



SDC Health Network

## The Private Sector as a partner in Health

Engagement modalities, limits and perspectives

Switzerland's Strategy on International Cooperation 2021–24 aims to expand cooperation with the private sector and unfold its potential to promote sustainable development in low and middle-income countries, including in fragile and conflict-affected settings. To this effect, private sector engagement (PES) is not a goal in itself, but a means to reach the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In February 2021, the SDC published a [Handbook on Private Sector Engagement](#), which provides operational guidance on the specific modality of Private Sector Engagement.

The SDC Health Network organizes a series of webinars on the Private Sector Engagement (PSE) in health, once every month (10.00-11.45 CET), between March and September 2021.

### MODULE 5

## Teaming-up with the private sector in emergency situation

July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021; 10.00 – 11.45 (Swiss time CEST)

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<https://eda-ch2.webex.com/eda-ch2/j.php?MTID=me5803e54559346a2046f8f9e1e0a5e25>

2 billion people live in countries with fragile, conflict or violence settings. 170 million are in need of humanitarian support. While the underlying causes of emergencies vary, the resulting population displacement and destabilization of health systems have predictable health consequences.

Large-scale and complex **emergencies** often occur in countries where government institutions have a **weak coping capacity**. The ability of the health system to adequately manage emergency risks and provide access to good-quality care is often affected by those very emergencies.

Humanitarian operations play a vital role in providing immediately responsive care to those in need, while the system tries to recover to some level of normalcy. Given the increasingly protracted nature of crises, **humanitarian interventions often become an integral part of the local health system** and need to be sustained (at times far) beyond their initial mandate and time frames. Engaging with all available actors and **maximizing the opportunities of generating additional income to sustain these subsidiary operations** is, therefore, paramount to ensure continuum of care until the reorganization of the local system makes external support obsolete. Alongside relief agencies, services provided by the private sector tends to take advantage of the overwhelming demand to fast develop during crises. Consequently, the **private sector** needs to be considered as an important actor and, whenever possible, an **ally in emergency preparedness and**

**response.** On the other hand, emergencies also pave the way for **new markets** to emerge and a good number of service providers specialize in **government and/or aid industry contracting**.

This session will focus on this particular form of public-private collaboration, and will offer a diverse recount of examples collected from SDC Humanitarian Aid's direct experience, as well as from a number of SDC partners' practice, where relief operations without key contributions from the private sector, be it in terms of goods, services or in-kind resources, could not be conducted.

## Objectives of the webinar

Participants will get a better understanding of the role of the private sector and public/aid industry contractor in health-related emergency operations, and explore several market sectors involved in this form of public-private partnership (logistics, insurance schemes, support with innovative technology, release of surge staff to humanitarian operations, etc.).

The session will:

1. Characterize public/aid industry contracting as one important form of private sector engagement in the health sector in emergency situations
2. Illustrate the variety of health- and non-health-related services that are purchased from the private sector in relief operations
3. Discuss advantages, opportunities and challenges of such forms of public-private partnerships, and will highlight key lessons learnt from these arrangements

## Key questions



1. What is the comparative advantage of the private sector in emergency/humanitarian situations?
2. What kind of services are typically purchased from the private sector and could they be provided without a public-private partnership? With what consequences?
3. What are the private sector incentives to engage or even speciality in public and/or aid-industry contracting, particularly in emergency situations?
4. How do various humanitarian actors go about engaging with the private sector in health-related emergency interventions?
5. How does the protracted nature of crises impacts private sector engagement in health?

## Guest speakers:

Benedicte Wallez – Veolia Foundation

Dr. Olivier Hagon – Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit, Teaching Hospital Geneva (HUG) / SDC

Daniel Thüring, Chief of nursing, Will public hospital, St Gall.

Robert Agyarko – Outbreaks and Epidemics Programme, African Risk Capacity