brings care into focus within resourcing, basic income, and food systems projects.

THE PROJECT TEAMS

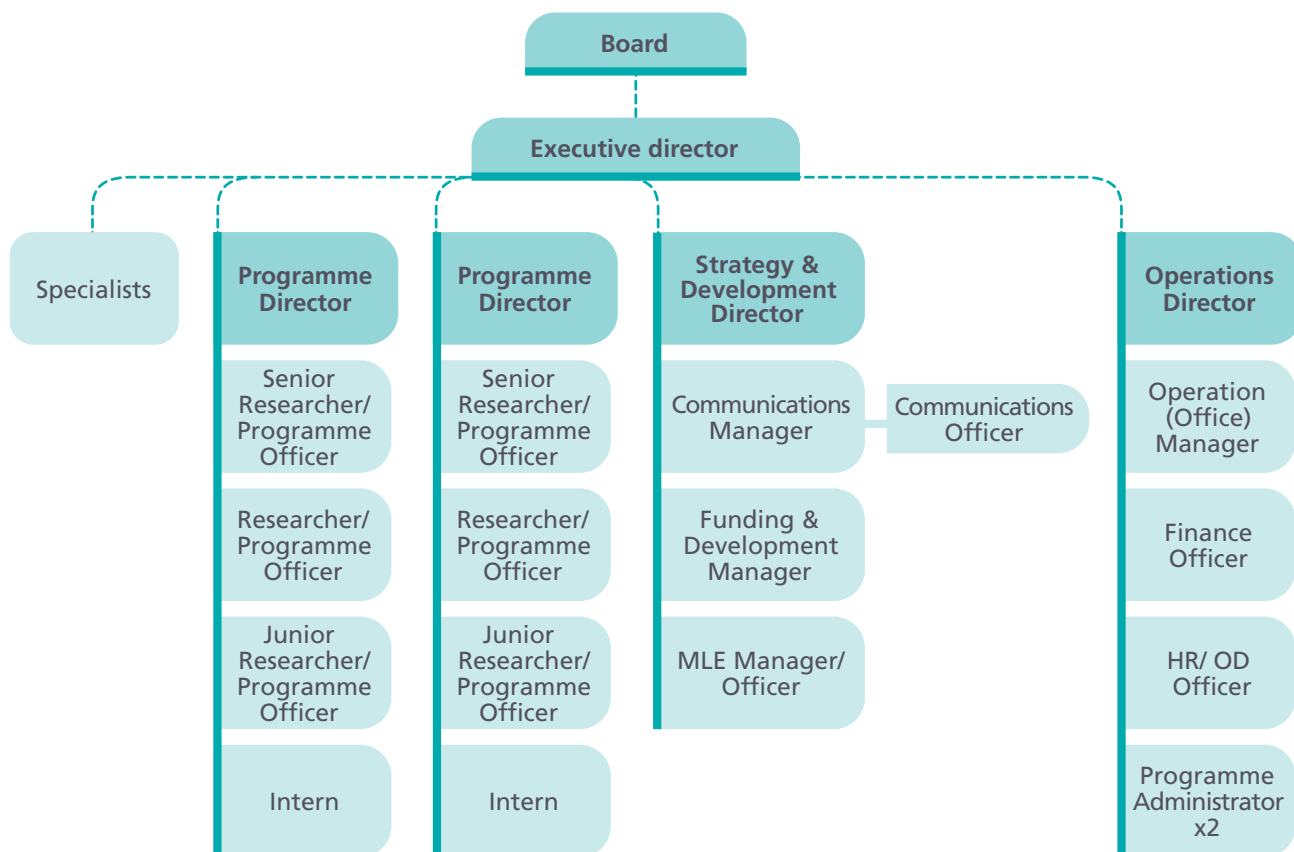
The project teams have been created using a project management framework that identifies Leads, Managers, Team Members, Advisors, and Approvers. Project Leads carry the overall responsibility for the coordination of the project. Managers (usually a member of the Leadership Team) ensure accountability.

The core team members for each project are as follows:

PROJECT	LEAD	MANAGER	TEAM MEMBERS
 Resourcing for Rights Realisation	Adrian	Basani	Zimbali, Kamal, Liso
 Basic Income	Neil	Hama	Kelle, Siyanda *
 African Feminist Economics Research and Policy Networks	Jamela	Basani	Juhi, Mayada
 Challenging Economic Orthodoxies	Bandile	Hama	Amaarah
 Just Energy Transition	James	Basani	Jezri *
 Building Resilience through a Just Transition in the Food System (and CAAP**)	Andrew	Hama	Yasirah, Lupumlo *
 Communications and advocacy	Dalli	Gilad	*
 Strengthening and positioning the organisation	Sophie	Gilad	Hama, Michelle, Pamela, Dimpho

* Further hiring planned in these areas in the near term.

