

COVID-19 and ENTERPRISES

Briefing Note [No. 12]

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Contents

- [1. Resources for enterprise response](#)
- [2. Government support to enterprises](#)
- [3. Enterprises response](#)
- [4. Workers response](#)

The COVID-19 pandemic has been affecting enterprises of all sizes and types in unprecedented ways. This brief aims to highlight key information resources available on the functioning of enterprises in the crisis, including its impact on enterprises, responses by enterprises and policy measures to support affected enterprises.

Disclaimer: Due to the rapid evolution of the situation around the COVID-19, there has been a large and growing amount of information resources related to enterprises and the pandemic. Therefore, this brief contains not only the resources of the ILO, but also those from external organizations. Reference to those external resources does not constitute an endorsement by the ILO of the opinions expressed in them.

Visit the ILO website for regular updates on responses to the COVID-19 crisis.

► ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus

ENTERPRISES Department

1. Resources for enterprise response

[ILO - Interventions to support enterprises during the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery](#) | 16 April 2020

This brief presents a range of policy actions to support enterprises in dealing with the impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic and response measures. It focuses on actions to enable business continuity and assist enterprises in laying the grounds for recovery, which are critical to mitigate expected massive job losses and pave the way out of the crisis. The brief draws upon policy measures various countries across the globe are developing and implementing during this pandemic.

[ILO - COVID-19 Enterprises Resources](#)

ILO Enterprises department's topic webpage on covid-19. It hosts policy advice, practical tools and resources, and up-to-date briefing notes for the use of all kinds of enterprises.

[ILO - SME resilience COVID19](#)

This webpage looks at: 1) What we know about how economies react to (health) crises, what this means for MSMEs and their workers and what comes after, 2) What the SME unit of the ILO is doing and planning to do in the future to address COVID 19 and to strengthen MSME support and eco-system resilience, 3) Other MSME Information Resources.

[ITC ILO - New training course on the government response, SME resilience and COVID 19](#)

The course has been designed along 2 blocks with 12 modules. The block 1 is on key policies to mitigate the impacts and sustain SMEs during and after crisis (protecting working capital; improving access to finance; boosting demand and preserving value chains; and protecting employment and social security) and the block 2 will focus on what MSMEs can do to protect themselves (forthcoming).

ITC launches COVID-19 dashboard and offers free access to Market Analysis Tools | 9 April 2020

The International Trade Centre has launched a new dashboard to monitor temporary trade measures adopted by governments responding to the global COVID-19 pandemic. At the same time, ITC has announced that it would offer free access to its trade statistics and company data to support companies during the crisis. Both initiatives will help micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) and policymakers make well-informed decisions during the coronavirus emergency.

ITC launches new webinar series in response to the COVID-19 | 8 April 2020

SheTrades, the ITC's initiative for economic empowerment of women, launched a new webinar series titled 'Responding to the Business Impact of COVID-19', together with partners, UPS, Maersk, VISA, Working Capital Associates and their technical experts to offer insight and guidance to small businesses as they navigate the operational stress caused by COVID-19. The series of six webinars will cover the following topics: operations and supply chain, crisis management and response, financial planning; and cash flows and liquidity.

OECD - COVID-19 and Responsible Business Conduct | 16 April 2020

This note, prepared by the OECD Centre for Responsible Business Conduct, reviews the challenges the COVID-19 crisis presents for business behaviour and outlines initial responses by governments and companies. It describes the rationale and method for adopting a responsible business conduct approach to address the crisis and sets down the potential short-term and long-term benefits of such an approach.

Business Fights Poverty - Action toolkit to help companies to support their MSME partners | 16 April 2020

The new Business and COVID-19 Response Centre offers a response framework, action mapping platform, and action toolkits on how large companies can support their MSME partners in their value chains such as suppliers (including small-scale farmers), distributors, and retailers.

