



# 2019 Mobile Industry Impact Report: Sustainable Development Goals



**5 billion +**  
unique subscribers  
worldwide



**7 billion +**  
people covered by a  
mobile network

Individuals are increasingly using mobile to access an array of life-enhancing services that contribute to and catalyse the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In 2016, mobile became the first industry to commit to the SDGs. We need to act fast to fulfil our commitment by 2030 and operators must continue to:

- Expand connectivity in a sustainable manner and continue innovating to enable more people to realise the benefits of a wide range of mobile-enabled services.
- Integrate social, environmental and ethical issues into their business practices, to deliver more positive impacts in the communities they operate in and drive a substantial contribution to sustainable development.

**#betterfuture**

# Mobile technology acts as a platform for innovation and sustainable development

## GREATER CONNECTIVITY HAS INCREASED THE INDUSTRY'S IMPACT ACROSS ALL 17 SDGS

**400m** 

people have started using mobile

Since 2015, **400 million** people have started using mobile, bringing global penetration to **67%**. More than **850 million** people have started using mobile internet, bringing global penetration to **47%**.



### SDG IMPACT DRIVER

**Usage of mobile-enabled services has increased.** This is the other main driver behind the industry's increased impact.

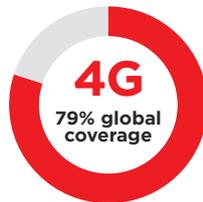
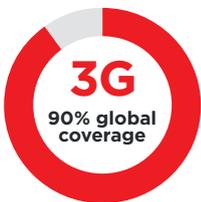
**1.3bn** subscribers use mobile health services - an increase of **230 million** since 2017

**1.9bn** subscribers use mobile to purchase goods and services - an increase of **160 million** since 2017

HIGHEST IMPACT

## SDG 9: INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE REMAINS THE HIGHEST IMPACTED GOAL

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



Since 2015, an additional **900 million** people have been covered by a 3G network, which now stands at **90%** global coverage. An additional **2.2 billion** have been covered by a 4G network, which now stands at almost **80%** global coverage. This reflects the role of mobile networks in providing critical infrastructure that spurs inclusive and sustainable development, in addition to greater innovation.

## THE INDUSTRY ACHIEVED ITS MOST IMPROVED IMPACT ON SDG 4: QUALITY EDUCATION

MOST IMPROVED

4 QUALITY EDUCATION



**1.4bn** 

use their phone to **improve their education** or that of their children

This is also the second highest impacted Goal, with **1.4 billion** mobile subscribers using their phone to improve their education or that of their children - an increase of **140 million** users since 2017.

## ACCELERATING IOT DEPLOYMENT

**9.1bn** 2018

IoT connections worldwide



IoT connections increased by 1.5 billion in 2018, reaching 9.1 billion worldwide. Nevertheless, the majority of IoT deployments remain small or medium scale as the market is in its early stages. **Scaling IoT solutions such as smart cities, smart homes and smart manufacturing will be crucial to achieving the SDGs.**

13 CLIMATE ACTION



## CLIMATE ACTION



In 2019, **more than 50 mobile operators** – which together account for more than two thirds of mobile connections globally – **committed to disclosing climate impacts, energy and GHG emissions.** The next phase will see the development of a decarbonisation pathway for the mobile industry aligned with the Science Based Targets initiative.

## MORE TO BE DONE

Despite its achievements, the mobile industry is **not on track to deliver the full potential of mobile's contribution to the SDGs by 2030.** SDG 9 remains the only SDG where mobile has reached more than half its potential impact. Improvements in other SDGs are not enough. **Faster adoption of mobile technology and enabling life-enhancing services can help to maximise the full contributions of mobile to deliver all 17 SDGs.**



