

COVID-19 and ENTERPRISES

Briefing Note [No. 29]

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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

[New IOE Business and Human Rights Newsletter](#) | 17 July 2020

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic we have seen in the last few weeks many activities and developments related to human rights and responsible business conduct. The work on a binding treaty on business and human rights continues, GRI undertakes human rights revisions to the GRI Standards, OHCHR published guidance on access to remedy as well as on mandatory human rights due diligence, the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights presented its report on linking the human rights and anticorruption agenda to the UN Human Rights Council, the German government announced the launch of mandatory supply chain legislation and the Swiss government decided that the popular vote on a Swiss supply chain law will take place on 29 November.

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.

[Kodak pivots with \\$765m US loan to make virus drug ingredients](#) | 28 July 2020

The Trump administration on Tuesday said it was extending a \$765m loan to Kodak, as the US government tries to expand domestic manufacturing across medical supply chains to reduce dependence on foreign countries, particularly China. The loan will be granted by the US International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) under the Defense Production Act, which Donald Trump has invoked to purchase N95 masks and speed up the making of ventilators.

France : Nouveau fonds d'investissement aéronautique pour soutenir les PME et les ETI de la filière aéronautique | 28 July 2020

Nommé Ace Aéro Partenaires, le fonds d'investissement a été créé afin d'accompagner les PME et les entreprises de taille intermédiaire (ETI) française de la filière aéronautique. Le fonds sera géré par Ace Management, filiale de la société de gestion d'actifs et d'investissement Tikehau Capital. L'État confirme sa participation dans Ace Aéro Partenaires à hauteur de 200 millions d'euros, dont 50 millions d'euros de la banque publique d'investissement Bpifrance. Les quatre grands donneurs d'ordre de la filière aéronautique française contribueront à ce fonds à hauteur de 200 millions d'euros.

France : Le gouvernement prolonge le chômage partiel dans le secteur du tourisme jusqu'à décembre | 29 July 2020

Le chômage partiel va se poursuivre dans les mêmes conditions jusqu'à septembre. Ce recours à l'activité partielle pour les entreprises du secteur (hôtellerie, restauration, voyagistes, événementiel, etc.) avait été instauré pendant le confinement, pour les aider à faire face à l'arrêt ou la baisse de leur activité.

Côte d'Ivoire : Fonds de soutien aux grandes entreprises : 29 entreprises ont reçu un appui de 9,7 milliards fcfa | 28 July 2020

Au total 29 entreprises ont pu bénéficier de l'appui du FSGE pour un montant de 9,7 milliards FCFA. (...) Le président du FSGE a précisé que ce fonds a été mis en place pour adresser les problématiques liées au maintien de l'outil de production et des emplois des grandes entreprises, dans le cadre de la lutte contre la pandémie de la Covid 19.

3. Enterprises response

Employment protection

[175,000 Smallholder BCI Farmers in India Receive Covid-19 Insurance](#) | 29 July 2020

Health and economic risks are more than ever linked for those who are living from one harvest to the next. The Better Cotton Initiative has announced yesterday that it has launched a Covid-19 insurance for small farmers in India. The insurance cover will provide income security to 175 000 BCI farmers in the form of a lump sum payment in case of infection. This initiative initiates the debates around the response of insurances and social protection schemes to the current situation for workers. It has been operated in cooperation with the Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH).

Production innovation and adaptation

[Zambia gets its first contactless payment card through Absa \(bank\)](#) | 28 July 2020

As social distancing is becoming the new norm, the use of contactless transactions has emerged in Africa. Many local actors are innovating in this field. It is the case of Zambia that has inaugurated its first contactless payment card through Absa Zambia's Card. The debit card allows customers to make small purchases by tapping the card on a point-of-sale machine. In the meantime, a tech firm from Kenya has developed a passenger counting and [cashless payment system](#) that aims to reduce physical contacts and overcrowding in public transport.

[Startup founders help each other weather the COVID-19 crisis](#) | 17 July 2020

The pandemic has had a devastating impact on startups. A number of Canadian entrepreneurs have joined force to organize group conversations each week on Zoom. Conversations in which opportunities, new challenges and very practical solutions are discussed. "We found that our group conversations about the experience of going through this exceptional time together helped

entrepreneurs feel less alone ». An interesting and innovative initiative in (re) building peer relations and a resilient entrepreneurial environment online.

