



STRATEGY

2023-2027

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About this publication

This strategy document represents the collective work of the IEJ Team and Board between July 2021 and July 2022 with operational planning until December 2022. It drew on interviews with partners, to whom we express our gratitude for giving their time. We were assisted by Mark Burke from development@work, Ruwayne Kock, Azania Netshivhulana, and Brittany Louis at Authentic Organisations, and colleagues at the Center for Economic and Social Rights. We are also extremely grateful to the Robert Bosch Stiftung who provided funding to see this process concluded and taken forward.

This strategy provides the basis for us to move from a “start up” phase into a “consolidation” and then “growth” phase.

FOREWORD

This strategy document presents IEJ’s organisational and programmatic goals for the next five years. It embeds these within our vision for a just society, the organisation’s mission, culture, and values, and a conceptualisation of how we contribute to systemic change.

It is drafted at a critical juncture, both for the struggle for economic justice in South Africa, Africa, and beyond, and for our organisation. As discussed in the situational analysis below, the combined weight of climate, economic, social, and governance crises are fraying the fabric of our societies and placing untold hardships on the most marginalised. This is all the more true in Africa and the Global South, which occupy subordinate positions in the global economic order. One impulse to respond to this is by turning to chauvinist populism, with attendant xenophobic, patriarchal, and ultra-nationalist tendencies. This is a path to increased dispossession, repression, marginalisation, and inequality.

Instead, the IEJ, as a part of a community of activists, unionists, intellectuals, and policy makers, sees another path. As our Vision states, this is a community that works actively to achieve: “A just society where an equitable distribution of resources, the democratisation of economic decision making, and systemic change are secured and entrenched for the realisation of rights and planetary well-being.” This will require, in our view, the mutually reinforcing processes of: conceptualising what just economies should look like, developing the pathways to reach these, developing the capacity necessary to walk these paths, and achieving concrete policy changes that advance us down these paths in the here and now.

For almost five years, the IEJ has worked at the nexus of research, policy, and advocacy, building an institution and the team and partnerships that allow it to flourish. We are proud of the enormous accomplishments: growth from two persons to over fifteen; dozens of high-quality outputs; strong partnerships; and effecting real policy change. This strategy provides the basis for us to move from a “start up” phase into a “consolidation” and then “growth” phase. It grounds that growth within coherent political objectives developed on the basis of interrogating the shifting local and global environment.

The IEJ believes a different world is possible and that workers, women, and historically disadvantaged groups are the engine for attaining that. Through our collaborations, we hope to think and act with a wide range of progressive social forces and contribute to moving the world towards that future.



GILAD ISAACS
Executive Director



STRATEGY SUMMARY

VISION

A just society where an equitable distribution of resources, the democratisation of economic decision making, and systemic change are secured and entrenched for the realisation of rights and planetary wellbeing.

MISSION

To advance economic justice by collaborating in the provision of rigorous, accessible research and policy alternatives that empower progressive social forces to create systemic change from above and below in South Africa and the continent.



GOAL 1

To produce knowledge that critically engages with the impacts of existing economic systems and advances systemic change that centres just socioeconomic outcomes and wellbeing.

GOAL 2

To shift the economic discourse, open policy space, and provide alternative policy proposals in strategic areas towards just socioeconomic outcomes.

GOAL 3

To support the building of collective power through strengthening heterodox economic analysis and the capacity to undertake it, and empowering progressive social forces to create systemic change from above and below, in South Africa and the continent.



CULTURE

At IEJ, we are a value-driven and inclusive organisation that provides a space where we collaboratively practice 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; boldness and solidarity.

PROGRAMMATIC 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 partnership 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.



SITUATION ANALYSIS

The work of the IEJ responds to a series of multiple and overlapping crises. These frame the context within which we work and present opportunities for change.



Multiple and overlapping crises

The **climate crisis** presents an existential threat to life on the planet as we know it. It poses the need to accelerate mitigation measures, particularly the reduction of CO2 emission in South Africa, the world's 13th largest per capita carbon emitter. It also raises severe adaptation challenges, as most of Africa is highly susceptible to the inevitable consequences of (some level) of climate change that will lead to water scarcity, biodiversity loss, disrupted agricultural production, and increased extreme weather events. At the same time, leading economies fail to take decisive action while skirting the necessity for wealth transfers to the Global South.

