



# SDG Impact Assessment

**Telenor SDG Impact Report 2020 | Methodology of visualisation | February 2021**

Description of the methodology behind the visualisation of the SDG Impact Assessment in as well as the challenges, assumptions, and guiding principles of this approach



## Methodology: Our Approach

The Telenor SDG report 2020 is based on the same methodology used for the Telenor SDG Report for 2018 and 2019.

The methodology is based on guidance from the first stage of the UNGC and GRI report Integrating the SDGs into corporate reporting: a practical guide. In short these steps are: 1. Assess the range of initiatives and risks that could impact the SDGs; 2. Map the initiatives and risks against the SDG targets; 3. Rank the SDGs based on the frequency of the SDG targets addressed and; 4. Use this ranking to inform the size of the SDG icons.

Every reasonable effort has been made to ensure that the information provided is reasonably comprehensive, accurate and clear. While the information is considered to be reliable at the date of publication, no warranty is expressed or implied regarding its completeness.

### **1. Taking scope of initiatives<sup>1</sup> and priority risks:**

Working with Telenor, Sustainia first updated the spreadsheet of Telenor's sustainability initiatives<sup>2</sup> and risks. The decision to include risks in the spreadsheet was based on advice from Sustainia and a strategic reflection from Telenor to present a more balanced view of SDG impact.

The sources of information for adding new initiatives and risks to the spreadsheet were: Telenor's Draft 2019 Sustainability Report; the 'Sustainability Risks 2019 in Telenor Group' document; and website links sent by Telenor. Telenor helped to remove initiatives no longer active from the 2019 spreadsheet and approved the newly added initiatives and risks. These changes (newly added initiatives, and removed initiatives) are also documented in a separate tab of the above mentioned spreadsheet.

As agreed in 2018, only initiatives considered material to Telenor's activities and operations have been included, meaning that, for example, a one-time initiative that reached 30 people is

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<sup>1</sup> Initiatives cover: services, products, programmes, initiatives, policies, outreach programmes, training programmes, campaigns, communication campaigns, projects and more.

<sup>2</sup> See "Telenor SDG IA: 2019 initiatives and risks 26\_02\_20" spreadsheet.

not included. For the same reason, some initiatives have been grouped together if together they make up one larger initiative, but Telenor Group and Business Unit initiatives have been kept separate. For example, Be Smart Use Heart, Digi CyberSAFE, Bruk Hue etc. are separate initiatives, but several initiatives that fall under Bruk Hue are grouped together.

## **2. Mapping SDG impacts:**

With the updated list of initiatives and priority risks identified, the same assessment as last year was performed to see how the initiatives and priority risks impacted the 169 SDG targets. As acknowledged in 2018, assessing impact of a risk or initiative against the SDG targets can be a subjective exercise, for example when SDG targets do not have quantifiable metrics, or evidence of initiative impact is lacking. Moreover, only direct benefits and risks have been included in the assessment. It could be argued for example that by providing greater access to the internet, Telenor is increasing access to pornography, gambling, and other negative applications of the internet. However, since this is not under Telenor's control, these indirect impacts are not included. The same applies for the many positive applications of the internet.

### **2.a. Assigning SDG targets to initiatives and risks**

Each initiative or risk is thoroughly researched and an 'impact description' is recorded in the spreadsheet. This impact is then assessed against the 169 SDG targets. Where an initiative or risk is found to address the SDG target, this is recorded in the spreadsheet. Some targets are easier to ascribe impact to than others, where quantitative evidence can be used to prove impact. For others, or initiatives without quantitative evidence, more qualitative arguments are used to indicate impact. For risk, potential impacts are also considered. This is ultimately a subjective exercise, but Sustainia's SDG expertise and guidance from the GRI and UNGC report<sup>3</sup> increases credibility and confidence in the results.

### **2.b. Special consideration to SDG 13 Climate Action:**

The SDG 13 targets do not explicitly mention climate change mitigation efforts or Greenhouse Gas (GHG) reductions. However, there is a footnote provided within the SDG framework that states "Acknowledging that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change." This is interpreted to mean that mitigation efforts pursuing UNFCCC-endorsed approaches limiting global warming to 1.5°C are also considered an SDG 13 impact. Hence initiatives or risks relating to GHG reductions receive an 'SDG 13' impact without citing a specific target.

## **3. Ranking SDG targets:**

Once initiatives and risks had been assessed against SDG targets, the 17 SDGs were then ranked according to the cumulative frequency that the SDG targets within each goal were found to be impacted by Telenor's initiatives and risks.

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<sup>3</sup> UNGC and GRI (2018) *Integrating the SDGs into corporate reporting: a practical guide*.

As with 2018, it is important to note the following: This methodology does not judge significance of SDG benefits or risk, nor does it attempt to measure Telenor's actual performance against industry, or global standards. For instance, it highlights Telenor's carbon footprint as a risk, but also shows the increasing use of solar panels in Asia as a positive initiative. It does not make a judgement on whether Telenor's energy usage is sustainable or overall positive/negative. Instead it uses the frequency of initiatives and risks impacting SDG targets to indicate Telenor's SDG impact. This 'frequency-based' approach to assessing overall SDG impact may unfairly weigh multiple, small initiatives, and under-represent larger, more significant initiatives and risks.

#### **4. Visualising the results:**

The results from the previous steps to create a visualisation (displayed on page two of the SDG Impact Assessment in Telenor's 2019 Sustainability Report) with SDG icons in five different sizes representing each SDG's rank, implying differing levels of engagement with the various SDGs. Special consideration is given to SDG 10 following Telenor's strategic focus. Therefore SDG 10 is the largest icon even though it is ranked second in the spreadsheet.

Since the assessment follows a "frequency-based" approach, the visualisation is enhanced to point out initiatives and priority risks that are more material to Telenor's business. This year, the SDGs which received additional text on page 2 were chosen based upon Telenor's materiality assessment, particularly the topics identified in the upper right quadrant of the materiality matrix, identified as the highest priority for stakeholders and importance for long-term business success.

The changes from 2018 to 2019 of the sizes of the SDG icons are further elaborated in the "Telenor SDG IA: Explanation of icon size changes" document provided to Telenor.