

The Politics of the Energy Transition in the Global South

Webinar Series

Webinar #1: The Political Economy of Country Platforms





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... in other words – you can say what was said, but not who said it!



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- Presentation (Tim Kelsall) (15 mins)
 - Fishbowl format discussion (35 mins)
 - Break (5 mins)
 - Breakout rooms to consider key questions (20 mins)
 - Plenary discussion (25 mins)
 - Wrap up (10 mins)

PEA and Energy Transition Country Platforms

Tim Kelsall



ODI Global



Overview

- What does PEA add to our understanding of energy transition country platforms?
- 2 parts:
 - PEA of energy transitions in general
 - PEA of country platforms as a specific institutional mechanism to advance the energy transition
- PEA's key insight
- IPE vs country-specific PEA of energy transitions
- Country Platforms
- PEA and Country Platforms



‘In order to identify politically viable entry points into ambitious climate policy, one needs to understand the underlying political economy, that is, how the economic structure, the political institutions and the political environment shape policy outcomes’
Jakob, p. 3



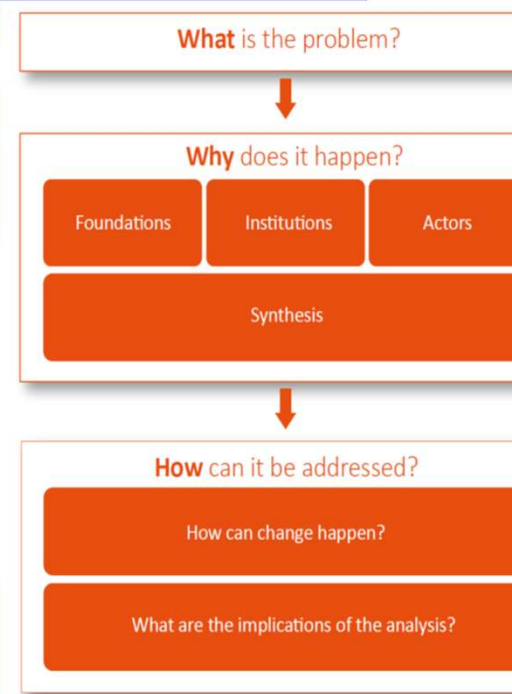
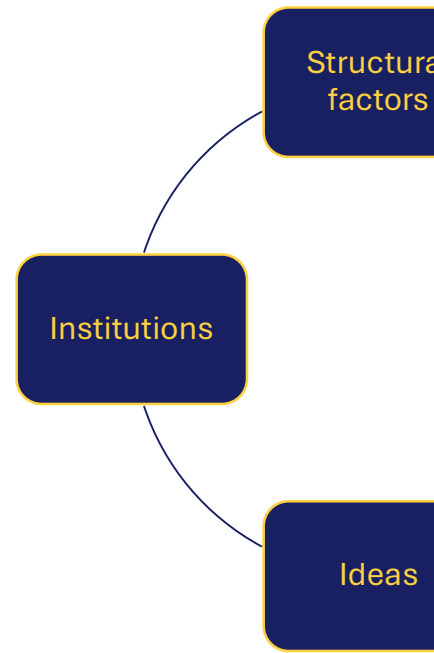


Global/International Political Economy Approaches

International Political Economy



Country-level Political Economy



Slide 7

NM1 Your little cycle is nice, but might be an opportunity to plug the ODI/TPP framework (and course - a few places still available!) that we use for country level PEA

Neil McCulloch, 2026-01-14T12:21:08.192

TK1 0 Quick reaction: The cycle was meant to be a generic amalgam of a variety of PE approaches. Happy to substitute our framework, but it is a 'problem' framework, not a country one. So what is the problem? That the country's energy transition is not fast enough/just enough?

Tim Kelsall, 2026-01-14T16:02:24.492



The Political

FIGURE 0.2. The climate policy space



Image

Alexand

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political
settlement
development

THEORY, EVIDENCE, IMPLICATIONS

Why are some countries more successful than others? This report synthesizes the latest research on the framework conditions for climate action, state capacity, and suggests policy options.

Keywords: climate policy; credibility; climate action





Common themes





Energy Transition Country Platforms



‘CPs are voluntary country-level mechanisms, set out by governments and designed to foster collaboration among development partners, based on a shared strategic vision and priorities’

The screenshot shows a webpage from ODI Global. The header includes the ODI Global logo, a search icon, and a menu icon. Below the header, there is a yellow bar with the text 'Trending: Sudan Israel-Gaza crisis COP30'. The main content area has a dark blue background. On the left, the article title 'Country platforms for climate action: something borrowed, something new?' is displayed in white text. Below the title, the date '24 June 2022 - Emerging analysis -' and the authors 'Sierd Hadley, Shakira Mustapha, Sarah Colenbrander, Mark Miller, Adriana Quevedo' are listed. On the right, there is a photograph of two industrial chimneys emitting thick white smoke into a cloudy sky. At the bottom right of the page, the text 'Chimneys with smoke. Pixabay/CCO' is visible.



What are Political Settlements?

- A political settlement is an agreement or understanding among a society's most powerful groups about the basic rules of the political and economic game
- These rules provide opportunities for powerful groups to receive a 'minimally acceptable' distribution of benefits
- This distribution prevents a descent into all-out warfare or disorder.



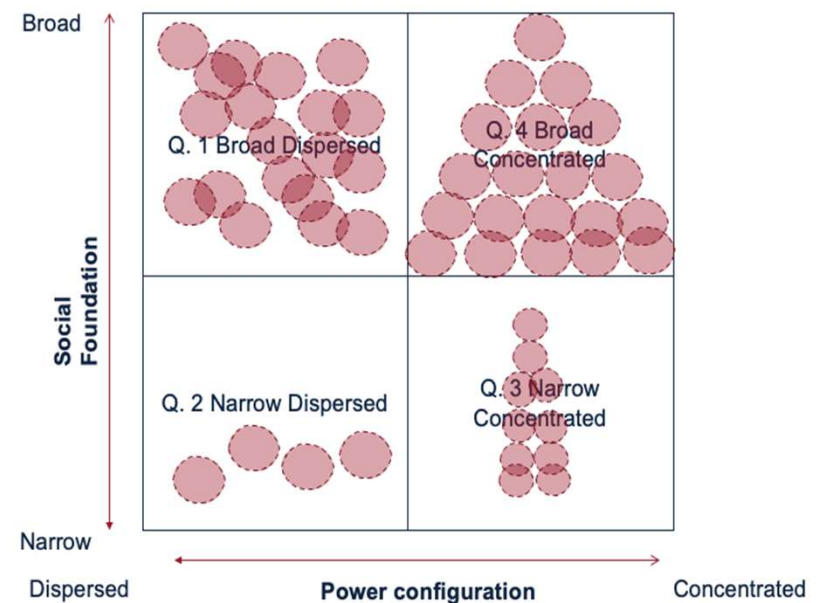
One size won't fit all:
Designing country platforms for
different political contexts