The economic disruptions caused by COVID-19 and recent global instability have made more acute economic fragilities across the African continent, with a series of **economic crises** either looming or in full swing (these will only be worsened by climate change). These include the threat of accelerated austerity, as part of a second round of structural adjustment programmes imposed on the back of international loan agreements. Supply chain crises continue to lead to rising costs, including in key commodities like fuel and food. This will exacerbate the inability of South Africa and African countries to provide decent work opportunities, a long-term trend underpinned by a lack of structural transformation (meaning a reliance on primary commodities), de-industrialisation and financialisation, and changes to the nature of work.

The resulting **social crisis** is, and will be, acute. Hunger is rising in South Africa and many other African countries, employment opportunities are scarce, poverty is deepening, and inequality is worsening. Existing social protection is inadequate and public services are under threat due to budget cuts. Economic elites are unwilling to enact the income and wealth transfers necessary to expand both public services and social protection, as witnessed by the opposition to basic income support in South Africa.

The **crisis of social reproduction** is also apparent. The burden of unpaid care, maintaining physical spaces, and organising resources, continues to be shouldered disproportionately by women and will worsen through the retrenchment and commodification of public provisioning. This is deepened by the restructuring of work, making women's work more precarious and labour markets more unequal. This crisis manifests in a range of ways, including gender-based violence, the feminisation of poverty, and reduced wellbeing amongst women and children. All of this serves to increase the burden of care, reduce access to public goods, and reinforce gender norms, particularly affecting low-income black African women.

In differing combinations across countries and regions governance crises have meant instability has increased, populism risen, narrow sovereign self-interest has dominated, confidence in the prevailing multilateral system diminished, militarisation and global conflict deepened, and state capacity weakened and eroded by corruption and internal power struggles. In South Africa, this is characterised by an erosion of confidence in the constitutional dispensation, marked by disaffection

The subordinate position of African (and Global South) countries in international economic systems, and financial systems in particular, maintained by international financial institutions and the international flow of private capital, are fundamental.

and increasing political alienation. The exclusion of popular participation in sites of decision making are central to these trends, compounded by the manner in which conservative centres of power, such as national treasuries, hold sway.

These interlocking crises are premised on relationships of dominance. The subordinate position of African (and Global South) countries in international economic systems, and financial systems in particular, maintained by international financial institutions and the international flow of private capital, are fundamental. So too is the on-going dispossession of vulnerable groups, including women; children; Black, indigenous, and other persons of colour; those with disabilities; LGBTQI+ persons; rural populations; and others, reinforcing intersectional inequalities.

→ Prevailing and emerging responses

The dominant response – led by international financial institutions and Global North governments and central banks – can be characterised as a shift towards “inclusive neoliberalism” and the “Wall Street Consensus”. Under this regime social provisioning and developmental priorities are not fully stripped away but rather handed over to the private sector. This more “inclusive” form of neoliberal capital accumulation sees the distinction between private and public interests fall away in regulatory regimes that govern areas such as social protection and services like health and education. Private provisioning is increasingly rolled up into public services. The role of the private sector, and private finance in particular, is also centered in providing for economic and social infrastructure (including in response to climate imperatives) through an array of “derisking” instruments (such as, public private partnerships and blended finance). These see states bear the risk and the private sector reap the rewards while raising the likelihood of excluding the most marginalised. This form of “development” is increasingly imposed on the Global South, while more progressive breaks from neoliberal orthodoxy, for example, expansionary spending, is tolerated in the Global North.

Against this bleak background rays of light exist and opportunities emerge. The climate crisis calls for new alliances – as workers, poorer communities, and Global South countries stand to be worst impacted – and reinforces the need for systemic change and new economic systems. A growing progressive consensus has centred the role of public provisioning, decent work, community solidarity, care, and rights realisation within these, prioritising human and planetary wellbeing. Alternatives are increasingly viewed through feminist and intersectional paradigms. Intra-African solidarity, embedded within trans-continental Global South alliances, has a vital role to play. The strengthening of progressive social movements and parties, particularly in Latin America, provide an alternative pole with the emergence of multipolarity offering important space to Global South actors.

The alternatives to neoliberalism are not yet fully formed, but an array of intellectual and political spaces, bringing together theorists and activists, are emerging to challenge prevailing economic orthodoxies. These, and the resulting visions for new economies, must be nurtured while the links between theory, practice, and social change are strengthened. This project must illuminate the status quo but reach beyond critique, tabling a coherent programme for change and associated policies and instruments.



IEJ'S CAPACITY TO RESPOND

Within this context, organisations like the IEJ have critical roles to play. An internal situational analysis reveals the significant capabilities and meaningful successes that the IEJ has developed and achieved in its short lifespan. The model of empowering progressive social forces and contesting orthodoxies, while working at the intersection of research, policy, and advocacy has been validated in important respects.

