A new year brings with it excitement and hope for what can be achieved—personally and professionally. We want to hear about our community members’ priorities for the year ahead on topics such as gender, livelihoods, learning and skills, climate justice, partnerships and impact measurement.

Join us for a co-created workshop, bringing together thoughtful practitioners and practical scholars from across the Business Fights Poverty community. Together, we’ll chart the year ahead, discuss shared priorities and identify areas for collaborative action.

This inclusive, online event is curated by the community for the community. Get involved and get inspired, access practical insights, hear what’s top of mind among your peers, and find new partners.

WE BELIEVE AN EQUITABLE FUTURE IS A MORE RESILIENT FUTURE.
PUTTING PEOPLE AT THE HEART OF CLIMATE ACTION
Zahid Torres-Rahman

WHAT IS CLIMATE JUSTICE?

NEW IN 2021: RESOURCES ON CLIMATE JUSTICE

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BUSINESS FIGHTS POVERTY 2021 IN REVIEW

2022 EVENTS

GET INVOLVED

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Preface

ANNABEL BEALES, DIRECTOR, LEARNING AND ENGAGEMENT, BUSINESS FIGHTS POVERTY

Why and how should business put people at the heart of climate action? This edition of the Business Fights Poverty magazine is dedicated entirely to this question - one which will continue to be a priority for us in 2022.

There is a compelling case for action on climate justice. It is sadly true that those who are already most vulnerable will be the most impacted by climate change; on the flip side, combining social and environmental initiatives can create value for all stakeholders.

For me, it is our shared responsibility to act that speaks the loudest, particularly for those of us in the developed world. According to Oxfam’s report “Confronting Carbon Inequality”, 52% of cumulative carbon emissions between 1990 and 2015 were produced by the richest 10% of people, whereas the poorest 50% of people contributed only 7%. We urgently need to find new models of business that are equitable, sustainable, and just.

The Rt Hon Amanda Milling MP, Minister for Asia, UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, joined us for a fireside chat on Opportunity day at our Climate Justice Summit in November. She explained the task ahead: “Business can put people at the heart of climate action by developing credible plans for transition, understanding and mitigating the risks faced by people in their operations, value chains, and the communities they serve.” Additionally, business can play an important role in ensuring that everyone can access the opportunities of the green economy.

Despite the enormity of the challenge, our Climate Justice Summit showed that together we have a strong foundation from which to achieve climate justice for those who need it most.

One of our speakers, Esther Ngumbi, Assistant Professor of Entomology and African-American Studies, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and Founder, Oyeska Greens, Kenya, put it well: “How we accelerate progress is working together and ensuring that with every agenda at the centre of climate change, we are putting the vulnerable at the forefront.”

Inside this magazine, you will find articles that provide many examples of businesses who are acting on this mission, as well as explain in greater depth why putting people at the heart of climate action should now be a business priority. We would love to hear your own views and experiences on this topic - and we look forward to more inspiring conversations and action-driven collaborations with our community in 2022.


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PUTTING PEOPLE AT THE HEART OF CLIMATE ACTION

AS AN ORGANISATION WHOSE MAIN FOCUS IS SOCIAL IMPACT, BUSINESS FIGHTS POVERTY HAS ADOPTED CLIMATE JUSTICE AS ONE OF OUR PRIORITY THEMES. ZAHID TORRES-RAHMAN EXPLAINS WHY CLIMATE JUSTICE IS RELEVANT TO BUSINESS; SHARES PRACTICAL EXAMPLES OF ACTION BY GLOBAL BRANDS; AND POINTS TO KEY CHALLENGES AHEAD.

WHY WOULD BUSINESS FIGHTS POVERTY FOCUS ON CLIMATE CHANGE?

This year at Business Fights Poverty, we made climate change one of our priorities, including through our recent hybrid event during COP26. Some have wondered why.

The fact is that it’s become painfully clear that while climate change is affecting us all, the most severe impacts fall on the most vulnerable people.

Existing inequities - due to factors such as gender, race, income, and geography - exacerbate the risks to people’s lives and livelihoods.

At the same time, inequity also affects people’s capacity and opportunity to participate in the transition to a green economy.

- 80% of people displaced by climate change are women, and women are 14 times more likely to die during environmental disasters (UNDP)
- When Cyclone Aila hit Bangladesh in 2009, 1 in 4 poor households were impacted, compared to 1 in 7 non-poor households (UN)
- In the U.S., Black workers fill less than 10% of the jobs in clean energy production and energy efficiency sectors (Brookings)

So, in short, any organisation concerned about social impact needs to be at the heart of the conversation on climate change, because ultimately we need to put people at the heart of climate action. Business Fights Poverty, and many of our peers, are - in my view - very late to the party.

On a positive note, while we were in Glasgow I heard from several people who have been to many COPs, that this year’s conference marked a shift in the way climate change is being discussed: finally the social and equity dimensions were attracting serious attention.
WHAT IS CLIMATE JUSTICE?

These terms and ideas are not new, of course. People have been calling for a rights-based, people-centred approach to climate action for at least two decades. For me, I think of it as essentially applying a social justice and equity lens both to understanding the impacts of climate change and designing climate action.

As some people reading this may have seen, in March we published a framework on Business and Climate Justice, with Jane Nelson at the Harvard Kennedy School Corporate Responsibility Initiative and Tara Shine at Change by Degrees.

Tara put it really well during one of our sessions at COP. She talked about how the concept of climate justice used to be taboo but is now widely accepted: it is now included in the Paris Agreement and used by NGOs, young people and indigenous people. It’s no longer new or novel. It really struck me when she said that “The next group to take on climate justice language and principles is the business community. You are just the most recent to the party, and you’re most welcome”.

The diagram below shows how we think about the concept of climate justice, from the perspective of what it means for business. On the left axis are the main ways that business can have a positive societal impact. This is based on work by Jane Nelson back in the mid-90s, and which I still think is a very powerful way of thinking about how business can act as a force for good:

- Core business - how a company does business, its products and services, employees, and all those across its value chain
- Philanthropy and community investment
- Policy engagement and advocacy - business voice calling for ambitious action

Across the top, we look at the main impact areas:

- lives - health and safety of workers and communities
- livelihoods - jobs and incomes
- learning - education and skills

In developing their strategies, businesses need to take three things into account:

1. Inequity of risks faced by people across their business, their value chain, and the communities they serve, in terms of their vulnerability to the impacts of climate change; the need to minimise these risks and build people’s resilience.

   In India, 80% of economically active women work in agriculture, a sector most at risk from rising temperatures and disrupted rainfall patterns - via the effect on crop yields, increased risk of harvest loss (WEF).

2. Equity of opportunity for people across their business, their value chain and communities, in terms of their access to the benefits of the climate transition: access to clean energy, sustainable farming, and green skills and jobs.

   At our COP event, our keynote speaker was Monique Ntumngia, Founder of Green Girls
Organisation, which is building livelihoods and energy access across West Africa by training rural women to be clean energy entrepreneurs: 4,500 women have been trained over the last 6 years.

3. Voice of those most vulnerable to climate risks and transitional risks. Listening to those most impacted by climate change and climate policies, building skills and knowledge, ensuring participation in the design of climate action.

Another strength of COP26 was the level of engagement by indigenous communities and other marginalised groups. Heeding the voice of those most proximate to the issues must be a priority for all of us.

WHAT ARE SOME PRACTICAL EXAMPLES?

In my view, all companies are on a journey. While some are clear leaders on either environmental or social issues or even on both - this intersection of environment and social impact is an area companies are navigating in real-time.

During our recent Climate Justice Summit, we brought together some of our company members to explore what climate justice - putting people at the heart of climate action - means to their business and what this looks like in practice.

I’ll mention three examples:

**AB InBeV** is the world’s largest brewer and is deeply integrated into local communities. They have calculated that over 87% of their emissions sit in Scope 3, that is across their value chain. That value chain includes 15,000 smallholder farmers, 30,000 waste collectors, and 4 million small retailers. So for them, reducing emissions - and meeting their climate ambition - means working with people in their supply chain:

- collaborating with smallholders on climate-smart agriculture,
- formalising recycling supply chains,
- getting renewable energy to retailers.

From a gender perspective, they have also particularly focused on supporting women farmers and women retailers.

One particularly good example shows how the lines between environmental, economic, and social are being proactively blurred and how the company has been thinking about where they can have the most impact. AB InBev’s commitment is that by 2025, 100% of purchased electricity will be from renewable sources. In Brazil and Mexico, as with elsewhere, they have

“The next group to take on climate justice language and principles is the business community. You are just the most recent to the party, and you’re most welcome”.

—Tara Shine, Co-Founder, **Change by Degrees**
been busy negotiating sizable renewable energy contracts. They have decided to extend this to small retailers in their value chain - this reduces the costs for these small businesses, improving their profitability. This initiative also reflects a shift in the relationship between the company and their suppliers - from transactional to collaborative.

**UNILEVER** is another good example. What I would like to highlight though is not one specific project - they have some interesting ones, such as helping tea farmers build drought resilience, improve water management and income diversification - but their recent decision (which they described at our COP event) to apply a social justice lens to their climate work - to ensure a more integrated approach.

So while they do have concrete programmes, I like their commitment to taking a more holistic approach to all of their work. Climate Justice is not about new initiatives, but applying a social lens to their climate policies and initiatives like the Climate and Nature Fund, or the Climate Transition Action Plan.

**MARS** brought together their Chief Sustainability Officer and Chief Procurement Officer roles into one, which I think is a really powerful opportunity to leverage procurement as a force for good, including through their influence on suppliers - particularly when you combine this with their focus on gender-sensitive sourcing, living wages and living incomes for smallholders, and respecting the rights of migrant workers.

One of the points they made is that long term climate targets are not enough when the impacts on people - on employees, farmers, consumers - are being felt right now.
WHAT ARE THE KEY CHALLENGES?

During our Climate Justice Summit, we also asked about some of the key challenges holding businesses back:

1. **What does good look like?** For the environment, it’s relatively easy - you can have a science-based target and measure progress. However, for social impact, there are no universally agreed, standardised metrics to assess individual performance and to provide common goals to work towards.

2. **Silos.** Our approaches are still too siloed between those who focus on climate and those who focus on social impact - not just in business, but also in NGOs, government, and academia. Integrating these is key.

3. **Beyond Sustainability.** How do we get out beyond the CEO or Sustainability team - to all employees, suppliers, customers - so all feel they have a role in co-creating solutions? How do you ensure that you hear the voice of those proximate to the issues? What are the mechanisms for listening?

We will continue our focus on climate justice into 2022, crowdsourcing insights and co-creating solutions with you and others in our global community. Please reach out to us, as we look forward to travelling on this important journey together.

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**Zahid Torres-Rahman,** Co-Founder and CEO, Business Fights Poverty

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Editors’ Note: Our webinar “*How do Businesses Put People at the Heart of Climate Action?*” was hosted with *Mars Inc.* You can view a full recording of the event [here](#).

**PANELLISTS WERE:**

- Anouk Heilen, Global Sustainability Director, Social Equity and Inclusion, *Unilever*
- Katie Hoard, Senior Global Director, Sustainability & ESG, *AB InBev*
- Lisa Manley, Vice President, Sustainability, *Mars Inc*
- Dr. Tara Shine, Director, *Change by Degrees*
- Moderator: Katie Hyson, Director, Thought Leadership, *Business Fights Poverty*
WHAT IS CLIMATE JUSTICE?

“Climate change is happening now and to all of us. No country or community is immune... And, as is always the case, the poor and vulnerable are the first to suffer and the worst hit.”

- António Guterres, UN Secretary-General

CLIMATE JUSTICE IS ABOUT PUTTING PEOPLE AT THE HEART OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND CLIMATE ACTION.

While climate change is affecting us all, the most severe impacts fall on the most vulnerable people.

Existing inequities - due to factors such as gender, race, income, and geography - exacerbate the risks to people’s lives and livelihoods.

At the same time, inequity also affects people’s capacity and opportunity to participate in the transition to a green economy.

Climate Justice is not a new concept, but businesses (and their stakeholders) are now actively thinking about the role they can play.

Climate justice is essentially about applying a social justice and equity lens both to understanding the impacts of climate change and designing climate action.

WHY TAKE ACTION?

1. **Enhance climate action with a social lens**
   It encourages a holistic, joined-up approach within the company that minimises the risk of unintended negative social impacts from climate actions. It recognises that building social and economic resilience is a powerful way to build climate resilience and vice versa.

2. **Spur innovation and investment**
   It will spur innovation and investment that drives social impact and climate action as well as business competitiveness. Investment and innovation in new technologies, products, services and business models can build the resilience of communities and the business in the face of climate and other systemic shocks.

3. **Build trust and reinforce license to operate**
   It provides a framework for consultation and dialogue with key stakeholders, including around potential tradeoffs. This will help build trust and reinforce companies’ social license to operate.
NEW IN 2021

RESOURCES ON CLIMATE JUSTICE

CLIMATE JUSTICE ACTION FRAMEWORK

Climate change is already here. How we tackle its causes and effects will determine our level of success in building a greener economy as well as promoting a fairer society. This toolkit shows how companies can incorporate social justice into climate action through core business capabilities and operations, philanthropy and social investments, and engagement in policy dialogue.

The Business and Climate Justice Action Framework is the result of a partnership between Business Fights Poverty and the Harvard Kennedy School Corporate Responsibility Initiative.

Read this toolkit to:

- understand what Climate Justice means and why companies can benefit from employing a Climate Justice lens
- learn more about the social impact of climate change on lives, livelihoods, and learning opportunities
- take advantage of cutting-edge advice and multiple resources on how to develop a Climate Justice strategy

ACTION TOOLKIT: WOMEN AND THE NET ZERO ECONOMY

Climate change and inequality are the twin challenges of our time. This toolkit shows how companies can transition to a net zero economy at the same time as economically empowering the many vulnerable women working upstream in global value chains.

It builds on recent work by the UK Government’s Work and Opportunities for Women (WOW) programme implemented by PwC and its alliance partners, as well as the Climate Justice Framework jointly developed by Business Fights Poverty and the Harvard Kennedy School Corporate Responsibility Initiative.

Read this toolkit to:

- understand the business case for integrated action on women’s economic empowerment and climate change
- identify opportunities for action in the supply chain
- take the first steps towards a gender-just net zero strategy
Jane Nelson: As we all know, the leadership challenge is clear, it’s compelling and it’s urgent. As the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres commented in his address to the UN General Assembly in September, “we face the worst cascade of crises in our lifetimes. The COVID-19 pandemic has supersized glaring inequalities. The climate crisis is pummeling the planet. And a surge of mistrust and misinformation is polarizing people and paralyzing societies. Human rights are under fire. Science is under assault. And economic lifelines for the most vulnerable are coming too late and too little - if they come at all. Solidarity,” he said, “is missing in action just when we need it most.” And that is what we want to focus on. How can we work together to build and rebuild solidarity for climate justice? And specifically, what role can business play in partnership with others?

I’d like to start with this leadership imperative. When you led the seminal Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change back in 2006, you made a very powerful and evidence-based argument.

You said that “the benefits of strong and early action far outweigh the economic costs of not acting,” and you warned “the delay would be dangerous, and much more costly.” Yet here we are 15 years later, and we’ve failed to achieve the speed or the scale or the level of systemic transformation that is needed. What are your current thoughts on the leadership imperative and the cost of inaction from both an economic and social perspective?

Lord Nicholas Stern: Over the last 15 years, emissions have gone on rising and the science has become ever more worrying. The kinds of effects that we anticipated then on the basis of the science have come through faster and more severely than we might have worried about then. Even though at the time, we were criticised for being alarmists, we actually understated the risks. At the same time, the costs of action have really come down. We didn’t anticipate 15 years ago that in many parts of the world, solar electricity would be cheaper than fossil fuels. So there’s that basic
sense that it’s still more worrying than we thought, and we’re now in a better position to tackle it than we might have anticipated.

So, what we have to do now is to accelerate, and I think there has to be a stronger understanding just how devastating this is. We’ve seen acceleration in the last three, four years. A couple of years ago, or at the beginning of last year, beginning of 2020, probably a third of the world’s emissions were in countries with a net zero commitment. Now, probably three quarters of emissions are in countries with a net zero commitment; something close to half the assets under management are committed now to net zero. So the commitments are starting to come. Now how credible those are, they vary. Some are credible; some are not. But at least the commitments are something you can hold people accountable to if you’re trying to promote leadership.

I do think that the last few years have seen strong progress. I do think it’s more hopeful now. But we’ve lost so much time. And there’s so much acceleration to do. But we’re starting to see some leadership.

**JN:** You and Bob Ward have also just written a great article in the British Medical Journal saying if we can get this leadership, the opportunities to unleash enormous economic opportunity, as well as tackle the crisis, is unprecedented. Can you say a little bit more about the links between the climate crisis response and COVID recovery packages? How can we unleash these opportunities to improve lives and livelihoods?

**NS:** There are tremendous opportunities right across the world. But so much of what we have to do is development-mitigation-adaptation, put together. The restoring of degraded land is a very clear example, where you’re capturing carbon in the soil, you’re increasing productivity. You’re making that agriculture more robust against difficult weather climate conditions. Another example is decentralised solar. So many millions in the world are without power, connections to the grid are problematic, sometimes they’re corrupt as well. But decentralised solar can be really liberating in many different ways right across the board of human wellbeing.

If you think of the growth of the economy as a whole, in order to transform our economy, we have to invest an extra two or three percentage points of GDP and stay there, keeping that up for this decade and beyond. What we have to do is to create that form of growth where productive and consumption activities are not destructive...
of the environment. But those investments are full of job opportunities, and much healthier job opportunities than in the past.

We actually have in our hands now a different way of doing things. But we need leadership; we need policies; we need investment. And above all, we need mutual support. Because those investments have to be made. And for me, the biggest part of the justice story is to help provide the capital for those investments. This is about changing lives, investing to change lives and the way we grow, the way we behave. And the rich world has a huge opportunity in terms of building a world good for everybody, but also a huge duty to help others follow paths which are not the destructive path that they followed, themselves, to be rich.

JN: How do we sort of shift that cascade of crises that we’re facing into a cascade of mutual benefits? I think that’s a great framing. You, Mary Robinson, and a number of other leaders, have recently written to the UK Government about the importance of protecting and preferably increasing aid budgets. Can you quickly say something about the role of aid, and particularly, bilateral and multilateral aid in improving climate justice?

NS: Justice is, I find, easiest to understand in terms of recognising injustice. And here I follow Amartya Sen - the idea of injustice is a right denied - and so what are the relevant rights? Well, it’s the right to development, the right to enhance your opportunities and build as an individual and the community, and of course, climate change denies those rights. And those rights are denied as a result of the actions of ourselves, particularly, of course, the rich world past and currently, but also the whole world. So this really is a question of justice in all sorts of dimensions.

But this is also a moment when helping others helps ourselves and the rich world because we are all vulnerable to climate change. And this investment that we’re talking about is an investment with a very strong return. So being a partner in that investment is not only the right thing to do, it can also be a rewarding thing to do in a conventional sense.

