

Farmer Incomes

Page 15

2020 in Numbers

Page 18

Strange Bedfellows?

Page 23

BUSINESS FIGHTS POVERTY MAGAZINE

ISSUE 6

REBUILDING BETTER

FOR AN EQUITABLE
AND RESILIENT
FUTURE





REBUILD BETTER SUMMIT — WHERE NOW? — 21 JANUARY 2021

BUSINESS FIGHTS POVERTY

Building an Equitable and Resilient Future

A new year brings with it excitement and hope for what can be achieved—personally and professionally—but as the world still grapples with COVID-19, many of us are left asking: ‘where now?’ How can we emerge stronger from the crisis and set ourselves firmly on a path towards an equitable and resilient future?

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CONTENTS

- 04 CEO PREFACE**
Zahid Torres-Rahman
- 06 ACTION TOOLKIT:
BUILDING BACK WITH BETTER JOBS**
Amy Fairbairn
- 08 A GUIDE TO EFFECTIVE PLANNING:**
Katie Hyson
- 10 ADDRESSING GENDER-BASED
VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT**
Nomsa Fulbrook-Kagwe and Genevieve Joy
- 12 DEVELOPING SKILLS AND QUALITY
JOBS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**
Julie Wallace and Katie Hyson
- 15 TACKLING POVERTY IN GLOBAL
SUPPLY CHAINS** Daniel Alves
- 18 2020 IN NUMBERS**
- 20 UNGA 2020: DRIVING DIGITAL EQUITY
FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE**
Annabel Beales
- 23 STRANGE BEDFELLOWS
OR LOGICAL PARTNERS?**
COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE
AGRICULTURE AND MINING SECTORS
TO 'BUILD FORWARD BETTER'
Ruth Thomas and Dr Nicky Black
- 26 SPOTLIGHT INTERVIEWS**
- 30 GET INVOLVED**

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Preface

**ZAHID TORRES-RAHMAN, CEO,
BUSINESS FIGHTS POVERTY**

Yvette and I founded Business Fights Poverty on a fundamental belief in the power of business to be a positive force in the world and on a commitment to harness that power in service of the most vulnerable in our society.

We regularly bring the community together to inspire one another, share insights, collaborate on common challenges, forge valuable relationships, and ultimately to help unlock new opportunities for business and social impact.

Without question, 2020 has been a defining year with profound implications for the future. It has never been more important for the business community to step up.

Within weeks of WHO declaring COVID-19 to be a pandemic,

we developed the Business and COVID-19 [Respond, Recover, and Rebuild Better Centre](#) in partnership with Jane Nelson, Director at the Harvard Kennedy School, Corporate Responsibility Initiative, funded by UK aid from the UK Government and a number of our corporate partners. Our Business and COVID-19 Response Framework provides a guide for business decision-making and action to support the most vulnerable across three areas of impact: lives, livelihoods, and learning.

Additionally, across our platforms you will find a wealth of practical tools and resources, developed with 100+ content partners. So far, over 82,000 people have engaged with our COVID-19 content.

Now we must move equally rapidly to recover and rebuild better. Action taken now will have long-lasting effects on people's wellbeing and resilience for many years to come.

Our focus has been on leveraging the widespread commitment to rebuild better and on a deeper global understanding of our interconnectedness. We have used our rapid collaboration process and our convening power, particularly online, to help companies respond to the impact of COVID-19 on the most vulnerable.

In May, building on our initial framework, we published the [Rebuild Better Framework](#), which supports companies to think beyond the immediate "respond" phase, to help individuals, enterprises, and communities "recover"—to get back on their feet—and ultimately to "rebuild better". This guide facilitates the decision-making process of

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IFC International Finance Corporation
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ILO International Labour Organization

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businesses, engaging their core business, strategic philanthropy, and collective advocacy in order to protect the lives, livelihoods, and learning of the most vulnerable.

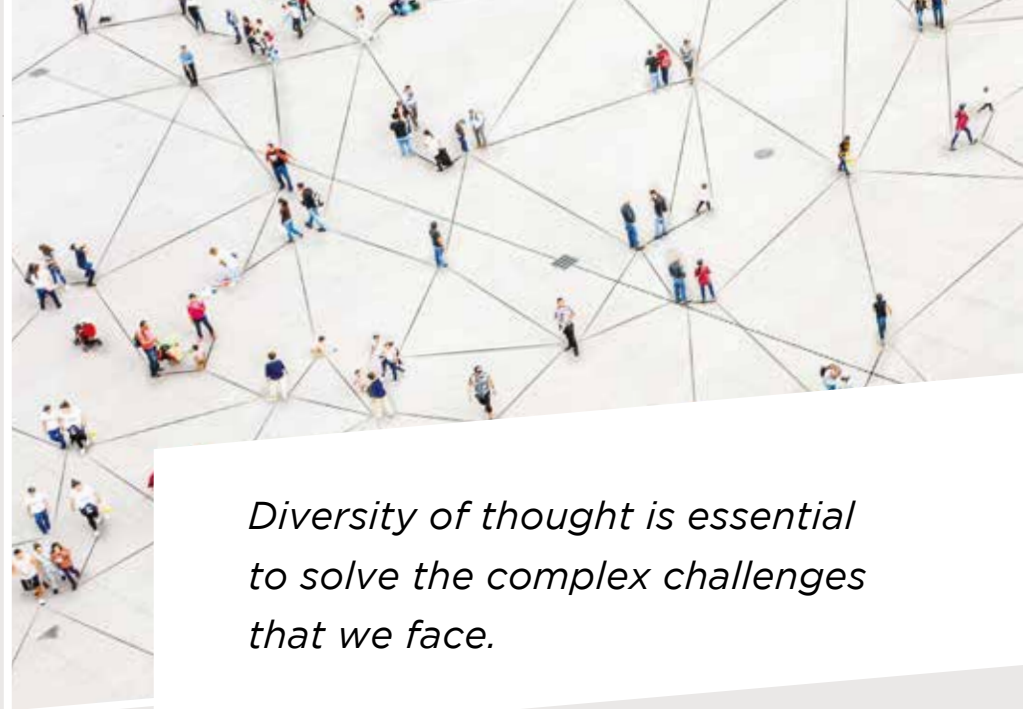
The Rebuild Better Framework is complemented by a range of action toolkits, the latest of which is entitled *A Guide to Effective Planning*, an easily applicable [ten-step guide](#) based on the critical elements of military training and assessment.

With support from the Lab Project at the International Labour Organization (ILO), our [Action Toolkit](#) on *Building Back With Better Jobs* considers what [business models for decent jobs](#) should look like and how to mainstream these into business practice.

In partnership with the International Council of Mining and Metals (ICMM) and the Partnering Initiative (TPI), we published *Building Forward Better: Mining as Partner in Supporting More Inclusive and Resilient Societies*. [This paper](#) applies our Rebuild Better Framework to the mining sector, connecting the immediate COVID-19 response to long-term sustainable development challenges.

Besides this, a dynamic programme of online events have brought together our wider Business Fights Poverty community to ask, “what are the next steps for business to build a more equitable and resilient world?”

Our two flagship events, Rebuild Better: Business Fights Poverty Online 2020 in July and Rebuild Better: Business Fights Poverty NYC 2020 in September, brought thousands of people together from over 90 countries to explore how we can rebuild better in a variety of areas: for example, how businesses can form coalitions



Diversity of thought is essential to solve the complex challenges that we face.

to fight COVID-19, build resilient livelihoods, achieve gender and racial equality, develop skills and quality jobs for young people, better value nature in supply chains, and build partnerships for systemic change.

In order to avoid “Zoom fatigue”, we designed a diverse programme of webinars, one-on-one interviews, educational seminars and courses, music, artistic contributions, and plenty of opportunity for people to connect and share their views. The strength of our community lies in the expertise of its members, and I am in no doubt that the exceptional calibre of our speakers also contributed enormously to the success of these events.

Diversity of thought is essential to solve the complex challenges that we face—and inclusion is particularly important in a year when racial, gender, and other inequalities have been highlighted with such urgency. Moving online since March of last year has enabled us to significantly increase the size and diversity of our audience (over 5,000 people from 90 countries registered for our online events) while retaining quality: 98% would recommend our events, 98% learnt something valuable.

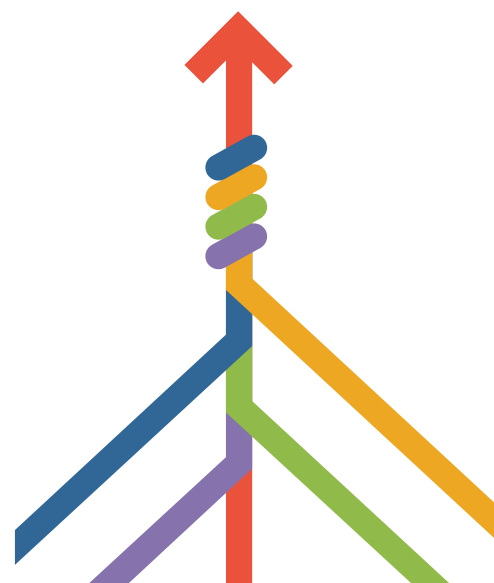
This year, we will continue to convene our community around the question of how we can collaborate to build an equitable and resilient future, particularly through our Virtual Summit Series.

Every 6–8 weeks, we will hold an event focusing on a specific topic or a series of topics as we did for our [Global Summit](#) during the summer and our [NYC Summit](#) during UNGA. We have already held a [Virtual Summit on Health](#) and a [Virtual Summit on Gender](#), both of which have been well-received. This Series will continue over this year, and we hope you will join us. You can find out upcoming themes and dates on the back page of this Magazine, and I am keen to hear from you which other topics would be valuable for your work.

There will also be many other opportunities to collaborate. This could be in the form of private convenings of key stakeholders to gather insights on a challenge your organisation is facing, the co-creation of toolkits to tackle a shared priority, or your participation in a virtual summit to help you showcase your work and help spread best practice.

Please do get in touch with your suggestions and requests.

ACTION TOOLKIT: BUILDING BACK WITH BETTER JOBS



AT THE TIME OF WRITING, COVID-19 IS CONTINUING TO DEVASTATE LIVELIHOODS AROUND THE WORLD, AND AS GOVERNMENTS WORK TO CONTAIN THE VIRUS, RESTRICTIVE MEASURES ARE IMPACTING JOBS, MARKETS, AND SUPPLY CHAINS.

THE ILO PREDICTS THAT 1.6 BILLION INFORMAL ECONOMY WORKERS COULD SUFFER “MASSIVE DAMAGE” TO THEIR LIVELIHOODS DUE TO THE PANDEMIC, WHICH MAY ALSO COST THE EQUIVALENT OF 305 MILLION FULL-TIME JOBS.

As job losses continue to mount, the consequences of years of declining job quality and security for millions of low-paid workers—who face unpredictable wages, limited social protections, and unhealthy workplaces—are also being brought into sharp focus.

While more flexible working practices have created job opportunities, they have also placed a disproportionate amount of risk on low-paid, vulnerable workers in the form of lower and more unpredictable wages, limited or non-existent social protections, and a reduction in workplace health and safety standards.

from [The Lab Project](#) at the **International Labour Organization (ILO)**, aims to stimulate thinking and exchange within lead companies and external partners about what [business models for more decent jobs](#) should look like and how to mainstream these into business practice. Lead companies are those businesses who control the global supply chain and set the parameters to which other firms in the chain must adhere, and they are typically responsible for the final sale of the product.

[The guide](#) demonstrates how fundamental changes can be made to improve job security, equality, and health and wellbeing without impacting business competitiveness, growth, and profitability.

More decent jobs encompass principles of job security, equality of opportunity and health and wellbeing, and are reflected in Goal 8 (Decent Work) of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

With examples from Hermes, Unilever, Anglo American and others, the guide provides evidence and insight into companies making incremental changes to existing business models, as well as those

As “Building Back Better” becomes the prevailing theme emerging from global efforts to rebound from the pandemic, there is a need and an opportunity for global leaders to make more decent jobs a top priority.

[A new guide](#) published by **Business Fights Poverty**, with support



who are making decent jobs intrinsic to business model design from the start.

Despite the potential challenges of competitive disadvantage, investor pressure, systemic complexity and capacity, the examples demonstrate that “win-win” business models can simultaneously create value for businesses and workers.

However, only a few companies to date have attempted to systematically understand the limits and potential of their current business models to drive more decent jobs.

To support other lead companies in examining their workings and embracing potential changes, the guide identifies Four Big Shifts that lead companies can make to transition to business models that can move the decent jobs agenda from the margins to the mainstream.

■ **Change mindsets from compliance to opportunity**

Many companies address working conditions as a risk mitigation and compliance issue instead of viewing investment in decent jobs as an opportunity to drive commercial success.

■ **Make decent job principles integral to how the business does business**

Companies should work to understand what critical features of the business model (value proposition, revenue model, sourcing strategy) can create an opportunity or a problem for workers, and then take steps to further unlock the opportunity or mitigate the risk.

■ **Scale up collective action at a value chain and industry level**

Acting alone to improve working conditions or labour laws can be hard for companies. As business models for more decent jobs are highly sector-specific, industry-level collaboration between firms can facilitate replication and scale up.

■ **Think and act more systemically**

Lead companies should be encouraged to step beyond their direct operations and co-develop and advocate for solutions with a wider range of players in the ecosystem, including other companies outside their direct supply chain, national and local governments, government donors, and civil society organisations.

