



UNITED NATIONS

PRIVATE SECTOR FORUM 2016

19 September | UN Headquarters, New York

Empowering People: Thematic Discussion Briefing Note

Discussion Objectives

In a 40-minute luncheon discussion at the Private Sector Forum, UN, Business, Government and Civil Society participants seated at tables of ten will address challenges and opportunities set out in this briefing, share examples of their own organizations' commitments to action, and identify new opportunities to collaborate with other participants to scale impact.

Discussion Question

How can Governments, the United Nations and the private sector work together to empower people while ensuring that no one is left behind?

Introduction

The commitment to leave no one behind is well-established within the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the UN Secretary-General's Agenda for Humanity. In particular, the Agenda for Humanity highlights how migrants make positive contributions to inclusive growth and sustainable development and why it is so important to protect and empower migrants and refugees. The number of international migrants soared to 243.7 million in 2015 – a 41 percent increase since 2000.¹ Around the world, 31 million children are living outside the country of their birth²; another 17 million have been displaced within their own countries by violence and conflict.³ Migrants and refugees face dangerous journeys and even more challenges upon arrival in a new land. Through a multi-stakeholder approach, the public sector, private sector and civil society can advance human development by working together to ensure fundamental human rights and dignity for all people, starting by empowering the most marginalized. For business, these people can become valuable employees, customers and members of the community.

Key Challenges

Migrants and refugees are an enormous population missing the opportunity to positively contribute to societies and markets around the world. First, limited safe and regular pathways for migration and weak protection systems put refugees and migrants at risk of violence, abuse and exploitation while on the move, especially if they travel through irregular channels or resort to smugglers. So far in 2016 alone, 4,027 migrants have been reported dead or missing along migratory routes across the globe.⁴ Migrant women and girls are more likely to be victims of forced labour, human trafficking and gender-based violence. Unaccompanied and separated children and those who are stateless or undocumented are most at risk for the worst forms of violence, abuse and harm. Once at a destination, discrimination, xenophobia and unfair treatment are all too common for refugees and migrants.

Poverty disproportionately affects migrants and refugees, including women, children, ethnic and religious minorities, persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples. As a result, the challenges of poverty are closely intertwined with the current humanitarian crises. Multiple factors shape poverty, including food and nutrition insecurity, access to basic quality services such as education and training; safe, affordable and effective healthcare; and sanitation. Businesses increasingly see that growing inequality stifles growth and contributes to political and social instability. Yet, in recent years, income inequality has increased within both developed and developing countries.

Solutions

Over 90 percent of international migrants are migrant workers and their families.⁵ Acknowledging that migrants and refugees positively contribute to inclusive growth and sustainable development, businesses can apply responsible and inclusive practices that empower workers and the communities in which they operate. Examples include:

- Invest in business-driven poverty eradication activities, such as developing a living wage policy and inclusive business models.
- Promote financial inclusion of workers, migrants and refugees, including by offering digital payments.
- Create more opportunities for children and young people in countries of origin (education, mentorship, vocational training, employment, exchange programmes, etc.), improving the prospects of children and youth at home and opening other options to fulfil their aspirations rather migration.
- Establish non-discrimination policies, including by providing equal remuneration and benefits for work of equal value to women and men.

¹ Trends in International Migrant Stock: 2015 Revision. Available at: <http://un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/data/>

² UNICEF analysis based on United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, "Trends in International Migrant Stock: Migrants by Age and Sex", 2015.

³ UNICEF analysis based on Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, "Global Report on Internal Displacement 2016", IDMC, Geneva, 2016.

⁴ Missing Migrant Project: Latest Global Figures. Available at: <http://missingmigrants.iom.int/latest-global-figures>

⁵ International Labour Organization: Labour Migration. Available at: <http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/labour-migration>



UNITED NATIONS

PRIVATE SECTOR FORUM 2016

19 September | UN Headquarters, New York

- Address potential adverse impacts of third parties, such as suppliers that may put migrant workers at risk of exploitation, human trafficking and forced labour.
- Provide training, skill building, mentoring and scholarship opportunities for migrant workers, refugees and youth.
- Hire migrants directly, when possible, to eliminate recruitment fees; pay or reimburse all fees and costs associated with recruitment, travel and migration processing.
- Promote inclusive sourcing, for example, from women-owned or minority-owned businesses.
- Make health a priority in business operations and invest in affordable medicine and healthcare services.
- Support advocacy efforts to shift public opinion and create more welcoming societies where integration and participation of migrants and refugees are possible.

UN-Business Partnerships and Initiatives

The **UN Business Action Hub** offers a central online entry point for companies looking to partner with the UN. Visit business.un.org or the new UN Global Compact Partnership Passport to learn how to connect and partner. Companies are also encouraged to take action through the following UN-business initiatives:

Pilot the UN Global Compact-Oxfam Poverty Footprint Tool – an assessment tool that takes a people-centered approach to business impacts (positive and negative) on poverty. The tool provides a comprehensive overview of factors that influence poverty, emphasizes stakeholder engagement, partnership between companies and civil society and promotes corporate transparency and pro-poor business strategies. www.unglobalcompact.org/take-action/action/poverty-footprint

Endorse the Women's Empowerment Principles – a set of principles developed by UN Women and the UN Global Compact for business offering guidance on how to empower women in the workplace, marketplace and community. Chief executive officers, or equivalent, are invited to issue a CEO statement of support. www.weprinciples.org.

Apply the Dhaka Principles for Migration with Dignity – a set of human rights based principles to enhance respect for the rights of migrant workers from the moment of recruitment, during overseas employment and through to further employment or safe return to home countries. They are based on the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and international human rights and labour standards. www.dhaka-principles.org

Join the Global Shelter Coalition – a convener of leading brands and individual philanthropists aiming to provide and improve shelter solutions for refugees. It is an invitation to private sector leaders to join forces with UNHCR in managing the refugee crisis, the greatest humanitarian challenge of the modern era. Members of the coalition work collectively towards this common goal and can invest in different areas of UNHCR's shelter work. www.unhcr.org/en-us/global-shelter-coalition.html

Support Education Cannot Wait – the first global fund to prioritize education in humanitarian action. It aims to play a ground-breaking role in ushering in a more collaborative approach to ensure every crisis-affected child and young person is in school and learning. By bringing together public and private partners, Education Cannot Wait will leverage additional finance and catalyse new approaches to funding and innovation to deliver education in emergencies and protracted crises. www.educationcannotwait.org

Make a commitment to Every Woman Every Child – a multi-stakeholder movement spearheaded by the UN Secretary-General that recognizes that all partners have an essential role to play in improving women's and children's health and well-being. www.everywomaneverychild.org

Linking the SDGs and the Humanitarian Agenda

While all of the SDGs are interconnected and help advance the humanitarian agenda, the following SDGs are particularly critical to empowering people:

