



# Private sector networks from across the world come together to prevent and respond to crises

**Geneva, February 7, 2017** – Business networks from 12 countries - members of the Connecting Business initiative (CBI) - are coming together today in the first CBI Annual Event to identify opportunities for collaboration and share their experiences to disaster risk reduction, emergency response and recovery.

More than 128.6 million people in the world today are affected by conflict, displacement, natural disasters and profound vulnerability. The occurrence and severity of natural disasters, political crises and protracted emergencies are increasing, stretching the global capacity to meet humanitarian needs. Private sector solutions can help save lives and safeguard livelihoods. The Connecting Business initiative and its Member Networks support the private sector to engage as an equal partner in risk-informed emergency preparedness, response and recovery. For example, the Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation members helped to restore power and telecommunications services in coordination with the Government-led response after the recent Typhoon Nock-Ten which affected almost a million people in the Philippines.

The Connecting Business initiative builds the capacity of local business networks to be part of risk informed crisis preparedness, response and recovery efforts. The [Connecting Business Global Portal](#) is a global entry point, connecting companies, the UN, governments and civil society, and providing resources and tools that support effective private sector engagement.

*“Recovery can be a huge task, especially for small companies who are often the lynchpin of an economy. We improve the risk preparedness of small companies and help them to recover faster. Through the Connecting Business initiative, we are sharing our experiences and learning from others. Through CBI we can be part of creating and implementing international best practice”* said Ms. Guler Altinsoy, Managing Partner of IDEMA and Saglam Kobi representative.

Connecting Business initiative Member Networks coordinate private sector engagement with other humanitarian actors, map private sector resources available to respond to humanitarian needs, train their members on disaster risk reduction and emergency preparedness, and organize emergency simulation exercises to test private sector capacity and identify appropriate response in crisis situations. When an emergency occurs, these Member Networks mobilize and coordinate the private sector response, helping to restore infrastructure and basic services and providing relief items such as water and school materials to families in crisis-affected areas.

During the Annual Event, Connecting Business initiative Member Networks share experiences from Cote d’Ivoire, Fiji, Kenya, Haiti, Madagascar, Mexico, Myanmar, Nigeria, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Turkey and connected to partners from all over the world.

*“To overcome the enormous humanitarian crises we face, we need collective action from all actors. Philanthropy can be a catalyst to help unlock private sector resources and transforming the future of humanitarian and development response. I encourage all partners to get engaged so that we can make a real difference in the lives of people by helping to avoid, mitigate and more effectively respond to disasters and humanitarian crises.”* noted the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation's Vice President Ed Cain.

*“We have come together with our partners to find ways to build up resilience so that hazards would not force people into a humanitarian crisis mode. CBI is one of the tangible outcomes from the World Humanitarian Summit. It adds strength and structure to our expanding public private partnerships and the way we prepare for and respond to humanitarian emergencies.”* explained OCHA's Chief of Partnerships and Resource Mobilization Branch Marcy Vigoda.

By 2020, CBI aims to support strengthened private sector engagement in 40 high-risk locations. Partners from the private sector, governments, civil society and international community are providing technical advice to the initiative and collaborating on the delivery of programmes. The initiative aims to mobilize more than 10,000 people over the next four years through an online portal and deliver positive results for people affected by crisis.

*“We are very excited about the work that the CBI Member Networks are leading in countries. We are seeing a real change when knowledge resources and experiences are shared more effectively. The Networks and partners are helping to think more creatively beyond the traditional models of prevention, response and recovery and engaging the private sector to help people in need across the world.”* said UNDP's Istanbul International Center for Private Sector in Development Director Marcos Neto.

*Note to the Editor:*

The Connecting Business initiative is a private sector driven and UN-supported initiative. Key supporters, which endorsed CBI's strategic approach on 6 February, includes Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, the Government of Belgium, UPS Foundation and the Boston Consulting Group, as well as the Philippine Disaster Resilience Foundation as a representative of CBI Member Networks and IFRC through One Billion Coalition for Resilience representing CBI Program Partners. Operational and technical support to the initiative is provided by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) while United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) is playing a role in providing technical advice on disaster risk reduction.

CBI Annual Event is organised on 7 February 2017, alongside the Humanitarian Networks and Partnerships Week at the International Conference Centre (CIGC) in Geneva.

## Contact Information

For further information, go to [www.connectingbusinessinitiative.org](http://www.connectingbusinessinitiative.org) or contact: [ConnectingBusiness@un.org](mailto:ConnectingBusiness@un.org)

For media enquiries, contact:

UNDP: Tiina Turunen [tiina.turunen@undp.org](mailto:tiina.turunen@undp.org) +41 (0)79 586 9576

OCHA: Jens Laerke, [laerke@un.org](mailto:laerke@un.org) +41 (0)79 472 9750

Twitter: [@ConnectingBiz](https://twitter.com/ConnectingBiz) [#ConnectBiz](https://twitter.com/ConnectingBiz)