

COVID-19 and ENTERPRISES

Briefing Note [No. 13]

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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

[ILO - Action Checklist: Prevention and mitigation of COVID-19 at work](#) | 16

April 2020

Prevention and mitigation of COVID-19 in workplaces requires effective processes of risk assessment and risk management. This tool offers a simple and collaborative approach to assess COVID-19 risks as a step to take measures to protect the safety and health of workers.

[DCED - Private Sector Development and COVID-19](#) | Last updated 8 April

2020

The Donor Committee for Enterprise Development (DCED) created a page that compiles ideas and resources on how donor and development agencies might adjust their private sector development (PSD) interventions to mitigate the tragic social and economic impacts of the Coronavirus, and to stimulate economic recovery as well as resilience to future outbreaks.

[WHO - COVID-19 and Food Safety: Guidance for Food Businesses](#) | 7 April

2020

There is now an urgent requirement for the industry to ensure compliance with measures to protect food workers from contracting COVID-19, to prevent exposure to or transmission of the virus, and to strengthen food hygiene and sanitation practices. The purpose of these guidelines is to highlight the measures so that the integrity of the food chain is maintained, and that adequate and safe food supplies are available for consumers.

[Productivity SA - South Africa's economic recovery plan beyond the COVID-19 pandemic](#) | April 2020

Productivity SA provides its strategy to unlock the productivity potential for improved competitiveness and sustainable economic growth after the covid-19 pandemic.

[OECD blog - Why protecting informal economy workers is so critical in time of COVID-19](#) | 17 April 2020

Written by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and the OECD Development Centre, this article sets out four critical lines of action that can protect informal workers from these risks, reduce their vulnerability and minimise negative externalities on local communities and the economy at large.

[European politicians, CEOs, lawmakers urge green coronavirus recovery](#) | 14 April 2020

European politicians, companies, lawmakers and activists called for green investment to restart growth after the coronavirus pandemic, saying fighting climate change and promoting biodiversity would rebuild stronger economies.

[Environmental Entrepreneurs \(E2\) - Clean Jobs America 2020: Repowering America's Economy in the Wake of COVID-19](#) | 15 April 2020

The report details the sheer size of this important employment sector, the troubles it is currently facing due to COVID-19 and how focusing recovery policies on clean energy can get America's economy humming again—quickly and for the long run. It finds that more than 106,000 clean energy workers filed for unemployment benefits in the US in March.

[SOMO/ECCHR/PAX Joint Position Paper - Responsible disengagement in the time of corona](#) | 20 April 2020

SOMO, ECCHR and PAX call upon companies and policy-makers to carefully consider the human rights impacts from disengagement, reminding them of the principles set out in the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises (OECD Guidelines) and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs).

[Webinar: IOE - Europe and Central Asia update on Covid-19 business response](#) | Tuesday 21 April 2020 from 14:00-15:30 (CEST)

This digital conference will offer an opportunity to briefly review the measures taken by governments in Europe and Central Asia, share IOE member

assessments, as well as to discuss possible new measures that should be taken to further mitigate the social and economic effects of the pandemic and the steps under consideration for a quick recovery. Participants include employer organisation representatives from Belgium, Croatia, Germany, Italy, Norway, Poland, Russia and Spain.

[Webinar: European Commission - Social economy in the fight against Corona](#) | 23 April 2020, 10:30 - 12:00 (CEST)

The panelists include representatives from TISE (Social and Economic Investment Company) in Poland; Banca Etica (Cooperative bank) in Italy and Spain; and France Active (a network that offers advice, financing and networking to entrepreneurs in the social economy). The website also contains 'open docs' tables on: 1) Collected Social Economy initiatives; 2) Volunteering initiatives; 3) Platforms & Digital Services helping communities and social economy to run their operations or match needs; 4) Technical specifications, guides, codes, software and manuals to produce materials or medical equipment; 5) Past and future webinars to help social economy and civil society; 6) Funds to support initiatives; 7) Policy Response, and more.

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.

[IMF - Policy Tracker](#) | Last updated 17 April 2020

This policy tracker summarizes the key economic responses governments are taking to limit the human and economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The tracker includes 193 economies.

[Tax Foundation - Tracking economic relief plans around the world during the Coronavirus outbreak](#)

The countries in the table implemented or plan to implement tax relief for businesses and households affected by this health crisis. The webpage is regularly updated.

[European Commission - Policy measures taken against the spread and impact of the coronavirus](#) | 14 April 2020

The table provides a comprehensive overview of measures announced or taken in the Member States so far. The expected impact of these measures on the general government deficit and debt figures will be finalised together with the Commission spring forecast.

[France - Fnac Darty, première grande entreprise à bénéficier d'un prêt garanti par l'Etat](#) | 20 April 2020

« Avec plus de 20 milliards d'euros de prêts accordés à 150 000 entreprises, le déploiement du prêt garanti par l'Etat est aujourd'hui une réalité pour les entreprises françaises, quelle que soit leur taille. » (...) En contrepartie, conformément aux demandes du gouvernement, Fnac Darty a renoncé à verser un dividende à ses actionnaires au titre de 2019. (...) Le prêt permettra de « préparer la reprise des activités de Fnac Darty », a annoncé l'entreprise. Et, plus précisément, de « payer les factures des marchandises déjà achetées, et relancer les achats pour préparer la fin de l'année ». L'objectif étant également, en cascade, de soutenir ses fournisseurs en « s'engageant sur des commandes pour qu'ils puissent avoir de la visibilité pour relancer leurs productions ».