** CAAP is the Climate Ambition to Accountability Project, a joint initiative with WWF South Africa and SACAN



ORGANISATIONAL REDESIGN

During the strategy process the IEJ revisited its organisational design. This had two major consequences.

The first was moving away from very broad, somewhat siloed, ‘programme areas’, towards more focused ‘projects’. This also meant that staff would be appointed on the basis of particular expertise and potentially contribute that expertise across more than one project, either permanently or on a needs basis.

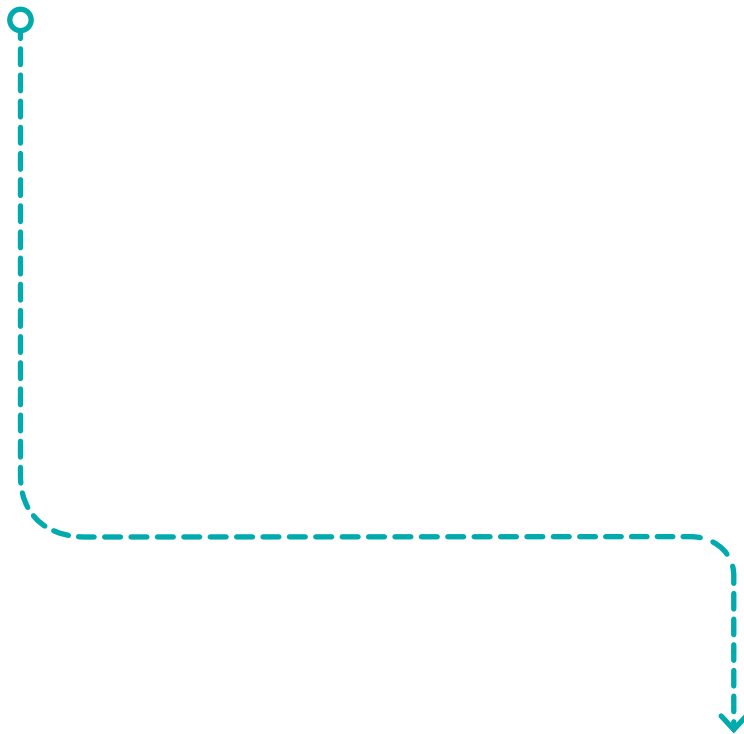
The second was changes in the organogram. This established three broad departments into which staff fit: the programme team; the strategy, organisational development, and communications team; and the finance and operations team. These are each headed by a Director - or in the case of the programme team two Programme Co-Directors. The Leadership Team is made up of all the Directors, the Executive Director, and any Specialists, who contribute both strategically and programmatically. Not all positions will be filled immediately, constrained by finances and appropriate staff. The Executive Director, Finance and Operations Director, and one Programme Co-Director, currently share the role of a Director of Strategy and Development.



OUR LEARNING JOURNEY

The IEJ firmly believes in being a learning organisation. This means we will develop and implement a comprehensive monitoring, evaluation, and learning framework to assess our projects with a view to learn and, where necessary, adjust and/or change the course of action.

Developing the MLE framework will be a collaborative process among IEJ staff. The process will also be an opportunity to strengthen the organisation and advance IEJ's collaborative ethos. It will provide a platform for staff to shape the nature of the MLE framework, developing the various indicators providing input on what should and should not be prioritised. It will also be an opportunity to impress upon staff the need to see broader connections among different project streams and how various strands of work actually contribute to achieving desired outcomes.



RESOURCING THE STRATEGY

The IEJ Strategy and this Implementation Plan set out an ambitious agenda. This needs to be matched by sufficient resources to support the growing IEJ team and project activities.

Over the last six years, our annual expenditure has increased from R3,228,196 (~\$240,000) to a budgeted R34,921,032 (\$1,900,000). In 2024, we project a further substantial increase due to a bigger team and a rebalancing of our salary scales. At the start of 2024 we had secured approximately 75% of the 2024 budget with fundraising efforts positive and ongoing..

The IEJ's sources of funding have also diversified. In our first year we had three funders. In 2023, we received funding from seventeen funders, and a further five contributions towards activities from partners. This shows the calibre of the work the IEJ is doing and the faith that funders have in us.

This said, the IEJ has not secured sufficient long-term funding. Either with regards to core / flexible funding, or for most projects. Some projects still have very limited budgets.

The improved planning within the IEJ means an ability to confidently project a three-year budget cycle.

This is being used to build out a comprehensive resource mobilisation strategy and associated work plan. Critical, will be deepening a few core funding relationships to provide long-term anchor support to the IEJ.

