



# Accelerating Private Sector Engagement for the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

**Snapshot of Progress:**  
UAE Private Sector Survey and Roundtable  
Takeaways on the SDGs



Global Compact  
Network UAE





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*The private sector plays a pivotal role in realising the SDGs. This report highlights how collective ambition, coordinated action, and strategic alignment are creating the conditions for a more just and resilient global future, one that extends well beyond the 2030 horizon.*

**H.E. ABDULLA NASSER LOOTAH**

Deputy Minister of Cabinet Affairs for  
Competitiveness and Knowledge Exchange  
Chair of the UAE Committee on Sustainable  
Development Goals

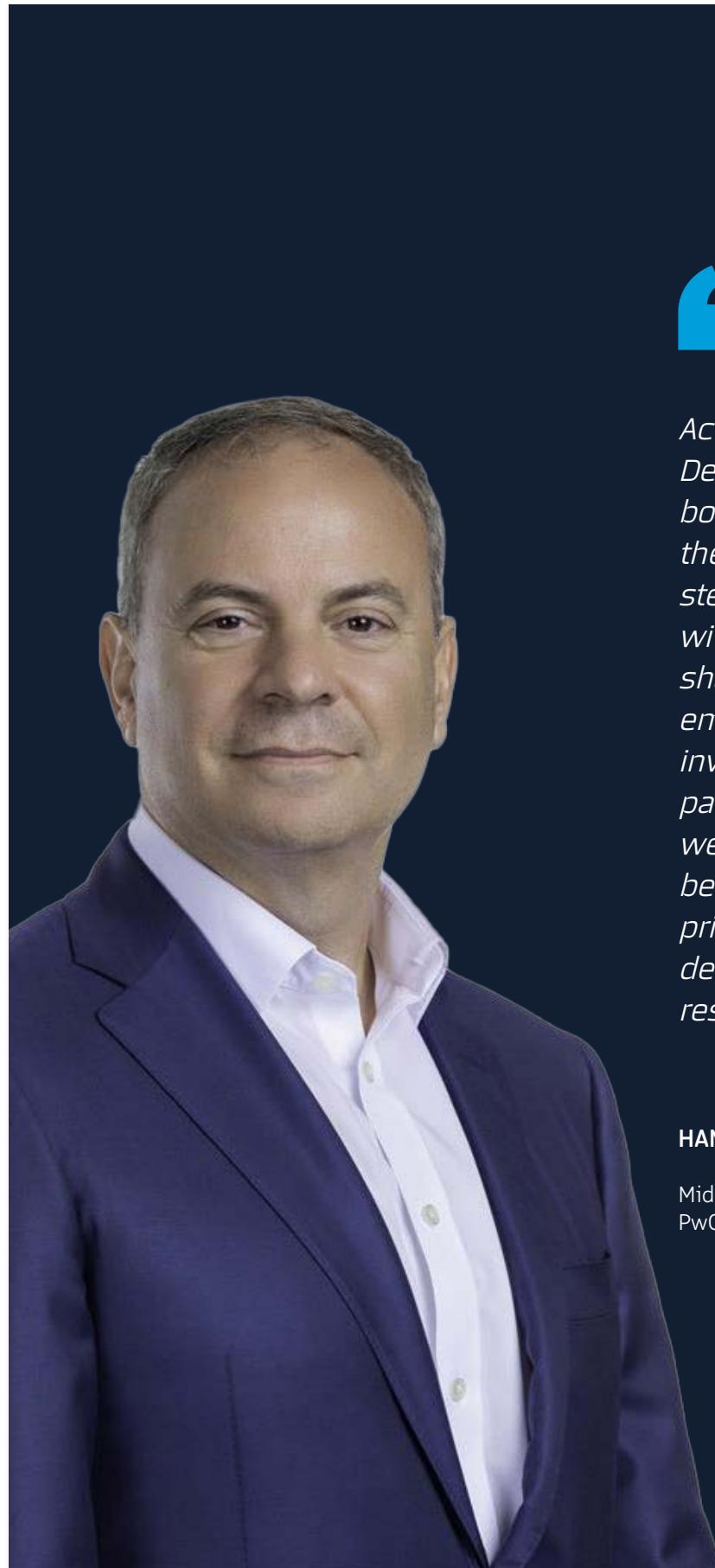
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*This report reflects our collective commitment to the 2030 Agenda and reinforces the central role of the private sector in advancing national and global development goals. It captures how companies across the UAE are translating sustainability ambition into business strategy, embedding the SDGs into operations, and contributing to a more resilient, inclusive, and future-oriented economy. By aligning long-term growth with sustainable development, the private sector is helping to shape progress that delivers value for both business and society.*

**H.E. WALEED SALMAN**

Executive Vice President, Business Development and Excellence, DEWA,  
Chairman, UNGC in the UAE





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*Achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals requires bold, coordinated action. Across the UAE, we're seeing businesses step up - not only aligning with national priorities but shaping them through inclusive employment, climate-smart investment and purpose-led partnerships. At PwC Middle East, we believe that collaboration between government and the private sector makes sustainable development a shared responsibility and a reality.*

**HANI ASHKAR**

Middle East Senior Partner  
PwC Middle East

## Introduction

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The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a global blueprint for addressing social, economic and environmental challenges. While governments play a key role, the private sector is also a critical driver of progress in achieving the SDGs, accelerating job creation, skill development, innovation and access to essential goods, services and infrastructure. Businesses further contribute by ensuring strong capital investment and promoting sustainable, inclusive practices.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has demonstrated a longstanding commitment to sustainable development. The principles of sustainability have been integral to shaping the UAE Vision 2021, We the UAE 2031 and continues to guide the UAE Centennial 2071, a comprehensive 50-year strategy that envisions the country as a global model for sustainability by its centennial anniversary.

Acknowledging rapid economic development, the UAE government emphasises private sector involvement to maintain and accelerate progress. At the United Nations High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in 2024, the UAE reaffirmed its commitment to the five SDGs under review that year: SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 13 (Climate Action), SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). This forward-thinking action underscored the UAE's dedication to sustainable growth highlighting the country's growing role in global development efforts.

Meeting the SDGs requires a coordinated approach that aligns trade, migration, social development, environment, taxation and climate policies. The role of the private sector is crucial, using its resources, innovation and influence to drive change.

As a global community, we are faced with critical challenges that demand strategic decisions to secure a sustainable future for people and the planet. Achieving the SDGs is a collective responsibility to ensure that no one is left behind.

## Our objective

Ahead of the High-Level Political Forum 2025 in July, the UAE General Secretariat of the National Committee on SDGs and the UN Global Compact Network UAE, with PwC Middle East, are continuing efforts to engage the private sector in advancing the SDGs.

The forum, as the primary UN platform for reviewing SDG progress, addressed five key SDGs in 2024:



Throughout 2024, the UAE General Secretariat and the UN Global Compact Network UAE set out to explore how the UAE private sector has been addressing these five key SDGs and the proactive measures businesses are taking to strengthen the country's leadership in sustainable development. Building on these efforts, this report aims to foster constructive dialogue between the government and the private sector to explore mutual support and collaboration. It is a snapshot of the private sector's growing contributions to the SDGs in the UAE, with a focus on identifying key action areas for future engagement.

The report highlights the significant strides made by UAE businesses towards achieving the SDGs, and identifies actionable areas for further progress and investment. It sheds light not only on the private sector's significant achievements but also the gaps and opportunities to be explored that have emerged from the survey of UAE private sector organisations, as well as the insights gathered from roundtable discussions and case studies. By examining the challenges and growing contributions faced by the private sector, the report provides a data-driven guide for future action. We hope it will serve as a roadmap for enhancing private sector engagement to advance the 2030 Agenda and reinforce the UAE's leadership in sustainable development.

## Methodology

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This report takes a holistic approach drawing on survey findings, roundtable discussions and real-world case studies to capture key insights, challenges and opportunities in advancing the five SDGs discussed above.

The survey was designed to address key themes under each targeted SDG and was distributed across various sectors and company sizes in the UAE. The insights presented in this report are based on data collected from more than 100 companies across 24 sectors in the country.

The series of roundtable discussions – curated to reinforce the survey findings – were held at the Government Accelerators in Emirates Towers on 25 June 2024, bringing together leaders from more than 80 private sector companies in the UAE. These discussions facilitated knowledge exchange, the sharing of best practices and the development of actionable recommendations to advance the SDGs.

The addition of a range of case studies provided by the private sector aims to further enrich the findings, offering practical examples of impactful initiatives and lessons learnt.

## Special acknowledgment

We extend our sincere appreciation to all private sector stakeholders who participated in the roundtable discussions and survey and contributed to the development of this report. Your valuable insights have been instrumental in shaping its findings and will continue to inform future efforts to advance responsible and forward-looking business practices.

The report benefited greatly from vast contributions from the Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government (MBRSG), on the intellectual, research design, policy analysis and organisational fronts. The Sustainability Policy research team at MBRSG provided crucial reviews of the data collection instruments, actively moderated, contributed as speakers in roundtables, developed focus group proceedings and provided valuable reviews of methodology, content and qualitative data collection process, and offered insightful feedback during the review of the report findings and the reporting of results. Special thanks to Lama Zakzak, Eiman Almarzooqi, Keertana Subramani, Dr. Mark Esposito and Dr. Fadi Salem. For further information on the MBRSG Sustainability Policy Research group.

Please visit: [www.MBRSG.ae/Research](http://www.MBRSG.ae/Research)



المستقبل سيكون لمن يستطيع تخيله





## No Poverty

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Poverty, defined as surviving on less than US\$2.15 per person per day at 2017 purchasing power parity, has witnessed remarkable declines over recent decades<sup>4</sup>. It is a fundamental issue that violates human dignity and hampers socio-economic development.

Achieving SDG 1 is critical as it lays the foundation for all other SDGs. A society free from poverty advances peace, stability, innovation and equality.

The private sector plays a pivotal role in realising the vision of a world free from poverty. Businesses have numerous opportunities to create meaningful impact by fostering inclusive employment, ensuring fair wages, maintaining safe and ethical working conditions, offering essential products and services, supporting responsible sourcing, investing in communities and engaging in policy advocacy.

Below are key findings from the UAE private sector across critical impact areas, highlighting efforts to tackle poverty and promote sustainable development.

### Inclusion and upskilling

Achieving sustained economic growth and eradicating poverty requires a strong emphasis on social inclusion, recognising that the entire society must be engaged in the country's development. Opportunities, such as career advancement, training and inclusive hiring practices are crucial for reducing poverty. In the UAE, the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation (MOHRE) has set forth guidelines that emphasise the importance of equal opportunities and a discrimination-free work environment to cater to its diverse workforce. This is critical to support the UAE government's efforts to diversify the economy beyond oil, create job opportunities and stimulate sustainable growth, which in turn supports economic resilience and poverty alleviation.

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<sup>4</sup> End poverty in all its forms everywhere - <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/poverty/>

Survey findings on the UAE private sector engagement with the SDGs have indicated that 79% of respondents offer opportunities for skill development, while 75% implement inclusive hiring practices. While strong progress is evident, there remains room to expand opportunities for all employees and strengthen support for marginalised communities. Participants at the roundtable discussions highlighted the importance of internships and scholarships to increase job opportunities and promote diversity. Businesses, part of the roundtable, also recommended targeted financial literacy programmes for blue-collar workers, citing improved fiscal management and stability among employees who attended workshops and training sessions. Roundtable discussions also stressed the importance of policies that support inclusivity and the development of comprehensive support networks for people with determination.

### Fair compensation

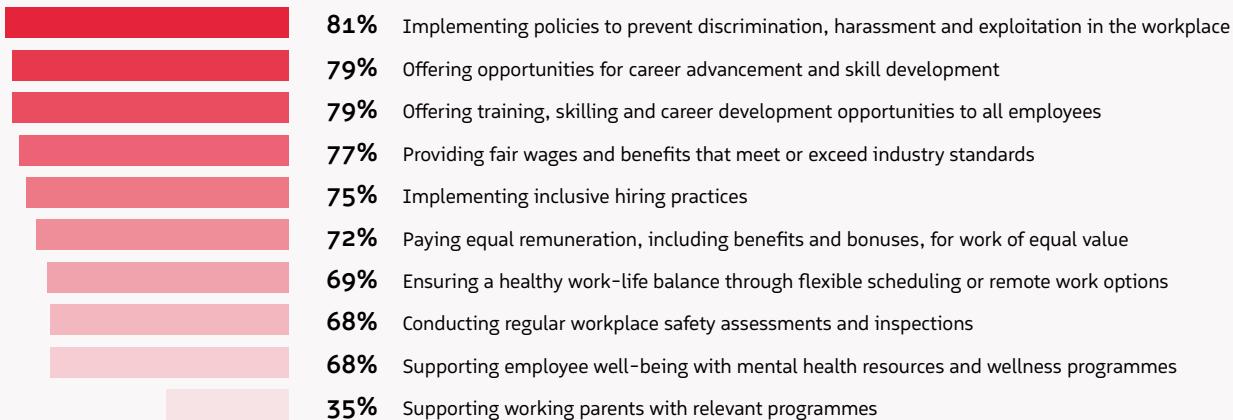
One of the most impactful ways for the private sector to reduce poverty is by paying employees a fair compensation. Every worker and employee in the UAE has the right to receive their full salary on the due date. The UAE labour law does not stipulate a minimum wage<sup>2</sup> but requires that salaries meet employees' basic needs. A new UAE law ensuring equal pay for men and women in the private sector came into effect on 25 September 2020<sup>3</sup>. It mandates private sector employers to ensure timely salary payments through the Wage Protection System (WPS) to avoid penalties and violations, an important measure to safeguarding workers' rights and promoting fair labour practice.

Our survey findings have indicated that 77% of the respondents provided fair wages and benefits that meet or exceed industry standards with 72% paying equal remuneration for work of equal value. Roundtable participants emphasised the importance of companies establishing living wage criteria internally and addressing systemic biases in pay structures.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://gulfnews.com/uae/when-can-private-companies-deduct-salaries-in-the-uae-1.500012178>

<sup>3</sup> <https://gulfnews.com/uae/uae-employers-employees-welcome-equal-pay-decree-in-the-private-sector-1.74122269>



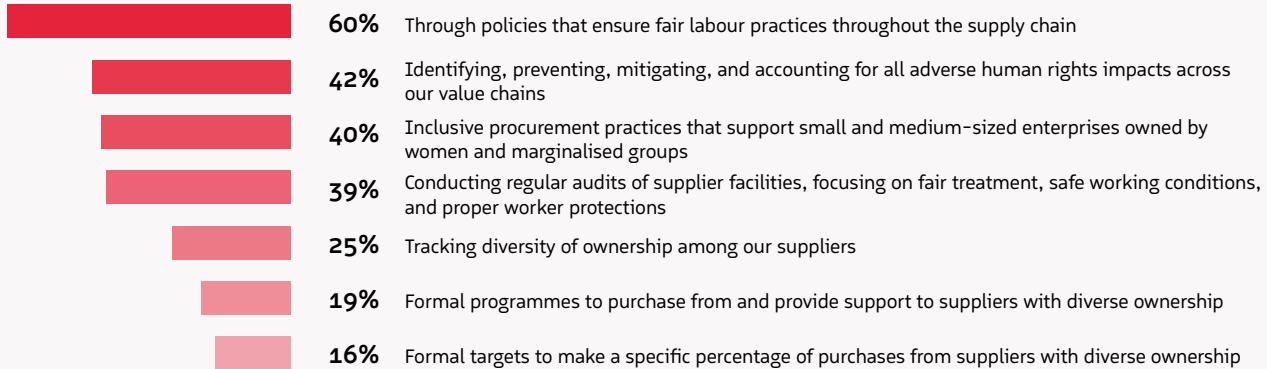
| **Figure 1:** How does your company support fair labour practices and ensure decent working conditions for employees?

### Ethical supply chain practices and diversity

One of the most impactful ways organisations can contribute to SDG 1: No Poverty is by ensuring ethical supply chain practices. By prioritising fair labour practices<sup>4</sup> that include policies and actions to ensure workers are treated ethically, lawfully and with respect throughout their employment, businesses can promote economic well-being in the regions where they operate, guaranteeing fair wages, improved working conditions and sustainable economic opportunities for vulnerable communities.

Our survey findings have revealed that 60% of respondents have formal policies in place ensuring fair labour practices throughout the supply chain. In terms of enhancing compliance and promoting diverse ownership across the supply chain, there remains opportunity for UAE businesses to progress further on this front. The roundtable discussions underscored the need for inclusive procurement practices and support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) owned by women and entrepreneurs from diverse backgrounds.

<sup>4</sup> International Labour Organisation (ILO). (2022). ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up. Geneva: ILO. Available at: <https://www.ilo.org/declaration>



**| Figure 2:** What policies and measures does your company have in place to ensure fair labour practices and decent working conditions throughout the supply chain?

### Initiatives, partnerships and engagements

Collaborative initiatives, partnerships and engagements can empower individuals and promote economic inclusion, directly contributing to the reduction of poverty and fostering long-term social impact. They are also crucial for SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals. In the UAE, the government has consistently promoted public-private partnerships (PPPs) to drive development. In 2023, the Ministry of Finance issued a new decree to regulate PPPs<sup>5</sup>, aiming to boost private sector participation in developmental and strategic projects.

Our survey findings revealed that almost half of respondents support local education and healthcare initiatives and 25% partner directly with organisations dedicated to poverty eradication. Additionally, more than half of respondents in private sector organisations invest in local community development projects. Roundtable insights highlighted experiences of successful partnerships with academic institutions, and local youth programmes to drive meaningful impact. Enhancing these partnerships could further maximise their long-term impact and effectiveness.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.thenationalnews.com/business/economy/2024/01/18/uae-issues-new-decree-to-regulate-public-private-sector-partnerships/>



| **Figure 3:** How does your company contribute to community development and poverty reduction?

