Business for Goals Platform Activities around COVID-19
April – June 2020

Business Surveys

In order to assess the impact and the needs of businesses while also being able to compare the socio-economic impact over time, a second survey* analysis was made by the Business for Goals Platform. This survey was conducted online between the 12th and the 20th of May 2020 and reached 619 enterprises which reflected upon their economic impact, adaptation strategies and use of state aids, future projections, needs and intervention priorities. Using the initial analysis as a baseline, new sets of questions have been designed for the second survey, during which design stage many UN agencies (UNDP, UN Women, UNFPA, ILO and UNIDO) were brought together for a collaborative work. The report revealed that 59% of enterprises are not prepared against a second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic and that the impact of the crisis on enterprises slightly changed from March to May. It can be seen that the firms that declared a substantial impact decreased from 61 to 50% and state aids have been applied to all sectors and to all scales of enterprises, almost half of the firms benefited from the short-time working allowance. You can reach the full report here and the infographic that summarizes the report here. Following the publication of the results, a press meeting was organized and the bulletins disseminated widely, which were picked up by 13 news on printed media, 2 TV news and 49 news on the online media.

* Business for Goals Platform conducted its first survey analysis with 780 enterprises last March, within 15 days of the first confirmed coronavirus case in Turkey.

The second survey also analyzed the situation within Syrian-owned enterprises in Turkey. Based on the 32 statements by Syrian-owned enterprises, it was shown that those enterprises were hit harder by the crisis: 38% of Syrian-owned enterprises reported a full-stop of operations in May, the rate was 30% for micro-and small-scale enterprises and 22% for all scales across Turkey. Specific analysis on the report (page 28), and the infographic which summarizes the results regarding Syrian-owned enterprises are available.

Webinars for the benefit of SMEs

Organizing webinars was one of the platform’s responses to address the needs of businesses, which appeared in the context of the Covid-19 crisis. Around 1000 participants representing enterprises connected to the webinars. The recordings are available in Turkish language.

- The webinar “Labor Law and Work Security in the Days of Corona” took place on the 16th of April and hosted Prof. Dr. Erdem Özdemir, professor of law at the Department of Labor and Social Security Law, Marmara University. Özdemir responded to questions on the effects of the coronavirus outbreak on labor law and companies’ work security policies along with decent work and employer approaches.
- Series of webinars continued with the “Covid-19: Analysis of the Economic Situation in Turkey and Experience Sharing of Enterprises”. In this webinar, the President and the vice president of the Business for Goals Platform, Ümit Boyner and Şükrü Ünlütürk, the president of
TÜRKONFED Orhan Turan, together with managing partner at the Policy Analytics Lab, Esen Çağlar analyzed the economic situation based on the survey results and shared their opinions and experiences with the audience.

- Third webinar took place on the 30th of April and covered the topic of “The Future of Trade: Turkey’s Perspective”. In this session, İlker Gürsoy, Head of Risk Underwriting at Euler Hermes and Evren Kılıç, International Trade Senior Manager at Ernst & Young Turkey explored the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the global economy and foreign trade and specifically the immediate measures taken at the customs.

- As the Covid-19 Crisis and its effects on women became a deep concern worldwide, a webinar has been organized on the topic of "Women in Business during COVID-19 Outbreak" to discuss equal access to economic support mechanisms and private sector measures to prevent increasing domestic violence. Women Entrepreneurs Commission, Private sector representatives, including Accor Hotels and Vodafone, as well as the representatives from UN Women and UNPFA presented their experiences and programs at the webinar. The feedback and comments received from the participants and business associations were recorded and shared with UN agencies and are expected to feed into future programming, especially around eliminating domestic violence.

**New Programming and Policy Dialogue**

- The results of the business surveys were collectively used for transforming of the ongoing programmes of the platform founders to meet the needs of SMEs. Enterprises who had better digital business solutions and able to work remotely were more resilient whereas diversifying sales channels and starting e-commerce will be leading strategies to cope with the crisis. In order to respond the needs for a digitalization journey of the SMEs, the ongoing projects and programmes were transformed into digital platforms and additional activities were designed to support SMEs. Platform partner TURKONFED has conducted trainings on improving digital skills, developing financial literacy, accounting, digital marketing, e-commerce and innovative business models and established a digitalization hotline/help desk with a mentoring component.

- TURKONFED also launched the Collective Wisdom Platform in order to demonstrate its commitment for lobbying resolutions that all parties can stand behind from a nonpartisan and a resolute standpoint. TURKONFED hosted the leaders of political parties in Turkey to convey the experiences of SMEs from the field as well as lobby sectoral demands and policy recommendations as Turkey is on its way to overcoming the challenges introduced by the global pandemic.

**Introducing Human Rights Perspective**

- With the global spread of Covid-19 and its effects on businesses, UNDP launched a tool to help businesses consider and manage the human rights impacts of their operations: “the Human Rights Due Diligence and COVID-19: Rapid Self-Assessment for Business”. Originally created by UNDP and B+HR Asia, The Business for Goals Platform adjusted this self-assessment tool to the
context of Turkey in collaboration with the ILO, UNDP, and Global Compact to make it more understandable and applicable for businesses in Turkey. The pilot process started in collaboration with UN Global Compact, using its business network in Turkey.