

COVID-19 and Enterprises

Briefing Note [No. 9]

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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

1. Resources for enterprise response

[UN Global Compact - Special Academy Series: Uniting Business to Respond to COVID-19](#)

The UN Global Compact is broadcasting a special series of live Academy sessions every Tuesday at 10:00 EST/15:00 GMT/22:00 SGT to provide information, insights and inspiration on how businesses around the world can respond to and recover from the COVID-19 crisis. Register for the upcoming Special Academy Session: [“COVID-19 and Supporting the World of Work”](#).

Panellists include Guy Ryder, Director-General, ILO; Roberto Suárez Santos, Secretary-General, IOE; and Sharan Burrow, General Secretary, ITUC.

[McKinsey - Getting ahead of the next stage of the coronavirus crisis](#) | 2 April 2020

Most companies will be very vulnerable to the economic fallout of extended public- and employee-isolation measures. As the number of issues your business is facing will likely rapidly escalate, there are two practical steps you can take to help stay ahead: 1) Launch a PLAN-AHEAD TEAM to get ahead of the next stage of the crisis; and 2) Direct that team to work across multiple time horizons, using five frames.

[McKinsey - Coronavirus and technology supply chains: How to restart and rebuild](#) | 3 April 2020

Drawing on precedents, this article sets out short- and mid- to long-term responses for technology manufacturers to restore production swiftly while building flexibility and resilience against further shocks.

[FAO - COVID-19 and the risk to food supply chains: How to respond?](#) | 29 March 2020

A protracted pandemic crisis could quickly put a strain on the food supply chains, which is a complex web of interactions involving farmers, agricultural inputs, processing plants, shipping, retailers and more. The shipping industry is already reporting slowdowns because of port closures, and logistics hurdles

could disrupt the supply chains in the coming weeks. This policy brief provides recommendations on measures to consider in order to keep the supply chain alive in these times of crisis.

Invest India Business Immunity Platform

The Invest India Business Immunity Platform (hosted by the National Investment Promotion and Facilitation Agency) is designed as a comprehensive resource to help businesses and investors get real-time updates on India's active response to COVID-19. This dynamic and constantly updating platform keeps a regular track on developments in the control of the virus, provides the latest information on various central and state government initiatives, gives access to special provisions, and answers and resolves queries through emails and on WhatsApp.

The World Economic Forum - COVID-19 Action Platform

Members include companies like Alphabet, Nasdaq Inc, KPMG, HP, Volkswagen, Bank of America, and Deloitte. The group's main goals are to ensure global supply chains of key commodities remain intact, facilitate business donations to public health needs, develop vaccines and diagnostics, and pursue collaborations to address business and economic disruptions.

2. Government support to enterprises

TMF Group - Government support schemes for COVID-19 (last updated 2 April 2020)

In this portal of a consulting company TMF Group, a list of the latest governments' schemes for businesses against COVID-19 is provided. You can view by region and countries.

UK - Bus companies in England to receive rescue funding | 2 April 2020

Bus companies in England will receive a coronavirus rescue package worth £167m over the next three months on condition they keep vital services running despite dramatically reduced passenger numbers. The Department for

Transport announced the Covid-19 Bus Services Support Grant on Friday, on top of a previous commitment to maintain support funding worth £230m.

[UK - Emergency loans unveiled for 'squeezed middle' companies](#) | 2 April 2020

The UK government has announced a new emergency loans package for the “squeezed middle” of mid-sized companies excluded from the Treasury’s Covid-19 rescue schemes.

[Australia - WA coronavirus relief package offers support for power, water bills to avoid households being cut off](#) | 31 March 2020

Some small and medium-sized businesses will receive a reduction in their electricity bills, licence fees will be waived and further payroll tax relief is on the way. This includes licences for building services, plumbers and electricians and tourism operators among others. Liquor licence renewal fees for 2020 will be waived and businesses that have already paid will be refunded.

[China - Ministry plans more steps to boost trade](#) | 3 April 2020

China will enhance efforts to further stabilize trade, support companies and minimize the COVID-19 epidemic impact on the global supply chain. The Ministry of Commerce will further stabilize foreign trade and facilitate the trade in transformation and upgrading. The ministry will help foster a number of large companies with global competitive advantages, and a large number of dynamic and innovative small and medium-sized enterprises. In addition, it will also take steps to further improve the competitiveness of China-made products in the global supply chain.