## SDG 1 Key takeaways

- **Implement** comprehensive internship and scholarship programmes to increase job opportunities and promote diversity within the workforce
- **Establish** living wage criteria to ensure all employees receive fair and adequate remuneration
- **Promote** inclusive procurement practices and increase support for women-owned and entrepreneurs from diverse backgrounds
- **Conduct** regular audits of supplier facilities to ensure fair labour practices
- **Engage** in meaningful collaborations with academic institutions, youth programmes and other organisations to share best practices and drive progress in poverty eradication
- **Increase** employee opportunities to engage in local community projects and corporate responsibility initiatives



## SDG 1 No Poverty

### Case studies



#### Championing a worker welfare programme

*Expo City is the new centre of Dubai's growth. It is an innovative business hub that integrates modern residences, cultural spaces, unique leisure facilities, restaurants and retail outlets all within a sustainable city.*

#### In numbers

- 149 audits and 453 worker trainings conducted in 2023
- 82 auditors trained and 14 hotline cases raised and closed
- 111 accommodation visits and 23 auditor training sessions held
- 31 grievances registered and resolved between July 2022 and December 2023

#### Company initiatives

Expo City Dubai is committed to supporting SDG 1: No Poverty through its comprehensive worker welfare programme. This initiative focuses on improving the living and working conditions of manual labour workers, ensuring fair compensation, safe environments and equal treatment. Expo City's Worker Welfare Policy includes 10 principles designed to protect employees' rights and dignity, such as ensuring fair recruitment, timely wage payments and providing grievance mechanisms. The city collaborates with contractors, service providers and third parties to enforce these standards, aligning with Expo 2020 Dubai's benchmarks for worker welfare.

#### The impact

The impact of Expo City Dubai's worker welfare programme is measurable through both qualitative and quantitative results. Over 4,000 workers benefit from enhanced welfare conditions annually. In 2023 alone, Expo City conducted 149 audits, 453 worker training interviews, and 111 accommodation visits, to ensure that workers' rights are consistently upheld. The "better together" approach fosters leadership and communication, improving ethical conduct across the supply chain. Additionally, the 24/7 hotline and Worker Connect app empower workers to report concerns, with 31 grievances being resolved during the 2022-2023 period.

## Next steps

Expo City aims to strengthen its worker welfare programme by expanding stakeholder collaboration and ensuring long-term sustainability. Future initiatives include improvements to worker welfare, such as enhanced training for welfare monitors – responsible for overseeing and ensuring the well-being of workers – and contractors. Further integration of welfare standards into the supply chain will be a key focus, ensuring that all partners align with Expo City's values and commitment to SDG 1.



### Aircrafted Kids, upcycling for education and impact

*Emirates is one of the two flag carriers of the UAE.*

## In numbers

- More than 2,000 schoolbags distributed
- Partnered with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Ethiopia, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Bangladesh, India and Pakistan
- 14 Emirates engineering staff involved in production

## Company initiative

Emirates launched Aircrafted Kids, a community-driven initiative that upcycles retired aircraft materials into schoolbags for children in underserved communities. As a collaboration involving Emirates Engineering and local NGOs, the project ensures access to vital school supplies – like stationery, books and calculators – delivered in high-quality, custom-designed bags made from upcycled aircraft interiors. The initiative is part of Emirates' broader commitment to consuming responsibly and to circularity, as well as supporting children's welfare through the Emirates Airline Foundation.

## The impact

By merging sustainability with social impact, Emirates addressed two critical challenges: waste reduction and access to educational resources. The schoolbags – designed for comfort, safety and durability – provided children in vulnerable communities resources essential for learning, while also engaging local teams on the ground to foster stronger community relationships.



### Next steps

The initiative is now expanding to Egypt, with more destinations in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region planned. Emirates also plans to extend the retail arm of the Aircrafted collection, with proceeds supporting further education-focused programmes. The initiative stands as an example of how innovation and sustainability can contribute to educational continuity and well-being, particularly in rural or economically disadvantaged settings.



## Zero Hunger

SDG 2 aims to end hunger and ensure access to safe, nutritious and sufficient food for all people. In the UAE, the government is actively addressing food security through a variety of initiatives and policies. Besides its National Food Security Strategy 2051<sup>6</sup>, the UAE has implemented several other key initiatives to enhance food security. Dubai's Food Security Dashboard uses AI to analyse indicators, such as stock availability, production and consumption. The UAE Food Bank, launched in 2017, collaborates with local authorities to distribute food to those in need, while the Food Security Research Platform serves as an online hub for specialists to share research on sustainable food systems<sup>7</sup>.

In the 2024 Global Hunger Index (GHI), the UAE is among 22 countries that have a GHI score of less than five<sup>8</sup>, indicating that the country has made significant progress in food security, access to nutrition and overall well-being. As the world grapples with increasingly complex geopolitical challenges, the UAE's approach to food security continues to evolve – anchored in innovation, sustainable farming practices, and a growing focus on reducing food waste and promoting responsible sourcing. With strong private-sector engagement, the UAE is positioning itself as a regional and global leader in food security, contributing to the broader Zero Hunger agenda.

In the UAE, businesses play a critical role in achieving SDG 2 by implementing effective, scalable solutions across the agriculture supply chain and supporting small-scale farmers through local sourcing where possible, thereby strengthening domestic food security and sustainability.

To improve productivity of the agricultural sector, the UAE government has also been encouraging the private sector to conduct continuous research in this area to help the nation become the leading knowledge hub in this sector.

Achieving resilient and equitable food systems requires collaboration from all stakeholders across the agricultural supply chain, including farmers, producers, traders, retailers, investors and consumers. Their collective efforts are essential to ensuring food security, protecting natural resources and driving economic growth.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://u.ae/en/about-the-uae/leaving-no-one-behind/2zerohunger>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.tamimi.com/law-update-articles/food-for-thought-the-future-of-food-security-in-the-uae/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.globalhungerindex.org/uae.html>

### Corporate policies on food access

According to the survey, 29% of respondents partner directly with food banks or organisations that distribute food aid, over a third work actively to reduce food waste in their operations and supply chain, while one-in-five implement sustainable sourcing practices to ensure resilience in the food supply chain.

Key roundtable insights included supporting farmers through direct purchases, promoting regional products, and establishing marketplaces for surplus food. These efforts are crucial in bridging supply gaps and achieving food security. Several companies emphasised their involvement with food banks to fight hunger and reduce food waste. Establishing a national food bank network and standardising food donation guidelines was recommended to enhance private sector participation by linking food banks with businesses and individuals looking to donate surplus food.

### Empowering agriculture

Findings from our survey show that 20% of respondents in the agricultural sector actively promote inclusive business models involving small-scale farmers in their supply chains and 13% now offer financial services and support to smallholder farmers.

Roundtable discussions reflected newer ways of operating and emphasised the importance of supporting small-scale farming through grants, water-saving projects, restoring traditional water systems and integrating academic research with business practices.

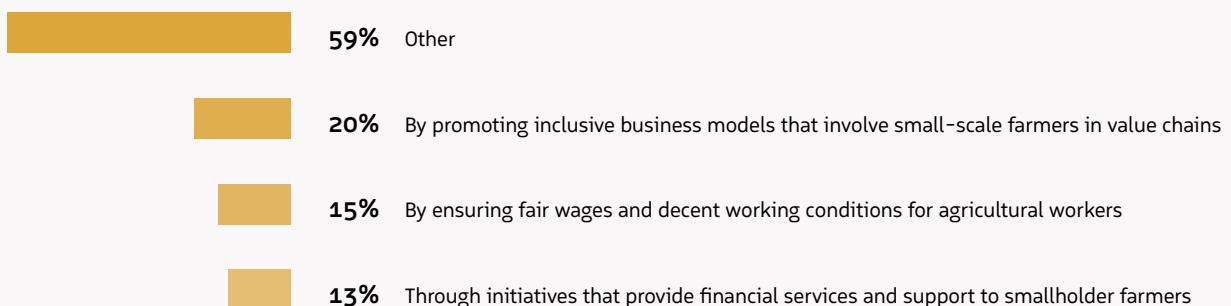
Innovative solutions such as vertical farming and circular economy principles were also highlighted as means to enhance agricultural sustainability. Creating direct connections between local farmers, retailers and manufacturers through dedicated platforms or infrastructure was also recommended with the aim of simplifying logistics and encouraging local sourcing.

## Enhancing nutrition

Findings from our survey have revealed that almost half of all companies have employee wellness programmes promoting healthy eating habits. Roundtable participants stressed the need for nutritional awareness and education initiatives, such as involving students in tree planting projects and using consumer data to forecast demand were highlighted as effective strategies to improve nutrition and reduce food waste. Through these combined efforts, businesses can play a pivotal role in realising a healthier and more food-secure future.



| **Figure 4:** Does your company have any of the following policies or initiatives in place in contribution to SDG2?



| **Figure 5:** How does your company support economic viability and inclusive growth in the agricultural sector?

