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COVID-19 in Africa: experience sharing and recommendations for the private sector

Thursday 9 April 2020

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IOE Covid-19 Response

Wednesday 8 April 2020

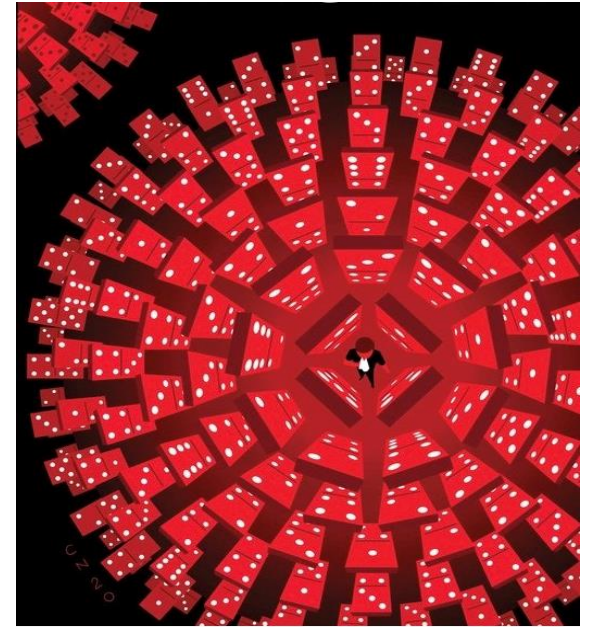


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Mitigating the impact of the crisis

- The health and livelihoods of workers and the sustainability of enterprises are at risk on the global level
- The impact of Covid-19 on the business world is unprecedented
- Employers have a key role to play in helping flatten the curve and in supporting political decision-makers with mitigation efforts
- IOE has mobilised to provide its full support to members:
 - ✓ A series of specific digital conferences
 - ✓ A dedicated digital platform
 - ✓ Engaging different forums and partners internationally



Informations appropriées et partage de solutions

- **Digital conferences**

- Employer and business organisations: COVID-19 response (18/3)
- How to develop effective Human Resource telework policies (23/3)
- Economic advocacy and ensuring business continuity (25/3)
- Private sector contributions in health emergency situations (26/3)
- Insights on diverse labour measures implemented by employers in response to Covid-19 (1/4)
- IOE-ITUC Digital Summit: What needs to happen next in Covid-19 response (2/4)
- IOE digital conference on the impact of COVID-19 on global trade, supply chains and employment (8/4)

- **Regional exchanges:** Asia (27/3), Latin America(2/4), Africa (8 and 9/4), Europe (21/4)

- **Online sessions of our Business Networks:**

- Global Occupational Safety and Health Network (GOSH) (24/3)
- Global Industrial Relations Network (GIRN) (30/3)



Partnerships and joint action

- **Social dialogue: joint statement IOE-ITUC**

- Commitments for coordinated action on a global problem
- Specific measures for business, employment, and salary support
- Call for a joint meeting with labour and finance ministers to strengthen coherence and collective action



- **Alignment with WHO: Coordinating private sector action**

- Mobilising members' engagement and action with governments and in support of health systems
- Raise awareness of WHO's COVID-Solidarity Response Fund and support the Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan

- **Continued engagement with UN**

- Supporting the UN Secretary-General's Covid-19 action plan

Thank you!

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African Exchange Conference on COVID 19

Presentation made by George Khaki, Executive Director

Country context (Malawi)

- Landlocked country
- Mainly agriculture dependent
- Largely informal economy
- A large number of SMEs
- Hand to mouth economy

Challenges

- Multiplicity of information sources
- Political landscape hindering information dissemination
- Disruption of supply chains
- No unemployment benefits
- No laws to support temporary lay-offs of workers
- Weak health infrastructure
- No direct participation by private sector in Government decision making
- No common understanding of essential services

Employer/Private sector responses

- ECAM took lead making proposals to Government
- ECAM in the process of transitioning from physical to virtual meetings
- ECAM doing a study on the impact of COVID-19
- Business formed a broad coalition to be talking to Government as one entity
- Businesses working with Government to complement its health infrastructure and response
- Flexible working arrangements by employers
- Provision of PPEs
- Businesses moving into manufacturing of COVID-related materials

Lessons

- Working together as one voice helps industry build strength and allows dealing with multiplicity of ideas very quickly
- Besides industry/sector specific responses, the industry can play a big role in complementing Government efforts in crises
- Such crises open up further business opportunities
- Members are looking up to employers organizations to navigate through the crisis and bring their views to government

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