Support to customers and communities

Emirates will pay for your medical treatment, hotel quarantine, and even your funeral if you catch COVID-19 while traveling | 27 July 2020

Emirates will offer free COVID-19 insurance to all of its passengers who travel by October 31. The insurance covers medical expenses, quarantine costs, and repatriation if you miss your flight home. It also covers the cost of repatriating your body and your funeral if you die from the virus.

Recovery and post-recovery planning

Crisis-hit, Moroccans join 'informal economy' as job market shrinks | 14 July 2020

Vulnerable workers have been front-line victims of the Covid crisis by putting both their health and mean of subsistence at risk. Another non negligible (and less trivial) consequence is the expected growth of the informal sector “as people lose their jobs in companies and consumers seek the cheaper goods and services provided by workers”. The example of Morocco underlines the importance of social security for workers.

Peru : Guías turísticos se reinventan: Entre profesores de idiomas y comerciantes para afrontar crisis | 16 July 2020

Dentro de lo afectada que se encuentra la economía por el impacto del COVID-19, la actividad turística ha entrado en el momento más duro de la historia a pesar de varios años de franco crecimiento. Y con esa caída, los más de 10,000 guías turísticos que hay en el país se han vuelto los más afectados. Gestión.pe conversó con Cecil Bastos, presidente de la Asociación de Guías Oficiales de Turismo (Agotur) de Lima, quien brindó algunos detalles de la crudeza con la

que ha afectado la pandemia a este sector y cómo se están reinventando para afrontar la crisis.

Other/multiple response

[Here are 3 ways businesses can survive and thrive through COVID-19 and beyond](#) | 23 July 2020

Based on interactions, here are three ways businesses from the World Economic Forum's New Champions Community of forward-looking, high growth firms have weathered the current storm while shaping their future resilience and profitability.

- Organizational agility was once desirable, but is now central to business survival.
- Digitalization should not be seen as an acceptable solution to a problem, but rather grounds to change the business model creatively for the better.
- Cooperation with previously unlikely partners proffers a more effective means to generate collective new gains.

[COVID-19: How can companies offer effective reskilling for employees?](#) | 27 July 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced businesses to rapidly train workers with digital skills to cope with remote working, so how can this be done effectively? Last year, a paper from the World Economic Forum and Boston Consulting Group found that the cost of reskilling is approximately \$24,800 per person in the United States. "It can cost as much as six times more to hire from the outside than to build from within."

[Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter removed a COVID-19 video due to false coronavirus information — but millions had already viewed it](#) | 28 July 2020

A Breitbart video touting misinformation about the coronavirus has quickly spread across social-media platforms. The video, which got more than 14 million views on Facebook alone has since been taken down from Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter. Earlier this year, social-media sites including Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter agreed to work together and alongside government health agencies to make sure people get accurate information about the coronavirus and COVID-19, the disease it causes.

[Visa ayuda a empresas y emprendedores a expandir su alcance digital](#) | 24 July 2020

Visa brinda su ayuda a través de soluciones para favorecer la transformación digital y brindar contenido educacional sobre los temas más relevantes. Visa, junto con proveedores líderes de soluciones para pequeñas empresas, presentaron un nuevo recurso en línea para PyMEs en Perú, el sitio web de [Visa para Pequeñas y Medianas Empresas](#), a fin de ayudar a los comercios y emprendedores a construir relaciones más sólidas con sus clientes y expandir sus negocios, apoyándolos en la recuperación.

4. Workers/multi-stakeholders response

[Suisse : La Loi Covid-19 doit offrir plus de sécurité](#) | 29 July 2020

Pour les syndicats, il faut que la loi remplaçant les ordonnances du Conseil fédéral mette l'accent sur la protection de la santé, la garantie du revenu et le partenariat social. (...) Les syndicats proposent l'ajout d'un article spécifique afin que les prescriptions dans les entreprises et lors de manifestations fassent l'objet de règles claires. Jusqu'à présent, les plans de protection n'ont été mis en œuvre que dans certaines branches et entreprises, sur une base largement volontaire. Afin de protéger les salariés, clients et participants de manifestations, l'USS propose un cadre plus contraignant.

[How digitalisation must be harnessed to save jobs](#) | 29 July 2020

At the end of June, the European Trade Union Confederation and the three major EU-level employers' organisations—BusinessEurope, CEEP and SME united—signed an Autonomous Framework Agreement, to work together on the introduction of digitalisation in workplaces across Europe. In the context of Covid-19, the deal has much wider relevance, as it provides a blueprint for negotiating a 'just transition' and change in the world of work. (...) The agreement sets out that, instead of making redundancies, employers need to look at other options for maintaining and investing in their workforces, creating new opportunities and enabling workers to adapt to change.