

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

TOOLKIT FOR BUSINESS

A guide for businesses to adopt the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and commit to making changes that benefit our futures and enhance our towns, cities, communities and industries.

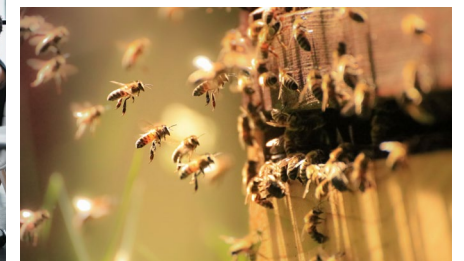


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FOREWORD



IAN TALBOT

Chief Executive
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Secretary General
ICC Ireland

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These Goals are an urgent call for action which acknowledge the importance of partnership between all developed and developing countries. The SDGs recognise that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality and spur economic growth while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans forests. Businesses around the world must play their part.

In September 2019, to mark the fourth anniversary of the launch, Chambers Ireland and ICC Ireland, together with our nationwide Network of affiliated Chambers, unanimously pledged to support the Goals. Since then, we have worked with our Chamber Network and our Sustainable Business Council to help to educate the 8,000 businesses they represent about the SDGs. Our aim in highlighting the SDGs is to realise the opportunities they create, provide companies with the confidence that meaningful results can be readily achieved and promote how they will positively impact businesses, communities, and livelihoods.

An aligned vision and commitment to achieving the SDG targets by 2030 is a collective task that cannot be accomplished without partnership. We are rooted in communities and are a voice for business across Ireland, which is why we are using our platform to amplify the SDGs and achievements of our stakeholders and our Network in their own initiatives to implement the Goals.

The primary purpose of this Toolkit is to bring some simplicity, structure and practical guidance to what may seem like a daunting prospect for us all. The 17 Goals have been created so that organisations, businesses and communities can identify the Goal

(or Goals) to which they feel they can make a contribution, however large or small. We hope that this Toolkit will inspire and encourage many business owners and managers, helping them recognise how recent changes in their workplace, as a result of external events – such as Covid-19, actively contribute to specific Goals and motivate them to further their impact in this area.

Whether you have vowed to make several small changes or are undertaking significant projects, we encourage every business who reads this Toolkit to make sure to document your plans, communicate your actions and record your impact. Reporting on your sustainability, biodiversity or equality initiatives will help grow support, encourage policy-making and bring about more significant change. These reports will also give structure to your business plans, progress and help develop other organisational strategies. By making this commitment and publishing these changes, it will allow the Central Statistics Office to record them and ensures that the Government hears about it and can produce their own reports on Ireland's progress to achieve the 2030 targets, as well as acknowledge and recognise our business community's contributions and efforts towards the SDGs.

We have less than nine years until 2030, and a marathon of work lies ahead; however, each of us has the power to make a difference and contribute in a meaningful way. One change, one plan or one step in the right direction by each individual, business or organisation equates to a leap forward in our duty to achieve these Goals. Your decisions and actions – both within and outside of your workplace – can advance the SDGs. There are numerous ways in which you can make an impact – you will find at least 70 suggestions in this document – so let's all make the commitment to do more from today.



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IMPORTANCE FOR BUSINESS

Business is going to play an essential role in supporting and achieving many of these Goals. In turn, they will help to create stronger communities, better working environments, sustainable trade opportunities and future-proof our economy and employment, both in Ireland and across the globe. The SDGs will require us to adapt, be innovative and make some changes; however, they have been set out with an ambition to provide us with a better future overall.

Business, industry and Government must work together towards achieving the SDGs in order for us to see the most significant impact. Therefore we must make changes, whether we begin by adapting our supply chains or taking steps to correct issues within our industries, reflecting introspectively too, to make changes to how we live our lives outside of the office. Together, we can make a difference across Ireland and further afield as we work towards the ambition and opportunity of the Goals.

THE BENEFITS TO YOUR BUSINESS

You might still be asking, what benefits might come from aligning my business with the Sustainable Development Goals? Companies who have committed to incorporating specific Goals into their business practices and policies report that they experience far-reaching benefits across their business, such as –

- » Boosting their profit margins and make savings across their business¹
- » Gaining greater trust among their customers²
- » Winning new contracts by appealing to businesses looking to implement a more sustainable supply chain³
- » Improving employee retention by working towards a common goal⁴
- » Increasing feelings of stability by developing sustainable plans for the future⁵
- » Growing their customer base by attracting sustainably-minded consumers⁶
- » Improving performance as management and staff work with a greater sense of purpose⁷
- » Strengthening relationships with staff, key stakeholder and partners⁸



REFERENCES

1. McKinsey: Profits with purpose: How organizing for sustainability can benefit the bottom line, July 2014
2. 2021 Edelman Trust Barometer
3. A More Sustainable Supply Chain: V. H. Villena And D. Gioia In Harvard Business Review, 2020.
4. Life is Better Filtered: Corporate School of Expertise
5. Deloitte - 2030 Purpose: Good business
6. Nielsen: A 'natural' rise in sustainability around the world
7. Deloitte - 2030 Purpose: Good business
8. 2019 Edelman Trust Barometer global report

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



MORE DETAILS ABOUT EACH GOAL CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 29



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MAKING A START ON THE SDGS

If you are unsure about where to begin your company's journey to align with the SDGs, here are some tips on getting started. Download our Getting Started guide to assist your decision.

CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD OUR 'GETTING STARTED' DOCUMENT 

STEP ONE	SMALL ENTERPRISE	✓	LARGE CORPORATION	✓
MOBILISE	Explain the SDG concepts to the owner/management and employees.		Get buy-in from the senior management team other employees.	
	Get permission to hold short meetings with employees to determine what needs to be done.		Meet with different departments to determine how they can support the Goals in their area.	
	Get a commitment for time to plan and implement programmes.		Get commitment from the Board and manage to plan and arrange additional events and meetings.	
	Help the owner/operator to develop a short policy about engaging with the Goals.		Begin to develop an SDG charter for your company.	
ASSEMBLE	Ask for 2-3 volunteers to create a working group for the SDGs.		Set up a committee of 10-15 people representing different departments and work locations.	
	If there are various roles in the company, get employees within each area to help.		Develop terms of reference for these groups if necessary.	
	If you can find experts from larger enterprises or community associations willing to help, include them.		Set up regional subcommittees if the corporation has many sites.	
	Find a space to meet and gather necessary materials.		Ensure cross-representation from all parts of the business.	

STEP ONE	SMALL ENTERPRISE	✓	LARGE CORPORATION	✓
ASSESS	Get further information on the SDGs and how it relates to your industry.		Gather demographic data about the company's workforce.	
	Determine local good-practice and consult outside experts as appropriate.		Conduct a confidential, comprehensive survey of all staff asking about their health well-being concerns and other areas concerning the SDGs.	
	Lead a discussion with the workers about the SDGs. Include family and community as they relate to work.		Ask employees what they would like to do to improve their engagement on the SDGs and how they think the employer could help.	
	Brainstorm ideas on what the employees and the employer could do to make things better.		Do a comprehensive audit of the companies' current engagement and review the results.	
	Contact the owner/operator separately to ask for his/her ideas.		-	
PRIORITISE	List problems and solutions and ask people to choose their top 3.		Analyse the results of the survey and audit/inspection results.	
	Contact the owner/operator separately to ask for his/her ideas.		Prioritise by pairing high "need" areas with high "want" areas from employees.	
PLAN	Use ideas from the Working Group as well as other employees or other enterprises.		Develop annual plans with detailed action plans for each specific activity, programme or new policy.	
	Write out the plan, make a list of what you'll need to accomplish each activity, and present it to the owner/operator for approval or negotiation.		Assess how your activities address awareness, knowledge and skill-building, behaviour change, and environmental or organisational adjustments.	
	Plan short-term activities to address smaller projects or immediate high-priority needs.		Base action plans on stages of change – process outcomes and goals, and evaluation plans and timelines.	

STEP ONE	SMALL ENTERPRISE	✓	LARGE CORPORATION	✓
PLAN	Develop a long-term plan to accomplish more significant projects.		Develop a broad 3-to-5-year plan for the business.	
DO	Carry out the action plans with assistance from the owner/operator and the Working Group.		Divide responsibilities among those on the committee.	
	-		Hold monthly or bi-monthly meetings to assess progress on all projects.	
EVALUATE	Ask workers if they think the project worked and what could be improved.		Measure the process and outcome of each activity against the evaluation plans.	
IMPROVE	Based on what you see and hear from workers, change the programme to improve it.		On at least an annual basis, re-evaluate your company's 3-to-5 year plan and update it.	
	Begin on another project based on your list of priorities.		Repeat the survey every two years and monitor changes over time.	
	-		Develop annual plans based on the evaluations from the previous year.	

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ICC GLOBAL TOOLS FOR ENGAGEMENT



Chambers Ireland acts as the Irish national committee of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), allowing it to communicate the ICC's views on international trade to government and business organisations across Ireland. As part of the ICC's commitment to the SDGs, they launched the SME Climate Hub in December 2020.

SME CLIMATE HUB

The SME Climate Hub is co-hosted by the ICC, the Exponential Roadmap Initiative, the We Mean Business coalition and the United Nations Race to Zero campaign. Working together with Oxford University, the SME Climate Hub provides small and medium-sized businesses with the skills and resources to help them take steps within their own company to tackle climate change, in line with SDG 13 – Climate Action.

The tools provided by the SME Climate Hub are freely available to small and medium-sized businesses and cater specifically to this sector with a goal to reduce emissions, improve business competitiveness and build resilience in line with the SDGs. If your company is interested in how you can build your business strategy or measure and offset your carbon emissions, there are tools on the SME Climate Hub's website to help you to get started:

VISIT THE **SME CLIMATE HUB**



COMMIT TODAY

While you are visiting the SME Climate Hub's website, you can take a pledge and join ICC Ireland as well as small and medium-sized businesses around the world by committing to take action against climate change. You can sign the SME Climate Hub's pledge today and commit to;

- » Halving your business' greenhouse gas emissions before 2030
- » Achieving net-zero emissions before 2050
- » Disclosing your progress annually

By undertaking this commitment, your business will be contributing to the United Nations' Race to Zero campaign and taking steps to achieve SDG 13 – Climate Action. You will be joining other companies as well as governments, cities, regions, and universities across the globe who have already embarked on the same mission to become more accountable, responsible about how we do business and tackle this climate crisis head-on to safeguard our future.

