

SUMMARY OF INSIGHTS

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF BUSINESS, AND HOW CAN BUSINESS PLACE PEOPLE AT THE HEART OF CLIMATE ACTION?

DATE: MONDAY 17/01/22

THEME: CLIMATE JUSTICE

FORMAT: ONLINE WORKSHOP

We would like to thank the discussants and all members of the Business Fights Poverty community who contributed to this workshop. Discussants: Alison Ward (Cotton Connect), Amanda Gardiner (Meta), Anouk Heilen (Unilever), Brendan Curran (Grantham Research Institute LSE), Deb Rigling Gallagher (Duke University), Hardeep Desai (Cotton Connect), María José Prado Valdés (CEMEX), Saskia Goldman (Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office), Marcela Chacón Castro (Bayer), Zahid Torres-Rahman (Moderator, Business Fights Poverty)

Companies, governments, international organisations, and NGOs increasingly recognise that **climate change** not only has an obvious impact on nature and the environment, but it also **exacerbates social challenges such as inequality, poverty, and food insecurity**. In this sense, for businesses and other organisations, climate justice means placing people at the centre of their sustainability strategies.

Leaders of multinational corporations are facing demands to **better integrate teams that often work apart from each other** even though they operate in interrelated issue areas like human rights due diligence, climate action, and social impact. In addition, because many cross-sector partnerships have been highly effective in supporting the most vulnerable during the pandemic, calls have grown louder for the replication of these

collaborative initiatives between public and private actors in the fight against global warming and social injustice.

Participants in the workshop highlighted that companies' commitments to net-zero carbon emissions require **building a more resilient society as well as more adaptable economic systems**. Also, companies offer important platforms to raise awareness about climate justice, advocate for more inclusive and greener public policies, and share education opportunities, training, and tools for people who want to learn more about how to transform their realities.

Moreover, multinational corporations that rely on long supply chains spread around the world have a responsibility to **ensure that the transition to a green, just economy leaves no one behind**. Small businesses and smallholder farmers need economic resources and expert assistance to meet higher sustainable and social standards in their operations. Furthermore, workers and the local communities where they live, frequently the most affected by extreme climate events and their social consequences, **must have their voices heard in the design and implementation of climate justice strategies**.

"WE NEED TRANSPARENCY, AN OPEN, LEARNING CULTURE, A WILLINGNESS TO EXPLORE, AND A READINESS TO FIND DIFFICULT THINGS AND TACKLE THEM HEAD-ON."

"WHAT I MOST ENJOYED WAS THE QUICK TAKES BY DIFFERENT RESPONDENTS, THE BREADTH OF EXPERIENCE, AND THE COMMENT OF ALL PARTICIPANTS."

RESOURCES

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