## SDG 2

### Key takeaways

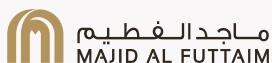
- Partner with local food banks and organisations to distribute surplus food and reduce food waste within internal operations and across the supply chain
- Implement supply chain transparency initiatives to ensure fair treatment of farmers and promote inclusive business models that involve small-scale farmers
- Support and enhance nutritional education initiatives in local communities and develop employee wellness programmes that promote healthy eating habits



## SDG 2

### Zero Hunger

#### Case studies



#### Advancing Zero Hunger through sustainable retail and food waste innovation

*Majid Al Futtaim is a leading developer of shopping malls, communities, retail, and leisure destinations across the Middle East, Africa and Asia.*

#### In numbers

- 8.3% increase in sales of sustainability-labelled products
- 350 tons of surplus food donated to people in need in 2024
- 10-15% annual reduction in food waste, through initiatives such as better demand forecasting and proper handling of food
- Dhs300,000 donated to local non-government organisations (NGOs) in 2024
- Over 95% of private-brand food products now feature front-of-pack traffic light labels, reflecting nutrition education efforts to indicate high, medium, or low levels of fat, saturated fat, sugars and salt



## Company initiatives

Majid Al Futtaim Retail has integrated SDG 2: Zero Hunger into its sustainability strategy, focusing on sustainable sourcing, nutrition education and reducing food waste. Initiatives including promoting healthier food through the Choose Better programme, employee wellness programmes and nutrition education, such as the Healthy Lunchboxes book, are also part of their commitment. Moreover, they collaborate with food aid organisations, donating surplus food to NGOs, such as the UAE Food Bank.

## The impact

Majid Al Futtaim's efforts have shown significant impact. The first phases of the Choose Better programme increased sales of sustainability-labelled products by 8.3% and raised fruit and vegetable sales by 0.8%. Their employee wellness programmes reached over 38,000 employees, with a strong focus on healthier eating. 350 tons of surplus food were donated in 2024, benefiting communities in need, while food waste reduction strategies helped avoid 10-15% of waste annually. The company's corporate social responsibility (CSR) efforts facilitated donations of Dhs300,000 to local NGOs.

## Next steps

Looking ahead, Majid Al Futtaim aims to scale its food waste reduction efforts by developing a comprehensive strategy to reduce landfill contributions. They have ramped up surplus food donations in 2024 across several emirates, and are working to continuously scale this up, in collaboration with local NGOs. They are also developing a comprehensive food waste reduction strategy which will help them achieve that.



### Tackling Food Waste and Hunger Through Smart Sourcing and Community Impact

*HeroGo is a grocery subscription service in the UAE dedicated to fighting food waste. They work with farmers and suppliers to rescue fresh, healthy produce that is destined to be wasted, whether it is excess supply or was rejected by supermarkets.*

#### In numbers

- Over 300,000 meals committed to low-income communities
- 50% growth in customer base, serving more than 22,000 users
- Surplus food sourced at 30% lower prices than in supermarkets

#### Company initiatives

HeroGo is committed to achieving SDG 2: Zero Hunger through reducing food waste and improving access to affordable, sustainable food. Their mission focuses on repurposing surplus produce and offering it at around 30% lower prices to consumers. They support local farmers, importers and manufacturers by providing a platform to sell fresh, healthy produce that has been either in excess supply or was rejected by supermarkets because products were “too big”, “too small”, or “looks a little funny”. Also, HeroGo donates two meals for every box delivered, benefiting low-income communities across the UAE.

#### The impact

HeroGo has had a significant impact on reducing food waste and addressing food insecurity. Since inception, they have committed over 300,000 meals to low-income communities through food bank partnerships, CSR events, and their ongoing “two meals per box” initiative. In 2024 alone, over 1.36m meals’ worth of fresh produce was reclaimed from going to landfill - food that is now nourishing families instead of being wasted.

The company efficiently connects farmers, manufacturers and consumers to reduce food waste and has grown its user base to serve over 22,000 home users and businesses, including TotalEnergies, New Balance, SNC Lavalin, and Rolls Royce. Through its sustainable sourcing and delivery model, HeroGo continues to support smaller farmers by giving them access to a wider market, ensuring fair compensation, and reducing surplus at the source.



### Next steps

HeroGo aims to expand into new markets, further tackling food waste and food insecurity in the region. They plan to integrate AI into their supply chain to optimise food waste predictions and efficiency. HeroGo also seeks to enhance its partnerships with local farmers by promoting climate-smart agricultural practices, ensuring long-term food security while continuing to provide nutritious meals to low-income communities.

13 CLIMATE  
ACTION



## Climate Action

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The consequences of climate change are severe and wide-ranging. Extreme weather, like heat waves, droughts, wildfires and floods are becoming more frequent and intense, leading to loss of life, economic damage and food and water insecurity.

**SDG 13: Climate Action** calls for urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. This goal emphasises reducing global greenhouse gas emissions to limit warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius, with efforts to keep it under 1.5°C.

The UAE Federal Decree-Law No. (11) of 2024 on the Reduction of Climate Change Effects is a landmark legislative framework aimed at achieving the nation's Net Zero emissions target by 2050<sup>9</sup>. Enacted on 28 August 2024, the law has officially come into force on 30 May 2025 and mandates comprehensive climate action across both public and private sectors, including entities operating within free zones. Besides this, the National Climate Change Plan serves as a roadmap to bolster nationwide actions for climate mitigation and adaptation in the UAE until 2050<sup>10</sup>. A key pillar of this vision is a private sector-driven economic diversification programme, where businesses play a vital role in expanding markets for environmental goods and services.

Additionally, the UAE government has also made significant investments in renewable energy projects, such as the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Solar Park, to diversify energy sources and reduce fossil fuel dependency. It also promotes sustainable urban development by implementing green building regulations and eco-friendly infrastructure. Public awareness campaigns further engage communities in climate action, ensuring citizens understand the importance of sustainability. The country also plays a leading role in international climate cooperation, hosting major events like the World Future Energy Summit and contributing to global climate agreements. The UAE's presidency at the recent United Nations Convention on Climate Change (UNCCC) Conference of Parties (COP) 28 reinforced its commitment to climate leadership, focusing on accelerating the global energy transition, enhancing climate finance, and fostering international collaboration.

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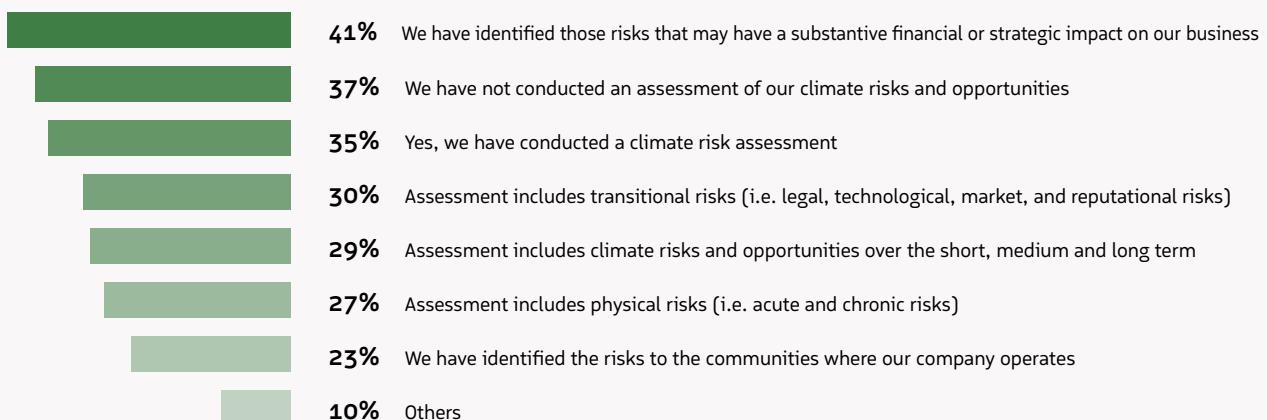
<sup>9</sup> <https://uaelegislation.gov.ae/en/legislations/2558>

<sup>10</sup> 2017-205: <https://u.ae/en/about-the-uae/strategies-initiatives-and-awards/strategies-plans-and-visions/environment-and-energy/national-climate-change-plan-of-the-uae>

Businesses in the UAE are playing a crucial role in advancing the Paris Agreement's goals of 2015<sup>11</sup> by adopting sustainable practices, anticipating climate risks and building resilience, all of which are essential for achieving SDG 13.

### Climate risk assessment

Identifying and assessing climate risks is critical for the private sector to mitigate the financial and strategic impacts of climate change. According to our survey, 41% of respondents identified risks that could have a substantive financial or strategic impact on their business while 30% have assessed transitional risks such as legal, market and reputational challenges. The roundtable discussions emphasised the opportunity to strengthen policies and introduce effective incentives that support comprehensive climate risk assessments. Companies must balance the rapid transition to sustainability with practical, realistic targets to ensure long-term resilience.



