



Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Day

FIRST RESPONDERS TO SOCIETAL NEEDS

25 JUNE 2020



Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Day 2020

In preparing for micro, small and medium enterprise (MSME) Day 2020, we must not only recognize the necessity and power of MSMEs worldwide, but also we must capture this opportunity to really be with MSMEs. This act of *being* includes sitting with their struggles, successes, stories, experiences, and opportunities.

Due to extreme losses touching every nation and every sector of industry, there are many people without jobs who are and will continue to be looking for entrepreneurship opportunities. The motivations of entrepreneurs and MSMEs can be leveraged to tackle the world's problems, while helping to implement the SDGs, especially in the underperforming sectors and in social recovery.

We are presented with an unprecedented opportunity to emerge with a better set of conditions for MSMEs than that existed prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. Economic diversification, improvement of health care, education, public transport, empowerment of all women and girls and the youth, and combatting climate change and its impacts are some of the key areas of work in many countries. MSMEs are uniquely placed to participate and contribute to the rebound and vibrancy in these areas.

We truly believe in the power of MSMEs, and therefore, our goals for their futures are not just lofty ideals. Rather, these recovery goals stem from the real and tangible examples set by MSMEs worldwide, as first respondent to societal needs. We are only able to imagine the success of MSMEs globally in increasing wealth, creating quality jobs, and advancing the Sustainable Development Goals because many of them are already demonstrating their capability and drive for excellence in these outcomes. Despite the constant and uncontrollable external pressures affecting MSMEs, many of them are persistently recreating the world anew. The exemplary work of some MSMEs has proven them to be our best actors for global improvement. However, many others need our support to survive the lockdown, to address pre-existing conditions staked against MSMEs, and to have the ability and capacity to address SDGs issues and **facilitate post COVID 19 global recovery.**

To address these challenges and in celebration of MSME Day on 27 June, the Permanent Mission of Argentina, UNCTAD, DESA and ICSB will hold a virtual event on 25 June 2020. This event will bring together ministers, high level policy makers, leadership of major international organizations, business associations, academia, other key stakeholders in the private and public sector to contribute to the collective voice of MSME solidarity. The event will provide an opportunity for an interactive stakeholder dialogue on how to support MSMEs in these difficult times, so they can seize the moment to enhance their role and impact on sustainable and inclusive growth in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and of the post COVID-19 resurgence.

With more than two-thirds of the global population employed by MSMEs, the event will highlight the rapid action needed in facilitating economic and social recovery for MSMEs globally. MSMEs Day celebration on June 25th will also discuss policy measures and capacity building efforts needed to build a more sustainable and resilient MSME sector, including best practices for and lessons learned due to COVID-19 impacts.

Gathering representatives from all different regions of the world, the celebrations consist of a high level opening session, followed by two hour-long panel sessions (hosted by UNCTAD and DESA), and closes with a concluding ceremony to capture the incredible work and progress of MSMEs and to advance us all further into our new better normal.

The celebratory day's events are as follows:

9:00 – 9:30 am (EDT) | 15:00 – 15:30 (CET)

High-Level Opening Panel: We Hear You

Panel Moderated by the International Council for Small Business

9:30 – 10:45 am (EDT) | 15:30 – 16:45 (CET)

Panel Discussion One: Leveraging MSMEs as Change-makers and First Responders to societal needs

Moderated by UNCTAD

10:45 – 12:00 pm (EDT) | 16:45 – 18:00 (CET)

Panel Discussion Two: Adding Chairs, All Voices Welcome at This Table.

Moderated by DESA

12:00 – 12:15 pm (EDT) | 18:00 – 18:15 (CET)

Closing Remarks

Partner organizations will conclude the informative sessions with an action-oriented send-off to guide our organizations and business as they fully embody their better normals. We thank you all for celebrating MSMEs Day with us.

Stay Connected!

25 June will be a very celebratory moment for our global MSME community. Remember to stay connected by following your host organizations (@ICSB, @ArgentinaUN, @UNDESA, @UNCTAD) and using the MSMEs Day hashtags (#MSMEsDay2020 #JoinUs #WeHearYou). We cannot wait to see you on 25 June! Please visit the website where we will continuously update the agenda.