Business leaders grappling with the impact of the pandemic must use this pivotal moment to improve the quality and security of jobs for their workers, but steps need to be taken to fundamentally re-calibrate the mechanics of their business models if decent jobs are to be prioritised.

You can access the [new guide](#) in the [Business Fights Poverty - Business & COVID-19 Respond, Recover, and Rebuild Better Centre](#) alongside other frameworks and toolkits.

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Amy Fairbairn, External Engagement Advisor, Business Fights Poverty



A GUIDE TO EFFECTIVE PLANNING

2020 HAS COMPELLED US TO RESPOND TO SOCIETAL CHALLENGES LIKE NEVER BEFORE. BUT KNOWING HOW TO RESPOND IN THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY CAN BE DIFFICULT AND DAUNTING, ESPECIALLY WHEN THE CHALLENGE AHEAD IS SEEMINGLY UNPARALLELED.

We asked British Army Major and expert in military contingency planning, Nick Barton, to share his thoughts and learnings on how these tried-and-tested military tactics may be applied to the business sector.

“Response and crisis planning, by its nature, is going to be pressurised due to the large amount of change, often within a short timeframe,” explains Nick. “A planning process gives structure to an organisation’s response. Often, there are several ways of achieving your goal. The key is to choose the best plan with the time and resources available.”

Nick has created a handy ten-stage [Guide to Effective Planning](#). Drawing on all his experience and training from his military career, this practical step-by-step guide distills leading crisis response thinking from the British Military. Nick’s Guide takes you on a journey of how to plan, what actions are required at each stage of planning, and what the outputs should be.

Designed to complement the [Business Fights Poverty COVID-19 Response Framework](#) and the [Rebuild Better Framework](#), [the Guide](#) can be found in the [Business Fights Poverty - Business & COVID-19 Respond, Recover,](#)

[and Rebuild Better Centre](#) alongside other frameworks and toolkits to support organisations in their decision-making, to help you plan out what to do, how, where, and when. Though this guide can be applied in a number of different planning scenarios, it is specifically tailored to assist with navigating planning during a crisis, when traditional corporate planning processes may take too long or require too many certainties.

[The Guide](#) is easily translatable for any organisation and scenario. Delivered with bite-sized learning points, key outputs, and background references for further detail, it will help anyone, regardless of their previous experience or business role, to plan better.

As Nick outlines in [the Guide](#),

“The recent context of a global pandemic has created characteristics of fear, uncertainty, pressure and exponential change. These characteristics are familiar to what the Armed Forces can experience in operations.”

“The military tries to tailor its training and assessments to ensure that its personnel thrive under these demanding conditions. In particular, it focuses on an organisation’s ability to plan and execute operations. The force that can



The ten-point process is taken from the Guide, provides the basis for effective planning, and is especially relevant in crisis scenarios:

- ## 7 Select and Refine Courses of Action

- ## 8 What Control Measures Do I Need to Impose?

- ## 9 Test the Plan: Wargame/ Tabletop Exercise

- ## 10 Deliver and Communicate Your Plan

[This Guide to Effective Planning](#) is based on Nick's experience as a Chief of Staff of a Joint Aviation Taskforce on exercises in NATO and on operations as an Apache Squadron Commander in Afghanistan. It is his synthesis of the key lessons that are taught and assessed within military training.

Nick concludes: “No plan survives contact with the enemy. Things will go wrong. Events will not turn out as you predicted. Expect this. With luck, the steps included in this guide will help your plan to arrive at an 80% solution, and you will be able to assess, adjust, and adapt accordingly.”

Katie Hyson, Director of Thought Leadership, Business Fights Poverty

ADDRESSING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT IS A WIDESPREAD AND SERIOUS GLOBAL ISSUE THAT AFFECTS INDIVIDUALS IN THE WORKPLACE, THEIR COMMUNITIES, AND HOMES.

Gender-based violence and harassment is an umbrella term that can take many forms—including physical, psychological, sexual or economic harm—and is characterised by being directed at a person because of their sex or gender, or by disproportionately affecting persons of a particular sex or gender. While gender-based violence and harassment can affect anyone, it disproportionately affects women and girls: an estimated one in three women worldwide has experienced some form of physical or sexual violence.

In addition, domestic violence and harassment increase during public health

emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic. The United Nations Population Fund Impact assessments estimate an additional 31 million cases of gender-based violence were perpetrated in the first six months of the pandemic alone.

There is growing recognition that the private sector has an important role to play to address gender-based violence and harassment. For companies and investors, violence and harassment due to gender can pose a range of risks, including litigation, loss of profits, and reputational damage. Addressing the risks can have many business benefits, such as improved productivity and performance, reduced accident potential, improved access to skills and talent, and improved stakeholder relations.

That's why CDC, in partnership with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the International Finance Corporation (IFC), developed [guidance](#) that provides emerging good practice in addressing gender-based violence and harassment risks for companies and investors, with an emphasis on emerging markets.

While gender-based violence and harassment is systemic, it can also be difficult to detect, and it requires training to respond to it appropriately.

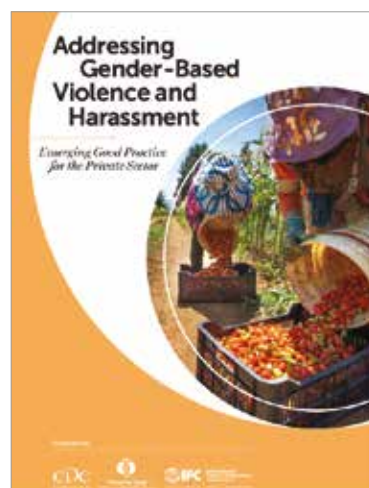
*The United Nations Population Fund Impact assessments estimate an **additional 31 million cases of gender-based violence** were perpetrated in the first six months of the pandemic alone.*





*...an estimated **one in three** women worldwide has experienced some form of physical or sexual violence.*

As more private sector players realise the importance of addressing gender-based violence and harassment, it is essential that they know what to do—and what not to do. The guidance provides an understanding of what gender-based violence and harassment is, the business case for addressing it, as well as emerging good practice and tools on how to assess and strengthen systems to manage risks and respond to reports—all while maintaining a survivor-centric approach. The guidance is sector-agnostic, but we have also developed three sector-level briefs covering the specific risks and benefits of addressing gender-based violence and harassment in the [public transport](#), [manufacturing](#) and [construction](#) sectors.



Nomsa Fulbrook-Kagwe and **Genevieve Joy**, ESG Impact Executives, CDC Group

Editor's Note: This article was previously featured on the CDC website and is reproduced with permission. On December 3, 2020 at the Business Fights Poverty Gender Summit 2020, CDC Group co-hosted a webinar on Gender-Based Violence with Care International UK.

