

COVID-19 and ENTERPRISES

Briefing Note [No. 19]

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Contents

- [1. Resources for enterprise response](#)
- [2. Government response for enterprises](#)
- [3. Enterprises response](#)
- [4. Workers/multi-stakeholders 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

1. Resources for enterprise response

[ILO - An employers' guide on working from home in response to the outbreak of COVID-19](#) | 18 May 2020

This guide has been developed by the International Labour Organization Bureau for Employers' Activities (ILO-ACT/EMP) to provide practical guidance to member companies that have implemented "working from home" protocols for their staff in 2020 as an alternative temporary arrangement during the COVID-19 crisis.

[ILO - Safe return to work: Guide for employers on COVID-19 prevention](#) | 7 May 2020

This Guide has been developed by the ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities (ILO-ACT/EMP) and contains recommendations for health and safety practices and approaches to COVID-19 prevention. The publication aims to provide general guidance and information to employers on how to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace, to enable workers to return to work safely while keeping the risk of contamination as low as possible. It also provides ideas on how to protect workers' mental well-being during the pandemic.

[Global survey on the impact of COVID-19 on staff development and training in enterprises](#) | Closure date: 25 May 2020

In order to examine the impact of COVID-19 on training and development of employees, apprentices and interns in enterprises and other organizations, a global survey is jointly launched by 10 key international and regional development partners, including the ILO, the African Development Bank, Asian Development Bank, European Commission, European Training Foundation, European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, Global Apprenticeship Network, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and the World Bank Group. The survey is provided in [English](#), [French](#), [Spanish](#), [Arabic](#) and [Russian](#).

[Investor Toolkit on Human Rights](#) | 19 May 2020

The Investor Alliance for Human Rights has published a new [Investor Toolkit on Human Rights](#) (with [Executive Summary](#)) for asset owners and managers to address risks to people posed by their investments. This comes in the midst of the current international COVID-19 crisis, where systemic economic and social inequalities across societies have been laid bare and exacerbated, and the precarious foundation that financial markets rely upon is evident now more than ever.

[ITC's new site crowdsources actions for COVID-19 recovery](#) | 18 May 2020

A new ITC webpage for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in developing countries to learn about best practices for handling the COVID-19 pandemic is now live. The webpage is a global resource that 'crowdsources' news, articles, research and recommendations to help people overcome the impact of the pandemic.

[ITC's Action Plan: Supporting small businesses through the COVID-19 crisis and towards the future](#) | 19 May 2020

ITC has developed a 15-Point Action Plan for MSMEs, business support organizations and governments. The plan supports internationally minded MSMEs through the crisis and allows them to be on the forefront of generating resilience, inclusiveness, sustainability and growth in the future. Business support organizations play the important role of agile, expert and trusted connectors between MSMEs and the government.

[Accenture - Outmaneuver uncertainty: Navigating the human and business impact of Covid-19](#) | 19 May 2020

“Businesses are rapidly adjusting to the changing needs of their people, their customers and suppliers, while navigating the financial and operational challenges. With every industry, function and geography affected, the amount of potential change to think through can be daunting.” In this short guide, Accenture lists “insight paired with tangible actions that organizations can take to turn massive complexity into meaningful changes “.

Seminario web: ¿Cómo están respondiendo las empresas agrícolas y los operadores territoriales a COVID-19? | 11 May 2020

IDH en asociación con FMO, Mirova y Proparco le invita a ver al tercer seminario web de la serie: ¿Cómo están respondiendo las empresas agrícolas y los operadores territoriales a COVID-19? Este tercer seminario web estará dirigido a nuestro público de habla hispana, y facilitará el intercambio de conocimientos prácticos sobre cómo las empresas de América Latina están respondiendo a la crisis actual, en términos de planificación para continuidad de los negocios; la salud y la seguridad en el trabajo, y la comunicación hacia los pequeños agricultores y las comunidades sobre COVID-19.

2. Government response for 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.

OECD - Supporting livelihoods during the COVID-19 crisis: closing the gaps in safety nets | 20 May 2020

This policy brief discusses the measures countries have taken to support the livelihoods of those who cannot access unemployment benefits or short-term work schemes. It examines the raft of new programmes introduced across the OECD and beyond, including means-tested assistance, new cash transfer schemes, and direct support for those struggling to meet their expenses. It also discusses how to close social protection gaps beyond the crisis to ensure inclusive growth post-COVID-19. Supporting livelihoods during the COVID-19 crisis: closing the gaps in safety nets.