At the same time, particularities of the “start-up” phase of the organisation’s life need to be revisited. The “organic” emergence of “flagship” projects – within defined areas of focus – needs to give way to a more structured system of strategic planning and project management. Alongside this, a common intellectual and methodological framework for the IEJ’s different thematic work needs strengthening, together with a more deliberate focus on organisation culture, design, and identity. The myriad of partnerships established across the research, labour, civil society, state, and business communities must be cemented. In such a short time, the IEJ’s resource mobilisation has been impressive, but medium-term financial stability remains to be secured. Strengthening these institutional features provides the basis for the organisation to dynamically, strategically, and proactively respond to the challenges noted above and the concrete circumstances as they unfold.

→ This strategy

This strategy is developed within this context. The strategy presents an organisational vision and mission in response to the prevailing political, economic, and social circumstances and the desperate need for systemic change. The theory of change and organisational goals give concrete expression to how the IEJ seeks to work. This is complemented by a series of programmatic objectives that define the IEJ’s role within the ecosystem and identify specific thematic foci, while also identifying areas for institutional strengthening. An operational plan (not contained here) fleshes out the various projects that will be driven over this period. We are confident that this strategy will enable the IEJ to contribute meaningfully to tackling the challenges, and leveraging the opportunities, identified here.



MISSION, VISION, CULTURE AND VALUES

The vision of the IEJ speaks to the society we aspire to – a project which we can contribute to, as one of thousands of organisations and individuals. Our mission reflects the contribution we strive to make. The IEJ is driven by a series of values, defining who we are and aspire to be, and what distinguishes us as an organisation.



THE VISION THE IEJ ASPIRES TO IS

A just society where an equitable distribution of resources, the democratisation of economic decision making, and systemic change are secured and entrenched for the realisation of rights and planetary wellbeing.

THE REASON FOR THE IEJ'S EXISTENCE IS ENCAPSULATED IN THE FOLLOWING MISSION

To advance economic justice by collaborating in the provision of rigorous, accessible research and policy alternatives that empower progressive social forces to create systemic change from above and below in South Africa and the continent.

THE VALUES WE SEEK TO REFLECT, AND HOLD OURSELVES TO, IN OUR ORGANISATIONAL PRACTICE AND WORKPLACE INCLUDE:

- **Valuing each other:** We value each person's uniqueness and respect their contributions.
- **Open communication:** We openly express our thoughts and ideas.
- **Collaboration and creativity:** We work collaboratively, innovatively and creatively to solve challenges.
- **Justice, diversity, and inclusion:** We ensure equitable access to opportunities, ensuring a diverse and representative workplace.
- **Rigorous work:** We produce high-quality work with positive impacts for our partners and the communities with whom we work.
- **Solidarity:** We act in concert with allies and each other to advance the cause of economic justice.
- **Boldness:** We have the confidence and courage to advance systemic change in the face of political resistance. taking risks while advancing shared objectives.