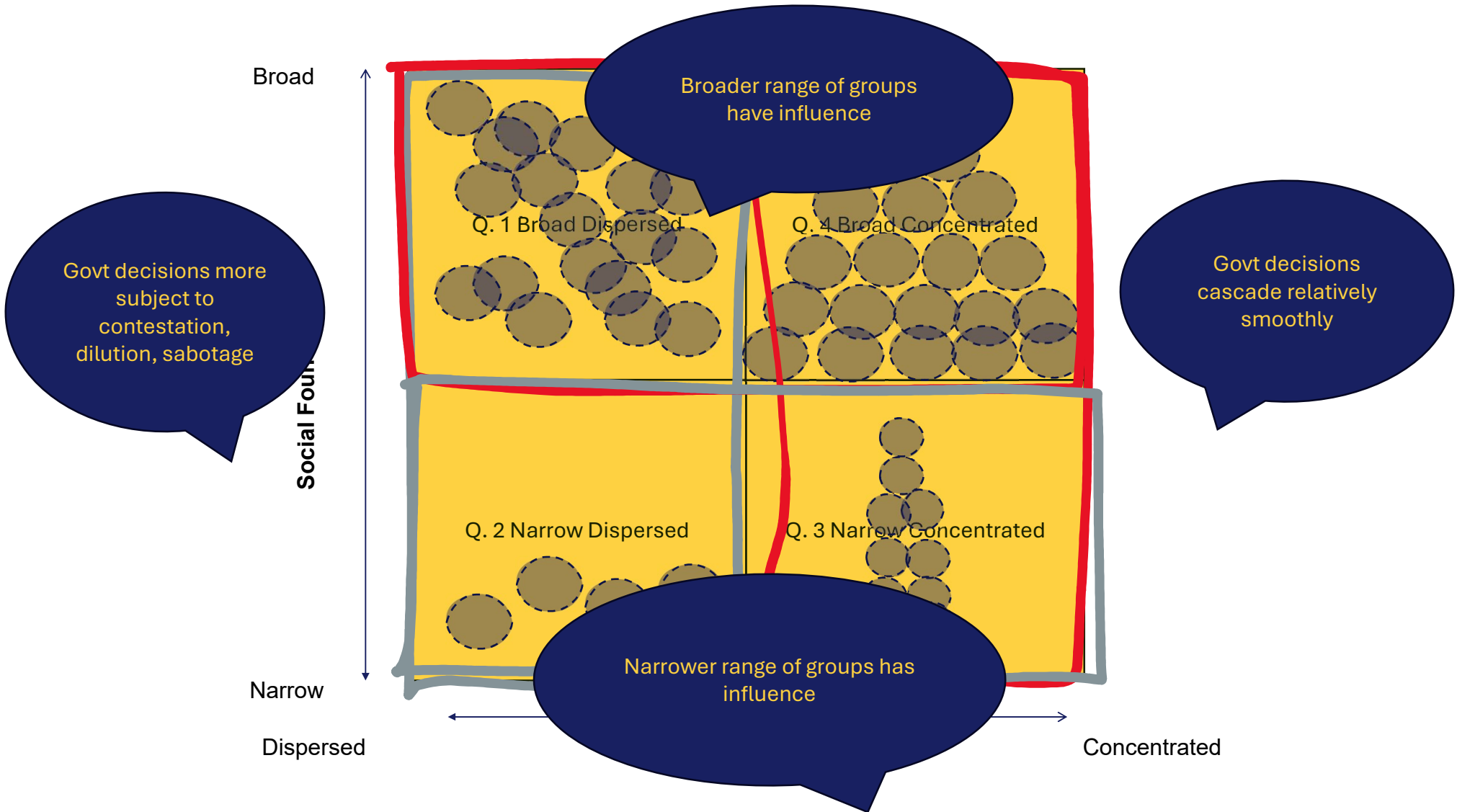
Tim Kelsall, Sarah Colenbrander and Nick Simpson
March 2024

