

Food, farming and fisheries

COVID19 guidance and links to resources

In response to the category group COVID19 risk forum this initial briefing mainly contains brief explanation of available portals on information, links to important data tracking webpages and examples of good practice we have been made aware of. We do however need to stress that this is an initial response for members. As we gather information, this will be analysed and synthesized for more detailed briefings.

In an initial survey conducted through affiliates, [the ITUC results show](#) that the top five policies governments are putting in place to respond to economic impact of the virus are:

- Provision of free health care - 50% of countries
- Employment protection for those self-isolating - 34% of countries
- Tax relief for businesses - 31% of countries
- Paid sick leave for a period of self-isolation - 29% of countries
- Bailout funds for business or sectors - 29% of countries

The survey shows that 62% of governments are responding well, but in 48% of countries employers are responding badly to the needs of workers.

For the global supply chains the ILO Standards and COVID-19 (coronavirus) paper for [Key provisions of international labour standards relevant to the evolving COVID19 outbreak](#) is a substantive document covering to name but a few OSH, temporary reduction in hours, wage protection and protection against discrimination.

Initial ETI advice

Due diligence mapping

Review your current due diligence mapping on labour rights to identify where workers will be at the highest risk – indicators should already show where legislation is weak, not enforced or non-existent. Workers in these high-risk countries will be in extreme risk to abuse and/or exploitation with little or no protection. The table below captures some of the resources already available to assist with your decision making.

	Note	Link/resource
UN, business and intra government commitments	Urgent call for social dialogue and social partners at UN level, intra government & global business forums to come together to work together on business continuity, income security and solidarity; to protect lives and livelihoods; and to assist with health systems as a crucial way of combatting the pandemic.	Joint statements of commitment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Health Organization and International Chamber of Commerce. • International Organisation of Employers & International Trade Union

	The OECD COVID19 webpages are dedicated to policy makers but also has data tracking on the virus spread and government responses For EU countries, Iceland and the OECD has produced “State of health systems” providing a concise briefing per country.	Confederation • OECD dedicated pages • EU – state of health system briefings per country
Country duty to protect	Governments are taking a wide range of measures in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. The Oxford COVID-19 Government Response Tracker (OxCGRT) aims to record these unfolding responses in a rigorous, consistent way across countries and across time. The American Unions have developed a state by state briefing on provision for workers in this time. The ILO’s social protection monitor keeps track of recent policy trends related to the pandemic.	Government response tracker USA state by state regulatory changes ILOs global social protection monitor – Government responses

Work with social partners

It is critical at this time to reach out to work with your established social partners, ie Global Trade Union Federations, local trade unions and labour NGO’s to develop solutions in producing countries but also to establish what they are working on in respect to protecting vulnerable workers at risk. Due to the established protocols, global links, on the ground activity and supported by local and international research, the trade union is well placed to work with in this crises.

	Note	Link/resource
UK trade union statements and advice	All UK trade Unions affiliated to the TUC have produced a wide range of guidance relating to emergency conditions. They include USDAW, GMB and Unite who are most relevant to the sector. Nautilus is the UK’s union for seafarers and dock workers There is a range of advice focusing on OSH, distancing & protection, short term contracts, advocacy and resources.	USDAW coronavirus FAQs and Social Distancing guidance Unite the Union H&S advice that also provides information on the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HASAWA) GMB with good advice for what employers should do Nautilus COVID19 web page for FAQs
EU information	The EU trade union congress (ETUC) has a range of guidance and information on country social partner agreements, bargaining agreements and advocacy they’re engaged in.	ETUC COVID19 social partner information
ITUC and Global	TUAC has developed a tracking page for OECD countries that covers emergency agreements and	https://tuac.org/news/covid19-crisis-mapping-out-trade-

Union Federations	<p>provision for workers in terms of sick leave and pay etc.</p> <p>All the Global Union Federations have produced guidance – for this sector, we have added the IUF and the ITF information pages.</p>	<p>union-and-social-partners-responses/</p> <p>IUF corona virus information page that covers affiliate global activity and advice</p> <p>ITF (seafarers, transport & shipping) pages with main page being the headline call for governments & employers to act.</p>
Ethical forums and commodity groups	There are already well-established country networks of MSI's or country based ethical platforms.	

Communication

Open, honest and transparent dialogue and consultation with ALL relevant stakeholders within your supply chain. It is now time to call on the relationships developed on your ethical journey to enable inclusive discussions - the principles of social dialogue become paramount in this. This could include:

- A dedicated rapid response line for suppliers, agents and producers.
- Modifying existing grievance mechanisms to enable emergency communication from workers.
- Assist suppliers and producers with education resources – the health advice to combat the virus is universal so materials can be adapted for global usage.
- Produce an emergency policy statement that covers the immediate situation but also covers the long-term commitment to ensuring a return to business as usual once the virus is contained.

Pay, terms & conditions and OSH

As indicated in the tables above, the regulatory framework that offered labour protections are now all in flux. Trade unions and employers around the world have been negotiating special agreements for this period.

Unilever and Nestle for example have [already announced](#) a range of measures including cash flow relief to support suppliers and pay coverage for up to three months. The pay deal covers all workers not eligible for government relief. Nestle has also committed to supporting workers through bottled water, medical and food provision.

Another example [from Colombia relates to protections](#) for 22,000 banana workers where the local union SINTRAINAGRO and the Industry Association, AUGURA have agreed all workers will receive personal hygiene equipment, disinfectant and safe distancing measures for all transport; strict protocol for monitoring workers' temperature on a regular basis; and staggered meal provision, with strict enforcement of canteen hygiene.

The Scottish Government has published a [Fair Work Statement](#) which sets an excellent example of the expectations to maintain working standards but also highlights the importance of contract labour at this time