TAKE THE **PLEDGE**



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**WAYS TO IMPLEMENT
THE GOALS IN YOUR
BUSINESS**



We have compiled over 70 suggestions on how businesses can support the SDGs and implement them across their company. Some of these suggestions only require staff and management dedication to succeed, while others will entail funding. These options cater to all levels of commitment and capabilities to inspire your business to support and get involved with the Sustainable Development Goals.

Each suggestion is followed by the number of at least one Goal to which they are linked.

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

1. Offer healthy food options in the workplace – fruit boxes from local suppliers. **(2, 3, 12)**
2. If you offer free lunches, request that they are supplied by local businesses promoting sustainability and using seasonal produce. **(2, 3, 11, 12, 13)**
3. Ensure you are providing workplace food options that cater to all diets. **(2, 3, 10)**
4. Set up cooking classes for staff to encourage healthier eating practices and improve overall well-being. **(2, 3)**
5. Ensure that workplace well-being is a priority – sign up to an employee assistance programme. **(3, 8)**
6. Offer staff gym memberships or access to exercise classes of their choice. **(3, 8)**
7. Set up social committees to arrange staff activities that create a stronger workplace community and helps to retain staff. **(3, 8)**
8. Offer to fund, or partially fund, health or dental insurance for your staff. **(3, 8)**
9. Introduce financial well-being courses for staff and give staff ESG pension and investing options. **(3, 8)**

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

10. If you can't see it, you can't be it' – Commit to visibly promoting gender equality within the workplace. **(5, 8, 10)**
11. Request gender representation at business meetings and events. **(5, 10)**
12. Offer childcare assistance to support working families in your sector. **(5, 10)**
13. Commit to diversifying your workforce. **(5, 10)**
14. Update recruitment initiatives to encourage more applications from minorities and under-represented groups. **(10)**

15. Work with other businesses who support women. **(5, 10, 17)**
16. Advertise your vacancies with companies that work with under-represented groups, including young people, people with disabilities or ethnic minorities. **(10, 17)**
17. Adapt your building/office so that it is wheelchair and mixed-mobility accessible. **(10)**
18. Campaign to improve how your sector advertises itself to women – ensure that women are visible across external advertising campaigns. **(5, 10)**
19. Encourage inclusive decision making across the company. **(10, 16)**
20. Implement gender balance at management and board-level. **(5, 8, 10, 16)**
21. Utilise technology to remove any bias towards applicants during recruitment. **(5, 8, 9, 10)**
22. Introduce longer paid paternity leave or equal parental leave to equalise parents' opportunity to return to work/share the workload after having a child. **(5, 8, 10)**



CONSCIOUS CONSUMPTION

23. Ensure that your building has efficient water consumption practices. **(6, 12)**
24. Encourage staff to take Irish Water's online Water Conservation training. **(6, 12)**
25. Switch to green energy suppliers. **(7, 12, 13, 15)**
26. Switch to electric vehicles (EVs) if you offer company cars. **(7, 12, 13)**
27. Fund on-site car charging points to encourage staff to switch to EVs. **(7, 12, 13)**
28. Undergo an energy audit. **(7, 12, 13)**
29. Switch to more efficient lighting options in your building. **(7, 12, 13)**
30. Insulate your office building. **(7, 12, 13)**
31. Undertake energy management training with the SEAL. **(7, 12, 13)**

WELL-ROUNDED WORKPLACES

32. Re-imagine the '40 hour' week within your workplace. **(3, 8)**
33. Allow staff to undertake further study by offering flexible hours or funding/partially funding training courses. **(4, 8, 10)**
34. Pay staff a living wage. **(1, 8)**
35. Enable your staff to work flexible hours and/or work remotely. **(3, 8)**
36. Support local co-working spaces by enabling staff to work there or mentor businesses in the hub. **(8, 11)**
37. Offer training to employees so that they can learn new technologies and systems. **(4, 8)**
38. Introduce a 4-day week. **(3, 8)**
39. Adopt a project-based work model to enable flexibility in how your staff work. **(8, 9)**

IMPLEMENTING INNOVATION

41. Lend your expertise to start-ups/innovation hubs. **(4, 9, 17)**
42. Build and trial new business models and technologies within your workplace and report on their success so that others can follow suit. **(8, 9, 17)**
43. Fund projects within your local schools and communities that educate on the SDG that you are supporting – computer skills, biodiversity, recycling, equality. **(4, 9, 11, 17)**
44. Move business functions online so that they can be accessed securely, remotely. **(8, 9)**
45. Make changes across your business that align with the Government's National Digital Strategy. **(8, 9)**



COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

46. Collaborate with Chambers, associations and local authorities to engage in business-focused projects to becoming more sustainable in your area. **(11, 17)**
47. Sign up for community watch programmes to make town centres a safer place to work, live and do business. **(11, 17)**
48. Support the introduction of/increase in public transport services and more infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians in your locality. **(11, 13)**
49. Back local initiatives to 'embrace the space' and utilise would-be parking bays as outdoor dining space for local cafés and restaurants. **(11, 17)**
50. Use your platform to support 'Shop Local' initiatives. **(11, 17)**
51. Support and sponsor food festivals or offer your services for local events. **(11, 17)**
52. Consider moving your business/secondary offices out of cities to support local economies and improve regional development. **(9, 11)**
53. Encourage employees to get involved with their communities by supporting volunteer work. **(8, 11, 17)**
54. Introduce apprenticeship and traineeship programmes to introduce marginalised groups into your business sector. **(4, 8, 10)**
55. Mentor in schools/DEIS schools around pathways to employment. **(4, 8, 10)**
56. Offer paid internships to ensure that this opportunity is accessible to all. **(4, 8, 10)**

PROTECTING THE PLANET

57. Encourage recycling and the reduction of waste across the business. **(12, 13, 14, 15)**
58. Get involved with the circular economy movement and find innovative ways to reuse waste materials from your business. **(12, 13, 14, 15)**
59. Source suppliers who use – or request that they use – reusable or biodegradable packaging. **(12, 13, 14, 15)**
60. Remove single-use plastic from the workplace. **(12, 13, 14, 15)**
61. If using chemicals or harmful substances in your workplace, work with the EPA to find solutions to minimise the negative impact on the environment. **(12, 13, 14, 15)**
62. Arrange car-pool groups to reduce your staff's carbon emissions. **(12, 13)**
63. Ensure staff can access the Government's bike-to-work scheme. **(13)**
64. Ensure there are bike racks/bike shed available on-site. **(13)**
65. Request the use of environmentally friendly cleaning products within the workplace. **(13, 14, 15)**
66. Embrace green finance options to further commit to the sustainable agenda. **(8, 13)**
67. Utilise vacant green spaces to increase biodiversity – plant bee-friendly vegetation or create a community garden for staff. **(11, 13, 14, 15)**
68. Offer free travel or 'tax-saver tickets' to employees to encourage more public transport use. **(13)**

LEADERSHIP AND INTEGRITY

69. Ensure you have robust protection for whistle-blowers within your business. **(16)**
70. Implement strict codes of conduct against abuse or exploitation in the workplace. **(16)**
71. Update your policies to include more sustainable practices across the business. **(17)**
72. Encourage buy-in from the top down to follow a sustainable agenda. **(17)**
73. Partner with businesses that are supporting similar SDGs to increase your impact. **(17)**



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CHAMBERS IRELAND'S COMMITMENT TO THE SDGS

Chambers Ireland is the largest business organisation in Ireland, with a geographic reach and membership base that spans cities, towns, and communities nationwide. With members in every region and economic sector, we are uniquely positioned to represent the views of businesses and understand their concerns. We realise the vital role that the business community plays in adopting and implementing the SDGs in Ireland, and we support businesses' commitments to achieving the Goals in every sector.

OUR VISION

If Ireland is to implement the SDGs domestically by 2030, each represented dimension of society must be included in the progress. With our extensive regional and national reach, we believe that Chambers Ireland is strongly positioned to influence and encourage both business and community engagement with the Goals. By championing the SDGs, Chambers Ireland will ensure that accomplishing these goals is reflected in the work that we do across our Network.

VIEW THE **CHAMBERS IRELAND WEBSITE** →



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**CHAMBERS IRELAND'S
SUSTAINABLE
BUSINESS COUNCIL**



The Chambers Ireland Sustainable Business Council is a group of professionals working within Sustainability, CSR, Communications and Citizenship across various sectors. This Council supports Chambers Ireland and our efforts to promote best practice in sustainable development and collaborates on projects to amplify the importance of the SDGs.

The Council members offer advice on increasing awareness of the SDGs and identifying partnership opportunities to provide a stronger voice for enterprise across Ireland. The insights provided by this Council are vital to Chambers Ireland and our commitment to encouraging and promoting sustainable and responsible business practices nationwide.

Members of the Sustainable Business Council, April 2021:



Chairperson: **SINÉAD HICKEY**

Head of Sustainability
John Sisk & Son

Sinéad is the Head of Sustainability (Ireland and Europe) for John Sisk & Son, an Irish family-owned business. For over 13 years, Sinéad has worked in sustainability strategy development, ESG rankings and ratings, sustainability reporting, social impact programme development and employee and community engagement. A graduate of the University of Limerick and University College Cork, Sinéad is currently the Chairperson of Chambers Ireland's Sustainable Business Council.



KARINA HOWLEY

Head of Corporate Citizenship & Diversity
KPMG

Karina has been the Head of Corporate Citizenship & Diversity at KPMG Ireland for the last 13 years. Through Karina's tenure, KPMG Ireland has developed a robust Corporate Citizenship programme. It has won various accolades at Chambers Ireland's CSR Awards (renamed the Sustainable Business Impact Awards in 2020) over the last number of years. In 2013, and again in 2017, KPMG won the overall "Outstanding Achievement" award for best company at the CSR Awards.



