

Guidelines for Contributing to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Introduction

This information note has been developed to inform IMCA members of the release of the world's first guidelines (ISO/UNDP PAS 53002:2024) to accelerate progress toward the UN development goals.¹

The SDGs² are a collection of 17 interlinked global goals designed to be a “blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all.”

They address the most pressing global challenges, including poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace, and justice. The SDGs were adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

IMCA released an information note on the progress of the SDGs³ most relevant to our members and to highlight how IMCA members can contribute.

What are the ISO/UNDP guidelines?

This guidance has been developed for organisations committed to making a difference by contributing to the United Nations (UN) SDGs and provides companies with:

- ◆ Action provided guidance for any organisation to proactively align its operations and strategies with the SDGs.
- ◆ A step-by-step process on how to effectively manage and optimise contributions toward these goals emphasising a structural-wise organisation-wide approach to sustainability.
- ◆ The process to identify, prioritise, and manage its impacts on interested parties thus giving organisations confidence that their contributions are performed holistically and systematically.

Why are the ISO/UNDP guidelines important?

They are especially important for several reasons.

◆ Challenges

- The world is grappling with unprecedented global challenges including climate change, poverty, gender inequality, and resource depletion. By following these guidelines, businesses will not only help to address these more pressing issues but contribute to a sustainable tomorrow for the planet for also for their long-term success.

¹ ISO – Sustainable Development Goals

² Goal 17: Partnerships for the goals – The Global Goals

³ IMCA-InformationNote-1685

◆ **Stakeholder Expectations**

- Investors and regulators are increasingly demanding that companies not only reduce their negative impact but also actively pursue positive change. These guidelines empower organisations to meet these expectations.

◆ **Business Resilience and Opportunities**

- Aligning with the SDGs is not only good for the world but it is good for business. They can:
 - Open new markets
 - Improve risk management
 - Drive innovation. By embracing the SDGs, business can boost their resilience and seize opportunities.

How are these guidelines beneficial?

The guidelines are:

- ◆ Versatile and applicable to all organisations regardless of size and location.
- ◆ A valuable tool for top-level decision-makers who are committed to embedding sustainability into their core business strategy and operations. They help them determine how to make tangible positive impact based on their unique circumstances

How can organisations implement these guidelines?

- ◆ This can be a transformative journey for organisations:
 - To start, you must **understand the organisation’s unique context** where it can make the greatest impact.
 - **Familiarise yourself with the SDGs.** Pinpoint the goals that align more closely with your business operations and values. This will help you focus your efforts where they can create the most significant positive change. The organisation should ensure that people working on its behalf are aware of SDG objectives.
 - **Leadership commitment.** Secure management buy-in by ensuring that leadership embeds sustainable development into the organisations core operations and decision-making processes. This guarantees that it is embedded in every aspect of the business.
 - **Stakeholder engagements.** Engage with stakeholders to understand their perspectives, needs, and expectations. Knowing who and what can be impacted by your organisation’s activities whether positively or negatively is fundamental. The guidelines also provide practical guidance on identifying all stakeholders.
 - **Set objectives and targets.** Evaluate your organisation’s current impact on stakeholders and contributions to the SDGs. Based on this assessment, set clear, measurement objectives and targets to track your organisations performance and progress towards them. Focus on the stakeholders where your impacts can be most significant and actively work to eliminate practices that undermine sustainable development.
 - **Secure resources.** These are key to turning your plans into reality. Identify and allocate the necessary resources (financial, people, partnerships, expertise, or technology) to achieve your objectives and process. Make sure that everyone in the organisation knows what you are doing and understand their role in achieving positive change. Assess current and future competence needs.

- **Integrate into operations.** Shift from target to action by placing your objectives at the core of business operations.
- **Monitor and evaluate.** Measure your progress regularly, adjust your targets and strategies as needed to continuously enhance performance, check frequently with your stakeholders, and reassess how you can further enhance your business contribution to the SDGs.

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Related Guidance

- ◆ [The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2024 \(un.org\)](#)
- ◆ [Guidance for contributing to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#)
- ◆ [About the Voluntary National Review – GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- ◆ [GRI – Standards \(globalreporting.org\)](#)