BY ADVANCING THESE VALUES WE AIM TO ESTABLISH THE FOLLOWING ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

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

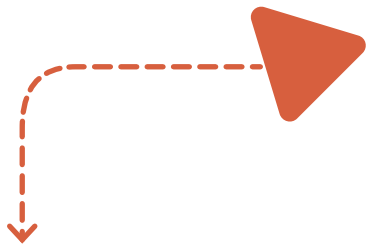


THEORY OF CHANGE

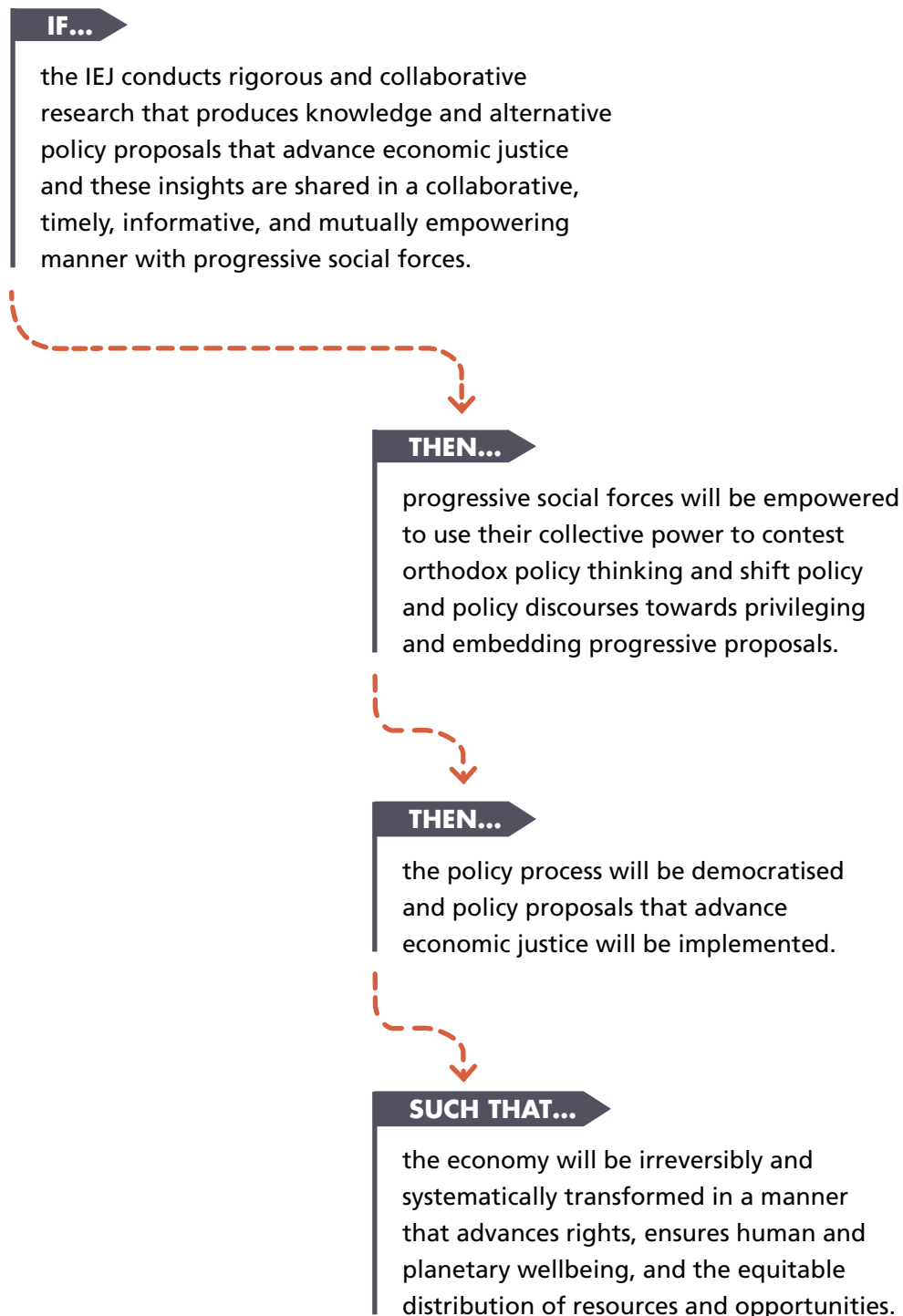
The IEJ is focused on bringing about systemic change that institutionalises social and structural transformation of the economy and society, and the sustainable distribution of economic resources in South Africa and the continent. Such a systemic change is predicated on the just distribution of power that democratises participation in economic decision-making within a normative framework that centres rights realisation and planetary wellbeing. IEJ's contribution to effecting such a systemic change is derived from the full exploitation of the research-policy-advocacy nexus (see more under organisational goals).

Central to this is the production and co-production of knowledge around which progressive social forces coalesce to advocate for policy change from above and below. Together with its partners, the IEJ translates the knowledge co-produced into viable policy options and proposals. Collaborative engagement in the process of analysis and development of policy options and proposals is mutually empowering for the IEJ and its partners. The IEJ strengthens the collective power of progressive social forces – working specifically with worker organisations, feminist formations, and social-economic rights and climate justice activists – as well as elements in government and business. These take the form of strategic partnerships, coalitions, alliances, and networks of action, to mobilise support and advocate for alternative policy proposals. Doing so will require creating the space to contest prevailing policies premised on economic orthodoxy and advancing policies inspired by heterodox economic theory (broadly, economic traditions concerned with institutions, power, production, distribution, social reproduction, and economic relations and systems, utilising pluralist methodologies).

The approaches and strategies outlined are expected to contribute to embedding heterodox economic analysis in policy-making, establishing an institutional environment that is more responsive to policy proposals drawing on such analysis, and ensuring broader participation in the policy process by progressive social forces. This, in turn, is expected to lead to the democratisation of the policy process, the implementation of policy proposals that advance economic justice, and the institutionalisation of human rights as a normative framework in economic policy. This process of institutionalisation must be accompanied by popular conscientisation that builds power amongst progressive social forces. Together this leads to economic and social change, advancing the vision of the organisation.