DEIRDRE KENNEDY

Corporate Social Responsibility Leader
IBM Ireland

Deirdre is the CSR Leader for IBM Ireland, responsible for reinforcing IBM's reputation as a leading-edge corporate citizen and delivering social impact at scale, particularly in education & skills and related to the effect of technology. Delivering maximum benefit from IBM's Citizenship activities and programmes across the business both with employees and external stakeholders is a key priority and focus. Deirdre has been a member of Chambers Ireland's Sustainable Business Council for over a decade.



BUSINESS
IN THE
COMMUNITY
IRELAND

BERNADETTE PHELAN

Head of Advisory Services
Business in the Community Ireland

Bernadette is Head of Advisory Services in Business in the Community Ireland. She leads and designs BITCI's advisory services in responsible and sustainable business, working with over 100 corporate members. Within her role, Bernadette is responsible for the CEO-led Leaders' Group on Sustainability, which drives innovation, collaboration and standard-setting within sustainability for business.



Bank of
Ireland

COLM BERGIN

Responsible & Sustainable Business
Bank of Ireland

Colm is Responsible & Sustainable Business – Group Strategy with Bank of Ireland. In this role, he supported the launch of the Bank of Ireland €1bn Sustainable Finance Fund, which included Ireland's first Green Mortgage. Before this, he worked on the Bank's Responsible & Sustainable Business Team. Colm is a member of Chambers Ireland's Sustainable Business Council.



ESB
Energy for
generations

FERGAL FITZGERALD

Group CSR Coordinator
ESB

Fergal joined ESB International's Communications & Marketing team in 2017 and was appointed as ESB Group CSR Coordinator in January 2018. Fergal manages ElectricAid, a charity run by the staff and pensioners of ESB and EirGrid; he is also responsible for the ESB's Energy for Generations Fund and staff volunteer programme. Fergal sits on the Chambers Ireland Sustainable Business Council, the BITC Education Steering Group, and represents ESB on the Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation's CSR Stakeholder Forum.



MICHELLE O'SULLIVAN

Senior Public Affairs Executive
Cork Chamber

Michelle is Senior Public Affairs Executive with Cork Chamber and leads their Sustainable Cork Programme. She is Chair of several groups, including the Energy Cork cluster, Energy Cork Transport subgroup, and a member of the EcoMerit Oversight Board. Prior to joining Cork Chamber, she worked with An Taisce and Comhar Sustainable Development Council.



MIA FAHEY MCCARTHY

Head of Sustainability for Ireland
SSE Ireland

Mia is Head of Sustainability for SSE in Ireland and works with a wider sustainability team, including SSE's Chief Sustainability Officer, to ensure the implementation of the company's sustainability strategy. SSE has set four fundamental business goals for 2030, directly aligned to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) most material to its business – they are Goal 13, Goal 7, Goal 9 and Goal 8.



DARAGH FALLON

Citizenship & Communications Manager
Abbott Ireland

Daragh is the Citizenship and Communications Manager for Abbott, part of the company's Global Citizenship and Sustainability function. Daragh is responsible for the delivery of Abbott's citizenship strategy and supporting internal and external communications. He works with the company's nine sites across Ireland to deliver impactful and strategic community programmes, sustainability reporting and stakeholder engagement.



YVONNE HOLMES

Chief Sustainability Officer
AIB

Yvonne is the Chief Sustainability Officer in AIB and is responsible for developing and implementing their Sustainability Strategy across the AIB Group. Yvonne became a member of Chambers Ireland's Sustainable Business Council in 2020. As well as sitting on the Council, Yvonne is Chair of Skillnet's Sustainable Finance group.



JAMES KIERNAN

Director of Relationship Development
Chambers Ireland

James joined Chambers Ireland in 2006 and is responsible for commercial and Chamber development. His main task is to support the network of 41 Chambers and coordinate the commercial activities of the national Chamber. He is the main point of contact for advertising, event sponsorship and membership within Chambers Ireland. James manages relations between Chambers Ireland and the Sustainable Development Council.



KIAH TOWNSEND

Relationship Development Coordinator
Chambers Ireland

Kiah joined Chambers Ireland in October 2019 as Relationship Development Coordinator. Kiah is responsible for assisting James in supporting the Chamber Network in building and maintaining strong working relationships with Chambers Ireland's partners and patrons and identifying and acting on issues of importance to the Irish economy. She coordinates meetings for the Sustainable Development Council and actions SDG-related events, content and communications for the Network, including this SDG Toolkit.

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THE 17 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



The 17 Sustainable Development Goals are an ambitious set of targets covering a range of topical issues from poverty eradication and reducing inequality to economic growth, access to education and environmental protection.

Here is an overview of all 17 Goals, as outlined by the United Nations:

GOAL 1

NO POVERTY

**THE GOAL:**

End global poverty, in all its forms, by 2030.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

In 2015, more than 700 million people (10% of

the world population) lived in extreme poverty, struggling with the most basic needs like health, education, access to water and sanitation.

WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT IT?

The private sector has a significant role to play in determining whether the growth it creates is inclusive and contributes to poverty reduction. It can promote economic opportunities for the poor. Your active engagement in policy-making can also make a difference in addressing poverty. It ensures that your rights are promoted and helps to support change in people's lives and communities.