## DIGITAL INCLUSION



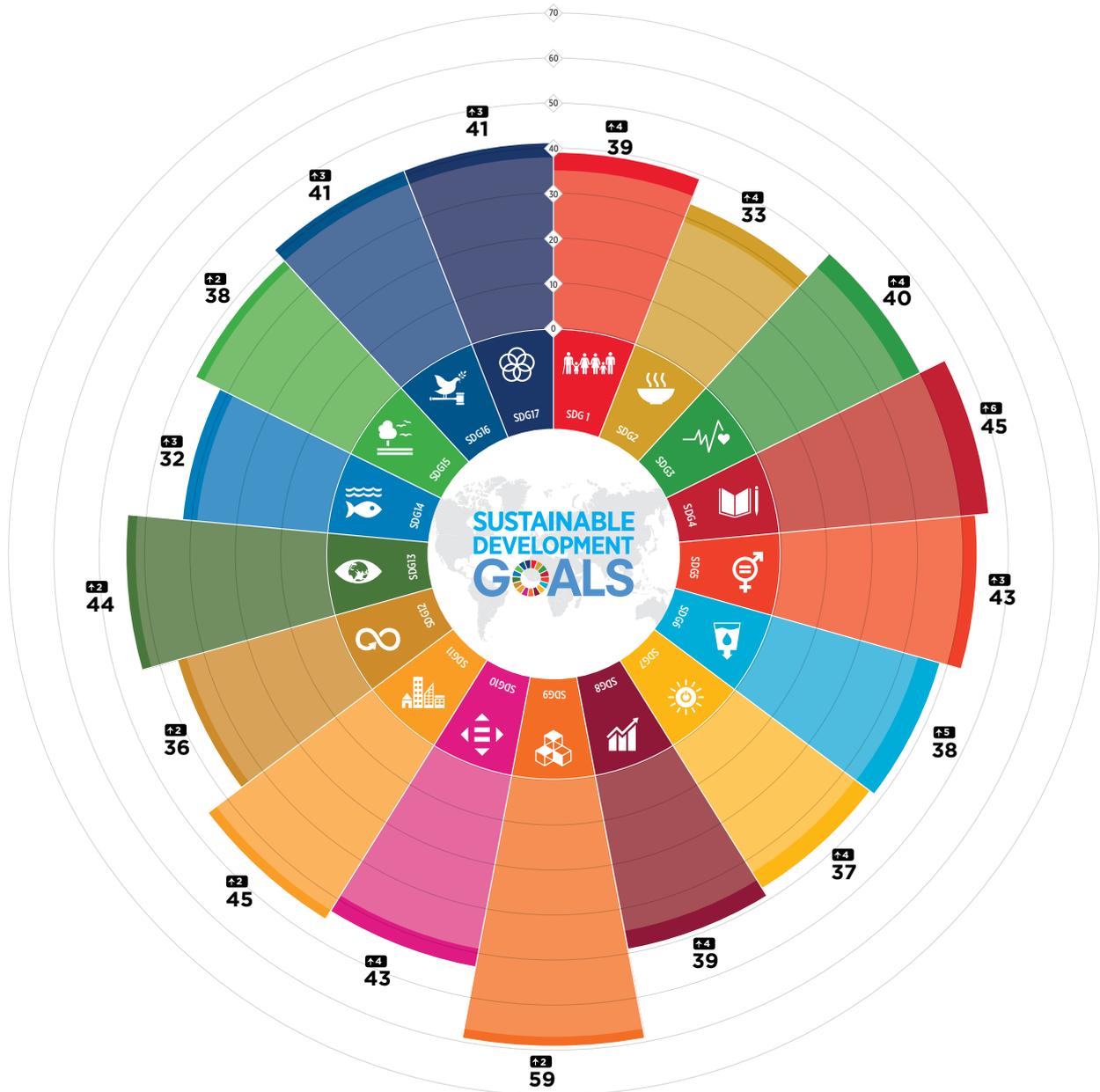
**Addressing barriers to digital inclusion will accelerate the industry's impact on the SDGs.** Affordability, low levels of literacy and digital skills, a lack of relevance, and safety and security concerns are the biggest barriers to mobile internet use from consumers' point of view.

# SDG Impact Scores

Normalised score (out of 100)



For each SDG, an impact score is calculated out of 100: 0 means the industry is having no impact, while 100 means the industry is doing everything possible to contribute to that SDG.



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