



A Coalition of Private Sector Companies Launches A Project With Public Partners To Reach Over 1.2M Vulnerable Population Across Addis Ababa

July 23, 2020. Addis Ababa Ethiopia. A private public coalition between the Addis Ababa Mayor's office, private sector companies, and non-governmental organizations today launched a project dubbed ጠናችን በእጃችን! (Tenachin Bejachin!) with a total potential value of \$6 Million over the coming months in response to the heightened risk of COVID-19. The project is expected to help people living in highly dense communities that struggle with access to water, soap, and other compounding challenges. Member manufacturing companies will commit to zero profit for the first 6 months of the project and ensure retention of employees. In return, the coalition will guarantee cost recovery for operating expenses relating to manufacturing of the critical items.

With the launch of ጠናችን በእጃችን! (Tenachin Bejachin!), the coalition will oversee the manufacturing and distribution of facemasks and soaps, installing of water tankers, and deployment of behavioural change education to address the needs of 1.2 million vulnerable population and reinforce broader efforts to fight COVID-19.

Dalberg Group and Roha Group have taken the initiative to organize the first of its kind private public partnership in an effort to add sustainable impact to the country's national response to COVID-19. The \$1M required for the pilot project was secured by Roha while the remaining \$5M of the funds will be secured from donors, private sector players, and non-governmental organizations that are expected to join the coalition. The coalition also plans to introduce a unique business model that will assist in the manufacturing and distribution of critical sanitation and protective products to high-risk communities and at the same time ensure businesses cover their costs and retain their employees.

The Government, through the Ministry of Finance, lifted value added tax on items manufactured for the project, with the aim to support private businesses in their efforts to contribute to the fight against COVID-19.

The initiative has so far identified and engaged 15 local manufacturers and signed a MoU with Addis Ababa City Government Administration as well as Save the Children.

The Block-Based Community Engagement Agency within the Addis Ababa City Administration Mayor's office has identified 24,934 blocks within the city to collect vital statistics and data

including vulnerability status. It has also built 1,357 resource banks within the 121 woredas of the 10 sub-cities where donated materials are collected and distributed. As such, the Agency has committed to lead the distribution of soaps and facemasks to the vulnerable population.

Furthermore, Save the Children Ethiopia provides the coalition technical guidance, leadership, and support regarding communication and community engagement. Every package that is distributed includes messages related to proper handwashing, facemask wearing, and physical distancing that has been approved by the Ministry of Health. Over 260 sub-city and woreda team leads were also given training on the standard procedure for distribution to protect the health and safety of staff and community members.

Moreover, Mary Joy has engaged with the coalition as a fund management and impact assessment partner to monitor and evaluate the pilot of this project before scaling up.

“We are happy to be doing our part to help communities affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. We thank the partners who have joined the coalition and pulled resources to help businesses find innovative ways to overcome this critical period,” say founding members of the coalition.

“This endeavour assists with the manufacturing, distribution, and consumer education of sanitation and protection products in the fight against the pandemic. We call upon other businesses and institutions to join forces as we scale up the ጤናችን በእጃችን! initiative” added the founding members.

Fisseha Alemayehu, CEO of Free Zone International, one of the coalition members for his part said, *“Joining this coalition has helped us manufacturers maintain our business and support the country in the battle against COVID-19”.*

#ENDS

About ጤናችን በእጃችን! (Tenachin Bejachin!)

ጤናችን በእጃችን! (Tenachin Bejachin!) is a coalition of private and public companies that was founded by Dalberg Group and Roha Group. The two companies took the initiative to organize the private sector’s capacity and competencies alongside NGOs to add sustainable impact to the country’s national response to COVID-19.

The coalition has been identifying and providing targeted solutions for identified hotspots within the vulnerable population group. In addition to subpopulations that are at severe risk, businesses that are critical to ensuring the economic health of our communities are also a focus for this coalition. Hence, ጤናችን በእጃችን! (Tenachin Bejachin!) has been developing innovative ways for businesses to survive this critical period of uncertainty by introducing a unique business model that would assist in the manufacturing and distribution of critical sanitation and protective products to high-risk communities and while doing so, ensuring businesses are able to cover their costs and retain their employees.

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