Connecting Business initiative (CBi) response to COVID-19
Understanding collective private sector action through CBi
Connecting Business initiative (CBi)

- launched at the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016 by OCHA, UNDP and other partners to transform the way the private sector engages before, during and after crises
- improves disaster preparedness, response and recovery by integrating the private sector into national and international disaster management mechanisms
- reduces risks and duplication while increasing the resilience of companies and societies
CBi supported private sector networks

- CBi Secretariat (OCHA Geneva and UNDP Istanbul)
- CBi Member Networks
- Other private sector networks supported
CBi networks know how to work in crises

- The core activity of CBi and its networks is disaster management.

- Many networks have also responded specifically to health crises such as measles and pneumonic plague epidemics for example by distributing medicines and sharing information (SMS broadcast).

- The CBi community is strong - it has been built over four years and networks are actively sharing experiences.

9 CBi Member Networks and their members responded to a total of 31 disasters in 2019

- Droughts: Madagascar
- Earthquakes: (Mexico) Pacific, Philippines, Vanuatu
- Fires: Madagascar, Mexico, Pacific
- Floods: Fiji, Kenya, Mexico, Sri Lanka
- Freeze: Mexico
- Health epidemics (measles): Fiji, Pacific, Madagascar
- Heavy rainfall and landslides: Mexico
- Protracted displacement: Kenya
- Political instability: Haiti, Pacific
- Terrorist attack: Sri Lanka
- Tropical storms (cyclones, typhoons): Fiji, Mexico, Madagascar, Philippines
CBi approach to COVID-19
1. Support to CBi networks

Based on feedback from the networks, CBi will focus on supporting the networks in four key areas:
- Risk containment and mitigation in communities
- Communications and public outreach
- Economic impact and business continuity
- Advocacy and policy dialogue

In addition to offering services to the networks, the CBi Secretariat will also promote knowledge transfer and encourage inter-network learning among them.

CBI networks already exchange daily WhatsApp messages

- Establish a knowledge management and online collaboration platform for CBI networks (MS Teams)
- Provide US$20,000 – US$60,000 of funding to selected CBI networks to implement activities, ideally with UNDP and/or OCHA country offices
- Support hazard monitoring and risk mitigation measures in selected networks
- Develop basic guidance and support CBI networks in drafting and implementing COVID-19 response and recovery plans
- Develop a checklist, list of resources and a training module to support business continuity planning
- Map, draft and distribute industry specific guidance
- Organize regular webinars to enable exchange of best practices
- Draft joint advocacy messaging
- Support policy dialogue
- Compile and share lessons learned
Example of COVID-19 response: Asia Pacific Alliance for Disaster Management Sri Lanka (A-PAD SL)

- Partnered HSBC, Hongkong Red Cross, Aitken Spence Cargo and a Sri Lanka based distributor of face masks to arrange the procurement, freight service and distribution of the masks to Wuhan.
- Supported the Disaster Management Centre in Sri Lanka to set up a COVID-19 Emergency Call Centre.
- Engaged in a nation-wide social media campaign to raise awareness about personal preventive measures, business continuity, curfew regulations and other critical topics.
- Partnered with supermarket chains to introduce guidelines on shopping etiquette for purchasing when curfew is lifted.
Example of COVID-19 response: Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation (PDRF)

- Together with business groups raised over 1.5 billion Philippine pesos (approx. US$30 million) to fund the distribution of grocery vouchers to over one million urban poor residents in the Metro Manila Area (more information here)
- Partnered with Globe Telecom’s e-wallet service Gcash, digital finance group Fintech Alliance Philippines, Smart Communications’ e-wallet service Paymaya, and online crowdfunding platform Gava Gives to help purchase essential protective gear for healthcare institutions
- With the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Admiral Transport, the Department of Labor and Employment, and Phoenix Petroleum Philippines, deployed buses to give transport assistance to healthcare workers
- Helping procure disinfectants and ventilators for public hospitals
2. Support to the UN system

• Coordinate the **UN emergency private sector focal points group** (in collaboration with the UN Global Compact)

• Help raise resources to support the **COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund** and **COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan**

• Support UNDP and OCHA country offices on engaging with private sector networks around COVID-19
  • All UNDP/OCHA country offices have access to **information, resources and guidance**
  • Countries where CBi has networks can apply for **funding to enhance collaboration**

• Engage in global UNDP and OCHA work streams where relevant
3. Support to the broader business community

- Continuously update the Business Guide to highlight different ways for the private sector to support
- Update the emergency page on the CBi online portal to share information such as situation reports, guidance, and other resources
- Provide information on what CBi supported networks are doing to address COVID-19
- Co-organize open webinars with partners such as the UN Global Compact
- Share key advocacy messages (including through social media) that help the private sector engage in COVID-19 response
- Identify and distribute good practices and inspiring examples, as well as private sector innovation for COVID-19 response and recovery
- Support companies with bilateral queries and match their offers with identified needs
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