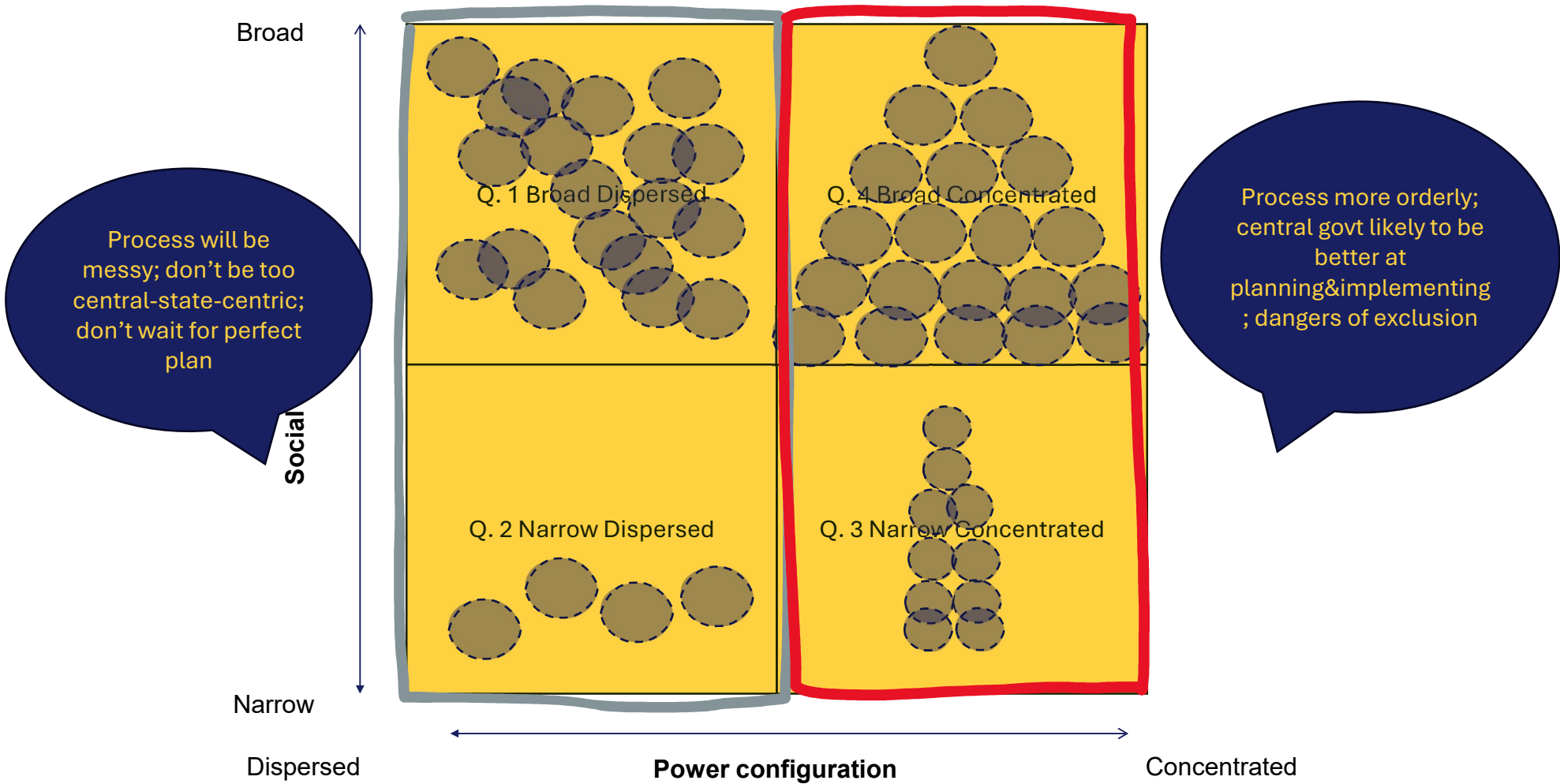


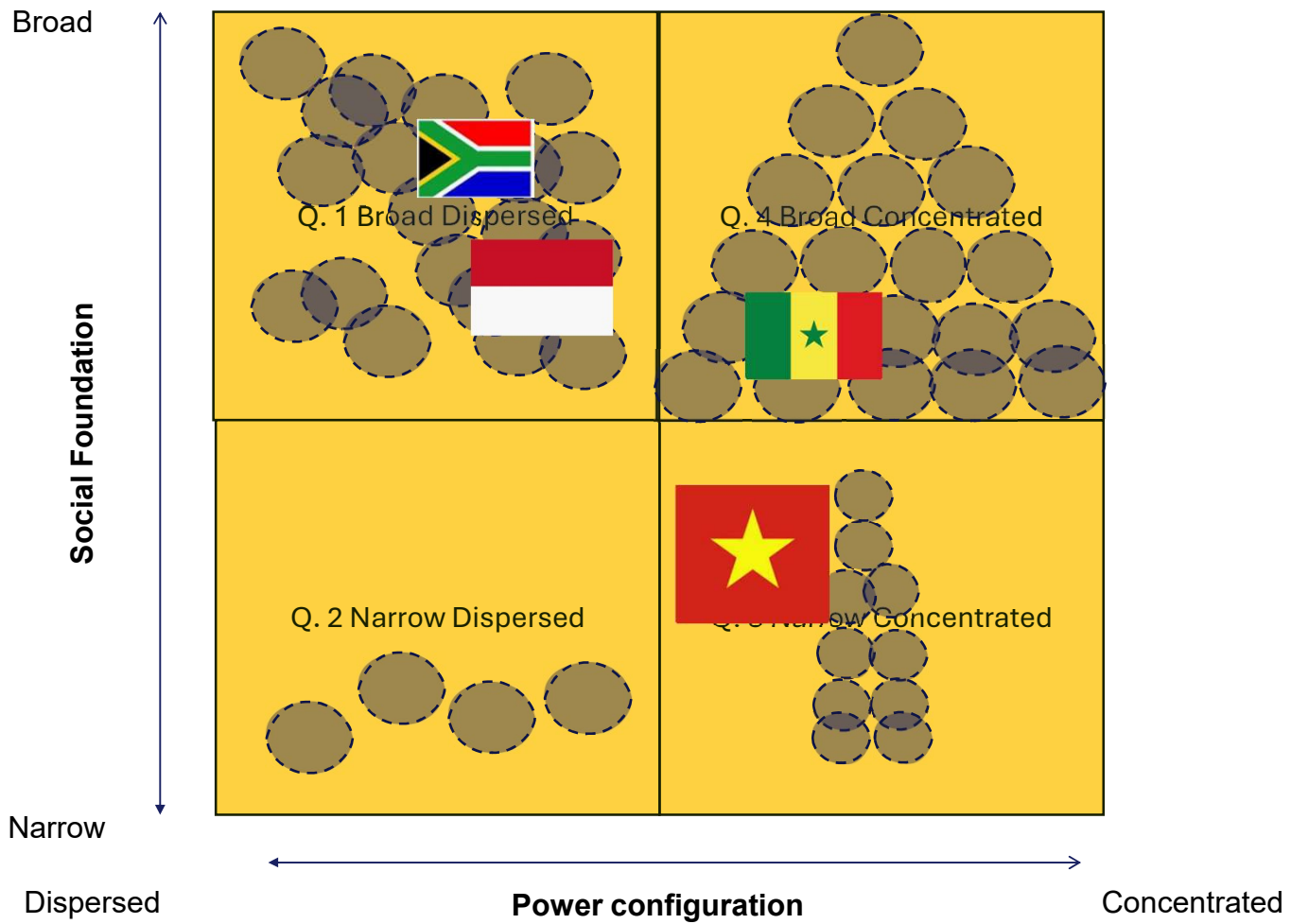
Settlements can be categorised along two dimensions:

- The social foundation (broad or narrow): the breadth and depth of the (insider) groups that have the potential to seriously disrupt or change the settlement;
- The power configuration (concentrated or dispersed): the degree to which power is de facto concentrated in the country's top leadership.











Additional PEA Questions

- Are the objectives of the platform realistic in the context?
- Are the platform's institutional structures well suited to the landscape of power?
- Are the personnel, including the IPG, sufficiently attuned to the technical and political issues involved in the transition?
- Is the strategy and sequencing based on an understanding of the underlying political economy?
- Do platform personnel have the right political backing/connections?
- Can the IPG maintain domestic political support/finance for the undertaking?

Slide 16

NM1 These are great questions, but I think there are far too many. Can I suggest a radical approach. Hide these slides and just finish with one question i.e. What have we learned from the practical experience of implementing these platforms about how to tailor platforms to the political context of the country?

This would be a nice segue into the Fishbowl discussion.

You can share the questions with Crispian and he can touch on some of the issues in his remarks.

Neil McCulloch, 2026-01-14T13:14:14.222

TK1 0 For this slide, I really want to talk about and acknowledge some of the prior PEA work that's been done on CPs, esp the CGD paper. Maybe 'Insights' would be a better term than 'Questions'? For the next slide, I agree.

Tim Kelsall, 2026-01-14T15:56:37.890

Closing thought:

“What have we learned from the practical experience of implementing these platforms about how to tailor platforms to the political context of the country?”



- The Fishbowl format is intended to allow you to watch and listen to a conversation on a topic, just as though you were watching fish in a fishbowl
- To achieve this effect online please do the following:
 1. Put yourself on mute and switch your camera ON
 2. Open the Chat
 3. Go to View and click:
 - Hide Self-View
 - Hide Non-video participants
 4. Now switch your camera OFF
 5. If you are invited into the Fishbowl – switch your camera ON



Questions for breakout rooms



1. How should the design of country platforms take account of **differing views within the government** about how the energy transition should proceed? i.e. How do you build **ownership**?
2. What is the best way of aligning the **institutional structures** of the country platform and the **types of personnel** involved with the nature of the political settlement in the country?
3. How can countries best navigate the **political economy of development partners** to achieve the best result for the country?



Webinars on the political economy of the energy transition



1. The Political Economy of Country Platforms
 - Date: 15 January 2026
 - Host: ODI
2. The Political Economy of Carbon Pricing
 - Date: 19 February 2026
 - Host: International Institute for Sustainable Development
3. The Political Economy of Gender and Energy
 - Date: 26 February or 5 March (TBD)
 - Host: ENERGIA (Energy and Gender Network for Sustainable Energy)

If you are keen to attend please email neil.mcculloch@thepolicypractice.com