Visit the [event website](#) to watch the highlights, which include a session held on Gender-Lens Investing in partnership with the 2X Challenge.

DEVELOPING SKILLS AND QUALITY JOBS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

THE CREATION OF JOBS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE MAY NOW BE AN EVEN GREATER CHALLENGE THAN BEFORE THE PANDEMIC HIT, WITH COMPETITION FOR POSITIONS BEING ALL THE MORE FIERCE ONCE ECONOMIC ACTIVITY RESUMES.

IN LIGHT OF THE ENORMOUS SHOCK THAT COVID-19 HAS HAD ON OUR ECONOMIC SYSTEM, HOW CAN WE THINK DIFFERENTLY ABOUT WHAT IS REQUIRED TO ENSURE THAT YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE THE RIGHT SKILLS FOR THE JOB AND THAT MORE EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES ARE CREATED?

“There are 1.8 billion young people between the ages of 10 and 24 today—the world’s largest ever group of young people. Every month, 10 million reach working age—and they’re finding that yesterday’s skills no longer match today’s job market.”¹

These words from UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore point to a growing crisis for an entire generation of young people. Today, 71 million youth are unemployed, and 150 million young

people are working but living on less than US\$3 a day. In a survey of 10,000 young people across 160 countries, the message from young people was clear: 35% of respondents saw job opportunities as the most urgent priority for action, and 26% demanded better education. A full 63% agreed that business leaders must do more to help young people succeed in our globalised world.

At the same time, the world of work is shifting. Automation and technology offer both opportunities and threats to entry-level jobs, and new job roles are emerging. By one estimate, 65% of children entering primary school today will work in completely new job types that do not yet exist.² In this uncertain environment, it is crucial—for our young people and for the credibility of a globalised economic system—that the aspirations of this generation for good quality education and work are met.

Having the right skills to run your own business or be ready for the job market is key to success, but traditional education is able to go only so far in delivering and consolidating these skills for young people. Well-established businesses have an essential role to play in providing opportunities for job-shadowing, mentoring, well-structured internships, and

*“There are 1.8 billion young people between the ages of 10 and 24 today—the world’s largest ever group of young people. Every month, 10 million reach working age—and they’re finding that **yesterday’s skills no longer match today’s job market.**”¹*

—Henrietta Fore, Executive Director,
UNICEF

partnerships with educational institutions.

Existing businesses and potential investors are already supporting educators to upskill young people for the future of jobs, but this is often piecemeal and relies too heavily on future-focused, agile educators. Is there now the opportunity for educators, employers, and investors to deepen their collaboration and double down on their impact in educating young people? Could cross-sector collaborations and advocacy partnerships re-shape the system, helping more young people acquire the skills they need to succeed and prosper?

An important component of this is the role that organisations play in providing paid work placements, internships, and apprenticeships. How can more opportunities be made available to young people that are relevant and accessible, and what role can the private sector play in delivering these?

Inclusion of women in education and skills-development initiatives needs to be given special attention in order to address existing gaps. A study conducted in rural Egypt looked at the impact of large-scale training and empowerment interventions for 4,500 women in 30 villages in the region.³ The intervention provided a combination of life skills, core business skills, vocational training, and guidance on how to start a business. It resulted in a significant impact on the labour market, as well as the economic aspiration and business knowledge of the young women. It also showed that interventions targeted at women work best when they are delivered according to a gender-sensitive design that eliminates barriers to women's participation via the planning of outreach projects and training spaces, flexible timing of classes, and providing mentoring by local women. Maternity considerations and childcare options were recommended as part of training in the future.

The Standard Chartered flagship education programme, Goal, under the company's Futuremakers initiative, aims to tackle inequality and promote economic inclusion. Goal uses sport, play, and life skills education to transform the lives of adolescent girls from 12 to 18 years of



age in 24 countries around the world.⁴ A recent report evaluating the impact of this programme showed an overall positive effect on self-confidence, communication skills, the ability to express self in public, standing up to violence, and participation in family decision-making. It also had an impact on increasing the financial knowledge and savings behaviour of the young women. Studies like this are useful examples to understand what works and to identify where and how programmes can be further scaled and integrated for impact.

Young people will not only become employees but will also be job creators through their own enterprises, now or in the future. There is an opportunity to link young entrepreneurs with mentors, business opportunities, and learning to equip them to grow their own ventures. This type of initiative not only impacts the young people who receive training but also catalyses further employment creation as young entrepreneurs grow their organisations and act as role models to inspire others.

THE COVID-19 EFFECT

The topic of skills and jobs for young people is extremely timely.

At the time of writing, the COVID-19 pandemic has added significant pressure to unemployment figures and has had



“For millions of workers, no income means no food, no security, and no future. [...] As the pandemic and the jobs crisis evolve, the need to protect the most vulnerable becomes even more urgent.”⁵

—Guy Ryder, Director-General, ILO

a particularly detrimental effect on the informal economy and small enterprises around the world. The ILO estimates that close to 1.6 billion workers in the informal economy (the most vulnerable in the labour market) have an immediate danger of having their livelihoods destroyed, and 436 million enterprises face high risk of serious disruption.⁵ Lockdown conditions worldwide have stopped informal businesses—many of them run by young people—in their tracks, seriously damaging people’s capacity to earn a living.

The consequences are severe. As Guy Ryder, Director-General of the ILO noted: “For millions of workers, no income means no food, no security, and no future. [...] As the pandemic and the jobs crisis

evolve, the need to protect the most vulnerable becomes even more urgent.”⁵

In the light of this crisis, developing skills and creating quality jobs for young people becomes an urgent priority for ensuring the future stability of society, reducing poverty, and providing some means of survival for millions around the world.

The creation of jobs for young people may now be an even greater challenge than before the pandemic hit, with competition for positions being all the more fierce once economic activity resumes.

¹ UNICEF. 2019. Young People to Davos Leaders: More Jobs, Better Education. <https://www.unicef.org.uk/press-releases/young-people-to-davos-leaders-more-jobs-better-education>

² WEF. 2016. The Future of Jobs and Skills. <https://reports.weforum.org/future-of-jobs-2016/chapter-1-the-future-of-jobs-and-skills>

³ International Labour Organization. 2017. IMPACT BRIEF: Empowering Young Women through Business and Vocational Training: Evidence from Rural Upper Egypt. https://www.ilo.org/employment/areas/youth-employment/WCMS_575931/lang-en/index.htm

⁴ Standard Chartered. Goal programme. <https://www.sc.com/en/sustainability/investing-in-communities/goal>

⁵ International Labour Organization. 2020. ILO: As Job Losses Escalate, Nearly Half of Global Workforce at Risk of Losing Livelihoods. https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_743036/lang-en/index.htm

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Julie Wallace, Global Head, Community Engagement, Standard Chartered

Katie Hyson, Director of Thought Leadership, Business Fights Poverty
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Editor’s Note: During 2020, Futuremakers, a global initiative by Standard Chartered to tackle inequality and promote greater economic inclusion, brought together business leaders, policymakers, influencers, and the next generation to help build partnerships and create opportunities focused on young people.