So, low-cost capital is fundamental. Some of it will have to be concessional finance with favourable terms. And I would normally point to five areas of finance here. There’s the bilateral and multilateral funds, the private sector, the voluntary carbon markets and philanthropy. And the challenge is putting those strands together in the many hundreds of billions that we need. So this is aid with a very direct sense of purpose of helping create investment that will change lives, which will benefit us all.

So there’s a very concrete agenda. This is not justice in some woolly sense; it’s justice in a very precise sense across those various dimensions, where the response to it, I think, is pretty clear: low-cost finance which can help generate those kinds of investments. Now, these investments will create enormous opportunities, but you’re going to have to invest in people and places in a just transition so that they can actually change their lives.

“This is about changing lives, investing to change lives and the way we grow, the way we behave.”

—Lord Nicholas Stern
**JN:** What is your call to action for the business community and particularly the larger companies and how they can partner with smaller enterprises as well as government and civil society?

**NS:** The first thing is the duty. The purpose of companies is to find profitable solutions to the problems of people and the planet. This is way beyond the Milton Friedman story. The first substantive word in that sentence is profitable, of course, because if you don’t stay profitable, you won’t stay around. The second is if you pursue the purposes of the firm, actually, you can do well by doing good. And the evidence now is that firms that behave responsibly on a number of dimensions, including environment and climate do better. And that’s, I think, here to stay.

If you look at the purpose, and what’s to be gained as a firm, then it seems to me that the direction of travel is very clear. But you have to also begin with your duty. As a firm, you’re part of a world, you’re part of a community, you’re part of society. And that’s why the purpose of the firm is to find profitable solutions to problems of people and the planet. But then, when you get into the implementation, you recognise how big those opportunities are.

You also find you get the best people. Now you and I, Jane, have the privilege of being in universities. And this younger generation is tremendous. It’s got a sense of purpose. And it’s not just that they’re pushing us to do something. They’re actually very, very thoughtful about what it is that we need to do. And they choose where to work. And they don’t want to go into something which is doing damage; they want to go into something that’s doing well. So you’ll get the best people.

So I do think that at the moment, more and more businesses are seeing that opportunity in leadership. There is some insincerity. But there’s also a tremendous amount of sincerity. So the leadership of business is enormously important.

**JN:** Absolutely. What gives me such hope is that combination of the passion and the purpose of our students and a generation of young people with the sort of real practical action, and the practical capabilities, both on the advocacy activist side, but also on the implementation side. So I think there is much to be hopeful for.

**NS:** As we see how we can accelerate and we see reasons for optimism, this is optimism about what we can do. We have to change that into optimism about what we will do.

“How do we [...] shift that cascade of crises that we’re facing into a cascade of mutual benefits?”

—Jane Nelson

Transcribed and edited by Sofia Ribas, Researcher, Business Fights Poverty
It was a strange, somewhat uncomfortable experience to be stepping out of the virtual world onto a physical stage, but also, perhaps, a sign that things may be edging “back to normal”.

I have had many conversations about what “back to normal” really means and that we have a real opportunity to reach for better. But it requires us to confront some uncomfortable truths.

While the pandemic has impacted us all, the uncomfortable truth is that the impacts have been most severe for the most vulnerable people. And the same goes for climate change: deep inequities by race, gender, geography and income shape the impacts, risks, and opportunities.

One thing that has really struck us during this pandemic is the deep humanity that people have shown despite personal challenges, stepping up to help others around them in their communities and around the world.

At Business Fights Poverty, we recognise that behind all the brands of our different organisations - whether business, academia, charities, or governments - we are all people who share a passion for improving the lives of those around us.

During the pandemic, it has been remarkable to see how people have come together to collaborate. That’s been true around the world and also in the context of our community, with the focus ranging from co-creating toolkits to tackle gender-based violence to sending emergency oxygen supplies to India. All these diverse initiatives share a common thread: to support the most vulnerable people.

At Business Fights Poverty, we believe that when we talk about climate change, we also need to place vulnerable people and communities at the heart of our climate actions.

For our COP26 live event, we focused on gender - how we can empower women through the green transition. Our great lineup of speakers discussed the importance of advancing gender equality in the energy sector, why companies must listen to what women are saying, and how gender lens investing can be an ally of climate justice. Our speakers also touched on topics related to key actions necessary to ensure a just transition, how to embed gender equality in the climate agenda, and how to open new income opportunities for women as clean energy entrepreneurs (watch the full recording here).

The event was conceived in partnership with Jane Nelson, Director of the Corporate Responsibility Initiative at Harvard Kennedy School and Monique Ntumngia, Founder, Green Girls Organisation. I’d like to share three key insights from the event.

**ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS ON EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH A JUST TRANSITION**

Climate change is a key issue and how we react can either promote or impede gender equality around the globe. This piece sheds light on the benefits of gender lens investment, championing a just, green transition and encouraging more women in the energy sector.
GENDER EQUALITY IN THE ENERGY SECTOR CAN BE A CATALYST TO A JUST TRANSITION

Women have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19 and by the impacts of climate change that are already being felt in many communities around the world. Linked to that, out of the one billion people who lack regular access to energy, the majority are women. In this respect, Kristina Skierka, CEO of Power for All, argued that ensuring women have equal access to renewable energy is crucial to embedding gender equality into companies’ just transition plans. According to the IFC’s Ellen Maynes, the energy sector must develop plans to foster greater gender inclusion within their operations, train women in technical and leadership skills, reach women entrepreneurs, and provide fair labour conditions for their women workforce through childcare and prevention and protection against gender-based violence.

ENSURING WOMEN’S VOICES ARE HEARD IS VITAL FOR COMPANIES TO MEET THEIR CLIMATE TARGETS

Some multinational corporations are starting to recognise that building a fairer society and a greener economy are part of the same project. Companies are increasingly being pushed by consumers, employees, and other stakeholders to go beyond net-zero targets and incorporate principles of inclusion and diversity into their climate justice strategies. For Nick Robins, a Professor at LSE, in many instances, companies are still missing women in their sustainability and social purpose plans. To correct this, companies must guarantee that women take an equal part in participation, consultation, and decision-making roles. Translating commitments into actions demands closing the pay gap between men and women, making boards more diverse, supporting women entrepreneurs through finance and training, and promoting women role models that can inspire the next generation of women leaders.
GENDER LENS INVESTING IS A POWERFUL TOOL TO ENHANCE A MORE EQUITABLE SOCIETY

Due to social norms and an unequal distribution of opportunities in society, women entrepreneurs face what is, most of the time, an insurmountable barrier when competing with businesses led by men for credit. To overcome this challenge, Amal-Lee Amin, a senior adviser to COP26, emphasised the role of gender lens investing. As gender is a cross-cutting issue in social and environmental action plans, companies and financial institutions that have created funding facilities focused on women are improving their impact on society. As an example, Monique Ntumngia described the work her social organisation does to train women in Africa to generate energy from the sun and biogas. The initiative not only increases access to clean energy but also empowers women entrepreneurs and drives climate awareness.

This event showcased how each of us - whether as an individual, a charity, a government, or a business - can take action. Because two things are certain: urgent action is needed, and we all have to be leaders in our own way, whether that is by using our knowledge, our resources, or our networks.

Going online during the pandemic has enabled us to enhance the diversity of our events, bringing voices of those proximate to the issues to our global stage. At another recent virtual event of ours, 75% of speakers came from the Global South, 75% came from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, and 75% were women.

That is why, for our COP26 event, we made an effort to blur the lines between the in-person and virtual worlds [...] combining the relationship-building advantages of in-person formats with the reach and inclusiveness of online.

The scale, complexity, and urgency of today’s challenges mean we have to rethink how we connect and collaborate. We need new approaches, such as hybrid events and rapid collaborations, to bring people together across business, civil society and government - around shared challenges to unlock collective insights and deepen relationships. Please do reach out to us if you’d like to join forces to move the needle on climate justice!

Yvette Torres-Rahman, Co-Founder and CFO, Business Fights Poverty

Editors’ Note: Our webinar “Empowering Women Through a Just Transition” was co-hosted with Harvard Kennedy School Corporate Responsibility Initiative and Green Girls Organisation. You can view a full recording of the event here.

PANELLISTS WERE:

- Amal-Lee Amin, Director Climate Strategy, CDC Group plc and Senior Advisor, COP26 Unit, Cabinet Office
- Ellen Maynes, Operations Officer, Fiji and PNG, Gender & Economic Inclusion Group, IFC
- Monique Ntumngia, Founder, Green Girls Organisation
- Niall McGrath, Director, Robocean Ltd.
- Nick Robins, Professor in Practice for Sustainable Finance, Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment, LSE
- Kristina Skierka, CEO, Power for All

Moderator: Jane Nelson, Director, Corporate Responsibility Initiative, Harvard Kennedy School
The backgrounds and experiences of people we talked with at COP26 varied. However, their united message is loud: we must put people at the heart of all our climate actions.

Each short clip below is an extract from a longer conversation. Please follow the links to hear these in full. I hope that they will help you ground your climate action on a foundation of global perspectives.

**WHO WAS AT COP26 & WHY IT MATTERS...**

Madan Pariyar, an expert adviser to iDE and part of the Nepali delegation, was pleased to see so many people from around the world gather in Glasgow for COP26, especially given the ongoing concern around COVID-19. However, he remarked to me that, in his experience, previous COPs had seen more people and more engagement. Madan’s colleague Jawoad Kazi acknowledged the large numbers of indigenous groups present, which has been well covered by the press. However, he also expressed his concern that more diversity is needed amongst the key decision makers to account for all people’s needs.

