

**OUTCOME REPORT: THE ROLE OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN EMERGENCY  
PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE IN EASTERN & SOUTHERN AFRICA: OPPORTUNITIES  
FOR COLLABORATION**

**23 OCTOBER 2014, 14:00- 17:15, JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA**

1. Together with the South African Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SACCI), OCHA's Regional Office for Southern Africa and OCHA's Private Sector Section (PRMB) organized and hosted the World Humanitarian Summit regional business consultation for Eastern and Southern Africa in the margins of the SACCI Industry Annual convention on 23 October 2014. The consultation attracted eighty-three private sector participants across multiple industry sectors including pharmaceutical, medical, telecommunications, banking, retail and logistics. Ten participants from civil society, the United Nations (UN) and academia also participated in the event.
2. Dr. Jemilah Mahmood, Chief of the World Humanitarian Summit Secretariat, called upon the private sector to:
  - a. Support the World Humanitarian Summit process leading up to Istanbul in 2016 by working with OCHA's Regional Office for Southern to actively engage in **consultations** with humanitarian actors in the region and to develop new innovative projects to ensure for a more effective and efficient humanitarian actions.
  - b. Consider the establishment of national and regional **innovation hubs**, where the private sector can work with the United Nations, NGOs, academia and governments to address challenges to the effective prevention of, preparedness for and response to emergencies.
  - c. Consider the establishment of a national and **regional humanitarian fund**, co-managed by a private sector consortium in partnership with the UN and other humanitarian actors.
3. Companies that have been active in humanitarian action including Pfizer, Foundation Telma, and Ericsson shared their experiences of partnering with the humanitarian community, focusing on their motivations, the results and lessons. The World Food Programme (WFP) also gave an account of their history of private sector partnerships and urged the private sector to build transformative partnerships with the humanitarian community by utilizing their key competencies to strengthen emergency preparedness and response.
4. A panel discussion was moderated by Dr. Jemilah Mahmood with participation from the audience. The following issues were raised:
  - a. There is a strong business case for the private sector to partner with the humanitarian community. Businesses are as vulnerable to emergencies as everyone else.

- b. A business case for private sector collaboration is more effective than corporate social responsibility motivation; humanitarian actors should therefore explore opportunities for partnership with senior leadership, risk management, finance or strategic planning units of companies to ensure sustainable and effective partnership.
- c. A public-private sector partnership needs to make sense; there should be a strategic fit between the key competency of the private sector partner and a challenge/deficit faced by the public entity.
- d. Companies should support projects that seek to build local capacity in affected communities with the objective of strengthening resilience and preparedness.
- e. The humanitarian community should develop and provide a sound “business plan” when approaching companies to engage in a partnership. It is particularly important for companies to understand how their contributions will produce the desired outcomes.
- f. Companies should disseminate information widely and frequently to the public on their contributions in collaboration with the humanitarian community in order to change negative perception about private sector motivations in supporting humanitarian action.
- g. Companies should seek to foster a corporate culture that inherently supports humanitarian issues.

5. Recommendations:

- a. To create a local or regional private sector platform to map the strengths of partners and act as a “one stop” shop for private sector engagement in the event of an onset emergency;
- b. Launch a formal engagement process/forum for the private sector and the humanitarian community for regular dialogue and exchange of information. This would enable the private sector to engage in policy discussions and identify opportunities for engagement before the onset of an emergency;
- c. Nominate Chambers of Commerce in the Eastern and Southern African region as regional focal points for private sector participation in humanitarian initiatives and hold a similar meeting annually in collaboration with the appropriate Chamber of Commerce. This would strengthen the relationship between the humanitarian community and the private sector, as well as provide a high-level platform for information sharing and foster the development of partnerships. Chambers of Commerce could also act as focal point for NGO’s and humanitarian organizations seeking to partner with companies in the region.
- d. To explore the feasibility of establishing a private sector pooled regional humanitarian fund, whereby private sector companies could be encouraged to contribute a percentage of their profit to humanitarian action. North-West University offered to collaborate with OCHA ROSA to develop legal and financial frameworks required to establish this kind of fund and to capture the lessons learnt following implementation. A pilot initiative in the Southern African region could be launched and if successful, replicated in other regions;