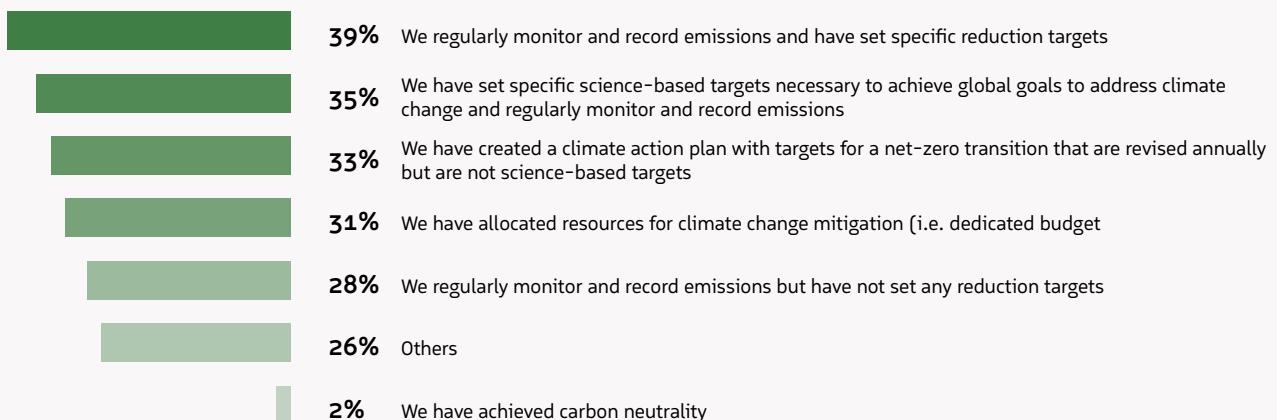
| **Figure 6:** Has your company conducted an assessment of your climate risks and if so, what did it include?

<sup>11</sup> <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement#:~:text=The%20Paris%20Agreement%20is%20a,France%2C%20on%2012%20December%202015.>

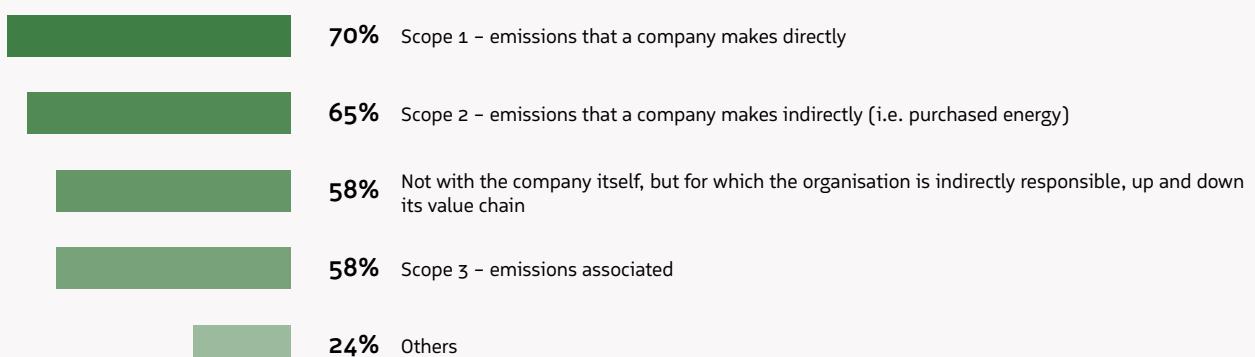
## Climate change mitigation

Mitigating climate change involves reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adopting low-carbon technologies. Survey findings revealed that companies in the UAE support the UAE Net Zero by 2050 Strategic Initiative, with 67% of respondents regularly monitoring and recording emissions of which 39% have set specific targets. Notably, well over half of the respondents are now reporting on Scope 3 emissions—highlighting growing awareness of value chain impacts beyond short operations. Roundtable insights emphasised the importance of regulatory clarity and financial incentives to encourage businesses to invest in sustainable practices. Advancing sustainable development calls for innovative approaches that lower initial investment barriers and harmonise profitability with long-term environmental goals.

Organisations must focus on practical solutions such as carbon capture and sustainable fuel alternatives to meet their emission reduction targets.



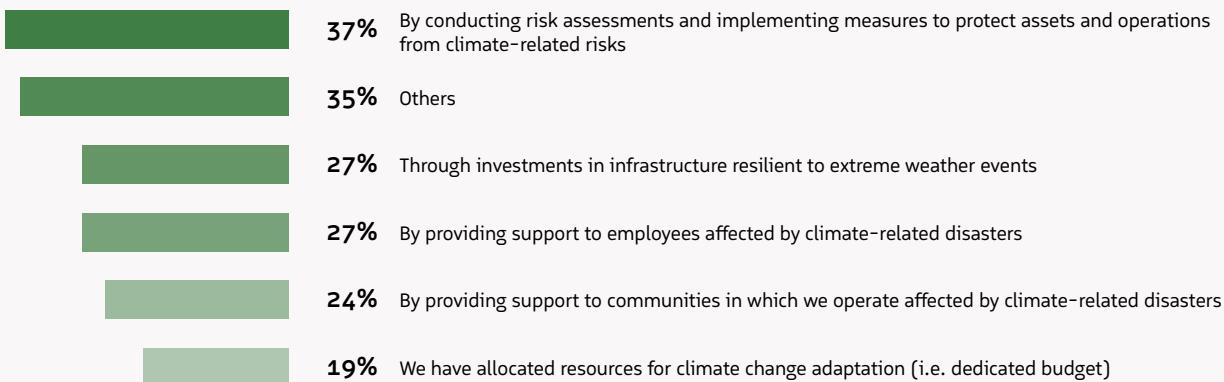
| **Figure 7:** How does your company contribute to climate change mitigation efforts?



| **Figure 8:** Which of the following scopes does your company report with?

## Climate change adaptation

Adapting to climate change is essential for building resilience and ensuring sustainable development. Survey results showed that 37% of respondents are actively engaged or conducting risk assessments and implementing measures. Also 27% of organisations are investing in climate-resilient infrastructure.



**| Figure 9:** What measures does your company take to adapt to climate change and its related risks on your employees, operations, and communities in which you operate?

A similar trend emerges from the findings of the latest PwC 28th Annual CEO Survey: UAE findings where we see 83% of CEOs in the UAE initiating climate-friendly investments over the past five years, reflecting their alignment with the UAE's commitment to sustainable growth<sup>12</sup>.

Roundtable discussions highlighted the need for government support and clear regulations to facilitate climate adaptation efforts.

Key opportunities lie in increasing investment in climate adaptation projects, improving access to data and technology for accurate risk assessments, and fostering a cultural mindset geared toward long-term sustainability.

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.pwc.com/m1/en/ceo-survey/28th-ceo-survey-middle-east-findings-2025/uae-findings.html>

## SDG 13

### Key takeaways

- **Encourage** companies to recognise and assess climate-related risks that could significantly impact their operations, including transitional risks such as legal, market and reputational challenges
- **Implement** regulatory clarity and financial incentives to motivate businesses to invest in sustainable practices and low-carbon technologies, aiming for specific emission reduction targets
- **Support** government initiatives and clear regulations for the development of climate-resilient infrastructure and ensuring effective public-private partnerships to enhance climate resilience



## SDG 13

### Climate Action

#### Case studies



#### Advancing the Energy Transition

*Founded in 1971, ADNOC is an advanced and progressive international energy company taking transformative steps to responsibly provide energy that people and economies need to thrive.*

#### In Numbers

- ~7kg CO<sub>2</sub>e/boe upstream GHG intensity, among the industry's lowest
- 6.2 million tCO<sub>2</sub>e reduction in scope 1 and 2 emission in 2023
- 20% reduction in upstream methane emissions in 2023
- US\$23bn (Dhs84.4bn) allocated for decarbonisation and lower-carbon projects



## Company initiative

ADNOC is decarbonising operations, investing in renewables, and advancing nature-based solutions, including planting 10m mangroves in the UAE by 2030. Aligned with 2030 targets, ADNOC aims to reduce operational emissions by 25%, achieve near-zero methane emissions and zero routine flaring, produce one million tonnes of low-carbon ammonia annually, and deploy 100GW of renewables generation capacity through its shareholding in Masdar. With a US\$23bn (Dhs84.4bn) investment, ADNOC is scaling practical renewables and low-carbon solutions, deploying innovative technologies, and partnering to build the low-carbon energy system of tomorrow.

## The impact

ADNOC lowered emissions while providing some of the world's least carbon-intensive oil and gas products, achieving an upstream carbon intensity of ~7kg CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per barrel of oil equivalent (e/boe) in 2023 - among the industry's lowest. Scope 1 and 2 emissions were reduced by 6.2m tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO<sub>2</sub>e), including 4.8m tonnes through clean grid energy from solar and nuclear powering all onshore operations. Methane emissions fell 20%, with OGMP 2.0 Gold Standard Reporting status attained in 2024.

## Next steps

ADNOC will continue providing affordable, lower-carbon energy to those in need while supporting a sustainable future. The company is enhancing its carbon management framework and integrating processes and plans to ensure continued progress. Strategic investments are being made in the abatement portfolio to meet emissions reduction goals. As the portfolio expands to secure a reliable energy supply, ADNOC is incorporating technology and AI to optimise operations and derive sustainable value from its assets and resources.