**WERE THE BIG ANNOUNCEMENTS, SUCH AS THE FOREST COMMITMENTS, AS IMPRESSIVE AS THEY SOUND? ONLY IF THEY ARE PEOPLE CENTRED...**

One of the most significant announcements during COP26 were the commitments surrounding forests – their planting, financing, and protection. In a conversation recorded for Business Fights Poverty the following day, Devika Gopal Agge, Chief Development Officer and Charlotte Fraiberg, Board Advisor, Health In Harmony, shared their joy on hearing the Forest Commitments. Alongside their excitement, they raised questions and concerns around how the commitments will be delivered and the challenges of getting the money to the people who need it. As Charlotte explained, “There is no point in planting trees for planting trees – we have got to support the communities.” Devika added “monocultures can do more harm than good.”
AND MY PERSPECTIVE...

This was the first COP I have attended. I can’t pretend that I wasn’t awed and humbled to spend time with so many people from around the world in Glasgow. To see the northerly streets thronging with people from all corners of our planet, on (hopefully) a shared mission to reduce the impacts of climate change - filled me with hope and that extra motivation to keep going. Having heard first-hand from people experiencing the grim effects of climate change, in the lead up to and whilst I was in Glasgow, I want to make three commitments to you and our Business Fights Poverty community:

1. **To connect you directly** - I will work to connect you with first-hand experience, insights and perspectives of people directly affected by societal impacts. We no longer have time to observe problems from afar.

2. **To collaborate for action** - COP26 reminded me how easy it is to talk about problems and solutions compared to acting on them. As so many said during COP26, “Now is the time for action.”

3. **To convene online and in person** - our COP26 Climate Justice Summit brought together people who were physically present at this key decision-making with others in the Business Fights Poverty global community who had joined through our free access online Summit. It was such a success; I hope that we see many more of these hybrid Summits and I welcome your feedback on how to improve them further.

And how about you - how did you find COP26? And what would you like to see Business Fights Poverty doing more of in the future? Do drop me a line to let me know.

Katie Hyson, Director, Thought Leadership, Business Fights Poverty

PEOPLE MAY CAUSE CLIMATE CHANGE, BUT PEOPLE ARE ALSO THE SOLUTION...

The outcomes from Glasgow’s COP26 may not have been as ambitious as many had hoped, but as the adage goes: ‘where there’s a will there’s a way.’ For many we heard from during COP26, there was a hopefulness and a desire to take action. One conversation encapsulated this well. Gib Bulloch, intrapreneur and founder of the Craigberoch Business Decelerator grew up a stone’s throw from Glasgow. He shared how organisations can create supportive environments that enable people to forge the breakthrough sustainable innovations the planet needs. Gib explained “Everyone at the moment is talking about renewables and the shift towards renewable energy. I think people have forgotten about the renewable energy of people within our organisations.”

PEOPLE EVERYWHERE AT COP26 WERE CONCERNED ABOUT THE NEED TO TAKE ACTION – NONE MORE THAN THOSE FARMING WITHIN THE CONTINENT OF AFRICA...

Bismark Kpabitey and Rachel Banda, cocoa and sugar farmers from Ghana and Malawi respectively, joined us alongside Kate Nkatha Ochieng from Fairtrade Africa to share their perspectives. During their conversation, they painted a vivid picture of the impact climate change is already having on their farms and their incomes. They asked us all to take real action on climate change, stressing that there is no time to wait, as they are having to adapt their farms already - just to survive today. A call to us all to take action now.
IT’S TIME TO LISTEN TO FARMERS AND WORKERS

IT’S TIME TO LISTEN TO FARMERS AND WORKERS, VALUE THEIR EXPERTISE AND WORK WITH THEM TO REBUILD BETTER. CO-OP AND FAIRTRADE AFRICA ARE REIMAGINING THE FUTURE OF PROGRAMMES.

As the eyes of the business world were trained on Glasgow for COP26, the environment has been increasingly topping the agenda for boardrooms at the biggest companies. At the UN’s recent biodiversity conference in China the chief executives of Unilever and H&M were among those calling on governments to take significant action to reverse the collapse of our ecosystems.

This is a crucial moment for our planet and an unmissable opportunity to listen to the custodians of our lands: the world’s farmers and workers. A delegation of representatives from Fairtrade’s global producer networks were attending the summit to lay bare the realities of the climate crisis and voice their concerns to global leaders and businesses, on behalf of 1.8million farmers and workers. They are demanding that world leaders live up to their climate pledges, meet the agreed $100 billion per year in climate finance for low-income nations and ensure that more money goes directly to those who need it.

Businesses committing to Fairtrade sourcing ensure producers are farming in the most environmentally sustainable way possible. But the costs on the ground are rising, and farmers and workers critically need greater investment to address climate change, particularly in commodities where incomes are known to be insufficient in meeting people’s daily needs. That’s why we at Fairtrade are excited to launch an ambitious and large-scale new programme, thanks to funding from Co-op; a long-term partner of Fairtrade, one of the world’s largest consumer co-operatives and one of the biggest food retailers and wholesalers in the UK.

The ‘Fairtrade Alliance for Climate-Smart Supply chains in Africa’ (FACSCA) will see Co-op partner with Fairtrade Africa to deliver the NGO’s Climate Change Strategy and to address point 7 (support producers to adapt to climate change realities and to become more climate resilient) of the retailer’s 10-point action plan (Climate | Sustainability - Co-op (coop.co.uk)). It will support producers to maintain resilience in the face of climate change and protect their...
local environment. The Fairtrade movement is calling this the ‘future of programmes.’

Fairtrade Africa’s climate strategy focuses on supporting producer organisations and their members to invest in a series of scalable and sustainable projects, across tea, coffee, and flower producer organisations in Sub-Saharan Africa. The key objective is to enable these organisations to adapt, whilst maintaining adequate productivity levels to guarantee stability within these supply chains, increase income for producer organisations and have a good return on investment.

In Co-op’s Climate Justice for People & Planet report, the retailer calls for bold leadership by governments and businesses to step up and support a just transition – ensuring they invest in climate resilience in their global supply chains and don’t leave the burden of transitioning to a more sustainable economy with the farmers and workers. With an investment of almost £400K in FACSA, Co-op are playing their part, investing in climate resilience and a just transition within at-risk supply chains in sub-Saharan Africa. By placing decision making with Fairtrade Africa, who work in close consultation with producers, this programme ensures producer voice and ownership for climate strategy is at the heart of programme design. We believe the gold standard of private-NGO partnerships is a collaborative model, driven by shared values that address power imbalances and ensure farmers’ and workers’ voices are central in programme design and delivery.

Over the course of two years, FACSCA will work with twelve Fairtrade producer organizations across Ethiopia, Kenya, and Rwanda, targeting 16,000 farmers and workers and benefiting an additional 65,000 people indirectly. Communities will also be supported in practical ways, for example helping to reduce the amount of fuel used in their households by changing
energy sources, such as investing in biogas cookers which are lower emitters.

The programme will also see farmers and workers supported to establish additional revenue and reduce their dependency on core products which are currently highly vulnerable to climate change. Diversifying crops so farmers can sell vegetables on the side for instance, generates income straight away, as it can take three and a half years for coffee bushes to mature. Mr. Nelson Ngeno, station manager at FINTEA Outgrowers Cooperative Union, Kericho, Kenya said he is optimistic that diversifying into new income streams will give farmers ‘financial freedom’.

Fairtrade Africa has targeted communities most severely affected by climate change and will be aiming to improve the livelihoods of vulnerable groups. It is identifying those who have demonstrated some progress in climate mitigation efforts already and have environmental projects in need of financing. Some of these will even go on to have Climate Change ‘centres of excellence’, which will be held up as examples to other producers from their local regions, meaning the programme will have an even greater impact.

Aside from the many real challenges farmers are currently experiencing, the threat of a warming planet to agriculture and the increasingly frequency of storms, floods and catastrophic events mean future generations’ livelihoods look increasingly uncertain. Therefore, following Fairtrade’s model of empowering communities and listening to those with the relevant expertise, FACSCA will work closely with young people and appoint 12 youth climate ambassadors, to be a point-person that locals can go to for advice.

This type of programming enables businesses to have a positive impact, strengthen their own supply chains, whilst farmers gain backing for projects that make a real difference. Can businesses make a difference? Absolutely – but they should take a just transition approach and work in true partnership with farming experts. We hope world leaders will follow their lead.

Agapeters Kubasu, Operations Manager, Fairtrade Africa and Bridget Cuttell, Partner Marketing Manager, Fairtrade Foundation

Editors’ Note: This article was first published on Business Fights Poverty’s website on 26 October 2021, in the run-up to COP26.
WOMEN AND NET ZERO: HOW BUSINESSES CAN EMPOWER WOMEN VIA CLIMATE ACTION

WOMEN ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY CLIMATE CHANGE THAN MEN, PARTICULARLY THEIR HEALTH AND LIVELIHOOD. AS MORE BUSINESSES JOIN THE RACE TO ZERO, HOW CAN INTEGRATED ACTION ON GENDER EQUALITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CREATE VALUE FOR ALL CONCERNED?

As the consequences of inaction on climate change become increasingly evident, companies and investors are joining national and local governments to commit to net zero emissions by 2050. As it stands, the Race to Zero Campaign covers 25% of global CO₂ emissions and over 50% of global GDP.¹

At the same time, the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in significant setbacks for women’s rights across the world. WEF has calculated it will now take 135 years to achieve gender equality.² This injustice significantly affects the daily lives and opportunities of women everywhere and comes at an estimated cost of US$28 trillion per year to the global economy.³

Earlier this year, I had the privilege to work on an Action Toolkit with the Work and Opportunities for Women programme, helping companies address these dual issues. It launched at a webinar exploring how L’Oreal, Aviva, Visa and the IFC are bringing together gender equality and climate action, creating value along the way.