[Switzerland Coronavirus update](#) | 3 April 2020

Video on Novartis' interview (...) Switzerland on 3 April doubled the size of its coronavirus emergency loan program to CHF 40 billion to head off a rash of insolvencies among small businesses strapped for cash. So far about 76,000 businesses have received credit under the program, part of Switzerland's largest-ever economic aid package. (...) Businesses can borrow up to CHF 20 million at low or zero interest and have five years to repay the debt.

Mauritius heads into coronavirus storm with strong social welfare buffers

| 16 April 2020

The country's solid social protection system provides a strong foundation which government can use to expand support to the most vulnerable Mauritian households. As it battles the impacts of the pandemic: 1) the sick will be systematically treated for free, irrespective of socio-economic class, by the national health care system; 2) the unemployed will receive unemployment benefits for up to a year; 3) pensioners will receive a guaranteed income through the universal pension; and 4) fiscal stimulus measures will be manageable and easier to implement given the systems in place.

Egypt - COVID-19 crisis brings forward formalization of Egypt's informal sector | 12 April 2020

A one-off monetary compensation (500 EGP) will be offered to informal workers registered at the database of the Ministry of Manpower through post offices. Registration has already included around one million individuals working in construction, agriculture, fishing and plumbing.

India restarts factories, farming in rural areas even as coronavirus cases rise | 20 April 2020

The government said some activities, including factories and farming, would be allowed from Monday in the hinterland which has been less-hard hit by COVID-19. Small businesses reopened in the rural parts of most populous Uttar Pradesh after the lockdown in late March but police were deployed to ensure people maintained social distancing.

South Asia's stimulus for addressing Covid-19 | 19 April 2020

Leaders of South Asian countries together announced an emergency fund in the middle of March 2020 to address the Covid-19 impacts. Its objective was to tackle risks associated with the pandemic. India announced US\$10 million assistance to the emergency fund, which was worth US\$21.8 million with contribution from seven countries. Bangladesh announced its contribution of US\$1.5 million.

3. Enterprises response

Workplace safety and working conditions

[Amazon deploys thermal cameras at warehouses to scan for fevers faster](#) |

18 April 2020

Amazon.com Inc has started to use thermal cameras at its warehouses to speed up screening for feverish workers who could be infected with the coronavirus.

[Amazon closes operations in France after court orders Covid-19 safety review](#) | **16 April 2020**

The company closed its warehouses after it was ordered to stop deliveries of non-essential goods by a French court that ruled it had ignored its obligation to protect the security and health of its employees during the coronavirus pandemic.

[EU Commission is urged to protect agri-food workers](#) | **17 April 2020**

Mounting concerns for the health of workers in the agri-food sector have prompted stakeholders to call for stronger measures for their protection. Thirty organizations co-signed a joint statement calling for urgent measures and structural reforms to address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on EU agriculture and agri-food workers.

Employee protection

[Ante crisis por COVID-19 Coparmex propone salario solidario sostenido por empresas y gobierno](#) | **20 April 2020**

Dentro de la estrategia planteada por la Confederación Patronal de la República Mexicana (Coparmex) se enfatiza la importancia de contar con el plan de activación económica, la contratación de deuda pública o la reorientación del gasto público de obras no esenciales.

Supply chain stabilization

[Waitrose to speed up payments to vulnerable suppliers](#) | 16 April 2020

The British upmarket grocer will provide cash to supplier communities in Africa and Central America, support small businesses bring their products to market, and speed up payments to small and vulnerable suppliers. Waitrose has donated £200,000 to its foundation communities in Africa and Central America, where some of its produce is grown, picked and packed.

[ICC calls on corporate leaders to “Save Our SMEs”](#) | 20 April 2020

Noting the need for clear and principled corporate leadership, ICC has today issued a call for multinational corporations to preserve their supply chains, operations and workforce as the economic repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic ripple through global supply chains. Global supply chain leaders are encouraged to: 1) ensure the health and safety of the workforce in the supply chain; 2) uphold contracts with suppliers and/or distributors; 3) facilitate continued business operations of the supply chain; 4) insist on integrity and responsible business conduct; and 5) advocate for stimulus efforts to flow into the real economy.

[World Economic Forum - Supply chains have been upended. Here's how to make them more resilient](#) | 6 April 2020

In the wake of supply chain disruptions due to coronavirus, several experts have reiterated the need to obtain more visibility across the chain. Companies who sell finished goods generally know production and shipment schedules for their Tier 1 suppliers, but they usually have little to no knowledge of suppliers further up the chain. Key recommendations include 1) Move away from paper to digitization; 2) Ensure data privacy for suppliers; 3) Give suppliers an incentive to share their data; and 4) Start early – don't assume the current disruptions will never happen again.

