

COVID-19 and ENTERPRISES

Briefing Note [No. 21]

Published: 4 June 2020

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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 - Safety and health in micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises: A collection of five case studies](#) | 28 May 2020

The five case studies - conducted in Cameroon, Colombia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Tunisia – describe the occupational safety and health (OSH) situation in MSMEs and the initiatives adopted in this field.

[ILO - Recovering from the COVID-19 crisis: What policies are needed?](#) | 29 May 2020

Catelene Passchier, Chair of the Workers' Group of the ILO Governing Body shares her views on the policies needed to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic. She also calls for more regulation of digital work and enhancement of social dialogue and tripartism to provide social justice and decent work for all.

[ILO - The effects of COVID-19 on trade and global supply chains](#) | 03 June 2020

The purpose of this brief is to provide an analysis of the near-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on enterprises and workers engaged in trade and GSC-related activities and to explore the medium and long-term implications of the pandemic on supply-chain sustainability and implications for the world of work.

[ILO - COVID-19 rapid assessment: Federation of Employers of Ukraine releases business impacts and responses](#) | 21 May 2020

The Federation of Employers of Ukraine (FEU), the largest and most representative employer organization in the country, conducted a survey between 10 and 27 April, 2020 to scan the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic among its member enterprises. 121 enterprises responded to the survey which is based on the ILO "Enterprise survey tool: Assessing the needs of enterprises resulting from COVID-19".

[ILO - Rapid assessment of the employment impacts and policy responses. North Macedonia](#) | 28 May 2020

The report provides evidence that shows that the lockdown measures had

severe impacts on employment. It offers eleven policy recommendations for the country and suggests steps to introduce as coronavirus emergency measures are being eased.

[DFID's approach to re-orienting manufacturing support in response to COVID-19](#) | 15 May 2020

The note summarises how DFID is adjusting its support to local manufacturing in response to COVID-19.

[USAID - Guidance on supporting safe and functioning food markets](#) | 28 April 2020

The guidance was developed by the USAID Bureau for Resilience and Food Security to help support safe and functioning food markets, while maximizing safety precautions to limit COVID-19 transmission.

[World Bank - Map of SME-support measures in response to COVID-19](#)

The World Bank recently released a dashboard tracking measures that countries are rolling out in support of MSMEs in response to Covid-19 pandemic.

[World Bank - To avoid food insecurity, keep finance flowing](#) | 27 May 2020

The recent World Bank blog draws attention to the important role public banks, financial cooperatives, and microfinance institutions can play as the main providers of capital to smallholder farms and agricultural MSMEs.

[OECD - COVID-19: Call to action for responsible mineral supply chains](#) | 11 May 2020

The Multi-Stakeholder Steering Group of the implementation programme for the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Mineral Supply Chains is calling for immediate and concerted action from civil society organizations, governments, financing institutions, international organisations, private sector actors, and others to safeguard gains related to due diligence in supply chains in alignment with the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Mineral Supply Chains.

UNCTAD - Textile and garment supply chains in times of COVID-19: challenges for developing countries | 29 May 2020

Since the Coronavirus outbreak, the UNCTAD has monitored the effects of the global pandemic on manufacturing, trade, foreign direct investment and economic growth. This article studies the disruptions in the textile and garment supply chains. The globalized nature of the industry and its dependency to Chinese inputs has raised concerns from the perspective of developing countries.

FAO - Adjusting business models to sustain agri-food enterprises during COVID-19 | 6 May 2020

The COVID-19 crisis is compromising agri-enterprises' ability to continue business as usual and, in some cases, is threatening the survival of some firms beyond the crisis, particularly small businesses comprised of farm enterprises, traders, food manufacturers, distributors and retailers across food chains. The brief highlights the critical role that these companies play in maintaining functioning food systems during the crisis. Recommendations target a mix of ministries, public institutions, food industry associations, local business service providers and chambers of commerce.

IOE - Position Paper on economic advocacy: fiscal and monetary policies | 28 May 2020

This document follows the IOE Digital Conference on "Economic advocacy to assure business sustainability and avoid massive job losses: what works, what does not" that took place on 25 March 2020. It presents a range of policy actions that are being considered by governments in dealing with the impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic. It draws upon policy measures adopted in some countries and highlighted during the event.