2. Government support to enterprises

[ILO portal on the country policy responses](#)

This ILO portal is being frequently updated to provide recent updates on the measures implemented by governments, employers' and workers' organizations, and the ILO by country and territory.

[#EUvsVirus Pan-European Hackathon](#) | 24-26 April 2020

The European Commission, in close collaboration with the EU member states, will host a pan-European hackathon to connect civil society, innovators, partners and investors across Europe in order to develop innovative solutions for coronavirus-related challenges.

[An EU approach for efficient contact tracing apps to support gradual lifting of confinement measures](#) | 16 April 2020

To establish voluntary contact tracing and warning systems that fully respect privacy, the European Commission has put forward a toolbox and guidelines. Bluetooth-based proximity apps should only be used voluntarily, be highly secure, easily accessible, effective and fully respect privacy while supplying non-personal aggregated data to epidemiological public health bodies to protect and save lives. This is part of a common coordinated approach to support the gradual lifting of confinement measures.

[UK - £20 million for ambitious technologies to build UK resilience following coronavirus outbreak](#) | 3 April 2020

Grants of up to £50,000 will be available to technology and research-focussed businesses to develop new ways of working and help build resilience in industries such as delivery services, food manufacturing, retail and transport, as well as support people at home in circumstances like those during the coronavirus outbreak.

3. Enterprises response

Employee protection

[South African Future Trust Employer Relief Fund](#) | 3 April 2020

Some small businesses are already receiving financial assistance from the South African Future Trust, established by business leaders Nicky and Jonathan Oppenheimer to offer an initial R1 billion in support to small and medium enterprises impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. The aim of SAFT is to provide interest-free loans to qualifying SMMEs, exclusively for the purpose of paying a specified amount of money to their permanent employees who are at risk of losing their jobs or suffering loss of income due to COVID-19.

[German Retail sets up a staff placement platform to allow for temporarily unemployed people to work in retail](#) | 16 April 2020

The German Retail Federation (HDE) and the EHI Retail Institute have set up a staff placement platform allowing temporarily unemployed people to find work in food retail, logistics and other sectors needing extra staff.

[How can fashion brands mitigate the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on garment workers?](#) | 15 April 2020

With the COVID-19 pandemic provoking a global health and economic emergency, the OECD's Dorothy Lovell looks at how OECD guidance on responsible business conduct can help governments and business address the impacts of COVID-19 in a way that mitigates harm to workers and supply chains in the garment sector.

Supply chain stabilization

[Recession-proof your supply chain](#) | 13 April 2020

When a recession hits, customers can reduce your revenues and stop your outbound flow of products faster than you can trim expenses and stop your inbound flow of raw materials. Working capital will be stressed as your

materials pipeline backs up and profits will take a hit as costs overshoot revenues. This framework gives supply chain managers six simple ways to prepare for downturn before it happens—and to respond constructively when the economic slump arrives.

[How to strengthen your supply chain during the ultimate disruption](#) | 14

April 2020

From adopting new tools and mindsets for analyzing, mapping, managing, and monitoring risk, supply chains will have the chance to continue moving forward while being better prepared for the next major disruption. Here are three approaches to fortifying your supply chain in an era of escalating disruption.

Production innovation and adaptation

[H&M starts protective apron production at supplier](#) | 15 April 2020

H&M, the world's second-biggest fashion retailer, said on Wednesday it had started producing protective aprons at a supplier and would deliver one million aprons to the Swedish healthcare system over the coming two weeks. Larger rival Inditex, the owner of the Zara brand, is also making medical supplies, while British fashion brand Barbour said on Wednesday it had turned over its production line to making protective gowns.

[South Mediterranean clusters mobilized in the fight against COVID-19](#) | 14

April 2020

The essential role played by clusters in the Covid-19 crisis management is emerging also in South-Mediterranean countries, where these actors are mobilizing their ecosystem to face the health emergency experienced by at national level. This article highlight some examples of successful initiatives in Morocco and Tunisia.

