

Sustainable Development Goal #9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation



What is Goal 9?

As the world continues to urbanize, sustainable development challenges will increasingly be concentrated in cities, particularly in the lower-middle income countries where the rate of urbanization is fastest. The continuing urbanization and overall growth of the world's population is projected to add 2.5 billion people to the urban population by 2050, with nearly 90 per cent of the increase concentrated in Asia and Africa. At the same time, the proportion of the world's population living in urban areas is expected to increase, reaching 66 per cent by 2050. High urbanization density poses significant challenges to cities yet also creates opportunities for innovation and growth in sustainable transport and industrial development.

The ninth goal of the Sustainable Development Goals seeks to build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation. At the core of those aims is the goal to eliminate poverty, plausible within the next generation, as well as the goal to reduce impacts of climate change in urban areas/reduce urban causes of climate change. Investments in infrastructure – transport, irrigation, energy and information and communication technology – are crucial to achieving sustainable development and empowering communities in most countries. Investments in infrastructure are essential to long-term growth in productivity and incomes; greater social, economic, and political development; and improved health and education.

Industrial development and trade in industrial goods have a proven track record in effectively reducing poverty. Manufacturing is an important employer, accounting for around 470 million jobs worldwide in 2009 – or around 16 per cent of the world's workforce of 2.9 billion. By 2013, there were more than half a billion jobs in manufacturing. The recent examples of industrial development and growth of manufacturing jobs in the Republic of Korea, China, and Southeast

Asian states are cases in point. Manufacturing industries and their peripheral services sectors can absorb a large number of workers, offer them stable jobs, and increase the economic prosperity of their families and local communities. Equally important, experience shows that environmentally-sound production methods in industry can significantly reduce environmental degradation; in other words, green industries can deliver environmental goods and services while simultaneously employing sustainable production patterns.

Taking on measures to combat climate change will require redesigning sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including transport. The transport sector alone is responsible for one quarter of energy-related greenhouse gas (GHG) emission worldwide, with transportation emissions increasing at a faster rate than in any other sector. Transportation has continued to be the major driving force behind a growing world demand for energy, primarily in developed countries and the faster-growing developing countries. International efforts to reform and redesign transport projects have been strong. In June 2012, eight Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) launched a Commitment to Sustainable Transport with an expected \$175 billion of loans and grants for sustainable transport in developing countries over the following decade. With \$20 billion approved in the first year and \$25 billion in the second year of the Rio+20 Commitment, the institutions are on target to meet the goal of \$175 billion by 2022.

What are the Targets?

- Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and transborder infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all
- Promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and, by 2030, significantly raise industry's share of employment and gross domestic product, in line with national circumstances, and double its share in least developed countries
- Increase the access of small-scale industrial and other enterprises, in particular in developing countries, to financial services, including affordable credit, and their integration into value chains and markets
- By 2030, upgrade infrastructure and retrofit industries to make them sustainable, with increased resource-use efficiency and greater adoption of clean and environmentally sound technologies and industrial processes, with all countries taking action in accordance with their respective capabilities.
- Enhance scientific research, upgrade the technological capabilities of industrial sectors in all countries, in particular developing countries, including, by 2030, encouraging innovation and substantially increasing the number of research and development workers per 1 million people and public and private research and developing spending.

Means of Implementation

- Facilitate sustainable and resilient infrastructure development in developing countries through enhanced financial, technological and technical support to African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States.
- Support domestic technology development, research and innovation in developing countries, including by ensuring a conducive policy environment for, inter alia, industrial diversification and value addition to commodities.

- Significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020.



Is This Possible?

Ensuring that both developed and developing countries construct resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable infrastructure and foster innovation will require removing constraints regarding infrastructure and bolstering small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that engage in industrial processing and manufacturing. SMEs are critical for the early stages of industrialization and are typically the largest job creators, making up over 90 per cent of business worldwide and accounting for between 50-60 per cent of employment.

The potential is high for growth in many different industries across the least developing and developing countries as well. Least developed countries have immense potential for industrialization in food and beverages (agro-industry) and in textiles and garments, with good prospects for sustained employment generation and higher productivity. In developing countries there is strong opportunity for agribusiness considering that barely 30 per cent of agricultural production undergoes industrial processing.

However, according to a [report by the German Council for Sustainable Development](#), Goal 9 is weighted towards the economic dimension and weaker in the social and environmental areas. Their proposal is to include 1.) a target on increased investment in energy and resource-efficiency infrastructure in order to strengthen the environmental dimension and provide links to

Goal 7 on Energy and Goal 12 on Sustainable Consumption and Production, and 2.) a target on promoting natural and climate-smart infrastructure in order to contribute to the environmental dimension and provide a link to Goal 13 on Climate Change. UN Major Groups have also proposed adding more socially focused language to the targets which would strengthen the social considerations within Goal 9.

Follow the Tinker Institute on International Law and Organizations at <http://www.tiilo.org> and on Facebook and Twitter at Tinker Institute #TIILOTeaches!

By Anthony DiFlorio, TILO Affiliate