CLIMATE CHANGE IS NEGATIVELY IMPACTING WOMEN’S RIGHTS

Women are more likely to be adversely affected by climate change than men, particularly their health and livelihood. Rachel Barre, Environmental Leadership Director, L’Oreal, noted, “What we saw in most of the supply chains in countries affected by climate change, and where gender inequality was remaining, was the dramatic effects of climate change impacts on women’s rights.”

Rachel highlighted how women in L’Oreal’s West African supply chains spend more time collecting water and experiencing food insecurity due to climate change. Similarly, Zelda Bentham, Group Head of Sustainability, Aviva observed how women lost time and suffered greater indoor air pollution until Aviva’s carbon offsetting programme introduced new cookstoves. Such daily struggles impact women’s health and their ability to engage in economic activities.

CONVERSELY, EFFORTS TO MITIGATE AND ADAPT TO CLIMATE CHANGE CAN BENEFIT WOMEN

For many companies, 65-95% of their emissions come from scope 3 emissions, which mainly relate to raw materials production and consumer use of products. Action to reduce these emissions presents an opportunity to transform global supply chains, especially upstream, where women face most vulnerabilities. For example, women make up 43% of the global agricultural force,⁴ and often play a critical but hidden role within supply chains.

Programmes at L’Oreal target women most at risk of climate change. One initiative with 40,000 women who produce Shea butter, holistically addresses fair incomes, revenue diversification and climate adaptation, clean energy, food insecurity, and insurance for loss of crops in climate-related events. Their “She Grows the Future” programme empowers 5,500 women farmers in Ecuador, Madagascar, India and Vietnam, whilst building climate resilience.

As these examples show, climate action can empower women and respect their rights, finding new models of business that place people at the centre. As Zelda put it, “if we’re addressing [climate change], that’s great. But we need to make sure that we’re not making the same mistakes that we’ve made in the past.”

WOMEN ARE FACING BARRIERS TO INCLUSION IN THE GREEN ECONOMY

In addition to mitigating disproportionate risk, climate
justice is also concerned with ensuring equitable access to a green economy. During the webinar, panellists noted that gender bias in recruitment, workplace harassment, social norms and stereotypes, and additional care burdens prevent women from taking advantage of new green opportunities.

Anne N. Kabugi, Regional Gender Lead - Africa, Gender and Economic Inclusion Group, IFC provided insight into the renewable energy sector in Africa. They report that “nearly half of Africa’s 1.2 billion population still lacks access to energy ... and it’s projected that renewable energy sources could provide up to 75% of new power generation.” However, only “32% of the renewable energy workforce in Sub Saharan Africa comprises women and women only occupy 13% of technical roles in those companies.”

The panellists proposed several ways to overcome these barriers for women, including blind recruitment policies, equal parental leave, and emphasising the business case for investing in women.

**TAKING INTEGRATED ACTION CAN CREATE VALUE FOR WOMEN AND FOR BUSINESS**

Dual action on gender and climate builds supply chain resilience. As Rachel noted in relation to a project for women farmers in Burkina Faso, “tackling these two issues together is of course foremost a question of responsibility for us as a company, but ... it’s also a question of business continuity... in the long term it’s building the resilience of our own company, of our own supply chain”. At COP26, the UK government announced £165 million in funds to tackle climate change whilst addressing women’s inequality and empowerment. Recent investor initiatives such as the 2X Gender and Climate Finance Taskforce, and the UK’s Climate Finance Action Group aim to leverage gender-smart investing for climate action and improve women’s access to climate funds. While challenges remain - not least the difficulty of gathering data and reporting on gender aspects of climate finance - there are indications that funds with higher gender diversity produce higher returns.5

Besides funding, bridging the digital divide will also be essential. As Katherine Brown, VP, Head of Inclusive Impact & Sustainability, Europe, Visa explained: “with knowledge, skills and access to networks and financial services, women can enable a multi-generational and lasting digital equity and inclusive economic growth.”

**TAKE STEPS TOWARDS A GENDER-JUST NET ZERO TRANSITION WITH A NEW ACTION TOOLKIT**

Cristina Bortes, PwC led the launch of the new Action Toolkit. She comments, “Companies must commit to an ambitious gender-just net zero strategy.... [This toolkit] is intended to spark a conversation among companies to talk both internally and in partnership with peers and governments and civil society.”

As the toolkit makes clear, bringing together action on gender equality and net zero will require commitment to holistic approaches, and collaboration across internal...
and external silos. None of this is easy, but with stakes this high - for women, business and the world more generally - it will undoubtedly be worth it.


Editors’ Note: Our webinar “Women and the Net Zero Economy: Business Opportunities and Challenges in Supply Chains” was co-hosted with the UK Government’s Work and Opportunities for Women (WOW) programme. You can view a full recording of the event here.

PANELLISTS WERE:

Rachel Barre, Environmental Leadership Director, L’Oreal
Zelda Bentham, Group Head of Sustainability, Aviva
Cristina Bortes, Director - Sustainability and International Development, PwC
Katherine Brown, VP, Head of Inclusive Impact & Sustainability, Europe, Visa
Anne N. Kabugi, Regional Gender Lead - Africa, Gender and Economic Inclusion Group, IFC
Moderator: Alice Allan, Collaboration Director, Business Fights Poverty

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Annabel Beales, Director, Learning and Engagement, Business Fights Poverty
MOBILISING FINANCE FOR A JUST AND GREEN TRANSITION

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS HAVE A MAJOR ROLE TO PLAY IN SUPPORTING INITIATIVES TO CURB CARBON EMISSIONS, BETTER PROTECT THE MOST VULNERABLE, AND MAKE OUR SOCIETIES MORE SUSTAINABLE AND FAIR.

As one of the key actors at COP26, the world of finance has much to contribute to the global fight against climate change and towards making social justice a reality. During COP26, Business Fights Poverty put together a high-level panel to discuss how the financial industry can foster climate action and fairness in our societies. As in many other sectors, financial institutions have made progress with respect to pledges of net-zero carbon emissions and towards the implementation of projects that tackle the impacts of the climate crisis on vulnerable people. Last June, Schroders and BlueOrchard launched a climate bond fund focused on emerging markets, its main goal the financing of social and environmental projects in these countries. The fund has already attracted more than US$ 100 million.

In a recent webinar hosted with Schroders and Business Fights Poverty, panelists explained how we can connect investments, climate action, and social justice. They highlighted three main ways in which investors and asset managers can mobilise against climate change and protect the most vulnerable.

INSURING CLIMATE RISK FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE

One example of action is an initiative in Nigeria which not only offers insurance to farmers but also access to weather forecasts, allowing them to plan their harvest accordingly. Led by local insurer REGIC, with funding from KfW Development Bank, BlueOrchard, and others, it has benefited approximately 100,000 farmers since its launch in October 2019.

Such initiatives are in tune with SDG 13 on Climate Action. The impacts of climate change are already causing substantial difficulties for smallholder farmers, who need support to adapt their farming practices and to mitigate the impact of extreme weather events and other climate-change-related risks.

With the backing of private and public financial institutions, insured farmers can count on special credit lines and rapid liquidity recovery funds in case of extreme climate events. As more smallholder farmers acquire insurance, the resilience of food supply chains improves, and local
communities add an important protection mechanism to secure their livelihoods. Crucially, less uncertainty and better profits allow the agriculture sector to direct more resources towards making their businesses greener and more resilient.

**SPEEDING A GREEN TRANSITION**

In addition to insurance schemes to build resilience for those most at risk from climate shocks, the speakers in the webinar advocated for a greater involvement of investors in supporting financial solutions that aim to speed up the green transition in developing countries, where farming continues to represent a comparatively large part of the economy. Besides the untapped economic opportunities for lenders and producers, many of these countries are already facing the worst effects of the climate crisis. It will be companies’ record in the developing world that will show us whether their environmental and social commitments are delivering real results.

‘Mobilise finance’ was one of the four goals of COP26, and the organisers of the conference called on financial institutions, both public and private, to provide more funds for a green transition. We need infrastructure projects that make our economies more resilient, and scientists and entrepreneurs depend on substantial investments to continue developing better mitigation and adaptation strategies in the fight against climate change.

For this reason, the promise of financiers and bankers to make US$ 130 trillion available in an attempt to help the world reach net-zero by 2050 is welcome. However, questions remain as to where all this money will end up. Victoria Crawford, Senior Manager for Just Rural Transition Investment Partnerships at the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, claims that the most cost-effective sector for curbing carbon emissions is agriculture, forestry, and land use. In this sense, "Preventing the worst effects of global warming demands urgent action, which in turn depends on massive investments and a concerted effort involving public and private financial institutions.”
dedicating funds to smallholder farmers in developing countries has the potential to generate comparatively higher returns for the health of our planet and the wellbeing of the most vulnerable.

In addition, as Tamsin Edwards, Reader in Climate Change at King’s College London, argues, even if COP26 was successful in keeping the Paris Agreement alive and pushing more countries and organisations to commit to net-zero carbon emissions, the vital target of limiting global warming to 1.5ºC (compared to pre-industrialisation levels) remains an optimistic scenario according to the Climate Tracker. To give just one example of the importance of this goal, a rise in temperature of below 1.5ºC is projected to halve the rise in sea level that is currently predicted (between 25 and 40 centimetres) by 2100. Missing the 1.5ºC target will most likely result in millions of people around the world becoming climate refugees. It is critical, therefore, that investors do not waste a moment in turning pledges into actions, providing sufficient funding for a green transition.