[Urban logistics benefit small businesses in Guinea during COVID-19](#) | 13

April 2020

A Guinean start-up Aoudi Food used to produce and export organic honey-

based products, with several retail stores and four full-time and 20 seasonal workers. With commercial flights grounded, the start-up revamped the online market and started home delivery services.

Support to customers and communities

Coop Sweden and no-profit organisation “Elderly Contact” start co-operation to help the elderly | 7 April 2020

The Corona pandemic hits particularly hard on elderly people. For this reason, Coop Sweden has initiated a co-operation with the no-profit organisation “Elderly Contact”, which works to break social isolation among lonely elderly people. Elderly contact volunteers now help the isolated elderly to buy food and, thanks to the collaboration, can pay with a digital purchasing service in Coop's stores so that they do not have to spend money themselves.

UK's Morrisons gives discount to health workers battling coronavirus | 14 April 2020

Morrisons, Britain's fourth biggest supermarket group, said it is giving National Health Service (NHS) workers a 10% discount to support them through the coronavirus crisis. It is the first of Britain's 'Big Four' to give a monetary discount to 1.5 million NHS workers, who have already been offered priority shopping hours by market leader Tesco, Sainsbury's, Walmart owned Asda and Morrisons.

Other responses

UNEP Finance Initiative signatories share responses to COVID-19

To help support their customers and in turn communities in the most effective ways, UNEP Finance Initiative's coalition of over 200 banks from over 60 countries has been sharing practices, solutions and lessons learned as they respond to the COVID-19 crisis and its economic impacts.

[Digital health companies optimistic on COVID-19's long-term business impact](#) | 15 April 2020

Many are anticipating greater adoption of digital health services and more favorable regulatory and reimbursement environments, according to a recent poll sampling 513 digital health and adjacent companies.

[As COVID-19 hits F&B sector, calls emerge for delivery apps to lower commission fees](#) | 16 April 2020

Singapore: The “very high” commission fees charged by food delivery platforms are eating into the already-thin profits of food and beverage (F&B) businesses, said an industry group as it called for these fees to be cut during the COVID-19 pandemic and in the longer run.

[Coronavirus : quand le secteur privé africain se porte au chevet des États](#) | 15 April 2020

Par sa participation aux différents fonds d’urgence lancés par les gouvernements africains, mais aussi par des dons matériel ou encore la mise à disposition de sa logistique, le secteur privé du continent s’implique massivement dans la lutte contre le Covid-19.

[Los bajos precios amenazan a las compañías petroleras privadas en Colombia](#) | 16 April 2020

Las compañías petroleras privadas en Colombia recortarán la producción, reducirán la exploración y algunas podrían cerrar por completo si los precios se mantienen en los niveles actuales y los costos de producción siguen altos, dijo el dirigente de la asociación de productores privados de crudo.

[Julio Pardavé: Reactiva Perú no va a llegar a las MYPES \[VIDEO\]](#) | 14 April 2020

Presidente de la Asociación MYPE Perú aseguró que iniciativa del Gobierno no beneficiará a microempresas por alto nivel de informalidad.

4. Workers response

Cuarentena por COVID-19 : el drama de millones de trabajadores latinoamericanos | 13 April 2020

Empleados despedidos, empresas con pérdidas o inactivas y un futuro muy incierto... En América latina, millones de trabajadores sufren ya el duro impacto del parón económico y del cierre de fronteras decretados por muchos países de la región para enfrentar la pandemia de coronavirus. RFI recogió el testimonio de algunos de ellos y analiza algunas de las soluciones que pueden implementar los Estados.

Trabajadores protestan tras muertes en fábricas EEUU en frontera mexicana | 16 April 2020

Varias protestas han surgido afuera de fábricas a lo largo de la frontera entre México y Estados Unidos en los últimos días tras la muerte de algunos trabajadores, incluidos empleados de empresas estadounidenses, a causa de lo que los manifestantes dijeron era el coronavirus