



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



The role of business

Health is a fundamental human right and a key indicator of sustainable development. Poor health threatens the rights of children to education, limits economic opportunities for men and women and increases poverty within communities and countries around the world. In addition to being a cause of poverty, health is impacted by poverty and strongly connected to other aspects of sustainable development, including water and sanitation, gender equality, climate change and peace and stability.

In recent years, notable progress has been made, but significant challenges remain. Women around the world continue to lack access to sexual and reproductive health care; thousands of new cases of HIV/AIDS continue to occur each day, billions of people are left without access to essential medicines, millions of adults and children will suffer from undernourishment this year, and the global amount of waste is estimated to triple in the coming year, with severe effects on health. Further, with an increase in economic integration, mobility and political instability new health challenges and risks are emerging, threatening livelihoods in both the global North and South.

In order to accelerate progress and address new health challenges, all actors, including the private sector need to partner to develop health care solutions that work for people, families, communities and nations. At minimum business has a responsibility to respect all human rights, including the right to health. Small, medium and large companies can both benefit from and contribute to achieving healthy societies. The SDGs provide a new opportunity for the private sector to support the delivery of health needs around the world through their products, services and business activities including value chains and distribution networks, communication activities, occupational health and safety practices and provision of employee benefits. By ensuring that workers have safe working conditions and access to health services, companies establish healthier staff and better relationships which in many cases has positive effects on productivity.

Key business themes addressed by this SDG

- Occupational health and safety
- Access to medicines
- Access to quality essential health care services
- Air quality
- Water quality

Examples of key business actions and solutions

The below examples are non-exhaustive and some may be more relevant to certain industries than to others.

- Align human resources policies with principles of human rights, including policies for HIV/AIDS. Use already existing resources for guidance (e.g. from the ILO, WHO, etc.).
- Partner with health care NGOs and public clinics to raise awareness and increase access to targeted health services for women and men workers and their families.
- Make investments in health a priority in business operations.
- Facilitate and invest in affordable medicine and health care for low-income populations.
- Leverage corporate resources (e.g. R&D, distribution, cold chains) to support health care delivery by public and international organizations.



Examples of key business indicators

- Access to Medicine Index, C.III.1: Portion of financial R&D investments dedicated to Index Diseases out of the company's total R&D expenditures
- CEO Water Mandate's Corporate Water Disclosure Guidelines: % of facilities adhering to relevant water quality standard(s)
- GRI G4 Sustainability Reporting Guidelines, G4-LA6: Type of injury and rates of injury, occupational diseases, lost days, and absenteeism, and total number of work-related fatalities, by region and by gender
- Oxfam Poverty Footprint, PF - 14.4 (B): Where the Company has set up health services for workers, does it make the service available to the family and community members? If yes, how many people have benefited from this service?

The complete overview of business indicators can be found at www.sdgcompass.org

Examples of key business tools

- Social Hotspots Database/Portal (SHDB)
- UN Global Compact-Oxfam Poverty Footprint Tool
- Corporate Human Rights Benchmark (CHRB)

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The SDG targets

3.1 By 2030, reduce the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births

3.2 By 2030, end preventable deaths of newborns and under-five children

3.3 By 2030, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases, and other communicable diseases

3.4 By 2030, reduce by one-third pre-mature mortality from non-communicable diseases (NCDs) through prevention and treatment, and promote mental health and wellbeing

3.5 Strengthen prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol

3.6 By 2020, halve global deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents

3.7 By 2030, ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programs

3.8 Achieve universal health coverage (UHC), including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health care services, and access to safe, effective, quality, and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all

3.9 By 2030 substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water, and soil pollution and contamination

3.a. Strengthen implementation of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in all countries as appropriate

3.b. Support research and development of vaccines and medicines for the communicable and non-communicable diseases that primarily affect developing countries, provide access to affordable essential medicines and vaccines, in accordance with the Doha Declaration which affirms the right of developing countries to use to the full the provisions in the TRIPS agreement regarding flexibilities to protect public health and, in particular, provide access to medicines for all

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3.c. Increase substantially health financing and the recruitment, development and training and retention of the health workforce in developing countries, especially in LDCs and SIDS

3.d. Strengthen the capacity of all countries, particularly developing countries, for early warning, risk reduction, and management of national and global health risks

