

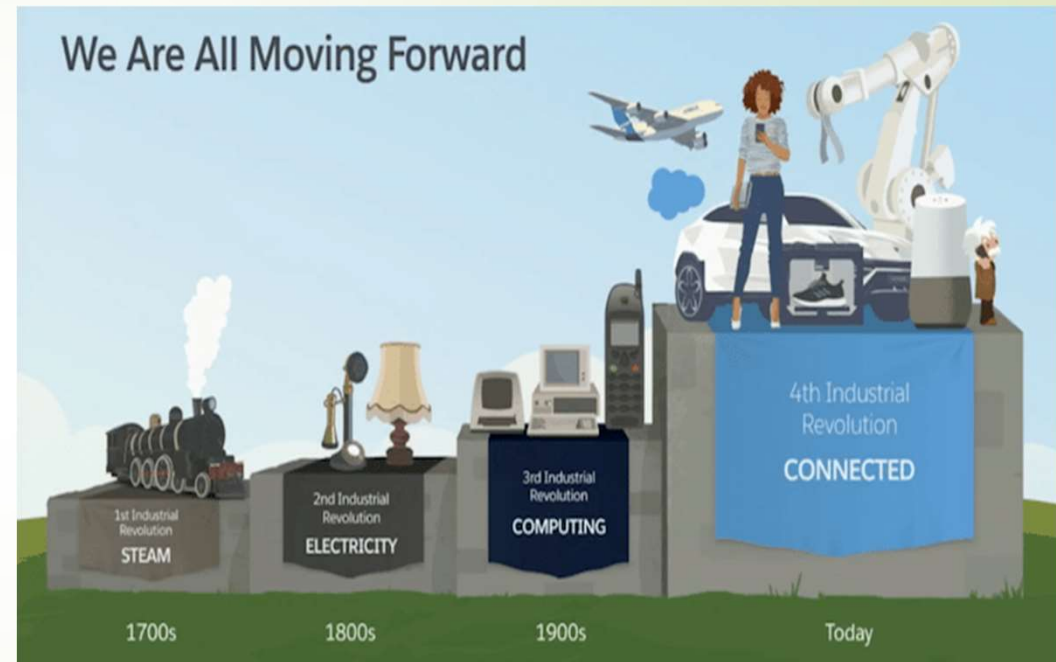
A Just Transition for the 4IR: The way to go for Labour?

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In this presentation

- ▶ Setting the scene- Labour engagement with the Just Transition and the 4IR
- ▶ Objective of the presentation
- ▶ Concept of a Just Transition: History and Key Pillars
- ▶ The 4IR: Meaning, Opportunities and Challenges
- ▶ Why the Just Transition is relevant to the 4IR?
- ▶ Suggestions on how workers should respond?
- ▶ Discussion?



Are we?

Setting the Scene

- ▶ For a long time labour has been engaged in the discussion of a Just Transition in the energy space
- ▶ Recently labour has been engaged with the 4IR
- ▶ As labour grapples with the Just Transition in energy, it also has to face the challenges posed by the 4IR

So, Why this presentation?

Objective of Presentation

- ▶ Is to bring to the fore some practical proposals that labour can draw from the Just Transition in the energy space
- ▶ It will do so by highlighting similarities between the Just Transition in the energy space and the country's migration to the 4IR that are of specific significance to workers

Concept of a Just Transition: History and Key Pillars

- ▶ The trade union movement has been hailed as the developers of the Just Transition Framework. It was an early trade union demand that has now become a mainstream policy tool applied by international institutions and treaties, (ILO 2018). It is a term highly synonymous with the Organised Labour Movement with regards to migration towards a low Carbon Economy.
- ▶ It was an intervention that was aimed at making sure that workers who would lose their jobs due to environmental protection policies and accompanying migration to cleaner energies would be supported (Smith, 2017).
- ▶ Organised labour put forward four pre-requisites or characteristics that would make the energy transition just from a workers' perspective. It relied on the Decent Work Agenda of International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2015) in coming up with these pre-requisites.

Concept of a Just Transition: History and Key Pillars

- ▶ Organised labour put forward four pre-requisites or characteristics that would make the energy transition just from a workers' perspective. It relied on the Decent Work Agenda of International Labour Organisation (ILO, 2015) in coming up with these pre-requisites.
 - ▶ Social Dialogue
 - ▶ Social Protection
 - ▶ Rights at work
 - ▶ Employment and Employment Creation

The 4IR: Meaning, Opportunities and Challenges

- ▶ The 4IR is loosely understood as a concept that is highly synonymous with technology. It is expected to bring with it changes in the manner in which goods and services are produced and are marketed.
- ▶ According to various scholars (Schwab, 2017; Ayentimi & Burgess, 2018; Kaggwa, 2019) the 4IR is characterised largely by a range of technologies that combine digital, physical, and biological systems to operate as one.
- ▶ The 4IR is considered as an important driver of social and economic growth as it is anticipated to increase production potential at a more rapid pace, using advanced technologies.

The 4IR: Meaning, Opportunities and Challenges cont...

- ▶ The previous three industrial revolutions (1IR, 2IR and 3IR) all have had an impact on the future of work and it is only fitting that trade unions are concerned about how the 4IR will impact work as well.
- ▶ The 4IR poses a real threat to organised labour due to its potential to lead to significant job losses and the displacement of workers based on skills, geographical location or new workplace configuration.

Why the Just Transition is relevant to the 4IR?

- ▶ The assumptions and labour concerns that motivated for calls for a just transition in the energy debates are very similar to those labour faces under the 4IR.
- ▶ The threat to employment and well-being of workers that was faced under the energy transition from fossil to low-carbon energy mirrors the threats that confront organised labour with the emergence of the 4IR.
- ▶ As such organised labour should borrow from the energy transition, the labour perspective conceptual framework and recommendations in dealing with the 4IR.

Suggestions on how workers should respond

- ▶ Although the 4IR is likely to increase productivity and probably propel countries to faster rates of development, its effect on employment in the short term, is likely to be negative. **A number of existing jobs will be lost!**
- ▶ Organised labour has to make sure that the well-being of the working class does not become a casualty of the technological changes that accompany the 4IR.
- ▶ Drawing from the energy just transition, it should demand that a just transition to the 4IR should be underpinned by social dialogue, social protection, protection of rights in the workplace, and job protection and creation.

Organised Labour should DEMAND a Just Transition to the 4IR!!

DISCUSSION