[OECD - Public employment services in the frontline for employees, jobseekers and employers](#) | 28 April 2020

Public and private employment services (PES) will play a crucial role in preventing the labour market from seizing up during the crisis and in promoting a fast recovery once confinement measures start to be lifted. PES in each country will not only be facing a surge in the number of jobseekers but also the need to potentially reallocate many of them across occupations, sectors and regions. This policy brief reviews the different country experiences in adapting PES's operations to the unprecedented confinement situation, and provides guidance on how PES can best cope with the short-term challenges, while paving the way to the medium-term strategies that will need to be adopted.

[OECD - Foreign direct investment flows in the time of COVID-19](#) | 14 May 2020

According to the analysis, FDI flows are expected to fall by more than 30% in 2020 even under the most optimistic scenario for the success of the public health and economic support policy measures taken by governments to address the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting recession. FDI flows to developing countries are expected to drop even more because sectors that have been severely impacted by the pandemic, including the primary and manufacturing sectors, account for a larger share of their FDI than in developed economies. It also examines various scenarios for the impact of the pandemic on FDI flows in the medium-term (2nd half of 2020 and full year 2021) and concludes with a discussion of potential long-term impacts.

[EU - Tourism and transport: Commission's guidance on how to safely resume travel and reboot Europe's tourism in 2020 and beyond](#) | 13 May 2020

The European Commission presented a set of guidelines and recommendations for tourists, travellers and businesses. The package includes an overall strategy, a common approach to restore free movement, a framework to support transportation, a recommendation on travel vouchers, and criteria for restoring

tourism. The flexible approach which allows tourism to continue is based on: epidemiological criteria, the application of containment measures, and economic and social distancing considerations.

EU - European Semester Spring Package: Recommendations for a coordinated response to the coronavirus pandemic | 20 May 2020

The Commission has proposed today country-specific recommendations providing economic policy guidance to all EU Member States in the context of the coronavirus pandemic, focused on the most urgent challenges brought about by the pandemic and on relaunching sustainable growth. The recommendations are structured around two objectives: in the short-term, mitigating the coronavirus pandemic's severe negative socio-economic consequences; and in the short to medium-term, achieving sustainable and inclusive growth which facilitates the green transition and the digital transformation.

U.S. - FDA issues best practices for re-opening retail food establishments during the COVID-19 pandemic | 18 May 2020

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued “Best Practices for Re-Opening Retail Food Establishments During the COVID-19 Pandemic” to address key food safety practices for retail food establishments preparing to re-open or restart operations after being closed or partially closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Colombia - Lanza guía de higiene y desinfección para que las empresas mitiguen riesgos de contagio de COVID-19 | 20 May 2020

Como una herramienta para ayudar a las empresas a cumplir los protocolos de bioseguridad, se lanzó este miércoles la ‘Guía de recomendaciones de higiene y desinfección para la industria en tiempos de COVID-19’.

3. Enterprises response

Workplace safety and working conditions

[CGF and Kin&Co - Creating a culture of health: The secret to a productive, resilient workforce](#) | 12 May 2020

The Consumer Goods Forum (CGF) and Kin&Co have published a global insights report on employee health and wellbeing in the consumer goods industry. According to the study, despite two-thirds of organisations deeming health and wellbeing programmes to be a pivotal element of their employee culture and brand, the number of employees who feel their employers are not doing enough to improve their health and wellbeing remains high. The report highlights the need for business to shift away from standalone policies on health and wellbeing in the workplace, and rather focus on driving change in behaviour and culture. It also provides key insights from case studies in China, Colombia, France, Japan, Turkey, the United States and the United Kingdom.

[Mining giants flag virus rules to stay even as restrictions start to ease](#) | 7 May 2020

Australian mining giant BHP has no immediate plans to ease social distancing protocols across its operations while Rio Tinto says the industry will have to coexist with the pandemic for some time yet, even as governments begin to gradually relax coronavirus restrictions. Following an increase in infections across its copper sites in Chile, BHP chief executive Mike Henry said the company would maintain limits on staffing numbers at its work sites and on Thursday outlined plans to trial a new smartphone app to help prevent the spread of the virus among its workers.

[Coop Italia introduces solutions for socially distanced shopping](#) | 12 May 2020

Coop Italia has introduced two new technological solutions to maintain physically distanced shopping in its stores during the coronavirus crisis.

Supply chain stabilization

[FCD s'associe à des organisations de la société civile pour établir une plateforme de dons alimentaires et non alimentaires](#) | 22 April 2020

La Fédération du commerce et de la distribution (FCD) et Perifem ont mis sur pied avec Comerso une plate forme commune pour les distributeurs, les industriels et les associations afin d'identifier et de faciliter les dons de produits alimentaires et non-alimentaires, lors de cette crise du Covid-19.