### Building climate resilience in energy and water

*The Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA), founded in 1992 by His Highness Sheikh Maktoum bin Rashid Al Maktoum, is the exclusive provider of electricity and water services for the Emirate of Dubai.*

#### In numbers

DEWA is committed to support Dubai's 30% GHG emissions reduction by 2030.

#### Company initiatives

DEWA has embraced its role as a regional leader in driving sustainable practices and safeguarding communities. Guided by SDG 13: Climate Action, DEWA's journey is defined by decisive actions to reduce emissions while prioritising adaptation to ensure resilience in a changing world. Recognising the risks posed by climate change, DEWA has placed adaptation at the centre of its sustainability efforts. DEWA's Climate Change Resilience Plan, the first of its kind in the region, is designed to fortify infrastructure and operations against rising temperatures, extreme weather, and shifting regulatory landscapes. Integrated into DEWA's Enterprise Risk Management framework, the plan follows a seven-step process, from risk identification and assessment to implementation and monitoring, while proactively identifying vulnerabilities and related risks. Preventive controls, stakeholder engagement, and community collaborations are key to mitigating these risks and enhancing adaptive capacity.

#### The impact

While adaptation forms a cornerstone of DEWA's strategy, DEWA also remains focused on reducing its carbon footprint. The Carbon Dioxide Emission Reduction Programme, launched in 2012 is a long-term plan to analyse emissions, set targets to lower CO<sub>2</sub> from all operations by 2030, and integrate these targets into business decisions and growth strategies. DEWA is committed to reducing emissions in the power and water sector as part of the Dubai Carbon Abatement Strategy 2030 that sets a 30% GHG emissions reduction by 2030 for Dubai. DEWA's commitment to Net Zero by 2050 drives its focus on renewable energy expansion, supply-side efficiencies, and demand-side management initiatives.

## Next steps

DEWA's climate journey reflects innovation, resilience, and leadership. By aligning with SDG 13, DEWA not only contributes to Dubai's sustainability goals but also sets a regional benchmark for climate action. The future, shaped by today's choices, is being built resiliently, sustainably, and purposefully for generations to come.



### Advancing Net Zero Through Science-Based Targets

*DP World is a multinational logistics company headquartered in Dubai. The company's range of products and solutions covers all aspects of ports and terminals, logistics, marine services and digital technology.*

#### In numbers

- 13% reduction in Scope 1 and 2 emissions (2023)
- 60% of electricity from renewable sources (2023)
- Nearly 50% reduction in carbon emissions across UAE operations
- 4.2% annual CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reduction targets
- Targeting net zero by 2050 across all scopes

#### Company initiatives

DP World has aligned its sustainability goals with SDG 13: Climate Action to Combat Climate Change. In 2021, the company committed to the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi), and updated its short-term decarbonisation target in 2024, following guidance issued by SBTi in 2022 to align with the 1.5-degree scenario. DP World aims for a 42% reduction in Scope 1 and 2 emissions and a 28% reduction in Scope 3 2030, as well as achieving net zero across all scopes by 2050. Furthermore, in August 2024, the company became the first logistics company in the Middle East to have its targets validated by SBTi.

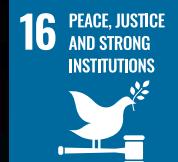


### The impact

By 2023, DP World reduced Scope 1 and 2 emissions by over 13% from the 2022 baseline. Annual key performance indicators include a 4.2% reduction in absolute CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and a 5% reduction in intensity CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. As of 2023, 60% of the company's electricity consumption comes from renewable sources, with a goal to reach 70% by 2030 and 100% by 2040. The company's operations in the UAE are now fully powered by renewables, leading to a near 50% reduction in carbon emissions in 2023.

### Next steps

DP World will continue following science-based guidelines to reach its decarbonisation targets. With an ambitious strategy, the company plans to accelerate the reduction of Scope 3 emissions and further industry-wide collaboration. Electrification and renewable energy investments will be a key focus, with the goal of achieving net zero operational status across ports and terminals by 2040.



# Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

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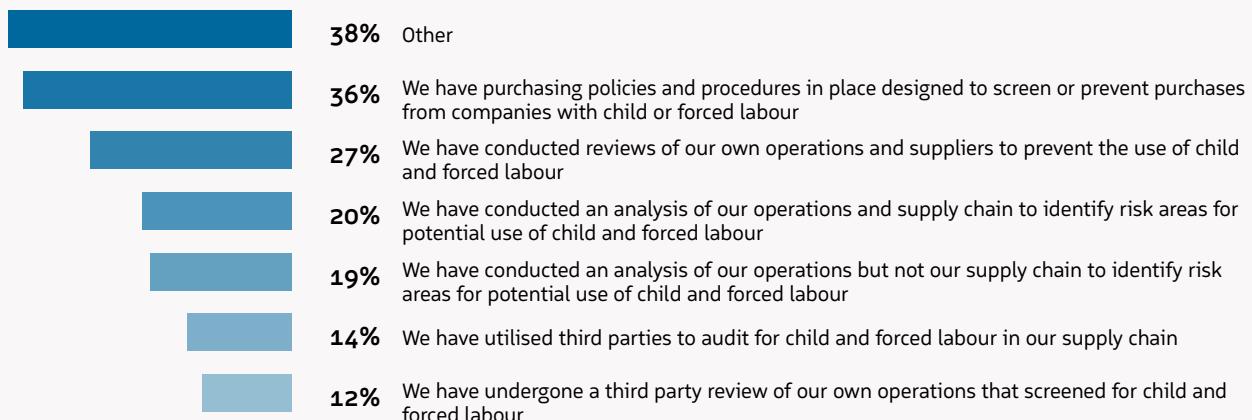


SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions aims to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. Achieving this goal involves addressing issues such as violence, corruption and bribery, while ensuring transparency and accountability in governance. It requires companies adopting a culture of integrity, fairness and inclusion, encouraging ethical conduct.

The UAE is dedicated to fostering peaceful and inclusive societies by strengthening the rule of law, justice and institutional accountability. To combat corruption, the government enforces stringent anti-corruption measures, which ensures public sector integrity and financial transparency. Beyond legal frameworks, the UAE promotes social cohesion and tolerance through community engagement initiatives, interfaith dialogue and cultural exchange programmes that reinforce inclusivity.

## Ethical supply chain

Ethical supply chain management is crucial for promoting sustainable business practices. According to the survey, 36% of organisations have formal purchasing policies to prevent sourcing from suppliers using child or forced labour. Moreover, 14% of companies participating in the survey are leading the way in implementing third-party audits. An area that can be expanded through shared best practices. Participants in the roundtables highlighted the challenge of monitoring entire supply chains and the need for a cultural shift towards ethical sourcing. Opportunities lie in creating a whitelist of certified companies and leveraging public-private partnerships to enhance supply chain transparency.



**| Figure 10:** Does your company do any of the following with regards to preventing or managing the risk of child and forced labour in your own operations or your supply chain?

## Anti-corruption measures

Combating corruption is essential for building trust and ensuring fair business practices and is crucial for achieving SDG 1: No Poverty. Survey results show that 56% of companies conduct internal audits and have monitoring systems to detect and prevent corrupt practices. Additionally, 57% provide regular training on anti-corruption measures. Roundtable discussions emphasised the importance of regulatory clarity and financial incentives to encourage anti-corruption practices. Progress can be accelerated by developing scalable monitoring solutions and fostering alignment in enforcement practices across different sectors.

**83%** By implementing a code of conduct and ethics policies for employees and business partners

**57%** Through regular training and awareness programmes on anti-corruption measures

**56%** By conducting internal audits and monitoring systems to detect and prevent corrupt practices

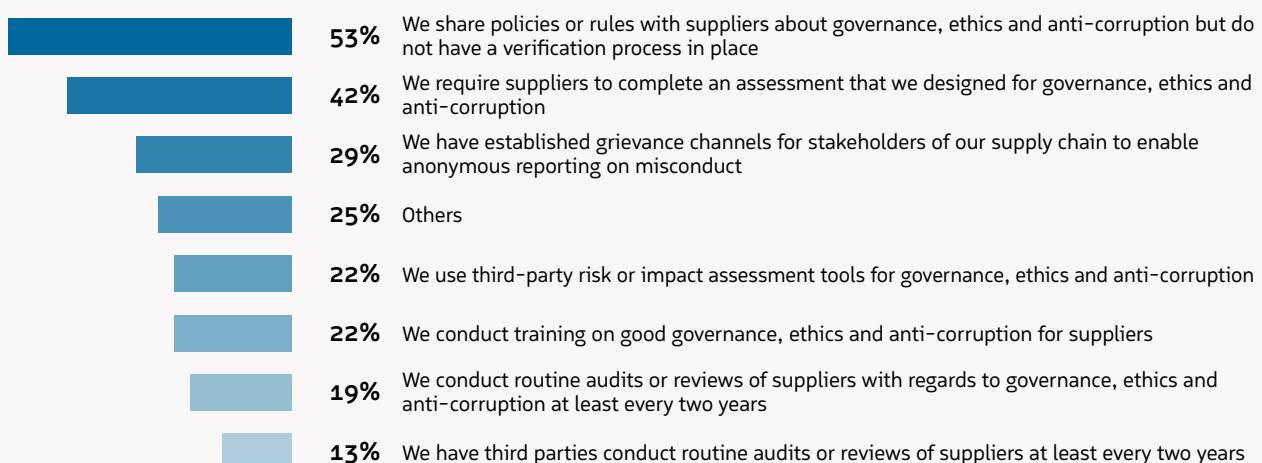
**8%** Others

| **Figure 11:** How does your company prevent corruption and bribery?