Production innovation and adaptation

[Uber to revive goods-delivery service in hunt for new revenue sources](#) | 19 April 2020

Uber is reviving an attempt to offer deliveries of goods as well as people and food, as it searches for new sources of revenue during the coronavirus outbreak. Drivers to transport items ranging from medical supplies to pet food.

[Mercedes F1 developing new breathing aid to combat coronavirus](#) | 16

April 2020

A new version of a breathing aid that can help coronavirus patients has been developed in less than a week by a team involving Mercedes Formula One, and is being trialed at London hospitals.

[P&G begins producing face shields for hospital workers](#) | 14 April 2020

Procter & Gamble began delivering a new safety product to front-line medical workers in hospitals grappling with a bulge of new coronavirus cases: plastic face shields.

[SMEs launch direct-to-consumer channel Mighty Small](#) | 9 April 2020

Young Foodies, a community for small and medium-sized food brands, is launching a new direct-to-consumer sales channel, Mighty Small. It is hoped the innovation will help smaller brands who have seen their shelf space squeezed during the COVID-19 crisis.

[Here's how Africans are using tech to combat the coronavirus pandemic](#) |

5 April 2020

From a WhatsApp chatbot to a self-diagnosis tool, Africans are devising mobile tech solutions to contain the spread of the coronavirus amid fears it could have disastrous effects for the continent's most vulnerable. Experts fear the respiratory disease could have a catastrophic impact on a continent with shaky healthcare systems and where soap and clean water for hand washing are out of reach for many...Governments, charities and entrepreneurs are racing to tap local knowledge to spread awareness of the virus simply and swiftly, and prevent it from reaching overcrowded, under-resourced slums.

[Dans les Bouches-du-Rhône, la vente directe soulage les agriculteurs](#) | 19

April 2020

Avec la fermeture des marchés et des restaurants, les producteurs privilégient le drive et la vente à la ferme.

Face à la fermeture imposée des commerces, des initiatives fleurissent | 18

April 2020

Plateformes de commandes, bons d'achat ou coffrets cadeaux permettent aux clients de montrer leur solidarité envers les boutiques qu'ils apprécient.

Entrega de pedidos con robots ya son una realidad en Latinoamérica | 20

April 2020

Como una respuesta adicional a la crisis generada por el Covid-19, y buscando nuevas opciones que favorezcan a la comunidad de restaurantes, ciudadanos y repartidores, a partir de esta semana Rappi inició la entrega de pedidos con robots, de la mano de KiwiBot, empresa colombiana basada en los Estados Unidos. Este es un piloto, que se está desarrollando en Medellín (Colombia), y busca hacer entregas de pedidos con el fin de evitar el contacto persona-persona. Este piloto se está desarrollando en Colombia y hasta la fecha se han realizado cerca de 120 órdenes al día con 15 robots.

'Estamos listos para producir como se necesite' | 16 April 2020

Eliseo Barcas, gerente general de Tetra Pak para la región Andina, que incluye a Colombia, explica que la compañía tiene la tecnología necesaria para ajustarse a las necesidades de las empresas antes y después de la cuarentena. Asegura que si bien hoy la demanda en los hogares ha crecido en beneficio de sus negocios, luego de la cuarentena no se descartan escenarios no tan favorables.

Support to customers and communities

We need to harness and channel the desire of companies to help communities during Covid-19 | 15 April 2020

The UK's new [Neighbourly Community Fund](#) is providing businesses with a direct, controlled and impactful route to support community organisations. The fund, which launched on 20 March, is channelling money directly to community

causes across the UK to ensure they can deliver essential services to those most at risk.

Recovery and post-recovery planning

[What returning to work will look like in offices, cafes and factories around the world](#) | 17 April 2020

Wearable social-distancing buzzers. Masked blackjack dealers. Drive-thru electronics purchases. From cubicles to factory floors, cafes to clothing boutiques, businesses around the world are dreaming up creative ways to reopen, attempting to start revenue flowing again while minimizing the risk to customers and employees.

[Carmakers gear up for getting back to work](#) | 17 April 2020

After deciding to close down in March to contain the outbreak — and because of a collapse in demand and stoppages in the supply chain — carmakers including Toyota, Volkswagen, Volvo, Renault and Hyundai are firing up factories again, while trying to keep their workforces safe.

Other responses

[Coronavirus creates new priorities for consultants](#) | 17 April 2020

Deals have dried up in emerging markets. Now the focus is on helping businesses survive the pandemic. A downturn presents not only complex scenarios for companies but also opportunities for consultants in emerging markets to help them through the dark times. The priorities for consultants at this time should be: 1) cash optimisation; 2) Scenarios mapping; 3) workers and supply chains protection; and 4) long term planning.

[Así puede aplicar a una de las 1.000 vacantes de Amazon en Colombia](#) | 20 April 2020

Amazon anunció que planea crear más de 1000 nuevos puestos en Colombia. Los nuevos colaboradores reforzarán el servicio de clase mundial que Amazon

brinda a sus clientes alrededor del mundo en inglés, portugués y español, así como el servicio 24/7 para Norteamérica y América del Sur.