You can access online the insights papers from this year’s [Futuremakers Forum](#) and hear about opportunities to join forthcoming events in 2021.



TACKLING POVERTY

IN GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAINS

WITH 10 YEARS LEFT TO ACHIEVE THE UNITED NATIONS' SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 1 (NO POVERTY), MORE THAN 730 MILLION PEOPLE REMAIN BELOW THE WORLD BANK POVERTY LINE, AND APPROXIMATELY TWO-THIRDS OF THEM WORK IN AGRICULTURE.

Now, for the first time since 1998, poverty is increasing as the COVID-19 crisis has exposed and exacerbated deep systemic fragilities in global supply chains. This year alone, an estimated [71-100 million people are expected to fall into extreme poverty](#), wiping out gains made since 2017.

Corporations with long supply chains are well placed to take action as they count on extensive networks involving suppliers, other companies within and across sectors, governments, and civil society organisations. But what specifically can be done to leverage these powerful networks alongside core business assets? How can we provide a step up for people who live in or at the edge of poverty, even as they create value through global supply chains?

At our Annual Global Summit, Mars Inc., AB InBev, Oxfam, and UNDP shared insights from the establishment of the Farmer Income Lab, a collaborative “think-do-tank” that aims to ask the right questions, create solutions, and inspire action to build global supply chains that work for farmers and for business.

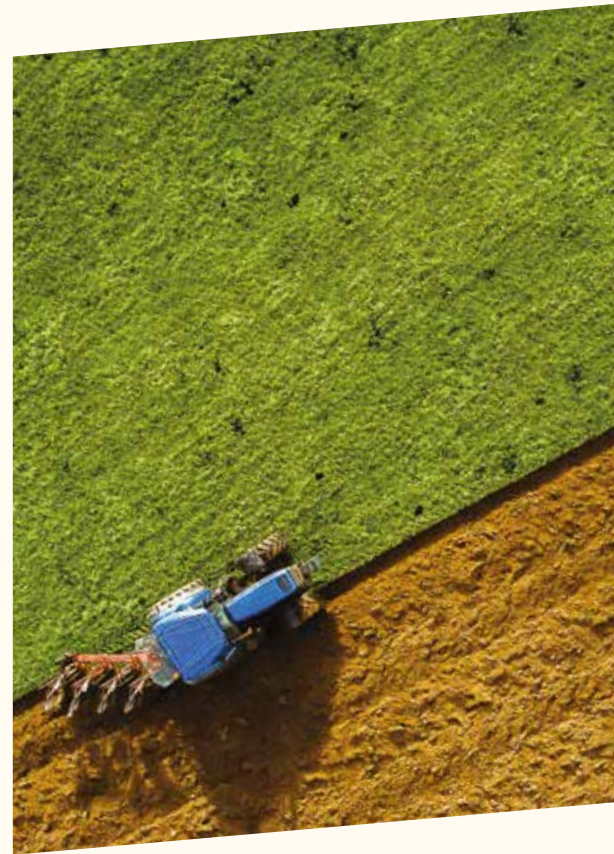
This article provides an introduction to the founding of the Farmer Income Lab and summarises the insights of the session.

WHY WAS THE FARMER INCOME LAB ESTABLISHED?

In order to ensure the continuity and availability of raw materials that are essential to the global agricultural and food industry, it is imperative that we meaningfully increase farmer incomes and build inclusive, resilient supply chains. Unfortunately, farmers' ability to rise out of poverty is constrained by factors such as the number of members in their household, external financial shocks, norms surrounding gender roles, financial illiteracy, digital exclusion, and discrimination due to ethnicity and/or socioeconomic status.

Although there have been billions of dollars of investment from across the industry, efforts to address these challenges and increase farmer income have had limited results. There is a lack of alignment on which interventions work best and what roles stakeholders should play, hindering progress toward successful corporate and collective action.

To better understand the barriers to decent farmer income and scaling the interventions that work, [Mars established The Farmer Income Lab \(the Lab\) in 2017](#). As an industry-led collective, The Farmer





Income Lab has brought together like-minded businesses to identify successful approaches, generating insights from within its own supply chains in developing countries. In order to deliver shared impact, this requires a deep level of transparency, pre-competitive collaboration, and shared accountability.

Through this work, the Lab aims to develop a repository of best practices that can be replicated across commodities, countries and communities. These deeper insights will help to accelerate collective action; provide transformative solutions to develop scalable sourcing models, tools, and procurement practices; and ultimately inform business strategies and investments.

WHAT KEY INSIGHTS DID THE PANELLISTS SHARE?

KEY INSIGHT #1 COMPANIES NEED TO RECOGNISE THAT POVERTY EXISTS IN THEIR OWN OPERATIONS

Lisa Manley, Vice President, Sustainability, Mars Inc, cited some of the lessons that Mars has learned while harnessing sustainability across their supply chains and the key improvements they have implemented to tackle poverty and create more resilient communities. She defined sustainability as encompassing human

rights, fair wages, and equity, and argued that recognising that there was poverty in her company's own supply chains was key for effectively addressing it. When facing the problem, they took responsibility in improving the livelihoods and wellbeing of their host communities, invested in fairer earnings for their most vulnerable suppliers, and became more transparent not only about the challenges they encounter but also in relation to the solutions they found. In this respect, Ezgi Barcenas, Global Head of Sustainability, AB InBev, remarked: "for decades, we have been part of these communities around the world, especially in those markets where we have invested in agricultural development programmes to improve our local sourcing, leverage our global scale, and bring in new technologies and new management. But it is fair to say that, about a decade ago, we started reframing our approach and rethinking our point of entry to what it is today, which is how we can solve farmer problems... because if we solve farmer problems, we solve our business problems."

KEY INSIGHT #2 IT IS CRUCIAL THAT BEST PRACTICES TO FIGHT POVERTY ARE SHARED AND SCALED UP THROUGH MULTI-SECTOR COLLABORATIONS

Christina Archer, Senior Partnerships Adviser - Private Sector, UNDP Green

Commodities Programme, reminded us that while poverty affects millions of people directly or indirectly connected to supply chains, it also affects many others that are outside of the relatively narrow remit of business operations. She highlighted that collaborative initiatives are vital to reach and support poor people across disadvantaged communities around the world. Governments, international organisations, and civil society can learn from the experiences that some companies have in fighting poverty inside their business, share these best practices with other actors, and also apply them where a strong private sector is absent. In addition, Fatema Sumar, Vice President of Global Programs, Oxfam America, pointed to the need for deeper collaboration in society when saying that everyone has the right to dignity, and that we must be collectively committed to equity and to guaranteeing a decent livelihood for all. In her words: “one company alone cannot have the kind of impact that we need; it is really about the collective power we have for systemic change. The systemic drivers of this change lie across industries, civil society, government... it is where the power is... We are trying to leverage it and scale it up in a way that helps us achieve our Sustainable Development Goals.”