[India - SIDBI's new COVID-19 Startup Assistance Scheme](#) | 5 April 2020

The Government of India is taking proactive steps to facilitate businesses and startups impacted by the COVID-19 lockdown. In this regard, Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) recognizes the operational and financial challenges being faced by startups and has been making efforts to provide financial assistance and stability to such startups through schemes like COVID-19 Startup Assistance Scheme ('CSAS'). This scheme will provide assistance to

innovative startups that have demonstrated ability to adapt to economic impact from Covid-19 and ensured its employees' safety and financial stability.

Singapore quarantines 20,000 migrant workers | 6 April 2020

Singapore has told 20,000 foreign workers to stay in their dormitories for 14 days as coronavirus cases increase in the city state. The workers will get their salaries, and their employers are entitled to claim S\$100 a day (£57, \$67) to cover their wages. They will get three meals a day, plus masks, hand sanitisers, and thermometers. Temperatures must be recorded twice a day and there will be "on site medical support".

3. Enterprises response

Workplace safety and working conditions

France - Plus de 400 000 sociétés françaises ont déposé un dossier pour passer en activité partielle | 3 April 2020

Trois secteurs concentrent, à eux seuls, un peu plus de la moitié des requêtes : le commerce et la réparation des automobiles (21,4 %), l'hébergement et la restauration (15,7 %), la construction (14,3 %). C'est en Ile-de-France où le plus grand nombre de procédures ont été engagées.

Mexico outdoor food market installs ozone-based sanitation tunnels to protect shoppers COVID-19 | 3 April 2020

A sellers union in Guadalajara established ozone-based sanitation tunnels at Mexico's 2nd greatest food market to combat the spread of COVID-19. Salvador Hernández Navarro, head of state of the Grocery Merchant's Union, stated the market is the very first worldwide that utilizes the sanitation passage system.

Employee protection

Chanel et Hermès renoncent au chômage partiel et maintiennent le salaire de leurs employés pendant l'épidémie | 31 March 2020

Chanel et Hermès s'engagent à conserver le salaire de leurs employés français et renoncent ainsi à l'application du chômage partiel proposée par le gouvernement. Chanel donne l'exemple en versant un don de 1,2 million d'euros aux fonds d'urgence créé par la Fondation de l'AP-HP, celui de la Fondation Georges Pompidou et aux services du SAMU. Chanel a également mis à profit le savoir-faire de ses fabricants partenaires et de ses équipes, pour concevoir des masques chirurgicaux et des blouses. Hermès, a également précisé qu'elle ferait don de 20 millions d'euros à l'AP-HP.

Production innovation and adaptation

Africa Roundup: Africa's tech ecosystem responds to COVID-19 | 1 April 2020

As COVID-19 began to grow in major economies, governments and startups in Africa started measures to shift a greater volume of transactions toward digital payments and away from cash — which the WHO [flagged as a conduit](#) for the spread of the coronavirus.

India - Opportunity in Chaos: The era of startups and innovation | 30 March 2020

Disruptive events sometimes prove to be wormholes for the journey from innovation to adoption. Hence, a pertinent question this article tries to answer - Can businesses find opportunities in the wake of coronavirus pandemic? It gives predictions on three new emerging sectors for consumers: Health-tech and Artificial Intelligence, E-commerce grocery platforms and Habit-forming sectors.

Support to customers and communities

Les accidents de la route sont en forte baisse, la MAIF rend 100 millions d'euros à ses assurés | 2 April 2020

La mutuelle d'assurance a constaté une chute de la sinistralité d'environ – 75 %, et a donc décidé de rembourser une partie des cotisations à 2,8 millions d'assurés.

Major Japanese telecommunication companies support student users taking online classes | 3 April 2020

In response to the request from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, Japanese major mobile companies, NTT DOCOMO, KDDI (au) and Softbank, will introduce measures to reduce the financial burden on data charges for students under 25, as they take more online classes.

Sony Establishes \$100 Million COVID-19 Global Relief Fund | 2 April 2020

Sony Corporation announced the establishment of the "Sony Global Relief Fund for COVID-19," a 100 million US dollar fund to support those around the world affected by the COVID-19. Through this fund, Sony will provide support in three areas: 1) assistance for those individuals engaged in frontline medical and first responder efforts to fight the virus, 2) support for children and educators who must now work remotely, and 3) support for members of the creative community in the entertainment industry, which has been greatly impacted by the spread of the virus.

Chinese high-tech helps world combat pandemic | 2 April 2020

From AI and 5G to cloud computing, Chinese companies have been standing with the world at a time when the pandemic is rapidly spreading worldwide. Companies like Huawei, Lenovo, Alibaba and JD are providing support and supplies to affected countries.

Apple has begun designing and producing face shields to protect health care workers during the coronavirus pandemic | 5 April 2020

Apple is designing and producing face shields to protect health care workers in the United States throughout the coronavirus pandemic and is also increasing the number of face masks it's donating to 20 million.

Recovery and post-recovery actions

[Florent Menegaux, PDG de Michelin : « Nous sommes en condition de redémarrer »](#) | 3 April 2020

Les mesures que nous prenons sont conformes aux recommandations nationales, et parfois même supérieures, comme la distance entre deux salariés, qui ne peut pas être inférieure à deux mètres dans nos usines. (...) Dans les pays comme la France, où le confinement est encore de mise, ceux qui, malgré toutes les précautions mises en place ne souhaitent pas travailler, n'y sont pas obligés.

[China's Businesses Start Down the Path of Recovery from Covid-19](#) | 30

March 2020

Companies in China are gradually resuming production, but the challenges imposed by the coronavirus pandemic are far from over. Cash-flow problems and parts shortages may slow efforts to get plants up and running. Reducing costs and optimizing supply chains can help restart growth after the coronavirus pandemic.

Other responses

[Les dirigeants de Michelin réduisent leur rémunération](#) | 3 April 2020

Florent Menegaux et Yves Chapot, les deux gérants de Michelin, vont diminuer « d'environ 25% » leur rémunération des mois d'avril et de mai « en solidarité avec toute la communauté des salariés » selon un communiqué à paraître vendredi 3 avril. Ils souhaitent aussi renoncer « à une partie de leur rémunération variable 2019 versée en 2020 »

[Des banques françaises finissent par consentir au gel des dividendes](#) | 1

April 2020

La Société générale et Natixis renoncent à verser des dividendes. BNP Paribas et Crédit agricole temporisent. Ces fonds propres, s'ils étaient conservés au lieu d'être distribués, s'avéreront précieux pour absorber des pertes sur les prêts

ou financer des crédits supplémentaires, nécessaires pour aider les entreprises à tenir pendant la crise.

[Boeing offers voluntary layoffs amid economy's COVID-19 nosedive](#) | 2

April 2020

In response to stagnant business amid the economic downturn caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, Boeing is offering employees a voluntary layoff plan.

[Estas son las medidas implementadas por las empresas en México ante el COVID-19](#) | 2 April 2020

Durante los últimos días a raíz del aislamiento programado por el brote de COVID-19 en el país, las empresas e instituciones financieras han modificado sus servicios para hacer frente a la contingencia. Estas son las medidas que están tomando.

4. Workers response

[En Occitanie, la fronde syndicale contre la réouverture des usines](#) | 2 April 2020

Droit de retrait, signalement d'un danger grave et imminent, menace de grève... les syndicats multiplient les procédures pour s'opposer à la reprise d'activité.

[India: Migrant workers' plight prompts UN call for 'domestic solidarity' in coronavirus battle](#) | 2 April 2020

High Commissioner for Human Rights welcomed the instruction of India's Supreme Court on Tuesday stating that the migrants be treated in a humane manner, including by providing them with enough food, water, beds and supplies as well as psychosocial counselling in shelters that are run by volunteers and not security forces.

[Coronavirus en España | "Estamos en la primera línea de batalla": la difícil situación de las cuidadoras y limpiadoras latinoamericanas en medio de la](#)

pandemia | 2 April 2020

En momentos en los que múltiples residencias de ancianos se han convertido en uno de los principales focos de Covid-19 en España, muchas familias prefieren contratar a alguien para que se quede en casa cuidando a sus adultos mayores. Y ese alguien, con frecuencia, es una mujer latinoamericana. Por ejemplo, Shany, una mujer peruana de 43 años que se enfrentó a un dilema en la pandemia: ¿correr el riesgo de contagiar a la mujer mayor que cuidaba o renunciar a la única fuente de ingreso que le quedaba a su familia?