# Business Must Put People at the Heart of Actions to Tackle Climate Change

**Wednesday 31 March, 2021**

LONDON: Business Fights Poverty is launching a global pipeline of activities to ensure business puts people at the centre of climate action. With COP26 only seven months away, momentum is building on this important issue.

To kickstart this programme an Action Framework is being published that sets out the value of a climate justice lens for business, and provides practical guidance on the actions businesses can take.

The Framework is co-authored by Zahid Torres-Rahman, Founder and CEO of Business Fights Poverty, Jane Nelson, Director of the Corporate Responsibility Initiative at Harvard Kennedy School, and Tara Shine, Director of Change by Degrees.

The new Business and Climate Justice Action Framework explores what climate justice means in practice and focuses on three areas of social impact. The first two, lives and livelihoods, relate primarily to the risks of climate change, while the third - access to learning - relates to people's ability to seize the opportunities of a green transition.

The Framework illustrates the issues with examples from different countries and sectors, and interviews with three inspiring leaders: Bridgette Murray on her work supporting Black and Latino members of her community in Texas in the wake of recent storms; Esther Ngumbi on her experience building the resilience of women smallholder farmers in Kenya; and Monique Ntumngia on her mission to empower women in the clean energy sector in West Africa.

"We know that while climate change affects us all, the most severe impacts are being felt by the most vulnerable people," says Zahid Torres-Rahman. "There is now growing understanding and increased urgency to ensure the transition to a green economy is also a just one. While governments must take the lead, business and civil society organisations have a crucial role to play in supporting climate justice on this defining issue of our time."

"Businesses have an important role to play in respecting human rights and addressing the impacts of climate change and climate change policies on vulnerable people and communities," says Jane Nelson. "Companies can take action through their core business capabilities, operations and value chains, their social investments and their engagement in policy dialogue and strengthening institutions and alliances."

"Not enough is being done to recognise climate change as an issue of fairness and social justice," says Tara Shine. "Applying a climate justice lens has a number of key benefits for business. It encourages a more joined-up approach that minimises the risk of unintended negative social impacts from climate actions. It also provides a framework for giving voice to those who are most vulnerable to climate risks."

The Action Framework forms one part of a wider programme that Business Fights Poverty and its partners are convening to crowdsource and share best-practice examples and insights from a variety of companies, industry sectors and countries. It will be accompanied by a series of online events and virtual peer group convenings.

For media enquiries, please contact Amy Fairbairn at amy@businessfightspoverty.org

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**About the Framework Authors' Organisations**

**About Business Fights Poverty**

Business Fights Poverty is a business-led collaboration network focused on social impact. With its origins dating back to 2005, Business Fights Poverty has grown into a global community of over 30,000 people and organisations passionate about building an equitable and resilient future. By curating purposeful collaboration, Business Fights Poverty helps companies and their partners access the insights and relationships they need to improve the lives, livelihoods and learning opportunities for the most vulnerable people and communities. Business Fights Poverty is an award-winning B Corp, reflecting the

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values that sit at the heart of the organisation.

Find out more at: http://www.businessfightspoverty.org/

**About The Corporate Responsibility Initiative at the Harvard Kennedy School's Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Business and Government**

The Corporate Responsibility Initiative is a multi-disciplinary and multi-stakeholder program that seeks to study and enhance the public contributions of private enterprise. It explores the intersection of corporate responsibility, corporate governance, public policy, human rights, and international development. It bridges theory and practice, builds leadership skills, and supports constructive dialogue and collaboration among business, government, civil society and academics.

For more information, visit: https://www.hks.harvard.edu/centers/mrcbg/programs/cri

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Change By Degrees delivers strategic sustainability advice, employment engagement and specialised sustainability communications support to organisations that are thriving, purpose driven and sustainable. Its mission is to provide sustainability leadership and inspiration, and with its partners, to create positive change throughout society.

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