KEY INSIGHT #3 MORE RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE BUSINESS MODELS ARE ESSENTIAL TO DRIVE THE TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE THAT WE WANT

Prioritising resilience over efficiency and aiming for long-term development instead of short-term gains are key mindset shifts that business leaders must take seriously when designing their companies' core strategies. As Lisa commented in relation to the Farmer Income Lab: “if we are really thinking about the long-term viability of our supply chains, our brands, our businesses, and the people that make them possible, then we have to be looking at more sustainable farming practices, we have to do a lot more to focus on soil health and regenerative agriculture...

I think that the opportunities far outweigh whatever tensions may exist.” Meanwhile, Fatema stressed that civil society plays a fundamental part in the process of building a more resilient, sustainable, and inclusive economy. Social organisations and individuals can demand higher standards of sustainability and more ambitious social inclusion plans, helping to transfer successful initiatives from one sector to another while also bridging the gap between companies and governments.

This year alone, an estimated 71-100 million people are expected to fall into extreme poverty, wiping out gains made since 2017.

The Farmer Income Lab was founded by Mars “as an incubator for insights that can be put into action through sustainable sourcing strategies.” Although these strategies may have started with Mars, they can extend much further to other companies who rely on raw ingredients from smallholder farmers in their global supply chains. In their own words: “this is certainly not a one-company agenda; it's a challenge that every business who relies on farmers in developing countries faces.”

Daniel Alves, Researcher,
Business Fights Poverty

Editors' Note: The Farmer Income Lab is inviting other companies to partner with them, and if you are interested in learning more, please contact Heather Pfahl, Income lead at Mars Inc., at farmerincomelab@effem.com.



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UNGA 2020

DRIVING DIGITAL EQUITY FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE

DURING THE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY, [BUSINESS FIGHTS POVERTY NYC ONLINE 2020](#) EXPLORED A RANGE OF ISSUES, INCLUDING HOW MULTILATERAL PARTNERSHIPS CAN DRIVE DIGITAL EQUITY FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE.

This article gives a brief insight into the importance of digital equity, explains how a wide range of organisations can play a part in driving change at a systemic level, and highlights the top three insights shared during the digital equity session, hosted with Visa Inc..

WHAT IS DIGITAL EQUITY AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?

The online world is playing an ever-increasing role in our lives and work. We can now shop online; bank online;

access vital health services and information; pursue educational opportunities; engage in cultural activities; find a new job; keep up to date with news and political developments; participate in professional and social networks; and engage in community and philanthropic activities, all from the comfort of our homes. For many of us, the internet has played an important role in maintaining our livelihoods and health—both physical and mental—throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, the pandemic has also shone a light on the deep digital inequalities that exist in our society. Millions of vulnerable individuals, small businesses, and communities are excluded from the benefits of the digital age. For example, [around half the world's population has no access to the internet](#), despite the fact that 90% live within range of mobile-cellular networks. [In the least-developed countries, only 15% have access to the internet](#), and [over 300 million fewer women than men have a smartphone](#) and can access the internet. [Just over 29% of 15–24-year-olds do not use the internet, equating to 346 million people worldwide](#). Worse still, digital exclusion exacerbates other inequalities; UNICEF has warned that [millions of children who lack access to the internet and other digital tools have fallen further behind](#) during the pandemic-related school closures.

Addressing digital inequality will have far-reaching impacts. For example, digital

“Small businesses on the frontlines of the global economy deserve extraordinary support in this extraordinary time. We are putting our network to work to help 50 million businesses globally not only survive but also to thrive, along with the communities they serve.”

—Al Kelly, CEO and chairman of Visa



equity has the potential to [accelerate food sustainability](#), [improve financial security for women employees and entrepreneurs](#), [expand the reach of social impact programmes](#), and [empower high-risk communities to respond effectively to health threats](#). As the Fourth Industrial Revolution intensifies, [digital skills and access to ongoing learning tools will be invaluable](#) for individuals to retain a competitive edge in the jobs market. Likewise, [small and micro-businesses must be able to take advantage of digital opportunities](#) if they are to thrive in this new environment.

Digital equity is ensuring that all individuals have the opportunity and skills to fully benefit from the full range of digital opportunities that are now on offer. It is not only about individuals having the ability to access information and services, but also about possessing the necessary knowledge and confidence to use technology to solve problems and achieve goals.

ISN'T DIGITAL EQUITY A MATTER FOR GOVERNMENTS AND TECH COMPANIES?

Of course, digital equity relies on universal access to the digital ecosystem that delivers the internet. This will require partnership between public sector and private sector technology companies,

including internet and telecoms providers, mobile technology manufacturers, software providers, and ecommerce platforms.

Beyond this, there is a role for a wide range of businesses, investors, public sector organisations, and the not-for-profit sector to drive systemic change by collaborating on policies and investments that make digital products and services accessible for all. Central to this is how organisations approach the design and development of the products and services they offer, ensuring that they are inclusive and increasing the participation of disadvantaged groups such as women, those with low literacy levels, and people with disabilities. Much of the time, this [requires an in-depth understanding of the barriers that specific customers or service users face](#) as well as proper consideration of their preferences and needs. Additionally, companies whose value chains include small businesses can [support these partners in accessing digital tools](#) to improve the efficiency and resilience of their operations. This is particularly true where these supply chains include women-owned enterprises and businesses located in developing economies. In parallel, there is a strong role for partnerships that provide digital skills training, enabling individuals to grasp the digital opportunities that exist.

For example, Visa recently announced its [commitment to support 50 million small and micro-businesses \(SMBs\) worldwide](#) to aid the recovery of communities from COVID-19. Key to this work is expanding access to digital tools and skills, as well as using online incentives to help local neighbourhoods thrive. Visa has built online resource centres in over 20 countries to provide tools, partner offers, and information on how to start, run, and grow small businesses online. Visa is also supporting neighbourhood businesses by incentivising people to shop local through partnerships with companies such as Shopify and Deliveroo, and by expanding access to contactless digital payments in order to help boost consumer confidence to shop in-store. As part of their commitment, Visa has also established the Visa Economic Empowerment Institute (VEEI) focused on economic and societal issues, including

the challenges that SMBs face in the wake of COVID-19, and closing racial and gender opportunity gaps. Recognising the need for digital equity, Visa has expanded its [partnership with IFundWomen](#) to provide grants and digital training to US-based SMBs owned by Black women.

WHAT KEY INSIGHTS DID THE PANELLISTS SHARE?