READ MORE ABOUT **SDG 1** →

GOAL 2

ZERO HUNGER

**THE GOAL:**

End hunger, achieve food security, improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

2 billion people worldwide do not have regular access to safe, nutritious food. Extreme hunger and malnutrition remain a barrier to sustainable development and creates a trap from which people cannot easily escape.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO HELP?

You can make changes in your own life – at home, as a consumer, at work and in the community – by supporting local farmers or markets, making sustainable food choices, supporting good nutrition for all, and fighting food waste.

READ MORE ABOUT **SDG 2** →

GOAL 3

GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

**THE GOAL:**

Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being is

vital to building prosperous societies. Concerted efforts are required to achieve universal health coverage and sustainable financing for health.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

You can start by promoting and protecting your health and the health of those around you, raising awareness in your community about the importance of good health, healthy lifestyles, and people's right to quality health care services. You can also hold the Government, local leaders and other decision-makers accountable to their commitments to improve people's access to health and health care.

READ MORE ABOUT **SDG 3** →

GOAL 4

QUALITY EDUCATION

4

QUALITY
EDUCATION**THE GOAL:**

Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Education enables rising socio-economic mobility and is a key to escaping poverty. Education helps reduce inequalities, reach gender equality and is crucial to fostering tolerance and more peaceful societies.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Ask our governments to place education as a priority in both policy and practice. Lobby governments to make firm commitments to provide free primary school education to all, including vulnerable or marginalised groups.

[READ MORE ABOUT SDG 4 →](#)

GOAL 5

GENDER EQUALITY

5

GENDER
EQUALITY**THE GOAL:**

Achieve gender equality and empower all females.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Females represent half of the population and,

therefore, half of its potential. But gender inequality persists everywhere and stagnates social progress. Women are underrepresented across political leadership and perform a disproportionate share of unpaid domestic work.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO FIX THESE ISSUES?

You can address your own unconscious biases and those within your sector of employment. Encourage your business to remove barriers to ensure that there are equal opportunities for women within your workplace. You can advocate for women and support women and girls to achieve their full potential.

[READ MORE ABOUT SDG 5 →](#)

GOAL 6

CLEAN WATER
AND SANITATION

6

CLEAN WATER
AND SANITATION**THE GOAL:**

Ensure access to safe water sources and sanitation for all.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Access to water, sanitation

and hygiene is a human right. The demand for water has outpaced population growth, and half the world's population is already experiencing severe water scarcity at least one month a year. Water is essential not only to health but also to poverty reduction, food security, peace and human rights, ecosystems and education.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Civil society organisations should work to keep governments accountable and invest in water research and development. Generating awareness and turning them into action will lead to win-win results and increased sustainability and integrity for both human and ecological systems.

[READ MORE ABOUT SDG 6 →](#)

GOAL 7

AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

7 AFFORDABLE AND
CLEAN ENERGY**THE GOAL:**

Provide and ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

A well-established energy system supports all sectors. More focused attention is needed to improve access to clean and safe fuels and technologies worldwide.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO FIX THESE ISSUES?

- » Support investment in renewable energy; prioritising energy-efficient practices, and adopting clean energy technologies and infrastructure.
- » Businesses can source 100% of operational electricity needs from renewable sources.
- » Employers can reduce the internal demand for transport by prioritising telecommunications and incentivising green modes of transportation.
- » Turn appliances off completely when not in use.
- » You can also bike, walk or take public transport to reduce carbon emissions.

[READ MORE ABOUT SDG 7 →](#)

GOAL 8

DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

8 DECENT WORK AND
ECONOMIC GROWTH**THE GOAL:**

Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all.

WHAT DOES “DECENT WORK” MEAN?

Decent work means opportunities for everyone to get work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace, social protection for families, and better prospects for personal development and social integration.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Sustained and inclusive economic growth can drive progress, create decent jobs for all and improve living standards.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO FIX THESE ISSUES?

We can ensure that our businesses provide youth with decent work opportunities and are taught skills that match labour market demands. Additionally, everyone should have access to social protection and essential services to level the playing field so that all aspiring individuals can attain productive employment. Governments can build dynamic, sustainable, innovative and people-centred economies, promoting youth employment and women's economic empowerment.

[READ MORE ABOUT SDG 8 →](#)

GOAL 9

INDUSTRY, INNOVATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE**THE GOAL:**

Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Economic growth, social development and climate action are heavily dependent on infrastructure, sustainable industrial development and technological progress. In the face of a rapidly changing global economic landscape and increasing inequalities, sustained growth must include industrialisation, which makes opportunities accessible to all people, and ensure that this is supported by innovation and resilient infrastructure.

HOW CAN WE HELP?

Establish standards and promote regulations that ensure company projects and initiatives are sustainably managed. Collaborate with charities and the public sector to help promote sustainable growth within developing countries. Think about how our industries impact your life and well-being and use social media to push policymakers to prioritise the SDGs.