DCED - Using Private Sector Development to achieve a Green Recovery in the context of the COVID-19 Pandemic | 26 May 2020

The guidance paper sets out how green growth approaches in PSD programmes can contribute to helping countries recover from the COVID-19

pandemic and proposes 10 principles that should be considered when designing and implementing PSD programmes during this time.

[ANDE COVID-19 Response and Resources](#)

This page lists responses by the Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs (ANDE) to COVID-19 and information resources related to supporting small and growing businesses through the pandemic.

[Response, Recovery, and Resilience Investment Coalition \(R3 Coalition\)](#) | 12

May 2020

This market-wide coalition aims to streamline impact investing efforts that will address the large-scale social and economic consequences of COVID-19. This initiative is a collaboration across prominent impact investing networks – to be managed by the Global Impact Investing Network (GIIN) as the organizing body – and is supported by a group of leading foundations.

[COVID Response Alliance for Social Entrepreneurs](#) | 4 May 2020

The Alliance brings together over 40 leading global organizations to coordinate responses for social entrepreneurs as they overcome the significant impacts of COVID-19. It aims to support social entrepreneurs through providing a joint action and communication platform, amplifying available financial support and coordinating non-financial support.

[CASE - Covidcap.com](#) | April 2020

Covidcap.com is a searchable database of over \$1 trillion in COVID-19 cash relief resources available to small business and nonprofit entrepreneurs everywhere. It is produced by the Center for the Advancement of Social Entrepreneurship (CASE) at Duke University's Fuqua School of Business.

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.

[IISD - Financing COVID-19 Stimulus: Will high levels of public debt come back to haunt us?](#) | 27 May 2020

The blog by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) examines how stimulus spending is actually financed and what patterns are emerging from the design and implementation of such packages in Europe, Japan, Republic of Korea, and Australia.

[Sri Lanka - COVID-19 & Beyond: The impact on the labour market](#) | 9 May 2020

This report by the Department of Labour analyzes the impact of COVID-19 on employment based on an online survey of private sector establishments including MSMEs (2,764 establishments responded) and provides short-term and mid-term policy recommendations.

[Spain - The government gives the green light to the minimum vital income to fight poverty in the midst of the pandemic](#) | 29 May 2020

Spain begins to raise this Friday a new pillar in the welfare state. The Council of Ministers approved a royal decree law this Friday that regulates the minimum state aid throughout the country for households with less income. This instrument, the latest social protection network, will come into force as soon as it is published in the Official State Gazette (BOE) and the Government will begin to pay the first benefits in a few weeks, next June.

[China - Night markets and street stands revive Chinese economy](#) | 03 June 2020

Night markets and street stands have resumed business and been encouraged to revive the economy in different parts of China. Both business modalities have

become an important engine to drive economic development, especially in energizing the market vitality for small and micro businesses in China.

Indonesia - Govt targets village funds program to speed up aid to 8 million poor families | 03 June 2020

The Indonesian government aims to complete the disbursement of the BLT Dana Desa (village funds unconditional cash transfers) to around 8 million families this week, as a part of its efforts to protect households at greater risk of falling into poverty amid the COVID-19 outbreak.

La Côte d'Ivoire au chevet des acteurs de l'informel | 27 May 2020

La Côte d'Ivoire a procédé au lancement de son programme du fonds d'appui du secteur informel (FASI). Cette initiative a pour objectif principal d'appuyer les acteurs du secteur informel, touché de plein fouet par la pandémie du coronavirus. Pour la première phase d'une durée de 1 mois (du 14 mai au 15 juin), le gouvernement va débloquent un montant de 10 milliards de FCFA (15,2 millions d'euros) Cette enveloppe sera répartie entre 40,000 acteurs du secteur de l'informel, opérant dans les activités de la restauration, de transport, de services entres autres.

