

# First Aid Kit

## *for business survival & transformation during COVID-19*

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There is no question that these will be challenging times for businesses all across the globe. Faced with increased export restrictions, closed borders, decreasing demand and a rapid slowdown in global supply, micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) will have to build resilience to continue operations after the crisis. More than ever, only those entrepreneurs, businesses and institutions that can adapt and innovate in a fast-paced world will be able to succeed.

In this *First Aid Kit for Business Survival & Transformation during COVID-19*, ITC's Youth and Trade Programme has compiled resources for staying ahead of the curve during these challenging times. For more information on what ITC is doing to support MSMEs through this crisis, you can also check the special page on the ITC website dedicated to MSMEs and the fight against [COVID-19](#).

ITC is also interested to hear from young entrepreneurs about how you are coping with this crisis. We have developed a short survey to understand better your needs and guide us in developing new solutions to support you. Do not miss this opportunity to be heard – click [here](#) to participate in the survey (English, French, and Spanish available).

### For entrepreneurs

The current crisis is challenging small and medium enterprises (SMEs) worldwide in an unprecedented way. When consumers stay at home, SMEs risk losing markets, income and produce. Early response is key for companies to remain competitive in this scenario.

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McKinsey and Co has published an overview of challenges and responses companies are pursuing across the globe. They highlight the importance of supply chain stabilization, customer engagement, and financial stress testing as major work streams to prepare and respond. You can access the full report by clicking [here](#).

In the online publishing platform Medium, business experts are sharing their tips for SMEs to adapt and survive the COVID-19 crisis. We recommend checking out [The Corona Crisis Checklist for Start Up CEOs](#), [How to adapt? Tips for SMEs and Start Ups during COVID-19](#), [17 Tips for Taking Care of Your Team, Your Work, and Yourself While Remote](#), and [23 Steps to Surviving COVID-19 for Startups and Small Business](#).

Whether you had to shut down your business temporarily or work from home, it can be good timing to recharge, upskilling / reskilling yourself. ITC has prepared a number of FREE online courses and resources for you, simply get registered and start the transformation today!

- [Ye! Community](#): The Ye! Community is a free to use platform connecting young entrepreneurs around the globe. By creating an account on the platform, you can take advantage of the community, experts and resources to support you during this difficult time.
  - [Connect directly with other young entrepreneurs](#) to ask questions and seek advice;
  - [Connect with an expert business coach](#) virtually; now is the perfect time to connect with an experienced coach who can support you through this tough time;
  - [Participate in the Coping with Covid-19](#) upcoming series of webinars with Ye! Coaches who are experts in future proofing, planning and crisis management;
  - [Read our latest blog posts](#) on working from home;
  - [Check out the Ye! Chapters](#) to see if there is an active network of young entrepreneurs in your country;
  - [Visit the Ye! Country guides](#) to see what entities for support are based locally to get connected.

Creating an account takes less than 5 minutes. Get approved so your profile is published and allow other young entrepreneurs to reach out to you. You never know who you will meet or the network you could build. Get connected!

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- [ITC SME Trade Academy](#): Whether you are considering taking the entrepreneurship route or already thinking about your export markets, the e-learning course package for young entrepreneurs available through ITC SME Trade Academy can help you. The courses introduce a range of international business concepts and build trade capacity. The knowledge gained assists young entrepreneurs from building their business plans to consider, assess, and plan expanding their business internationally.
    - [Taking the entrepreneurship route](#) - next sessions: 11<sup>th</sup> May, 6<sup>th</sup> July, 7<sup>th</sup> September, 7<sup>th</sup> December;
    - [Considering market exports](#) - next sessions: 1<sup>st</sup> June, 31<sup>st</sup> August, 30<sup>th</sup> November;
    - [Internationalization of digital businesses](#) - next sessions: 27<sup>th</sup> April, 10<sup>th</sup> August, 9<sup>th</sup> November;
    - [How to Measure and Manage your Social Impact](#) - next sessions: 20<sup>th</sup> April, 3<sup>rd</sup> August, 2<sup>nd</sup> November.
  - [Accelerate2030 Virtual Learning Space \(VLS\)](#): The VLS is a space to share knowledge and build the skills of social ventures as they go through their scaling journeys. The VLS combines Accelerate2030 sustainable scaling approach to ITC's expertise in business development and internationalisation. Through online courses and social discussion groups, the participants have the opportunity to learn from international experts and other entrepreneurs.

## For business support organizations

ITC is also working closely with Business Support Organizations (BSOs), including Trade Promotion Organizations, Incubators, Accelerators, and Tech Hubs, who play an important role in providing trusted information and tailored support to cushion the blow for small businesses.

Now more than ever, BSOs should take advantage of online communication channels to support their clients and deliver their services. Think about your planned activities – how could you adapt to ensure continued delivery? Could a [pitching competition be held fully online](#)? Could your networking events become [online matchmaking](#)? Could this crisis actually be an [opportunity for your health tech startups](#) to grow?

If you are considering pivoting, do not skip on ITC's tools and resources to assess your performance and improve the services to your clients:

- [ITC Benchmarking Tool](#): Carry out an internal review of your organizational performance online through our self-assessment option. This allows you to apply ITC's Benchmarking tool to your own institution. There is no charge for using the self-assessment tool and you may conduct as many reviews you wish.

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- [Benchmarking Library of Good Practices](#): Learn from best practices reading through our library. You can find case studies, reports and technical papers related to trade and investment support institutions.

## For technical and vocational training institutions

More than 1.5 billion students and youth across the planet are affected by school and university closures due to the COVID-19 outbreak. This not only widens learning inequality, but also affects the preparedness of youths entering the labour force.

[Distance learning solutions](#) can help parents, teachers, schools and school administrators facilitate student learning and provide social care and interaction during periods of school closure. For practical trainings and education targeted at vulnerable populations, course design might need to be restructured.

If you are in the management team of a TVET institution, check out the course below to enhance your ability to develop market-relevant training curricula and best prepare your students for the job market.

- [Developing Training to Meet the Needs of the Labour Market](#): This course explores effective ways in which TVET institutions can leverage the expertise of employers and other local stakeholders such as government institutions, trade unions, or even former students to ensure that their training courses actually help their graduates find work.

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The International Trade Centre's (ITC) Youth and Trade Programme promotes youth economic empowerment by delivering at the nexus of the Sustainable Development Goals 4 (Quality Education) and 8 (Decent Work and Inclusive Growth).

In order to deliver on those two tracks, ITC works with a wide range of partners, such as policy makers, technical and vocational training institutions, business development support institutions, local employers, and multinational players.

ITC is a joint agency of the United Nations and the World Trade Organization. ITC is the only development agency that is fully dedicated to supporting the internationalization of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

For more information, visit: <http://www.intracen.org/youth/> [@ITC\\_Youth](#) [@theyecommunity](#)