



MEDIA RELEASE
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World-first international guidelines empower businesses and organizations to fast-track SDG success

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have launched the world's first international guidelines for businesses and organizations to accelerate urgent progress on the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Today at the ISO Annual Meeting 2024 in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, the **ISO/UNDP guidelines for contributing to the UN SDGs** were officially released. This first freely available document will guide organizations in speeding up their response to the SDGs.

With only six years remaining, calls to intensify efforts and rapidly accelerate progress towards the SDGs are increasing. According to United Nations' *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2024*, only 17% of the SDG targets are on track to being achieved globally by 2030.

ISO Secretary-General Sergio Mujica said the new guidelines, developed by an international group of experts brought together by ISO member for Denmark, Danish Standards, were designed to take businesses and organizations from SDG alignment to SDG action.

"These guidelines allow all types of organizations – in both the public and private sectors worldwide – large or small, new or well-established – to place SDGs at the core of their operations," Mr Mujica said.

"For the first time, we have a common approach for businesses and organizations to align their strategies with the SDGs, and to document progress towards achieving them.

"The guidelines provide practical advice for fully integrating sustainable development into all functions and investment decision-making processes.

"Globally, there is a growing urgency for businesses to do more towards achieving the SDGs, and collaboration is critical to drive action. ISO is proud to join forces with UNDP in accelerating SDG progress.

"These guidelines complement existing sustainability standards by aligning organizational strategy, operations and decision-making with the SDGs holistically."

In September 2023, ISO and the UNDP signed a landmark Statement of Intent, signalling their commitment to collaborating on standards initiatives that will enhance sustainability efforts in public and private sectors.

The new **ISO/UNDP guidelines for the SDGs** represent the first major outcome of this strategic partnership.

Marcos Neto, UN Assistant Secretary-General, the UNDP Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, emphasized that achieving the SDG targets by 2030 necessitates collective action from all sectors, including governments, civil society, the private sector, and communities.

He highlighted the critical role of the new ISO/UNDP guidelines in helping organizations understand their contributions to the SDGs and how they can be most effective.

“These guidelines will unlock greater contributions to the SDG targets by aligning business purpose, strategy, and results with societal needs,” Mr. Neto said.

“They provide essential tools for the implementation of national SDG plans, enabling contributions from both the private sector and governments. Furthermore, they reinforce accountability for organizational impacts on people and the planet while simultaneously enhancing business performance.”

Danish Standards, Secretariat of the Technical Committee for the guidelines, said the recommendations would help organisations think about sustainable development more broadly.

“The guidelines showcase different business models and new ways of working, both internally and externally, that will accelerate innovation and allocate resources more effectively,” Director of Standardisation at Danish Standards, Tina Helsted Vengsgaard, said.

“By implementing the recommendations, organizations can anticipate risks and opportunities related to sustainable development earlier and manage them better.”

The **ISO/UNDP guidelines for the SDGs** will further evolve in future into the first International Standard for the UN SDGs, based on UNDP’s SDG Impact Standards and relevant ISO standards.

The guidelines are available at no charge to companies and organisations at [iso.org/SDGguidelines](https://www.iso.org/SDGguidelines).

More information about ISO is available at www.iso.org.

More information about UNDP and the SDGs is available at www.undp.org/sustainable-development-goals.

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About ISO:

ISO (International Organization for Standardization) is an independent, non-governmental international organization with a membership of 170 national standards bodies. Through its global network, it facilitates the development of voluntary and market-relevant International Standards that support innovation and provide solutions to global challenges. ISO has published more than 25 000 International Standards and related documents covering almost every industry, from technology to food safety, to agriculture and healthcare.

About UNDP:

UNDP is the leading United Nations organization fighting to end the injustice of poverty, inequality and climate change. Working with our broad network of experts and partners in 170 countries, we help nations to build integrated, lasting solutions for people and the planet. Learn more at undp.org or follow at [@UNDP](https://twitter.com/UNDP).

About UNDP Sustainable Finance Hub:

The UNDP Sustainable Finance Hub brings together UNDP's financial expertise to harness public and private capital for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)- supporting governments, investors and businesses in reaching climate, social impact and sustainability targets. Its work drives systemic change towards a sustainable financial architecture that benefits people and the planet. Find out more about its integrated services that ensure all finance is sustainable, at sdgfinance.undp.org or follow [@UNDP_SDGFinance](https://twitter.com/UNDP_SDGFinance).

About Danish Standards:

Danish Standards is Denmark's national standardisation organisation, representing Denmark in the European and international standardisation organisations: CEN, CENELEC, ISO, IEC, and ETSI. As a member of Danish Standards' standardisation committee, Danish stakeholders can collaborate with others to help set standards for the future, both nationally and internationally. Danish Standards has been hosting the Secretariat of the Technical Committee for the guidelines. Read more at ds.dk.