Based on this understanding of the systemic change process, the underlying if-then logic that ties together the strategies and actions for change is:





OVERALL ORGANISATIONAL GOALS

The IEJ has three overall organisational goals that reflect the Institute's work at the intersection of research, policy, and advocacy. These are:

- **Produce knowledge:**
To produce knowledge that critically engages with the impacts of existing economic systems and advances systemic change that centres just socioeconomic outcomes and wellbeing.
- **Provide alternative policy proposals:**
To shift the economic discourse, open policy space, and provide alternative policy proposals in strategic areas towards just socioeconomic outcomes.
- **Build collective power:**
To support the building of collective power through strengthening heterodox economic analysis and the capacity to undertake it, and empowering progressive social forces to create systemic change from above and below, in South Africa and the continent.

These goals are intertwined and mutually reinforcing. The production of knowledge, for instance, is then utilised in formulating policy proposals. Both knowledge and policy proposals form the bedrock of building collective power. Similarly, by working together to build collective power we can ensure the relevance of our research and appropriateness of our policy proposals.

→ Knowledge production

The first organisational goal is focused on knowledge production for informing social change to achieve just economic outcomes, the transformation of society, and wellbeing. The research of the IEJ engages critically with the adverse consequences of orthodox-inspired policies that intensify economic exclusion through inequitable and unsustainable growth and increased poverty and inequality. It also draws on heterodox economic analysis to develop viable alternatives that promote an equitable distribution of economic resources and opportunities within a rights-based framework. In doing both, it embeds an intersectional lens that highlights how class, gender, race, sexuality, age, geography, and other demographic factors determine economic outcomes for different groups.

In this strategy cycle, the IEJ aims to strengthen how it does research. This includes: deepening the theoretical underpinnings of its research; strengthening the methodological orientation towards participatory research design and collaboration; sharpening context and stakeholder analysis; enhancing the synergies between longer-term research and policy-responsive research that requires faster turnaround times; and deepening cross-programmatic coherence by ensuring the presence of cross-cutting themes across its research programmes. This strengthening will draw heavily on systems of knowledge that foreground feminist economics and political economy analysis.

→ Provide policy proposals

The second organisational goal is the utilisation of research in the development of progressive policy proposals. The IEJ has had significant success to date in this regard. This strategy cycle will focus on strengthening this work across the Institute’s programmatic work.

First, convergence and coherence across different programmatic areas will be strengthened. This builds on the development of consistent theoretical and analytical frameworks (see above). Second, the deepening of strategic partnerships and collaborations – already a strength of the IEJ – will ensure the policy work remains relevant in society. Third, a more deliberate approach to the identification of the relevant policy platforms and strategic engagements will contribute to the process of contesting and shifting policy discourse. It is necessary to identify internal policy champions within (“from above”) and outside (“from below”) the policy process, who can bring pressure to bear on policymakers and open the space for policy alternatives. Fourth, the ability to track, monitor, and assess the policy impact of the organisation and its partners is an important area of work that needs to be strengthened in this strategy cycle. This will provide learning opportunities that can refine tactics in strategic areas.

This will allow for policy work that transcends the individual programmatic areas within which the IEJ works, and the ability to articulate broader visions and pathways for building just economies. The formulation of such – through widespread stakeholder engagement – offers a major opportunity to galvanise stakeholder support for an overarching framework of policy proposals towards new economic development paths.

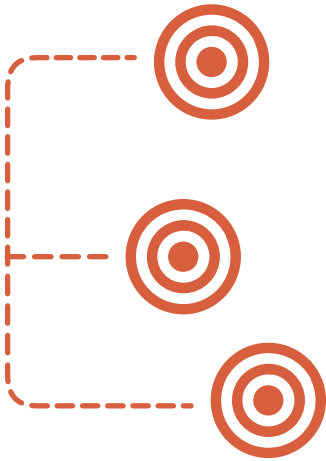
-----→ Building collective power

The third organisational goal is focused on guiding how the IEJ builds capacity – internally and in the fields in which it operates – and how it engages and partners with progressive social forces to amplify collective power. As discussed as part of our theory of change (see above), the organisation recognises that the power to bring about change – from above and below – lies in the collective agency of stakeholders. Although IEJ does not directly mobilise mass constituents, it seeks to reach them through partnerships, alliances, and networks based on common policy interests and alignment to progressive economic alternatives.

The translation of complex economic research and ideas into accessible information and knowledge has been a key strength of the IEJ and needs to be further strengthened. This has positioned the IEJ as an important source of policy alternatives in the network of organisations and stakeholders working to change policy for just and sustained economic outcomes. The IEJ will bolster its efforts to translate economic research and ideas into popular material (including translation into different languages) in support of policy education, training, and advocacy. The public presentation of the IEJ’s work, through traditional and social media and other public platforms, remains another important means to contest narratives informed by economic orthodoxy.