[Perspectivas del sector peruano de alimentos después del COVID](#) | 19 May 2020

Las cadenas de suministro de alimentos en el Perú se han mantenido relativamente resistentes a los desafíos logísticos y la cuarentena nacional, en parte como resultado de los esfuerzos coordinados del gobierno desde el inicio del brote del coronavirus, señala un informe de Oxford Business Group (OBG).

Production innovation and adaptation

[10 online supermarket start-ups zooming in Europe](#) | 11 May 2020

In many European countries, from Sweden to Spain, online supermarket start-ups are gaining popularity connecting customers with local suppliers and supermarket chains and providing safe and convenient grocery experience. Here are 10 booming supermarket start-ups differing in the type of the products, technology, delivery terms and location.

[UNDP launches online marketplace for SMEs in Bangladesh](#) | 12 May 2020

In order to support small and largely informal entrepreneurs in Bangladesh, UNDP launched a free-of-cost alternative marketplace where buyers can order products at home directly from them. Over 1,000 SMEs have already hosted their products on the marketplace.

Support to customers and communities

[L'Oreal pledges €150m to fight climate change, support women](#) | 12 May 2020

Cosmetics group L'Oreal plans to launch a €150 million (\$162.99 million) programme of climate change initiatives and financial aid to support vulnerable women hit hard during the coronavirus pandemic.

[Sénégal - FORCE COVID-19 : acteurs de l'économie informelle « débrouillez-vous »](#) | 02 May 2020

Le portail d'informations seneweb.com nous livre ici une intéressante (et très critique) contribution de Bacary SEYDI sur le soutien apporté par l'état du Sénégal au secteur informel. Le fondateur de la plateforme « PME AFRICAINES » stipule notamment que « la grosse artillerie sortie par l'État du Sénégal pour financer son programme de résilience économique et social contre la pandémie du nouveau Coronavirus (Covid -19) risque de se transformer très vite en pétard mouillé si des correctifs ne sont pas apportés aux mesures de soutien aux entreprises ».

[México - UPS Lanza Programa Para Que PYMES Enfrenten Al COVID-19](#) | 13 May 2020

La compañía estadounidense de mensajería, logística y servicios en cadena de suministro, UPS México, informó que lanzó su campaña “México, trabajamos para que sigas unido” que busca apoyar a las Pequeñas y medianas empresas (Pymes) en su proceso de recuperación económica frente a la pandemia mundial causada por el COVID-19.

Recovery and post-recovery planning

[Over 150 global corporations urge world leaders for net-zero recovery from COVID-19](#) | 18 May 2020

Convened through the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi), 155 companies — with a combined market capitalization of over US\$ 2.4 trillion and representing over 5 million employees — have signed a statement urging Governments around the world to align their COVID-19 economic aid and recovery efforts

with the latest climate science. The companies are calling for policies that will build resilience against future shocks by supporting efforts to hold global temperature rise to within 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, in line with reaching net-zero emissions well before 2050.

[More than 330 major businesses call on U.S. Congress to build back a more resilient, sustainable economy from COVID-19](#) | 13 May 2020

CEOs and representatives from more than 330 businesses called on a bipartisan group of federal lawmakers to build back a better economy by infusing resilient, long-term climate solutions into future economic recovery plans.

[Energy firms rally behind green stimulus call](#) | 6 May 2020

A coalition of 40 global businesses – including energy majors such as BP, Iberdrola, Orsted, and Shell – have called on governments to support “a massive wave of investments in renewable electricity” and other low-carbon energy solutions when devising recovery plans from the COVID-19 pandemic.

[La crise du coronavirus, révélatrice d’une nouvelle ère durable pour les entreprises](#) | 18 May 2020

Dans cette contribution publiée dans le journal Le Temps, Johnatan Normand tente de mettre en exergue le lien entre durabilité et résilience. Il estime que « si l’avenir n’est pas encore certain, il est cependant plausible que les entreprises qui défendent une vision à long terme – celles qui pensent au-delà du prochain trimestre, qui considèrent la situation dans son ensemble et font preuve de compassion et de dextérité – soient sur la bonne voie ». L’auteur est expert en innovation sociétale et en gouvernance. Spécialiste de la performance globale, et de la croissance durable, il siège notamment aux comités de Sustainable Finance Geneva.