3. Enterprises response

Supply chain stabilization

COVID-19 Action Tracker: Monitoring industry responses, government actions and workers' demands during the COVID-19 pandemic

While many brands have acted responsibly and committed to paying for orders in full, the details of these commitments have been held in private and are still changing. Business & Human Rights Resource Centre (BHRRC) is tracking commitments made by 35 global fashion brands, the emerging demands from the labour movement, and recommendations on how to build back better. To

encourage a move towards greater transparency, BHRRC conducted a survey of 35 fashion brands and retailers, asking for disclosure of payment terms and commitments made to suppliers. Findings on the brand's actions are encapsulated through this tracker.

Production innovation and adaptation

[From Kenya to Bangladesh mask-making has become a thriving cottage industry](#) | 25 May 2020

As the crisis continues and social distancing is turning into the new norm, face mask making has become a thriving cottage industry in developing countries. From Senegal to The Philippines, the locals have shown their resourcefulness. Networks of tailors and sellers are working hand in hand to provide washable masks. More than a simple income-generating activity, they are offering relief to the communities. By displaying colorful patterns, or pictures of religious leaders, locally produced masks are also a strong statement of resilience.

[Co-op expands robot roll-out in the UK](#) | 1 June 2020

Co-op became the first to trial same-day autonomous robot deliveries in the UK when it teamed-up with Starship Technologies in April 2018 to offer the emission free online home delivery service. Co-op has seen the number of customers using robot deliveries more than double since the start of lockdown, with the value of transactions increasing four-fold as shopping habits change.

[Tecnologías anti-COVID para que las pymes turísticas ahorren tiempo](#) | 29 May 2020

Las tecnologías anti-COVID para pymes turísticas y pequeños negocios como bares y restaurantes pueden ayudar a ahorrar tiempo y ganar eficiencia. Hablamos de códigos QR para pagar la cuenta, cartas virtuales que se consultan en el smartphone y sustituyen a las tradicionales, apps para gestionar las colas y turnos.

Support to customers and communities

[Investor plans £15bn support for UK companies toiling with crisis loans](#) | 01

June 2020

The Business Growth Fund (BGF), one of the UK's biggest investment companies providing patient capital for SMEs in the UK and Ireland, is planning a £15bn fund to help bail out thousands of businesses that will struggle to repay state-guaranteed coronavirus loans.

[Ecobank, Google partner to offer digital solutions to SMEs](#) | 26 May 2020

Ecobank Group and Google are teaming up to help African SMEs keep pace in a fast-growing digital world. The partners announced they will develop a range of digital solutions that aim to make banking operations easier for customers. The packages will be available to Ecobank's SME customers in May 2020.

[Google crea videotutoriales para que las pymes aprendan nuevas habilidades digitales](#) | 28 May 2020

Debido a la crisis sanitaria por el COVID-19, las pymes están atravesando un momento difícil que enfrenta cierres temporales y ajustes generales en su modelo de negocio. Últimamente se ha mostrado que la digitalización es un paso fundamental para mantener a las empresas funcionando, ya que si tu negocio está en línea, sigue abierto. Por esta razón, Google ha estado desarrollando contenido y ofreciendo conferencias para ayudar a los emprendedores a obtener el conocimiento y las herramientas necesarias que los apoyen en el mundo digital, según Entrepreneur.

Recovery and post-recovery planning

[UK - Majority of employers plan to preserve remote working](#) | 29 May 2020

Despite encouragement from the UK government for business to gradually return to normal, only 4% of UK employers have made their employees come back to work since coronavirus lockdown rules were relaxed in the country, specialised HR site People Management revealed on 28 May. According to a survey of more than 500 professionals, 55% of employers plan to keep remote working arrangements in place for an unspecified timeframe. Meanwhile 24%

of respondents are waiting to find out more about the health-related guidance in their sector before bringing staff back to the workplace, with the 'Covid-19 secure' guidance for returning to work being gradually updated. Regarding preventive measures in the workplace, 67% of employers have planned to reorganise layouts. 59% will stagger start and end times and 54% plan to stagger shifts so as to reduce contact. 53% of employers plan to hold fewer and shorter meetings, while 49% will spread breaks throughout the day.