The IEJ has also been successful at building capacity within the Institute and the field of economic analysis, for example, through the Rethinking Economics for Africa student programme. Strengthening this, so that progressive economic analysis, teaching, learning, and policies, may be advanced by a myriad of people and institutions is a key strategic priority. This also allows the Institute to be a “pipeline” for those trained by, or within, the Institute, into multiple sites of economic decision making, with particular priority given to advancing Black women and youth in these spaces.

Finally, the IEJ must continue to harness its convening power vested in the reputation it has established as an organisation committed to bringing about economic justice and producing high-quality work output in pursuit of this ambition.



PROGRAMMATIC OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Drawing from our situational analysis and organisational vision, mission, and goals, and in the context of our theory of change, the IEJ has identified **three programmatic objectives** to guide its work in this strategy cycle. These programmatic objectives are realised through work on particular projects that individually and collectively achieve stipulated outcomes. The below includes an indication of the type of projects and activities that fall under each of these objectives; elaborating on this is undertaken as part of the implementation planning associated with this strategy.

In addition, two cross-cutting programmatic objectives have been defined.

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.

Cross cutting:

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 partnership and alliances. As economic justice is a global endeavour, international and Global South partnerships will also be developed where appropriate.

OBJECTIVE 1



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

Achieving our vision requires fundamental shifts in the manner in which we organise our economies. IEJ views the prevailing macroeconomic and development frameworks as particularly entrenched, insufficiently challenged, and systematically producing, and reproducing, inequities and rights deprivations. The transversal macroeconomic issues affecting the Global South include, although are not limited to, cuts in vital public services and social transfers, unproductive and regressive tax regimes, debt distress, capital flight, and privatisation and financialisation. The mainstream economic development models that give rise to these are entrenched through power inequities and anti-democratic systems of governance. These have particularly harmful impacts on workers, women, youth, and rural communities, reinforcing intersecting forms of dispossession.

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. Equitable access to quality public services is both a goal to be fought for, and a way of increasing collective power through making society less reliant on the market. It also contributes to lifting the burden of social reproduction from women. Systemic change can only be realised through a more just distribution of power that democratises participation in economic decision-making within a normative framework that centres rights realisation and planetary wellbeing.

The IEJ's work in this space challenges prevailing economic policies and decision-making processes. Neoliberalism, and the associated economic orthodoxies that buttress it, are characterised by approaches that see redistributive policies as market distorting and public services as best provided through market mechanisms. To secure this, sites of economic decision making, whether international financial institutions or national treasuries, have been insulated from democratic control; have sidelined women, workers, and other marginalised groups; and been configured to benefit capital, particularly finance capital.

Projects and activities under this objective include:

- rethinking the developmental role of the state and models of public service provision and basic income challenging austerity;
- developing proposals for resource raising and spending that advance rights through an intersectional lens;
- contesting entrenched configurations of power in both national institutions – for example national treasuries – and international institutions – for example, the role of the IMF in Africa;
- and developing new macroeconomic and development frameworks.



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 embedded configurations of power, means contesting the modes of economic thinking and policy making that support them. This is in recognition that knowledge production across the African continent has been dominated by neoclassical and neoliberal economic paradigms. The dominance of “market fundamentalism” underpins the prevalence of “market-based” solutions, and the exclusion of a meaningful rights-based approach, in policy making. This has provided the intellectual and ideological cover for the exploitation of African, and other developing, countries.

Contesting this, in order to build more just futures, requires progressive paradigms of knowledge production – including decolonial and traditional knowledge, and indigenous epistemologies (theories of knowledge), as well as new and innovative ways of thinking – and new inter-disciplinary communities to develop and advance these. These alternatives should provide the tools to establish alternative ways of thinking, new (or revived) discourses and narratives, and innovative ways of organising our economies. This must involve tools of analysis that centre race, gender, class, and other intersecting lines of dispossession. Feminist and class analysis are particularly important in this regard. This is to gain a deeper understanding of the adverse and unjust consequences of orthodox economic policy on the one hand, and to strengthen the approaches necessary to inform the development of alternative policy proposals towards a just and sustainable economy on the other hand.

The IEJ’s work in this regard focuses on strengthening, and pushing the boundaries of, heterodox economic thinking and practice, feminist economics in particular. It aims to expand the pool of economic thinkers and actors trained in these approaches, and build connections between them, activists and policy makers.