## Good governance

Good governance involves encouraging accountability, transparency and inclusiveness in organisational practices, also contributing to SDG 1: No Poverty. The survey revealed that 22% of companies use third-party risk or impact assessment tools for governance and ethics.

Roundtable insights underscored the opportunity to enhance governance practices across the UAE by developing a unified Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) ratings system and a centralised data platform. Aligning government compliance with international ESG standards and building local sustainability expertise were identified as key enablers. Businesses also expressed strong interest in establishing national social and green taxonomies to define sustainable activities, guide investments, and support the adoption of meaningful sustainability practices. Harmonising national compliance with global sustainability frameworks and investing in sustainability talent development are key next steps. Roundtable insights also suggested that policy and regulation should mandate sustainability reporting and provide financial incentives to support businesses in their sustainability journey. Strengthening governance systems and ensuring regulatory clarity are crucial for consistent enforcement across sectors.



| **Figure 12:** Does your company do any of the following to ensure performance of your suppliers on Governance, Ethics and Anti-Corruption?

## Enhancing health and safety

Ensuring health and safety in the workplace is a fundamental aspect of sustainable development. The survey indicated that 73% of respondents have implemented workplace safety measures to prevent violence and accidents.

Roundtable discussions highlighted the opportunity to elevate health and safety standards through stronger government support and clear, supportive regulations. Advancing this agenda includes investing in cost-effective safety measures and expanding training and awareness initiatives. Enhanced investment in safety and continuous training offers significant long-term benefits for workplace well-being.

**73%** By implementing workplace safety measures to prevent violence and accidents

**23%** Others

**14%** By supporting initiatives that address domestic violence and abuse in the community

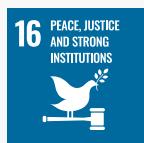
**1%** Not applicable

| **Figure 13:** How does your company contribute to reducing violence and related deaths?

## SDG 16

### Key takeaways

- **Develop and implement** a comprehensive policy that mandates third-party audits to ensure that suppliers adhere to ethical practices, such as the prohibition of child or forced labour
- **Establish** regular training programmes on anti-corruption measures for all employees and set up robust monitoring systems to detect and prevent corrupt practices, ensuring compliance with regulatory standards
- **Develop and adopt** a unified ESG ratings system and use centralised data platforms to enhance governance practices, aligning them with both national and international standards, and filling the talent gap in sustainability fields
- **Develop** national social and green taxonomies for establishing a more transparent and standardised ESG investment market. By defining “social” and “green” activities, these frameworks would help companies accurately classify their initiatives while allowing investors to assess the real impact of corporate social and environmental efforts
- **Advocate** for policies and regulations that mandate sustainability reporting and provide financial incentives for businesses, while strengthening governance systems and ensuring regulatory clarity for consistent enforcement across sectors
- **Invest** in comprehensive health and safety training programmes and implement rigorous safety measures to prevent workplace accidents and violence, supported by clear government regulations and ongoing employee awareness initiatives



## SDG 1 Peace, Justice & Strong Institutions

### Case studies



#### Enhancing transparency and sustainability

*Emirates NBD Group, a leading financial services brand in the region, operates across 13 countries around the world, including the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, India, and Türkiye, with over 30,000 employees and is listed on the Dubai Financial Market (DFM),*

#### In numbers

- 33% of management positions are held by women as of 2024
- 19% of top management positions are held by women, against a 25% target for 2024
- Issued a USD 500 million Sustainability-Linked Loan Bond (2024)
- Aiming for 25% female representation in senior roles by 2027

#### Company initiatives

In 2023, Emirates NBD committed to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs) by integrating these goals into its reporting and banking strategies. Aligned with UNSDG 16, which promotes peace, justice, and strong institutions, the bank is dedicated to reducing corruption, fostering transparent institutions, and promoting non-discriminatory laws and policies. Some of the initiatives implemented include an anti-bribery and corruption policy, anti-bribery training, and a whistle-blower programme that allows employees to anonymously report and seek guidance on ethical issues.

#### The impact

Through Emirates NBD's anti-bribery measures and policies, the bank has established a framework that minimises corruption risks while also complying with global reporting standards. These standards include the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and the Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB), enhancing transparency in its ESG efforts. Additionally, by aligning international human rights conventions and focusing on labour practices, Emirates NBD ensures the protection of human rights throughout its operations.

#### Next steps

Emirates NBD is focused on enhancing its Sustainable Finance Framework. In 2024, the bank issued a US\$500m sustainability-linked loan bond, and it plans to continue driving sustainable financing aligned with international standards. The bank also aims to increase the representation of women in senior management roles by 25% by 2027, to promote a diverse and inclusive leadership team.

17 PARTNERSHIPS  
FOR THE GOALS



## Partnerships for the Goals

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SDG 17: Partnership for the Goals emphasises the importance of global partnerships and collaborations to achieve the SDGs. This goal calls for inclusive and effective partnerships at the global, regional, national and local levels, bringing together governments, the private sector and civil society. For businesses, it underscores the need to form cross-sector collaborations, spur innovation and allocate resources effectively to address critical global challenges.

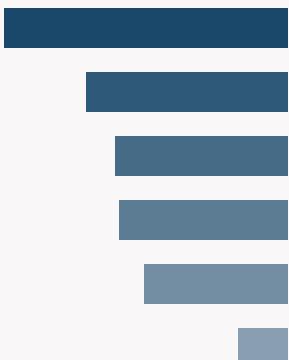
The UAE government encourages collaborative governance, working closely with the private sector, civil society and global organisations to enhance development initiatives. Public-private partnerships (PPPs) play a crucial role in advancing infrastructure, renewable energy and community services, fostering innovation and investment. Additionally, the UAE prioritises research and innovation collaborations, bridging academic institutions, research organisations and industries to address global challenges. The government also invests in capacity-building initiatives, partnering with international organisations and educational institutions to enhance skills and capabilities across sectors.

### Collaboration across sectors

According to survey data, 69% of the responding companies are collaborating with other businesses, governments and civil society to achieve common sustainable development goals. Roundtable discussions emphasised the need for multi-stakeholder partnerships and cross-sector collaborations to maximise impact. However, challenges include the complexity of aligning diverse interests and the need for a common platform to facilitate effective communication and coordination.

## Innovation and technology

Innovation and technology play a pivotal role in achieving SDG 17: Partnership for the Goals. The survey showed that 41% of companies are supporting research and innovation collaborations with partners in different countries and regions. Furthermore, 49% are investing in initiatives that promote innovation, technology transfer and knowledge-sharing for sustainable development. Roundtable discussions emphasised the importance of leveraging technological advancements, such as AI and blockchain, to enhance sustainability practices. Additionally, a culture of continuous learning and adaptation within organisations can drive innovation and create positive impacts.



<b>69%</b>	By collaborating with other businesses, governments, and civil society organisations to achieve common sustainable development goals
<b>49%</b>	Through investments in initiatives that promote innovation, technology transfer, and knowledge sharing for sustainable development
<b>42%</b>	Through investments in projects and programmes that address global challenges such as poverty, climate change, and inequality
<b>41%</b>	By supporting research and innovation collaborations with partners from different countries and regions
<b>35%</b>	By supporting capacity-building programmes and partnerships in developing countries to address global challenges
<b>12%</b>	Others

**| Figure 14:** How does your company enhance the global partnership for sustainable development?

## Engagement and awareness

Engagement and awareness among stakeholders are vital for the successful implementation of SDG 17. Roundtable participants stressed the need to humanise SDG values and encourage employees to apply them in their daily activities. Initiatives such as gamifying the SDGs and creating platforms for sharing best practices can enhance stakeholder engagement and drive collective action towards sustainable development.

## SDG 17 Partnership for the Goals

### Key takeaways

- **Establish** multi-stakeholder partnerships and cross-sector collaborations, focusing on innovation, technology transfer and knowledge-sharing initiatives to achieve common sustainable development goals
- **Promote** research and innovation collaborations that leverage technological advancements, such as AI and blockchain
- **Enhance** stakeholder engagement by humanising SDG values, encouraging employees to apply them in their daily activities and creating platforms for sharing best practices



## SDG 17 Partnerships for the Goals

### Case studies



Accelerating net-zero ambitions with the Alliance for Industry Decarbonisation (AFID)

*AFID was established at the Investment Forum of the G20 Energy Ministerial in 2022 with the adoption of the Bali Declaration (AFID, 2022). The International Renewable Energy Agency coordinates and facilitates the activities of the Alliance with Siemens Energy and EMSTEEL as co-chairs of the Alliance.*

### In numbers

- Over 80 members since 2022
- Aiming for a 54% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030
- Targeting 534GW by 2030 from 183GW in 2023 as their goal to increase renewable energy capacity



## Company initiatives

Established in 2022, AFID aims to accelerate net-zero ambitions in energy-intensive sectors such as energy, petrochemicals, and mining. By fostering collaboration among private and public entities, AFID is driving global partnerships to enhance the transition to a low-carbon economy, particularly through the adoption of renewable energy, green hydrogen, and bioenergy with carbon capture and storage.