REINVENTING BUSINESS FOR FAIRER AND MORE SUSTAINABLE SOCIETIES

For Caroline Ashley, Global Programmes Director at Forum for the Future, companies must be ambitious in rethinking what types of businesses are truly aligned with fairer and more sustainable societies. As she points out, reaching the sustainability paradigm we really need demands that organisations have at their core the aims of social justice and regeneration. In her own words, ‘adopting a just and regenerative approach means embracing the power of nature to renew and regenerate, understanding that humans are a fundamental part of nature, and respecting and truly investing in everyone’s universal rights and potential to thrive.

It is hard to escape how essential the financial sector is in the fight against climate change and the social injustices that have accompanied centuries of neglecting environmental protection. Preventing the worst effects of global warming and ensuring a just transition demands urgent action, which in turn depends on massive investments and a concerted effort involving public and private financial institutions. The clock is ticking.

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3 Check the event’s highlights and summaries here: https://businessfightspoverty.org/cop26-highlights/
6 Walker, O. and Hodgson, C., (2021). Carney-led finance coalition has up to $130tn funding committed to hitting net zero. Financial Times. https://www.ft.com/content/3fb22b3c-0920-43f1-9a03-debf250e95e9
When we speak about including people in the climate debate, we must prioritise young people.

**YOUNG PEOPLE CARE ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE, BUT THEY FEEL EXCLUDED FROM THE CONVERSATION**

Young people’s fight for climate justice was brought to global attention by Greta Thunberg who, at 15, galvanised climate strikes that drew millions of people. A recent survey published shocking data: 75% of young people are frightened for the future; 56% think ‘humanity is doomed’; and 40% feel hesitant to have children. In addition, 69% no longer trust governments, and 65% felt governments have failed them.

Barack Obama has said youth need to “channel that anger” and “keep pushing harder” because “that is what is required to meet this challenge.” In his view, “young people have to be the voice to awaken the rest of the public.”

But at COP26, many young people felt excluded. Carlos Shanka Boissy Diaz, a student, is one of them. He was a delegate at the UN Climate Conference of Youth (COY16) and attended COP26.

The major output of COY16 was the Youth Climate Statement, a detailed document of policy demands representing the views of 40,000 young people from over 140 countries. Carlos represented Spain when the Statement was presented to COP26 President, Alok Sharma, and Executive Secretary of UN Climate Change, Patricia Espinosa, at the closing ceremony.

However, he remains wary of “youthwashing” and emphasises that young people are looking for action: “[Leaders] said you are the future, we promise we will listen to you, [but] we are not done, we are watching them .... at the end of the day, our voices don’t have political power within the negotiations.”

This is a view backed up by the UN’s World Youth Report, which observes how “generational inequalities reduce political opportunities for young people, effectively preventing them from using their ideas and energy to address complex issues affecting society at large.”

A recent webinar hosted by Business Fights Poverty explored how business can help to redress this imbalance.
BY PROVIDING EDUCATION, RESOURCES, AND A PLATFORM, BUSINESS CAN EMPOWER YOUNG PEOPLE

EDUCATION

Businesses can foster education on sustainability, whether in relation to their products to help young people make sustainable purchasing choices or through external schemes. For example, Carlos works with his university’s Student Union to implement sustainability in each educator’s teaching units and apply it to the corporate sector. ‘Education is the way forward’, he explained, ‘promoting awareness and creating conscious consumers.’

Eoghan Griffin, Head of Sustainability - EMEA, Facebook, gives the example of the community development, taking place through increased access to digital spaces, that helps young people ‘share the passion’ and amplify issues. He pointed to the Climate Science Center on Facebook as a tool to start ‘kicking off this global conversation’.

RESOURCES

Business can champion young people taking action. One simple example was provided by Carlos: at COY16, two representatives from each country were invited. However, the UN’s policies could not “finance travel and expenses because of their policies on carbon emissions.” As a consequence, those needing to travel longer, more expensive distances to get to COY16, which “essentially are the people with less resources”, were unable to attend, producing an inequitable system for those in the Global South.

Businesses can help tackle the problem by providing “more grants, scholarships, and financial aid” for the youth. Carlos called on business and governments to channel finances where they are needed: “it’s simple: invest in funding educational schemes, promoting awareness and in subsidising the emerging clean sustainable industries.” He also emphasised the role of privileged institutions in “proactively demanding this justice for the Global South.”
PROVIDE A PLATFORM

Business has the potential to amplify young people’s voices, bringing them to larger audiences. In the webinar, Maria Claudia Valdivia Verde, Thematic Leader in Green Business, Practical Action, Latin America, pointed towards the capability of social media platforms such as Facebook to “give people a voice in different spaces” without having to be “a really powerful person.”

BUSINESS CAN COLLABORATE WITH YOUNG PEOPLE AND ACROSS SECTORS FOR A GREEN ECONOMY

Young people recognise that the private sector plays a vital role in providing the innovation, resources, and finance for sustainable development. As Saad Arshad, Intrapreneur, Unusual Pioneer and the Senior Manager Program & Research, HBL Habib Bank argued, “we need to clear all the market inefficiencies and direct funding towards the future of sustainability.

In the webinar, Eoghan recalled a quote: “in the future, every job will become a climate job.” He explained how, over the coming years, everyone’s work will have some form of climate or sustainability element, no matter the field. Businesses can collaborate with young people within their organisations to harness new ambition, mindsets, and innovation and put themselves at the forefront of sustainable development. Carlos calls on business to consider “how much of an input they [young people] have? How can they express their views? What is their demand and how can [business] supply that?”

For example, young people have ideas and ambition to develop and scale sustainable business models. Saad observed that corporate agriculture is often an unsustainable form of agriculture, but that collaboration with young farmers can help ensure “it [is] sustainable enough for them and leaving it better for the generations to come.” He noted that this is important to attract young people to agricultural careers since agriculture makes up 70% of developing economies.

These conversations helped make evident how we need businesses, civil society leaders, and governments to help empower the youth, to begin to collaborate with and listen to these young activists, and to create the necessary steps towards real systemic change. Maria illustrated the divided efforts of NGOs and the private sector as achieving “islands of change that are not going to scale.” Instead, we need to “start working towards the solutions together” and remember that “big changes start small.” Unity and multilateral collaboration are the effective and powerful steps towards systemic change.


Anna Spenner Hernandez, Research Intern, Business Fights Poverty

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Editors’ Note: You can view a full recording of our webinar, “Global Youth Perspectives on Scaling a Green Economy”, here.

PANELLISTS WERE:

Saad Arshad, Intrapreneur, Unusual Pioneer and the Senior Manager Program & Research, HBL Habib Bank
Eoghan Griffin, Head of Sustainability - EMEA, Facebook
Maria Claudia Valdivia Verde, Thematic Leader in Green Business, Practical Action, Latin America
Moderator: Annabel Beales, Director, Learning and Engagement, Business Fights Poverty

“Businesses can collaborate with young people within their organisations to harness new ambition, mindsets, and innovation.”
This year’s COP26 was an opportunity for companies to brandish their green credentials, with net-zero pledges, plastic free product lines and roadmaps galore.

We certainly need it; action by the private sector is essential to avert the worst impacts of climate change. If you’re still not convinced about the urgency of the crisis, just look out of the window. But the poorest and most vulnerable communities, those who have done the least to contribute to the problem, are bearing the brunt of impacts from record shattering floods, heatwaves, and droughts.

As fast as companies will put out press releases and glossy adverts, activists will be standing by to challenge empty promises. Beware the greenwasher.

Before we’re all swept up in admiration by this sudden corporate greening, here are five elements that we think a climate plan needs for rhetoric to match reality.

**DISCLOSURE**

Climate disclosure is the bedrock of ambitious action. Publish your scope 1-3 GHG emissions across your operations and supply chains and report on progress towards targets. The framework for doing this is already out there, so follow the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosure (TCFD) recommendations.
It’s essential that your supply chain is transparent and traceable, especially for companies that have supply chains with significant environmental and human rights impacts, such as palm oil.

**AMBITION AND TARGETS**

Set ambitious, science based, targets with a clearly defined path to reduce emissions in line with the Paris Agreement. That means deep emission reductions in your operations and value chains. Global emissions must be halved by 2030 to keep warming below 1.5 degrees and avoid catastrophic climate breakdown. This goes for investments by financial institutions as well. A forest of flimsy net zero targets won’t get us there.

Think about how incentives will help or hinder you – do governance and pay structures reflect overall climate objectives and break from purely maximising shareholder value? Put bluntly, if your company is missing its emissions targets, it shouldn’t be paying out bonuses or dividends.

**PLAN FOR A JUST TRANSITION**

In order to build a new economy that is equitable, thriving, and regenerative, your company must grab the chance to transition away from today’s extractive, carbon-intensive one, and do that fairly. Prepare for a just transition by developing plans that secure the future livelihoods of workers and affected communities.

This includes meaningful efforts to protect workers’ rights and livelihoods while investing in green job creation and reskilling and retraining workforce.

Recognise and address the company’s impact on inequality by paying a living wage, limiting CEO-worker pay ratios and paying fair share of taxes.

Most of all, base these plans on meaningful social dialogue and stakeholder engagement. A just transition can come with human rights risks that should not be ignored.
RESILIENCE AND ADAPTATION

Focus on the people in your business and supply chains who are at the frontline of climate change. Identify hotspots where human rights will be impacted by climate change and exert influence where you have leverage.

Do this in a transparent way and involve stakeholders by sharing information and developing a joint approach. This is not just about protecting your products from the impacts of climate change, but also the workers and farmers who have been producing or making them for many years.

So, set out a timebound plan and a budget that helps communities, especially the most vulnerable ones, address the impacts of climate change.

ADVOCACY

Voluntary commitments won’t be enough to tackle the climate crisis. Governments must step up to make the goals of the Paris Agreements a reality. Governments listen to companies.