Projects and activities under this objective include:

- **growing feminist economics communities of practice, including through the annual Feminist Economics Summer School and associated activities;**
- **supporting and pioneering the application of feminist analysis to new spheres of economic policy;**
- **cementing and expanding the Rethinking Economics for Africa movement to generate more progressive and pluralist modes of teaching, learning, and practice;**
- **generating new approaches to economic thinking, for example, at the intersection of economics and human rights;**
- **and projects which bring together African intellectuals and activists around challenging economic orthodoxies.**



OBJECTIVE 3

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

The IEJ's mission – to advance economic justice by collaborating in the provision and promotion of rigorous, accessible research and policy alternatives that empower progressive social forces to create systemic change – must be sensitive to the evolving contexts and the challenges faced by those we seek to benefit. 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 and production.

Achieving a just transition to an economy that centres planetary well-being – 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.

The IEJ's work in these regards centres the concerns of workers and marginalised communities. It acknowledges that a just transition and the creation of decent work means disrupting entrenched economic interests and existing patterns of accumulation and distribution. This is true both within and between national economies. The IEJ's approach pays particular attention to intersecting forms of dispossession, centring a feminist and class analysis. This entails, amongst other things, appreciating the gendered impacts and responses to climate change, prioritising women's voices, and giving equal attention to the realms of production and social reproduction, to 'productive' and 'care' work, and to the impact of climate change on workers and working class communities.

Projects and activities under this objective include:

- building concrete proposals for just transitions in priority sectors, including energy, agriculture, transport, and water;
- working to bring together climate justice, gender equity, human rights, and economic justice, through intersectional practice;
- and exploring ways in which labour markets have changed and the types of regulation that can secure decent work and living wages.

**CHANGING NARRATIVES
TO ADVANCE CHANGE:
OUR COMMUNICATIONS
OBJECTIVE**



OBJECTIVE 4

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

The manner in which the IEJ presents and communicates its work is integral to our success. First, to achieve our mission we need to clearly and accessibly present the future we want to see. Doing so pro-actively will imbue all advocacy and communications with a degree of purpose and hope, resonating with a range of audiences. Second, we must compellingly articulate the pathways required to build just economies. This requires deploying creative and impactful communication and advocacy tools. Doing so helps to build power amongst progressive social forces and support popular conscientisation and mobilisation (achieving change “from below”) and exert pressure on policymakers directly (achieving change “from above”). Third, central to contesting systems of power and achieving systemic change is shaping how we understand the status quo and building new narratives that buttress alternative policy approaches. This must strengthen, and push the boundaries of, heterodox economic thinking and practice.

By developing and amplifying our own voice, and that of progressive policy champions, the vision of the IEJ to affect economic and social change can be advanced. This requires a communications strategy underpinned by the full exploitation of the research-policy-advocacy nexus, that defines the IEJ, and that centres the concerns of workers, women, the youth, the unemployed, rural communities, and other marginalised groups.

Projects and activities under this objective include the ongoing development of a recognisable IEJ ‘brand’, presence, and voice, and the appropriate positioning of the IEJ to ensure reach, visibility, and impact. The communication and advocacy objective will support all other projects in reaching their objectives. Support here will include the translation of complex economic research and ideas, produced or co-produced by the IEJ, into clear and accessible content; the curation, positioning, and placement of this content on appropriate platforms that further the awareness and reach of the IEJ’s work; and the development of strategic and creative means through which the IEJ can leverage its research to affect positive change and shift policy through sustained and strategic advocacy.



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 involves a three-pronged approach.

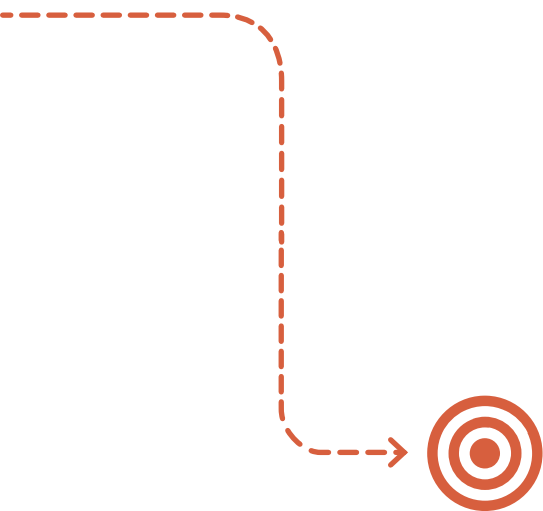
Strengthening strategic depth, coherence, and effective implementation, while deepening the monitoring, learning, and evaluation processes of the IEJ.

