Strategy 3. Adapt quickly to changes in urban structure

The rise of telework is also bringing about changes in urban structure. We are beginning to see people relocating away from major centers while still employed by companies based in city centers, people moving out of major cities due to attitudes changed by the pandemic, companies relocating their head offices, and people relocating themselves due to reduced office space or relocated offices. These changes will have major impacts on how several of the SDGs can be achieved, including Goal 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities).

Key points for achieving the SDGs

1. Consider new designs for urban, peri-urban and rural areas from economic, social and environmental perspectives: Changes in the flows of people will be a major catalyst transforming the relationships between (and design of) urban, peri-urban and rural areas. For example, the establishment of satellite offices and provision of shared offices away from major urban centers may change the design of cities. On the policy dimension, it is necessary to design urban, peri-urban, and rural areas in response to changes that incorporate telework, which until now was almost non-existent. Also, for work that does not need to be done in urban centers, encouraging employees to relocate could produce cost savings (e.g., reduced housing subsidies) for companies and lead to better work-life balance and financial efficiency for individuals.

2. Seek synergies to significantly expand renewable energy: Changes in office space could also have synergistic effects with the use of energy. Decentralized work arrangements could be a boon for decentralized energy. For example, the purchase of renewable energy and power generation from the installation of solar panels could help offset a company's greenhouse gas emissions, and also provide sources of power during disasters. The use of renewable energy could be significantly increased if a system were created in which a company joins RE100 or a similar initiative and not only promotes renewable energy procurement, but also a portion of the electricity used at home by its teleworkers could be counted as the company's own consumption. Policies could also help accelerate achievement of the SDGs by supporting this kind of behavior, and

additionally, providing incentives to install power storage systems. Combined with this, it will become increasingly important to limit any rise in household energy consumption due to telework, so it will be necessary to encourage the use of energy-efficient equipment and aggressively promote behavioral changes that promote of energy efficiency.

Key targets to help achieve the SDGs

3.6 (Halve the number of deaths and injuries from road traffic accidents)

7.2 (Increase substantially the share of renewable energy)

8.9 (Devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism)

11.1 (Ensure access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services)

11.a (Support positive links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas)

Strategy 3.