Get out of all those trade associations that lobby against climate policies. Work with like-minded peers and progressive sector groups to improve knowledge and practice. Call on governments to invest more in adaptation, particularly of most vulnerable groups.

Take another look at your company’s plan for tackling climate change. Does the rhetoric match these expectations?

If not, here’s our number one suggestion. Don’t hit send on that press release, don’t launch that glossy ad. Don’t risk becoming another meme on Facebook.

Instead, recognize the huge public, social and political power you hold, as much as your economic power.

You help to formulate the global processes that dictate how we all exist as consumers, workers and producers. You are as much a driver of global consumerism, and all the law and process and behaviour that underpin it, as you are driven by it.

Understand in a very fundamental way that the world will only succeed in staying within its boundaries of safety provided that you do the right thing.

Alex Maitland, Senior Private Sector Advisor and Lies Craeynest, Head of Private Sector Engagement, Oxfam

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THREE INSIGHTS

SKILLS & INNOVATION FOR A GREEN FUTURE

ARE WE ALONE IN THIS WORLD? NO. DO OUR ACTIONS HAVE A LOCAL AND GLOBAL IMPACT? YES. THIS ARTICLE HIGHLIGHTS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF BRIDGING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PEOPLE AND NATURE FOR AN ECO-FRIENDLY FUTURE, BOOSTING EMPLOYEE KNOWLEDGE ON SUSTAINABILITY, AND WHY GREEN ENTREPRENEURS ARE THRIVING.

We have generated more than 8.3 billion tonnes of plastic since the 1950s and around 60% of it has ended up in either the natural environment or a landfill. Plus, if we are to avert an irreversible catastrophe, global temperatures must not exceed 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels by the end of the century. These are just a few of the environmental issues confronting us.

For a green future, businesses must adapt and commit to sustainable change so that all people can thrive in a greener environmental and social landscape.

In a recent webinar hosted with Pearson, our panellists discussed the significance of connecting people to nature for a sustainable future. They considered why people are at the centre of successful green startups and how companies can ensure a long-term education journey for their employees.

CONNECTING PEOPLE TO NATURE IS CRITICAL FOR MORE EFFECTIVE CLIMATE ACTION

The first step towards a green future is for each of us to recognise the value of nature and our connection to it. Niall McGrath founded a startup that offers companies a path to connect with nature through carbon offsetting and the restoration of seagrass and coastal ecosystems. The Director of Robocean Ltd believes, “the best thing we can do is build a new relationship with the natural world around us. We’re not alone on this planet. Our impacts are local and global.”

To this end, Elena Höge, Founder & CEO, Yaldi Games, creates games that teach people how to better interact with nature. They aim to link the digital and physical worlds to inspire offline activities. Building these connections can require cross-industry collaboration. “It’s very important to build bridges between industries, because, for example, the games industry has been very isolated. I want to bring in gamification, because

“The best thing we can do is build a new relationship with the natural world around us. We’re not alone on this planet. Our impacts are local and global.”

—Niall McGrath, Director, Robocean Ltd.
there’s a big benefit on how it can boost motivation and learning,” explained Elena.

Both Elena and Niall agree that education is a key driver for building a green future. Connecting children and young people to nature is a highly effective way to embed sustainability thinking and skills in their education. Sustainability is integral across multiple sectors and competencies, and an interdisciplinary education can be a vital source to inform more encompassing climate actions. “The best thing we can do is shift our understanding of sustainability, realising that there is no sustainability sector. There is sustainability in every sector,” said Niall.

**PEOPLE ARE AT THE CENTRE OF SUCCESSFUL GREEN STARTUPS**

It is essential to listen to those on the front line, who are experiencing the problem first-hand and who can contribute important ideas and information about what will work.

The plastic pollution problem represents a significant challenge for companies and governments globally. Plastic pollution is a problem generated by people, so solutions must also be people-centric. The startups of Pablo Luengo Martin, a STEM Innovator at Living Energy and Bindu Sancheti, Founding Partner of Ecodabba Packaging Products, are addressing the plastic problem in creative ways. Moreover, they offer solutions to generate energy from waste plastics and to replace plastics altogether.

Both Pablo and Bindu place people at the heart of their successful green businesses and attribute their success to this people-centric approach. Pablo believes that curiosity is a driver of innovation. He visited communities to find out the problems these communities were facing and what type of solution he could come up with that would meet their needs. Bindu highlights that people, passion, and patience should guide entrepreneurs in their search for actionable solutions that can make the world a better place.
COMPANIES MUST SUPPORT PEOPLE'S LIFELONG LEARNING JOURNEYS

Designing people-centred solutions to the climate crisis and other environmental challenges requires not only technical know-how, but also ‘people skills’. What is more, given the constant technological change we experience every day, learning new skills is also a continuous, never-ending process for many people.

As Ben Stein, Director of Digital Marketplace & Portfolio Innovation, Virtual Learning, Pearson, observed, “There are skills that are not specifically classroom skills or technical skills that we can teach. So that idea of curiosity or patience, sometimes called soft skills - that’s something we’re really interested in pursuing.”

Both degree and non-degree educational offerings need to be made available more broadly, cheaply, and on different platforms, so that people around the world have access to personal and professional development opportunities. Ben stated that “access and accessibility is really important to us. We want to make sure that the learning we have access to is not locked up in delivery modes that are unreachable or too time consuming or too expensive for people to …take on.”

Jennifer Carroll is Customer Success Business Partner at SThree. She cautions that companies must be aware that the skills they need today will not be the same skills they will be looking for in the future, particularly as we transition further towards a green economy. Businesses must invest in upskilling and reskilling their employees as well as funding special training opportunities for young people, who bring a fresh perspective to the most intractable problems. “What we want to see is more big corporate organisations invest in young people today; to future-proof today’s workforce for tomorrow.”

Sera Mathews, Social Media Assistant, Business Fights Poverty

Editors’ Note: Our webinar “Skills and Innovation for a Green Future” was co-hosted with Pearson. You can view a full recording of the event here.

PANELLISTS WERE:

Jennifer Carroll, Customer Success Business Partner, SThree
Elena Höge, Founder & CEO, Yaldi Games
Pablo Luengo Martín, STEM Innovator, Living Energy
Niall McGrath, Director, Robocean Ltd.
Bindu Sancheti, Investment Professional, Nexus Venture Partners, and Founding Partner, Ecodabba Packaging Products Llp
Ben Stein, Director, Digital Marketplace & Portfolio Innovation, Virtual Learning, Pearson
Moderator: Katie Hyson, Director, Thought Leadership, Business Fights Poverty
CLIMATE JUSTICE AROUND OUR COMMUNITY

Over 90% of our content is produced by our global community members. Read on to find out, through a selection of articles and podcasts on the climate justice theme, how our community is taking action on climate justice.

Over 2021, our members and Content Partners continued to share hundreds of articles through Business Fights Poverty’s website and newsletter. Over 90% of our content is produced by our global community members - their insights in the form of articles, case studies, reports and podcasts. We now have an archive of over 4,000 stories!

We reached our 100th podcast milestone this year. If you haven’t found the spotlight podcasts before, they are a place where community members share their perspectives and advice with Katie Hyson, Business Fights Poverty’s Director of Thought Leadership. They offer audiences the chance to be educated, entertained, and inspired by the interviewee’s personal experience of working in the business, sustainability, and social impact space.

So how can business put people at the centre of climate justice? Here, we have highlighted some of our climate justice articles and podcasts from the year to help us address this very question. (Click on the links to read the full articles.)

Natasha McEwen, Director, Member Engagement, Business Fights Poverty

CLIMATE JUSTICE AROUND OUR COMMUNITY

ENLIGHTENED CLIMATE POLICY

As the world convened in Glasgow for the 26th United Nations Climate Change Conference of Parties (COP26), Aloysius Uche Ordu, Arunma Oteh, and Jeanine Mabunda Lioko declared that it is time to recognize Africa’s role in averting a climate disaster without compromising the continent’s growth and poverty reduction.

By Aloysius Uche Ordu, Director - Africa Growth Initiative Senior Fellow - Global Economy and Development, Brookings Institute, Arunma Oteh, OON - Chairperson - Royal African Society Member, Global Leadership Council, SAID Business School; Scholar - University of Oxford and Jeanine Mabunda Lioko, Member of Parliament for Bumba, DRC Former President of the National Assembly of the DRC

EQUALITY, JUSTICE, AND INVESTMENT IN NATURE MUST BE AT THE HEART OF THE CORPORATE CLIMATE RESPONSE

WWF discusses the momentum that is building for ambitious global action that delivers net-zero greenhouse gas emissions no later than 2050. And the vital role that companies play to help deliver a just transition—a shift to a green, low-carbon economy that does not leave millions of workers and their communities behind—and ensure climate justice across their business operations, supply chains, philanthropic activities, and engagement in policy dialogues.

By Hina West, Nature Pays Director, Markets Practice, WWF International
EMBRACING THE ‘NEXT EDGE’ OF BUSINESS AMBITION BEYOND NET ZERO

As we digest the agreements reached at COP26, many of us will wonder ‘what’s next?’ Caroline Ashely, Global Programmes Director at Forum for the Future, explores why we should be aiming for a just and regenerative future and introduces the ‘Business Transformation Compass’ as a new tool for leaders to navigate the transformation needed.

By Caroline Ashley, Global Programmes Director, Forum for the Future

>> Visit the Business Fights Poverty Website to read more articles on Climate Justice

GOING BEYOND SUSTAINABLE: IS REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE THE FUTURE FOR RAW MATERIAL SUPPLY CHAINS?

Image: Climate Academy in Kenya, Fairtrade Netherlands

Our farms, and the wider ecosystem, need regenerating. That’s why I’ve been working on the REEL Regenerative Code for Cotton to introduce various regenerative farming practices and new techniques to cotton farmers, which not only enhance but also enable them to foster mitigation and adaptation to climate change. It’s a win-win for the farmers and for the environment.