- **Political, intellectual, strategic, and theoretical depth and coherence:**
As noted already, greater coherence and integration across research themes is necessary to strengthen and deepen knowledge production. This can be established through: (1) shared theoretical underpinnings (conceptual and analytical); (2) common literature that informs the philosophical orientation to the world (ideas) and strengthens commitment to courses of action (practices); and (3) common methodological approaches.
- **Strategy implementation, monitoring, learning, and evaluation:**
Coherently translating a strategy into practice requires an on-going dialogue between the strategy and practical work of the IEJ. This is true both in its implementation and in appropriate monitoring, learning, and evaluation (MLE). Implementing an appropriate and robust MLE framework will allow monitoring of performance and impact and generate opportunities for continuous learning and improvement.

Centring people.

The IEJ's most valuable asset are the people who make up our staff team and Board. The team size, composition, and organisational structure can be consolidated and strengthened. This is complemented by organisational forms that prioritises not just what we do but how we do it and who we are.

- **Organisational culture and values:**
This strategy process has made explicit the organisational values required to build a basis for productive engagement and interaction internally and externally. These must be put into practice in order to engender a supportive organisational climate and culture.



- **Equity and justice:**

It is critical that the organisation lives its values of equity and justice. This must be reflected in the Institute's staff composition, leadership approaches, and operating processes. It is particularly important to foreground opportunities for, and the knowledge and experience of, Black women and youth.

- **Organisational design:**

This strategy process has helped the IEJ revise its organisational design to strengthen work processes (horizontal design); levels of work in terms of work roles and decision rights (vertical design); and coordinating and integrating mechanisms (lateral design), to support greater levels of cross-cutting teamwork. This should be revisited periodically.

- **Staffing plan:**


Achieving our programmatic objectives requires an expansion in the number of staff. However, this expansion should be carefully managed to fill appropriate programmatic and institutional gaps, and fit within the stipulated organisational design.

- **Staff development plan:**

Continued investment in the staff will enhance the work of the IEJ and is an important objective in itself. Opportunities for learning and strengthening capabilities must be identified so that every staff member has a short- and long-term development plan and career trajectory.

Securing adequate resources.

Securing funding to support the wide range of activities, and ensure fair remuneration, is a key priority. The development of a funding strategy and plan, and the appointment of dedicated fund-raising support is necessary to take advantage of the sound reputation the IEJ has established among donors and funders. The funding strategy should establish clear fund mobilisation targets, in line with the strategic priorities of the organisation.



NEXT STEPS: STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION AND ON-GOING LEARNING

Our strategy implementation plan sets out a roadmap for advancing our five strategic objectives, and further unpacks the projects we'll undertake.

OUR FORTHCOMING IMPLEMENTATION PLAN CONTAINS:

- Project objectives, outcomes, outputs, and activities.
- The teams and staff members responsible for implementing the activities.
- Time frames with clear milestones for tracking progress.
- Metrics of success and a plan for measuring them.
- The allocation of resources necessary to drive the strategic plan forward.

We're also developing an organisational learning agenda that allows for responsiveness, adaptation, and flexibility as we act, learn, and experiment. As noted under **Objective 5**, we will develop systems for taking stock of the impact of our work. This is critical for ensuring that our work is both effective, and remains relevant within a shifting context.

The IEJ is also continuing our journey of organisational development in the areas of organisational values, culture, equity, and justice. Achieving our objectives requires us to focus on not just what we do, but how we do it.

Fulfilling this strategy will be a collective effort and we welcome feedback from partners, allies, and critical friends.

IEJ'S GOVERNANCE

IEJ Leadership

GILAD ISAACS | *Executive Director and Co-Founder*

BASANI BALOYI | *Programme Director*

NEIL COLEMAN | *Senior Policy Specialist and Co-Founder*

LINDIWE NKUTHA | *Operations and Finance Manager*

IEJ Board

PUNDY PILLAY | *Chairperson*

Professor of Economics and Public Finance, Wits School of Governance

DZODZI TSIKATA | *Deputy Chairperson*

Director of the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana

SIVIWE MHLANA | *Treasurer*

Researcher at the Southern Centre for Inequality Studies, University of the Witwatersrand

LEBOGANG MULAISI | *Board Member*

Labour Market Policy Coordinator at Congress of South African Trade Unions

PALI LEHOHLA | *Board Member*

Former Statistician-General of South Africa

FIONA TREGENNA | *Board Member*

DST/NRF South African Research Chair in Industrial Development, University of Johannesburg

RUTH NTLOKOTSE | *Board Member*

President of the South African Federation of Trade Unions