READ MORE ABOUT **SDG 9** →

GOAL 10

REDUCING INEQUALITIES

**THE GOAL:**

Reduce inequalities within and among countries and societies.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Inequality – based on income, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, class, ethnicity, religion and opportunity – threatens long-term social and economic development, harms poverty reduction and destroys people's sense of fulfilment and self-worth. Inequality can increase crime, disease and environmental degradation. We cannot achieve sustainable development and make the world a better place for all if any individuals, societies or countries are excluded from the opportunity for a better life and a more prosperous future.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Reducing inequality requires transformative change. We can ensure equal opportunity and reduce income inequalities if we eliminate discriminatory laws, policies and practices. Governments and business organisations can promote safe, regular and responsible migration, including through planned and well-managed policies, for the millions who have left their homes to seek better lives due to war, discrimination, poverty and lack of opportunity.

READ MORE ABOUT **SDG 10** →

GOAL 11

SUSTAINABLE CITIES
AND COMMUNITIES11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES
AND COMMUNITIES**THE GOAL:**

Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable for their inhabitants.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

The rapid urbanisation of our towns and cities has meant that 4 billion people – over half of our global population – face worsening air pollution, inadequate infrastructure, lack of housing, appropriate services and amenities, and unplanned, disorganised urban sprawl.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP ACHIEVE THIS GOAL?

Take an active interest in the governance and management of your city. Advocate for the kind of city you believe you need. Develop a vision for your building, street, and neighbourhood, and act on that vision. The better the conditions you create in your community, the greater the effect on quality of life – Are there enough jobs? Can your children walk to school safely? Can you walk with your family at night? How far is the nearest public transport? Do you have good air quality? Do you have access to reasonable shared public spaces?

[READ MORE ABOUT SDG 11 →](#)

GOAL 12

RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION
AND PRODUCTION12 RESPONSIBLE
CONSUMPTION
AND PRODUCTION**THE GOAL:**

Implement sustainable consumption and production.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Over the last century, economic and social progress has been accompanied by environmental degradation that endangers the very systems on which our future development and survival depend. A successful transition to more sustainable consumption and production will mean improvements in resource efficiency, consideration of the entire life cycle of economic activities, and active engagement in multilateral environmental agreements.

HOW CAN I HELP AS A BUSINESS?

It is in businesses' interest to find new solutions that enable sustainable consumption and production patterns – identifying "hot spots" within the supply chain where interventions have the most potential to improve the environmental and social impact of the whole system.

HOW CAN I HELP AS A CONSUMER?

Reduce your waste, be thoughtful about what you buy, ensure you don't throw away food, reduce your consumption of plastic and make informed purchases.

[READ MORE ABOUT SDG 12 →](#)

GOAL 13

CLIMATE ACTION

**THE GOAL:**

Take action to tackle climate change and its impacts.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

2010-2019 was the warmest decade ever recorded, bringing massive wildfires, hurricanes, droughts, floods and other climate disasters to all continents. Climate change is affecting every country in the world. It is disrupting national economies and affecting lives and livelihoods, especially for the most vulnerable.

CAN WE SOLVE THIS PROBLEM, OR IS IT TOO LATE TO ACT?

To address climate change, we must vastly increase our efforts. Much is happening around the world – investments in renewable energy have soared. The world must transform its energy, industry, transport, food, agriculture and forestry systems to ensure that we can limit global temperature rise to well below 2°C, maybe even 1.5°C.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP ACHIEVE THIS GOAL?

We can do many things as individuals ([find out more](#)) or read about the [UN's efforts on climate change](#).

READ MORE ABOUT **SDG 13** →

GOAL 14

LIFE BELOW WATER

**THE GOAL:**

Conserve and sustainably use resources from the world's ocean, rivers and seas.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Oceans are our planet's life support and regulate the global climate system. They are the world's largest ecosystem, home to nearly a million known species and containing a vast untapped potential for scientific discovery. Oceans and fisheries continue to support the global population's economic, social and environmental needs.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

On a local level, we should make ocean-friendly choices when buying products or eating food derived from oceans and consume only what we need. Selecting certified products is an excellent place to start. We should eliminate plastic usage as much as possible and organise beach clean-ups. Most importantly, we can spread the message about how important marine life is and why we need to protect it.

READ MORE ABOUT **SDG 14** →

GOAL 15

LIFE ON LAND

15

LIFE
ON LAND**THE GOAL:**

Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

From the air that we breathe and the water we drink to the foods we eat, our forests sustain us. Biodiversity is declining faster than at any other time in human history. Land degradation undermines the well-being of 3.2 billion people, driving species to extinction and intensifying climate change. Biodiversity, and the ecosystem it underpins, can be the basis for climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction strategies.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Some things we can do to help include recycling, eating a locally-based diet that is sustainably sourced, and consuming only what we need. We must be respectful toward wildlife and only take part in ecotourism opportunities that are responsibly and ethically run to prevent wildlife disturbance. Well-managed, protected areas support healthy ecosystems, which in turn keep people healthy. It is critical to secure the involvement of the local communities in the development and management of these protected areas.

[READ MORE ABOUT SDG 15 →](#)

GOAL 16

PEACE, JUSTICE AND
STRONG INSTITUTIONS

16

PEACE, JUSTICE
AND STRONG
INSTITUTIONS**THE GOAL:**

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

People everywhere need to be free of fear from all forms of violence and feel safe as they go about their lives, whatever their ethnicity, faith or sexual orientation. Conflict, insecurity, weak institutions and limited access to justice remain threats to sustainable development.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

Exercise your right to hold your elected officials to account. Exercise your right to freedom of information and share your opinion with your elected representatives. Promote inclusion and respect towards people of different ethnic origins, religions, gender, sexual orientations or differing opinions.