Spain - The El Corte Inglés retail group is resuming business by facilitating functional and geographical mobility | 28 May 2020

The CCOO, Fagsa, Fetico, and UGT unions have reached an agreement with management for the El Corte Inglés group on the conditions for returning to work following the nationwide lockdown and the gradual reopening of the stores. Management is committed to maintaining employment and wages and to making additional effort towards employee work/life balance. In return, the employee representatives will accept a series of temporary measures 'linked to the current situation' to facilitate greater flexibility in terms of employees' working hours and potentially as regards employee functional (job role changes) and geographical mobility, even though the agreement already provides for non-situational and definitive mobility conditions in order to save jobs.

Will COVID-19 change global supply chains forever? | 03 June 2020

"Inefficiencies have been put under a spotlight". In this contribution, Richard Howells speculates on the irremediable changes of the global supply chain incurred by the Covid-19 crisis. "Just in Time" inventory systems and practices in the western world mean that any slowdown in production in China immediately affects consumers around the globe". Among other durable changes to come, he predicts "the comeback of safety stock and inventory optimization" and "the rise of near-shoring or on-shoring of finished goods".

Après-Covid-19 : l'Afrique au chevet de ses entreprises | 29 May 2020

La pandémie de Covid-19 et surtout les mesures de restriction adoptées pour

enrayer sa propagation ont fragilisé les Très Petites et Moyennes Entreprises d'Afrique. Alors que l'UA a estimé à 20 millions le nombre d'emplois que pourrait détruire la crise économique, certains analystes craignent qu'elle ne se transforme en une crise sociale durable. Alors l'Afrique se mobilise : fonds de garantie, résilience et innovation pour sauver l'écosystème entrepreneurial africain.

Other/multiple response

Afrique Comment réagissent les PDG aux perturbations liées au Covid-19?

| 19 May 2020

La dernière semaine d'avril, juste avant qu'un certain nombre de pays africains ne commencent à assouplir une partie des restrictions en vigueur, 7% des entreprises et institutions interrogées dans le cadre de l'enquête OBG CEO Covid-19 Survey ont déclaré être totalement fermées, 61% fonctionnaient à 1-60% de leurs capacités, et 32% à 61-100%. Les secteurs du tourisme et du bâtiment comptent parmi les plus fortement touchés et la majorité des entreprises des deux secteurs (80% et 78% respectivement) fonctionnaient à 0-20% de leurs capacités.

#UHack: Iniciativa Une A Universitarios Para Idear Soluciones Para PYMES Contra El COVID-19 | **03 June 2020**

La organización HackCovid Chile se encuentra realizando la convocatoria #UHACK, iniciativa orientada hacia los universitarios para que ellos entreguen soluciones locales y ágiles a los problemas que afectan a las pymes producto de la crisis del coronavirus.

4. Workers/multi-stakeholders response

[ITUC - Health and safety is paramount for return to work](#) | 28 May 2020

Re-opening workplaces is much more complicated than closing them, and it is crucial that occupational health and safety regulations, procedures and systems provide the basis for return to work, as well as in situations where work has continued. Social dialogue and negotiations between employers and unions are central to this.

[ITUC - Climate and employment proof our work](#) | 24 June 2020

The ITUC is inviting its affiliates and the Global Union Federations to work with union representatives to ask all employers to meet with workers and their unions to discuss plans for climate and employment proofing work. You can also have conversations with local businesses that you support or local and national government.

[Canada - New Task Force to make recommendations on a resilient economic recovery](#) | 19 May 2020

The Task Force for a Resilient Recovery is an independent and diverse group of Canadian finance, policy and sustainability leaders. The 14 members are determined to make sure that Canadian governments get the best advice on building a resilient economic recovery. The Task Force will make actionable recommendations on how governments can use a range of tools – including direct public investment, leveraging private capital, targeted tax cuts and incentives, regulatory sandboxes (to enable innovation), and behavioural ‘nudges’ – to spur jobs and generate lasting economic activity while also helping to build a clean and resilient economy.

[Australia - Poll shows less than 10% of workers have basic COVID protections at work](#) | 21 May 2020

Polling conducted for the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) shows a staggering lack of basic preventative measures in Australian workplaces and highlights the need for immediate action to improve WHS standards.