With the expert guidance of Beth Hurvitz, Senior Vice President, Social Impact, Visa Inc, who moderated the panel, we drew three key insights from the session:

KEY INSIGHT #1 THE ECONOMY IS IN DEEP TRANSFORMATION AND EVERYONE MUST BE INCLUDED

Henriette Kolb, Head, Gender and Economic Inclusion Group, International Finance Corporation, cited a research study published by the World Economic Forum which asserts that 60% of the global economy will be digitised by next year. This trend of technological transformation is not new, but, because of the pandemic, we have been exposed to a massive digital divide. Rich and poor people have been segregated into privileged groups that can work and study from home and groups that lack a basic internet connection. Digital inequalities are reflected in unequal learning opportunities, financial exclusion, and broken dreams. As Carrie Hughes, Director of Corporate Social Responsibility, Verizon, explained: “those who lack connectivity are disproportionately vulnerable populations, low income, minority and elderly groups, rural immigrants, and people with disabilities.”

KEY INSIGHT #2 ENHANCING DIGITAL EQUITY WILL BENEFIT UNDERPRIVILEGED GROUPS AND COMPANIES TOO

According to Dhanaraj Thakur, Research Director, Center for Democracy &

Technology: “the business case for investment in underserved groups is critical; for example, closing the gender gap in mobile internet use in developing countries can deliver an additional 700 billion in GDP growth in five years.” In addition, as Sheena Allen, Founder and CEO, CapWay, remarked, nowadays digital inclusion means financial inclusion. Because financial institutions are increasingly relying on online and mobile services, supporting the surge of entrepreneurs and revolutionising small businesses requires bridging the information gap, developing technological literacy, and delivering internet access to everyone. Meanwhile, schools and pupils will benefit tremendously from better broadband infrastructure, contributing to future inclusive growth.

KEY INSIGHT #3 CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS ARE POWERFUL TOOLS TO DRIVE DIGITAL EQUITY

For Henriette Kolb: “we need to double down on partnerships to close these digital gaps; we need to work on consistency and equality, but to do it not by demonizing the other but actually through convincing and influencing so that we can come together and build forward much stronger.” Likewise, Carrie emphasised the role of coalitions involving governments, companies, and nonprofit organisations in designing and implementing programmes of upskilling and reskilling. Such initiatives are crucial to include workers into the digital economy as new types of technology jobs surge and old ones die.

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Business Fights Poverty would like to thank the event supporters, *Visa* and *AB InBev*, who made it possible for us to offer free live access during UNGA to over 2,000 registered attendees from across the world. The video highlights are available on the [Business Fights Poverty NYC Online 2020](#) event website.

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Annabel Beales, Writer,
Business Fights Poverty

STRANGE BEDFELLOWS OR LOGICAL PARTNERS?

COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE AGRICULTURE AND MINING SECTORS TO 'BUILD FORWARD BETTER'



THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC HAS HELD UP A MIRROR TO US ALL, EXPOSING INEQUALITIES AND VULNERABILITIES THROUGHOUT SOCIETY. WITH THIS IN MIND, A PANEL DISCUSSION DURING OUR 2020 GLOBAL SUMMIT FOCUSED ON THE CRITICAL IMPORTANCE OF CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATION IN ORDER TO BUILD *FORWARD* BETTER TOWARDS A GREENER, MORE EQUAL, AND MORE RESILIENT FUTURE POST-COVID-19.

Not least, this pandemic is shining a spotlight on the weaknesses of our global food and land-use systems. Disrupted food value chains have exacerbated challenges faced by vulnerable rural communities, many of which are reliant both at the macro- and micro-level on agriculture. The United Nations' 2020 State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World [report](#) estimates an additional 130 million people will be subject to chronic hunger by the end of 2020 due to COVID-19, doubling rates of global food insecurity. We are not on track to meet Sustainable Development Goals 1 (No Poverty) or 2 (Zero Hunger) by 2030.

We are also seeing that many of the countries least prepared to respond to COVID-19 are those that are "resource-dependent". These countries are home to almost 30% of the global population and have 230 million people living in extreme poverty. The impact of COVID-19 on these people's lives is catastrophic, with health services crippled by mounting cases and

unable to provide treatment to those most in need. We are only just beginning to see the economic knock-on effects of the virus. Many local communities are struggling to get the basic supplies needed for everyday life, and the lasting impact of disruption to livelihoods and education is yet to be tallied.

The agriculture and mining sectors are uniquely positioned to respond within the rural communities in which they operate; in many cases, they have had a long-term presence in rural areas and have established constructive, trusting relationships with host communities and other local stakeholders. These factors mean that the agriculture and mining sectors are well placed to provide immediate support and drive the sustainable development that is necessary to recover from COVID-19 and build resilience in the decades to come.

The contribution that both sectors make to socio-economic development is clear: agriculture contributes 30% of the

GDP in many low-income countries and employs over 2 billion people globally. In addition, around 75% of people living in poverty depend on agriculture for their livelihoods.¹ The mining sector represents more than 50% of national exports in 16 developing and emerging countries, and our research has shown that members of the International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM) spend approximately \$1bn a year on social projects.² Both industries are critical for the provision of jobs and security for local communities. They both also help support livelihoods by providing vital goods and services, including healthcare, infrastructure including energy and roads, and educational facilities in some of the world's most remote and isolated areas.

With such beneficial capacity, and given these sectors' overlapping footprints and contributions to local communities, we must ask ourselves: how can we collaborate more closely to drive the change needed?

Cross-sector collaboration between agribusiness and mining is not a new notion. Mining companies have invested in small-scale farming for decades, both as a part of community development and poverty

alleviation programs to help workers sustain their livelihoods beyond the life-of-mine and also as post-closure insurance.

ICMM members have achieved a lot in this area, and one significant example discussed during the panel was the Somos Choapa initiative, which is supported by ICMM member Antofagasta. This programme is based on a private-public partnership between the municipalities of Salamanca, Illapel, Canela, and Los Vilos together with Antofagasta's Minera Los Pelambres in Chile to contribute to the sustainable development of the region and the wellbeing of its inhabitants. This includes skills training, development of rural water systems, and encouragement of rural productivity amongst many other programmes.

While these projects provide a strong foundation, this collaborative approach must now translate into action at scale. We need to find ways to build on isolated positive examples with a greater degree of urgency. We need to build bolder, bigger, better types of collaboration. Questions must still be addressed: What are the missed opportunities to mitigate business risks and also generate positive social outcomes? What are the barriers, and who wants to work collectively to identify, understand, and then break them down?

The Global Agribusiness Alliance (GAA) has made some progress with trailblazing partners to begin answering these important questions. In 2018, GAA moderated a panel at the [Intergovernmental Forum on Mining](#) where leading thinkers and practitioners from Newmont and Olam discussed the value of post-mined land, the scope to repurpose closed mine sites for agriculture, and the potential for aligning community development and social investment models for greater shared benefit. GAA published [a brief](#) in the same year that sets out the business case for cross-sector action; presents case studies; and proposes high-level criteria to identify opportunities for collaboration, including the potential to scale, development impact, and commercial sustainability.