[READ MORE ABOUT SDG 16 →](#)

GOAL 17

PARTNERSHIP
FOR THE GOALS

17

PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS**THE GOAL:**

Revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

The Sustainable Development Goals remain the framework for building a better world for all. We need everyone to come together—governments, civil society, scientists, academia and the private sector to achieve these goals by 2030.

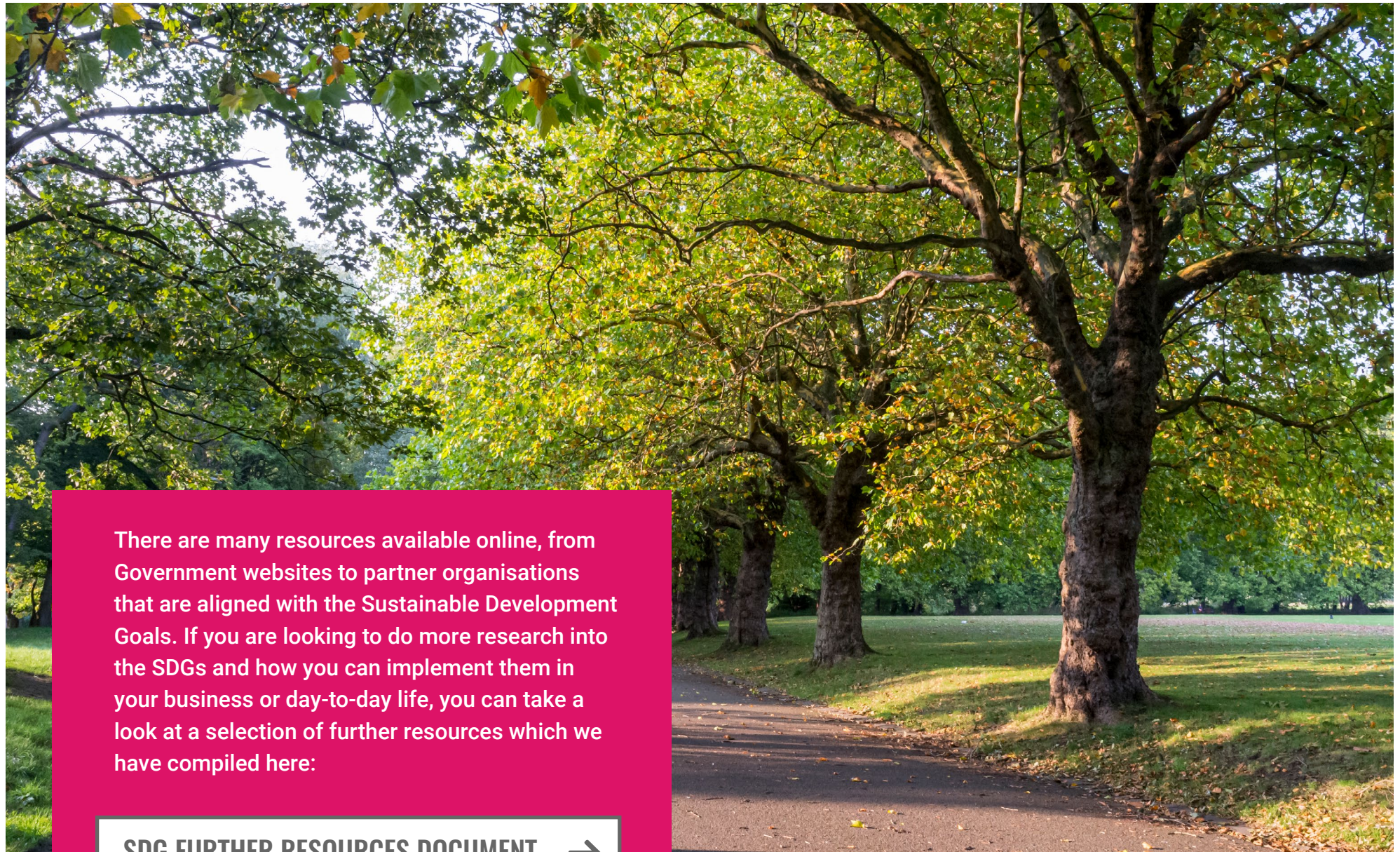
WHAT CAN WE DO TO HELP?

Join/create a group in your local community that seeks to mobilise action on implementing the SDGs. Encourage your governments to partner with businesses for the implementation of the SDGs. Register your initiatives on the SDGs Partnerships Platform to inform, educate, network, and be inspired!

[READ MORE ABOUT SDG 17 →](#)

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FURTHER INFORMATION SOURCES



There are many resources available online, from Government websites to partner organisations that are aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals. If you are looking to do more research into the SDGs and how you can implement them in your business or day-to-day life, you can take a look at a selection of further resources which we have compiled here:

SDG FURTHER RESOURCES DOCUMENT →

THANK YOU

For more information about the SDGs, get in touch with your local Chamber or visit **chambers.ie**

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