



Can the COVID-19 Pandemic Provide Momentum to Improve Global Health Infrastructure?

SDG 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

SDG 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

The UN's third Sustainable Development Goal is to "ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages". Several health-related targets are set by the year 2030, including the following:

- Reduce maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births;
- End all preventable deaths under 5 years of age;
- Fight communicable diseases by ending the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases;
- Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential healthcare services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all;
- Support research, development, and universal access to affordable vaccines and medicine;
- Increase health financing and support health workforce in developing countries;
- Improve early warning systems for global health risks.

As described on the UN's SDG website, prior to 2020, great progress was made in terms of global health, including critical areas such as child and maternal health, immunizations, tuberculosis, HIV, malaria, and other communicable diseases. Despite this, less than half of the global population was covered by essential health services. The COVID-19 global pandemic has paused much of this progress and it is estimated that healthcare disruptions could reverse decades of improvements and could lead to a spike in illness and deaths from communicable diseases in lesser developed countries. Clearly the goals set for 2030 are at risk.

The global COVID-19 pandemic has strained healthcare infrastructure globally, including in wealthier countries with well-developed healthcare systems. Each of the selected 2030 targets laid out above have a similar theme in that they all require a strong infrastructural foundation for success. This provides an interesting tie into SDG 9, which recognizes the need to "build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation". Included in the SDG is Target 9.5, which aims to "enhance scientific research, upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors in all countries, in particular developing countries, including, by 2030, substantially increasing public and private research and development spending". SDG 9 also includes goals relating



to physical infrastructure, facilitating development of industry, and sustainable infrastructure in developing countries.

As outlined above, the COVID-19 pandemic has 'pushed the pause button' on many health-related initiatives, but it has also emphasized the importance of community health and has the potential to improve our global health infrastructure. Consider, for example, the speed at which vaccines were researched, developed, tested, and brought to market. Consider the speed at which governments have created capacity to treat sick patients and to vaccinate at scale, in wealthier and developing countries. And many lower-income countries are just at the beginning of their vaccination process and will need to create or roll out infrastructure as well. This raises an interesting question: is it possible to leverage the lessons learned from COVID-19 and the ongoing vaccination rollout to permanently improve healthcare infrastructure and resume progress on the 2030 SDG targets?

Your Challenge


What can your company do to build back better and support tangible progress in the healthcare infrastructure? Is there a way to seize momentum from the current focus on global health to further support the goal of healthcare *for all* and its related targets? Work on a solution (product, service or other) that your company could deliver, build the business case and prove that it will work, with impact!

SDG 3 and 9 at a Glance...

Be sure to explore these goals further!

Further resources to get started: [SDG 3](#) | [SDG 9](#)


3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING





ENSURE HEALTHY LIVES AND PROMOTE WELL-BEING FOR ALL AT ALL AGES


BEFORE COVID-19


PROGRESS IN MANY HEALTH AREAS CONTINUED, BUT NEEDS ACCELERATION



CHILD HEALTH


MATERNAL HEALTH


HIV



TUBERCULOSIS




IMMUNIZATIONS


THE PANDEMIC HAS

INTERRUPTED CHILDHOOD IMMUNIZATION PROGRAMMES IN AROUND 70 COUNTRIES




COVID-19 IMPLICATIONS

HEALTHCARE DISRUPTIONS COULD REVERSE DECADES OF IMPROVEMENTS



HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF ADDITIONAL UNDER-5 DEATHS MAY BE EXPECTED IN 2020


ILLNESS AND DEATHS FROM COMMUNICABLE DISEASES WILL SPIKE



SERVICE CANCELLATIONS WILL LEAD TO 100% INCREASE IN MALARIA DEATHS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

LESS THAN HALF


OF THE GLOBAL POPULATION



IS COVERED BY

ESSENTIAL HEALTH SERVICES

(2017)

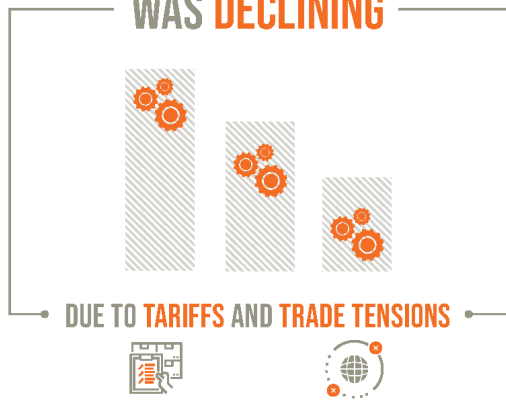




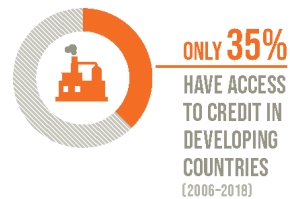
BUILD RESILIENT INFRASTRUCTURE, PROMOTE INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRIALIZATION AND FOSTER INNOVATION

BEFORE COVID-19

MANUFACTURING GROWTH WAS DECLINING



FINANCING FOR SMALL-SCALE INDUSTRIES IS NEEDED FOR THEIR SURVIVAL THROUGH THE CRISIS



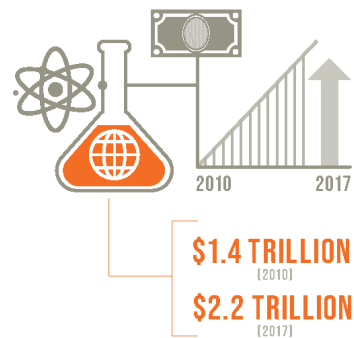
COVID-19 IMPLICATIONS

THE AVIATION INDUSTRY HAS SUFFERED THE STEEPEST DECLINE IN HISTORY



AIR PASSENGER NUMBERS FELL BY 51% FROM JANUARY TO MAY 2020 (COMPARED TO THE SAME PERIOD IN 2019)

INVESTMENT IN R&D IS GROWING BUT NEEDS TO ACCELERATE



FEWER THAN 1 IN 5 PEOPLE USE THE INTERNET IN LDCs (2019)