The mining industry's response to the crisis reflects the unique relationship ICMM's

The United Nations' 2020 State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World report estimates an additional 130 million people will be subject to chronic hunger by the end of 2020 due to COVID-19, doubling rates of global food insecurity. We are not on track to meet Sustainable Development Goals 1 (No Poverty) or 2 (Zero Hunger) by 2030.



members have with their communities due to the often remote locations in which they are situated, as well as the relationships that have been built between companies and community members over years of working together. What has become apparent through this response is that we are stronger together. Collaboration between

different sectors, government, and community and local stakeholders will be vital if we are to build forward towards a brighter future.

ICMM is delighted to have collaborated with Business Fights Poverty, The Partnering Initiative, and the Harvard Kennedy School's

Corporate Responsibility Initiative to build on and tailor their excellent COVID-19 [Rebuild Better Framework](#) for the mining sector. The result is [a practical action and learning tool](#) for mining companies to use as they address each phase of the pandemic. We hope that it also provides inspiration and encouragement for closer collaboration and engagement across sectors to inform short-term recovery and response efforts and also longer-term community and economic resilience.

¹ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/agriculture/overview>

² https://www.icmm.com/website/publications/pdfs/social-and-economic-development/romine_2nd-edition

Ruth Thomas, Director, Global Agribusiness Alliance

Dr Nicky Black, Director, Social and Economic Development Programme, International Council on Mining and Metals



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MYRIAM SIDIBE

**Founder, National
Business Compact on
Coronavirus, Kenya**

Dr Myriam Sidibe is the woman behind the multi-award-winning and UN-recognized Global Handwashing Day. She has focused her professional life's work on handwashing, leading Unilever's Lifebuoy programme, and is a senior Fellow at the Mossavar Rahmani Center for Business and Government at Harvard Kennedy School. During our podcast, Myriam shares how she has set up the national business response coalition in Kenya.



JOYCE MBAYA-IKIAO

Founder and CEO, Zeyii

What are the skills we need for the future? Meet Joyce Mbaya-Ikiao, Founder and CEO of Zydii, the digital learning platform contextualized for the African learner. Joyce is a former star of *The Apprentice Africa*, 2008, acclaimed author and now business leader focused on skills and Standard Chartered Futuremakers Alumni.

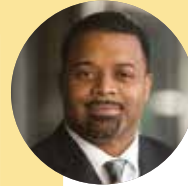


ASHISH GADNIS

Founder and CEO, BanQu

Blockchain is bandied around as a silver bullet to solving transparency and traceability challenges. This podcast reveals what this means in reality.

Meet award-winning serial entrepreneur Ashish Gadnis as he demystifies blockchain, shares the trends he thinks we should all be thinking about, and why his father said to him “if you want to get out of poverty, you can either programme or you can beg.”



FRED BROWN

**President and CEO,
The Forbes Funds**

Fred Brown is the President and CEO of The Forbes Funds, a capacity builder and catalyst for nonprofits in the Pittsburgh area, USA. The work Fred is leading goes far beyond simply helping NGOs up their performance. Fred has been creating innovation labs, frameworks to ensure anti-racism within organisations, and impact measurement tools, among other things. During our conversation, you will hear what Fred expects to be the big themes for not just the next 5 years, but the next 30! Get your pens and paper out—it's worth taking notes.



JANE PILLINGER

Gender Expert



ALICE ALLAN

**Challenge Director,
Business Fights
Poverty**

This is a tough podcast to listen to, but vital. As Alice explains: “Sadly, COVID-19 is exacerbating gender inequality.” Prior to the pandemic, one in three women experienced gender-based violence. During the lockdown, estimates show a 20% increase globally in that number.

Jane and Alice not only address this difficult subject head on during our podcast conversation but share their practical insight from years working on the issue.

PEG



JESSICA ESPINOZA TRUJANO

Gender Finance, DEG

Whether you've been working on the topic of gender investing deeply for years or you are new to the idea—whether you are an investor, entrepreneur, development finance institution, or corporate—take a listen to Jessica Espinoza Trujano.

During our conversation, Jessica lays out the case for investing with an eye on gender, why it pays and how to do it.



WILLINGHAM

**Executive Director,
Fairtrade America**

Peg Willingham is the Executive Director of Fairtrade America. Fairtrade's mission to work with businesses, farmers, and workers certifying products as ethically and sustainably sourced is more important than ever. In this podcast, Peg shares her insights of the compounded effects of COVID-19 on many of the world's poorest farmers



MERTEN SIEVERS

Value Chain and Enterprise Development, ILO

Merten Sievers leads value chain and enterprise development with the International Labour Organisation (ILO). During our podcast conversation, Merten shares his insights on the effects COVID-19 is having on small- and medium-sized enterprises, in particular the impacts on decent work. Merten then deep-dives into the practical ways businesses of all sizes can help create and capitalise upon quality jobs.



HANNEKE FABER

President, Foods & Refreshment, Unilever

In this interview, Hanneke Faber, President of Foods & Refreshment at Unilever, reveals how they stay global sustainability leaders and why food is broken.

Unilever has been named the number-one sustainability company worldwide for eight years straight, balancing being one of the globe's largest consumer goods companies—with products sold in around 190 countries—alongside being regularly called leader and pioneer.

During our conversation, Hanneke reveals all, shares her personal journey with Unilever, and explains why they have chosen to launch their 'Future of Foods' commitments now.



ALEXIS GEANEOTES

Operations Officer, IFC

KATHY MIGNANO

Operations Officer, Gender and Economic Inclusion, IFC

During this podcast, we hear Alexis Geaneotes and Kathy Mignano from IFC share the latest thinking on inclusive business.

This podcast gives you a starter guide on how to address the needs of those that are underserved, also known as inclusive business. Informed by a new study, Leveraging Inclusive Business Models to Support the Base of the Pyramid during COVID-19, Kathy and Alexis provide insight into why businesses and investors should be developing inclusive business models, and provide real-world examples.



RUDRANI OZA

Farm Innovations, CottonConnect

Rudrani Oza is senior manager of farm innovations for CottonConnect. Based in India, Rudrani is a gender expert with over 16 years of experience in the areas of gender, HIV/AIDS, reproductive health, water & sanitation, and children's rights. During our conversation, Rudrani shares her first hand insight and the research CottonConnect has been doing with the cotton farmers they work with in India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and beyond.



NICKY BLACK

Director at the International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM)

In this podcast with Dr Nicky Black, Director at the International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM), we talk with Nicky about the work she has been leading in helping the mining sector respond to COVID-19, and also the newly released Building Forward Better Framework.

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