Other/multiple response

[China - Private eye: Govt policy, tech help ward off virus woes](#) | 20 May 2020

As the novel coronavirus outbreak has been gradually contained in China, China Daily website has invited several executives from Chinese private firms to share their views and experiences fighting the coronavirus, limiting the outbreak's impact on their companies and their business strategies this year. This series hopes to provide insight into how China has taken supportive measures to help private enterprises deal with the epidemic.

[McKinsey - How the German Mittelstand is mastering the COVID-19 crisis](#) | 20 May 2020

German Mittelstand (small and medium-sized enterprises) account for 57.6 percent of employment in the country and 34.4 percent of national revenues. A comprehensive survey of Mittelstand enterprises shed light on their outlook, key success factors in mastering the shutdown, and the way out of the crisis.

[EACB - European cooperative banks' responses to the COVID-19](#) | 14 May 2020

President of the European Association of Co-operative Banks (EACB), a representative body of 2.800 cooperative banks, 84 million members and 209 million customers in Europe explains how European cooperative banks are dealing with the current COVID-19 crisis and which kind of proposals the EACB has put in place with regards to the banking legislative framework.

"Cooperative banks are committed by nature to fully support the local economy and can act as stabiliser in times like these. Cooperative banks are fully integrated in efforts to issue new loans, extend payment deadlines and provide liquidity to their corporate customers and SMEs." says the President. Initiatives undertaken by EACB member banks, are gathered [here](#).

[Rolls-Royce to cut 9,000 jobs amid virus crisis](#) | 20 May 2020

Rolls-Royce has said it will cut 9,000 jobs and warned it will take "several years" for the airline industry to recover from the coronavirus pandemic. The Derby-based firm, which makes plane engines, said the reduction of nearly a fifth of its workforce would mainly affect its civil aerospace division.

Pandemia cierra Altifibers, exportadora boliviana de lana de llama y alpaca

| 13 May 2020

Las exportaciones, en especial a mercados de Italia y China, representan alrededor del 96% de las ventas de esta empresa, que se ha definido como una de las “primeras víctimas” económicas en Bolivia a causa del coronavirus y la cuarentena vigente en el país.

4. Workers/multi-stakeholders response

Global unions welcome ENGIE’s commitment to cover Covid-19 related health care and social security for employees | **29 April 2020**

The new ENGIE Global Framework Agreement will include the company’s commitment to guarantee a common social protection base in terms of parenthood, health, disability and death throughout its world operations for all employees, implemented via the ENGIE CARE programme.

Teleperformance poursuivi devant l'OCDE pour conditions de travail "dangereuses" | **17 April 2020**

Le leader mondial des centres d'appel Teleperformance est poursuivi devant l'OCDE par UNI Global Union (présente dans 150 pays) et par les syndicats français CFDT, CGT et FO pour des conditions de travail "dangereuses" dans 10 pays face à l'épidémie de Covid-19. La plainte a été transmise au point de contact français de l'OCDE. Il s'agit selon le communiqué de la première plainte liée au Covid-19 déposée dans le cadre des principes directeurs de l'OCDE, qui prévoient que les multinationales doivent respecter la liberté syndicale et d'autres droits du travail tels que la santé et la sécurité.

Union supports deal for small enterprises in South Africa to manufacture 14 million masks | **18 May 2020**

The Southern African Clothing and Textile Workers Union (SACTWU) supports a deal made by the National Bargaining Council for the Clothing Manufacturing

Industry to register small, medium, and micro-enterprises (SMMEs). The deal provides capacity to make 14 million masks and will help thousands of small companies to survive during the pandemic.

Protecting workers in Myanmar | 14 May 2020

In a union-led initiative, as many as 100,000 garment workers in Myanmar are set to benefit from measures agreed with brands and employers. The parties commit to cooperate in good faith to secure the workplace health and safety of garment and footwear workers in Myanmar and mitigate the impact of the crisis on factories and workers. This includes engaging with relevant organizations to mobilize resources for covering salary loss of workers in the industry from April to July, in coordination with the global action to support the garment industry, and supporting ILO research to calculate the necessary funding for salary losses.

Brazil - Collective agreements in response to Covid-19 | 4 May 2020

Unions from various sectors got companies put in place health and safety measures to fight the spread of Covid-19 in the workplace and immediately allow at-risk workers to stay off site. The agreements also provide compulsory paid leave and temporary job security, keep economic benefits in place, and require any measures taken by companies to be approved by workers through a vote or a union assessment. Many agreements were negotiated through virtual assemblies, allowing members to debate and vote on proposals remotely.