By Arif Makhdum, Country Manager Pakistan, CottonConnect

PODCAST: SPOTLIGHT INTERVIEWS

EDWARD CAMERON
Podcast Interview with Edward Cameron, Founder, International Institute for Climate Justice

What is climate justice and why should we care about it? Meet Edward Cameron, Edward has dedicated his career to understanding, delivering, and advocating for climate justice. He has a PhD in the topic and is the founder of the International Institute for Climate Justice.

DEVIKA GOPAL AGGE AND CHARLOTTE FRAIBERG
Podcast Interview with Devika Gopal Agge, Chief Development Officer, and Charlotte Fraiberg, Board Advisor from Health In Harmony

During this conversation, Devika Gopal Agge, Chief Development Officer, and Charlotte Fraiberg, Board Advisor from Health In Harmony, share their insights from Glasgow. They talk the day after the COP26 Global Forest Finance pledge is made, during which more than 100 world leaders promised to end and reverse deforestation by 2030 and US$12 billion was pledged for forest-related climate finance between 2021--2025.

OLIVER FURECHI, EVALYNE AKOTH, AND SARAH ROBERTS
Podcast Interview with Evalyne Akoth, Farmer, Kisumu County, Kenya, Sarah Roberts, CEO and Oliver Furechi, Project Manager, Practical Action

What do farmers really think about regenerative agriculture, and what does it mean in action? During this podcast, Evalyne Akoth, whose farm is in Kisumu County, Kenya, – shares her perspectives on mixed regenerative farming, climate change, and getting young people into farming for the future. During this conversation, we are joined by Practical Action’s CEO, Sarah Roberts, and Oliver Furechi, – the project manager who has been working with Evalyne in Kenya.

KATE NKATHA OCIHENG, BISMARK KPABITEY, AND RACHEL BANDA
Podcast Interview with Kate Nkatha Ochieng, Commercial Director, Fairtrade Africa, Bismark Kpabitey, Cocoa Farmer, Ghana, Rachel Banda, Sugar Farmer, Malawi

This conversation is recorded from Glasgow during the COP26 and the Business Fights Poverty Climate Justice Summit. During this conversation, we hear from: Kate Nkatha Ochieng, Commercial Director, Fairtrade Africa; Bismark Kpabitey – cocoa farmer, Ghana, and climate change project lead; and Rachel Banda – sugar farmer, Malawi, and young co-operative official.
2021 IN REVIEW

14.6 MILLION

HOURS OF OXYGEN TO INDIA

At the height of the pandemic in India, a collaboration between Business Fights Poverty, Crown Agents and other partners helped to tackle oxygen shortages in the country.

- Online platform launched within days
- ‘India and COVID Rapid Response Facility’ involved partners from the private sector and NGOs
- New model of business-led rapid response to crisis

5,600

VIEWS OF OUR COP26 GREEN ZONE EVENT

In November, we were selected from thousands of applications to host an event in the COP26 Green Zone, which was integrated into a hybrid global summit.

- About 1,500 participants online and 150 in person
- 100% of participants surveyed said they learnt something valuable
- 100% rated the climate justice summit as “good” or “excellent”

7

VIRTUAL SUMMITS

Topics included Where Now?, Gender, Partnerships, our Global Summit, Youth (for Standard Chartered), Global Goals and Climate Justice.

- +70 online sessions, +300 speakers and +10,000 participants joining live
- 97% would recommend the summits to a colleague
- Each summit included videos, illustrations, music, and social media.

6

BUSINESS TOOLKITS COMPLETED

Climate justice, women and net zero, women in value chains, black-owned social enterprises in the US, COVID collaboration in Kenya, and self care.

- 7th report on living wages, coming soon
- Rapid collaboration, co-creation approach
- For 2022: climate justice, gender-based violence, the care economy, and more...

3

VIRTUAL PEER CIRCLES

Business Fights Poverty brings together employees from leading multinational companies to share advice and hear from external experts on a specific topic.

- Peer Circles focused on gender-based violence and on climate justice
- For each Circle, 6 multinational employees met monthly for 6 months
- For 2022: living wages, climate justice and more...
17 JAN: **TOGETHER FOR 2022**

Virtual Summit. A new year brings with it excitement and hope for what can be achieved—personally and professionally. Via a series of workshops we will hear about our community members’ priorities for the year ahead on topics such as gender, livelihoods, learning and skills, climate justice, partnerships and impact measurement.

8-9 MAR: **GENDER SUMMIT**

Hybrid Summit (London) To coincide with International Women’s Day (IWD) 2022, and building on the IWD theme of “Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow” we will focus on how we, as a community focused on harnessing business for social impact, step up and ensure gender equity is at the core of an equitable and resilient future.

13-17 JUN: **BUSINESS FIGHTS POVERTY SUMMIT 2022**

Hybrid Summit (London) We invite you to join us for a week of highly interactive sessions that brings together voices and insights from across the globe, from business, NGOs, academia and government - to share the latest thinking on challenges we face, and the collaborative solutions that are needed. Join us to access the very latest thinking so that you can increase the impact of your efforts.

19-23 SEP: **GLOBAL GOALS SUMMIT 2022**

Hybrid Summit (NYC) A week of highly interactive events timed to coincide with the UN General Assembly (UNGA). Hear how businesses are driving social and environmental innovation internally. Access the latest practical insights and tactics from real-world examples of businesses tackling the SDGs. Tap into current thinking and best-practice lessons on priorities for collaborative action.

8-9 NOV: **CLIMATE JUSTICE SUMMIT 2022**

Hybrid Summit (Egypt) Climate change is affecting us all, but the most severe impacts are being felt by the most vulnerable people, who contribute least to the causes of the problem. Existing inequities - due to factors such as gender, race, geography and income - exacerbate the risks to people’s lives and livelihoods. Inequity also affects people’s capacity and opportunity to participate in the transition to a green economy. How can business ensure people are at the centre of climate action?
GET INVOLVED

THE CHALLENGE WE FACE IS TWOFOLD: TO KEEP GLOBAL TEMPERATURE RISE BELOW 1.5°C WHILST ALSO TAKING URGENT ACTION TO REDUCE POVERTY AND REVERSE THE GLOBAL INEQUITIES THAT PRODUCE IT.

WE BELIEVE IT IS ONLY BY COLLABORATING MORE DEEPLY AND PURPOSEFULLY - ACROSS SECTORS, BORDERS, AND SILOS - THAT WE WILL BE ABLE TO TACKLE THE SYSTEMIC CHALLENGES WE FACE AND BUILD AN EQUITABLE AND RESILIENT FUTURE.

For over 15 years, through our cross-sector approach, we have been helping businesses, civil society, and public sector organisations access the latest insights and key relationships to drive forward thinking and action on the most pressing social impact challenges.

Get involved in our community to access the latest practical tools, learning, and collaboration opportunities to ignite social change within your business or organisation. No matter where you are on your journey to create social change, you can access a large network of peers and insights from leading businesses and experts on a range of shared global priorities.

**BE PART OF AN ONLINE CONVENING**

Join one of our regular highly-rated online convenings. After our most recent summit on Climate Justice, 100% of participants surveyed said they learnt something valuable for their work, and 100% rated the summit “good” or “excellent”. Get in touch if you would like to share your insights or be an event supporter. Our events are free to attend - watch for our free access codes on our social media, as well as our Digital Passes courtesy of Pearson.

**JOIN A PEER CIRCLE**

This year, we launched our popular Peer Circles for employees of MNCs. Get tailored peer support and expert knowledge for delivery and impact. Peer Circles cluster cross-sector groups of six MNC employees around specific implementation priorities, drawing in external experts over six months.

**PARTICIPATE IN A RAPID COLLABORATION**

To help you deepen your insights and relationships on social impact issues you care about, get involved in one of our rapid, Challenge-based collaborations. We have a proven rapid collaboration model with 10-day to 6-month timeframes. Join our public events or become a supporter of a new Challenge focused on a topic you care about.

**SHARE YOUR THOUGHT LEADERSHIP**

Stay ahead with the latest thinking and get free access to original and community-generated articles, podcasts, videos, and reports, harnessing the collective intelligence of our community of more than 35,000 professionals. Get in touch if you would like to share your insights. If you work for a university or NGO, get in touch about becoming a Content Partner.

**ENGAGE WITH YOUR PEERS**

We can help you share your perspectives across our global community and beyond. We work with our supporters to engage partners in authentic conversations. We also coordinate and mobilise voices from across our community to advocate for change on the social impact challenges we all care about.
WE ARE A GLOBAL COMMUNITY OF PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONS PASSIONATE ABOUT BUILDING AN EQUITABLE AND RESILIENT FUTURE. WE BELIEVE IN THE POWER OF BUSINESS TO HELP IMPROVE THE LIVES, LIVELIHOODS, AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES OF THE MOST VULNERABLE PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES.

BY CURATING PURPOSEFUL COLLABORATION, WE HELP COMPANIES AND THEIR PARTNERS ACCESS THE INSIGHTS AND RELATIONSHIPS THEY NEED TO UNLOCK NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR BUSINESS AND SOCIAL IMPACT.

WITH OUR WORLD MORE INTERCONNECTED THAN EVER, DRIVING SYSTEM-LEVEL CHANGE FOR A BETTER FUTURE WILL REQUIRE US TO UNITE ACROSS TRADITIONAL DIVIDES AND COME TOGETHER IN FRESH AND CREATIVE WAYS.

JOIN US.

WE ARE BUSINESS FIGHTS POVERTY.

businessfightspoverty.org