## The impact

AFID has grown significantly, with membership expanding from 14 to over 80 members across five continents. This growth highlights the increasing global commitment to decarbonisation. The Alliance's collective goal is to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 54% from the baseline year by 2030 and grow renewable energy capacity from 183GW in 2023 to 534GW by 2030. By 2030, AFID also aims to significantly increase green hydrogen capacity and upskill the workforce to support energy transition efforts.

## Next steps

Going forward, AFID plans to strengthen collaboration and governance among its members. It aims to enhance research and development, particularly for pilot projects, and advocate for supportive policies that encourage investment in clean technologies. The Alliance also focuses on scaling up financing through innovative models such as green bonds and public-private partnerships. Future efforts will also include expanding global collaborations and ensuring a just transition by involving diverse stakeholders.



### Empowering UAE businesses on their sustainability journey

*HSBC Bank Middle East Limited (HBME) is an international bank in the Middle East, operating as a wholly owned subsidiary of HSBC Holdings plc. HBME's history in the region dates back to 1889, and the bank has its headquarters in Dubai. It offers a comprehensive range of banking services to both personal and corporate clients, including commercial banking, investment banking, and wealth management.*

#### In numbers

- 100 participants enrolled in the Sustainable Business Accelerator (SBA) programme in 2024 - up from 50 companies in 2023
- 69 participants from 27 companies successfully completed the accelerator programme in 2024
- 4.8/5 customer satisfaction rating, reflecting the success and value of the programme
- Three sector specific modules delivered targeted learning and industry-specific insights with delegated sector experts as part of the programme

#### Company initiatives

HSBC's Sustainable Business Accelerator programme was launched in 2023 to support businesses in the UAE on their sustainability journeys. Many large conglomerates in the region face limited regulatory or buyer pressure to advance sustainability and often lack the necessary expertise or resources. The programme addresses these challenges by providing essential knowledge on materiality and carbon footprint calculations. In 2024, the programme entered its second year in partnership with Diginex, a Hong Kong-based tech start-up. Diginex's ESG platform enables companies to collect, certify, and disclose sustainability data in alignment with international frameworks. The initiative was further strengthened by the introduction of sector-specific workshops and extended one-on-one advisory sessions.



### The impact

The SBA programme has successfully guided companies in embedding sustainability into their business strategies. In 2024, 69 participants from 27 companies, who were part of the bank's customer base, graduated by submitting a materiality assessment and an initial greenhouse gas (GHG) footprint calculation, representing an 80% success rate. The programme received a 4.8/5 client satisfaction rating, demonstrating its value. Additionally, 91% of participating companies leveraged the Diginex ESG platform to conduct their first materiality assessment. Through three modules and two workshops, over 10 hours of content were delivered, equipping businesses with the tools to begin ESG reporting and track sustainability performance effectively.

### Next steps

Following the success of the 2024 programme, plans are in place to introduce a tailored SBA programme in 2025. The next phase will focus on detailed carbon calculation and target setting, ensuring businesses can advance their sustainability commitments. Continued partnerships with external experts will provide participants with enhanced tools and sector-specific insights, further strengthening ESG reporting capabilities.

## Final words

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The UAE's private sector plays a crucial role in achieving the SDGs, contributing to an inclusive, resilient and sustainable future. UAE businesses are increasingly becoming key partners in national and global development efforts.

Advances in artificial intelligence and emerging technologies present substantial opportunities for enhancing sustainability. These innovations will help the private sector implement measures more efficiently, accelerating progress towards the UN SDGs.

As the 2030 deadline approaches, deeper collaboration, innovation and accountability are essential. Achieving the SDGs requires strategic cross-sector alignment and purposeful leadership. This report suggests a comprehensive future study to better understand the evolving contributions of the private sector.

With bold actions and shared responsibility, the private sector can unlock new opportunities, drive scalable solutions and reinforce the UAE's position as a growing leader in sustainable development.

### Note

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Percentages in charts may not total 100% due to rounding, multi-selection answer options and the decision to omit certain responses, including “other”, “not applicable” and “don’t know”.

## UN Global Compact Resources to Accelerate Your SDG Contribution

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The Global Compact Network UAE is the official Local Network of the United Nations Global Compact, the world's largest corporate sustainability initiative, convening over 20,000 companies and 3,000 non-business stakeholders across more than 160 countries.

As a special initiative of the UN Secretary-General, the UN Global Compact calls on businesses to align their strategies and operations with Ten Principles in the areas of human rights, labor, environment, and anti-corruption, and to take action in support of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In the UAE, the Local Network fosters business leadership on sustainability by facilitating capacity building, multi-stakeholder collaboration, peer learning, and policy engagement—enabling companies to embed responsible business practices, manage ESG risks, and contribute to national and global development priorities.



## SDG 1 No Poverty

**Focus:** Living wages, decent work, gender equity, supply chain fairness, business and human rights.

### Programs & Initiatives

- **Business & Human Rights Accelerator**  
Helps companies implement the UN Guiding Principles across operations and value chains.
- **Human Rights Supplier Program (UAE)**  
Supports companies in strengthening supplier due diligence and aligning supply chain practices with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.
- **Target Gender Equality**  
Supports companies in setting and reaching ambitious targets for women's representation, participation and leadership.
- **UAE Living Wage Working Group**  
Brings together leading businesses to develop and implement living wage strategies that drive long-term value creation, workforce resilience, and competitive advantage.

### Academy Courses (not exhaustive)

- Advancing decent work in business through the UN Global Compact Labour Principles.
- Business and Human Rights: How Companies Can Operationalize the UN Guiding Principles.
- Decent Work Toolkit for Sustainable Procurement.
- Deep Dive Series: Exploring the Essentials of a Living Wage.
- How Procurement Decisions Can Advance Decent Work in Supply Chains.

Explore the UNGC Academy

<https://unglobalcompact.org/academy>

### Academy Courses (not exhaustive)

- **Business Dilemmas Forum:** Navigating Expectations for Societal Leadership.
- ILO Helpdesk for Business on International Labour Standards.
- **Male Allyship in the Private Sector:** Challenges and Opportunities Report (Middle East Spotlight).

Explore more SDG1 related resources on the UNGC Library

[https://unglobalcompact.org/library/search?search%5Bsustainable\\_development\\_goals%5D%5B%5D=1&search%5Bkeywords%5D=&search%5Bcontent\\_type%5D=](https://unglobalcompact.org/library/search?search%5Bsustainable_development_goals%5D%5B%5D=1&search%5Bkeywords%5D=&search%5Bcontent_type%5D=)

### Call to Action: Forward Faster

- Living Wage Track – Commit to paying living wages across operations and value chains.
- Gender Equality Track – Commit to equal pay, gender-balanced leadership, and inclusive policies.

Make a commitment

<https://forwardfaster.unglobalcompact.org>



## SDG 2 Zero Hunger

**Focus:** Food security, nutrition, sustainable agriculture, responsible supply chains.

### Programs & Initiatives

- **Food and Agriculture Business Principles (FABs)**  
A framework guiding food and agribusinesses to contribute to food security and sustainable agriculture.

### Academy Courses (not exhaustive)

- Food Sector Exchange – Insight-sharing among agribusiness actors on sustainability and nutrition.
- Webinar Series | Transitioning to a Circular Economy.

Explore the UNGC Academy

<https://unglobalcompact.org/academy>

### Library Resources (not exhaustive)

- Case studies on sustainable food systems and nutrition-sensitive supply chains.

Explore more SDG2 related resources the UNGC Library

[https://unglobalcompact.org/library/search?search%5Bsustainable\\_development\\_goals%5D%5B%5D=11&search%5Bkeywords%5D=&search%5Bcontent\\_type%5D=](https://unglobalcompact.org/library/search?search%5Bsustainable_development_goals%5D%5B%5D=11&search%5Bkeywords%5D=&search%5Bcontent_type%5D=)



## SDG 13 Climate Action

**Focus:** Emissions reduction, net-zero, climate risk management, resilience, nature-based solutions.

### Programs & Initiatives

- **Climate Ambition Accelerator**

Helps companies manage and reduce GHG emissions to reach net-zero by 2050 in alignment with the Paris Agreement through the science-based target initiative.

### Academy Courses (not exhaustive)

- Accounting for your Scope 1, 2 and 3 Emissions.
- Biodiversity Fundamentals: The Business Case for Action.
- Climate-proofing your business: strategy planning for adaptation.
- Corporate action to advance a just transition.
- Engaging Supply Chains on the Decarbonization Journey.
- Introduction to Forward Faster: Climate Action.
- Setting Science-Based Targets.
- The Net-Zero Standard.

**Explore the UNGC Academy**

<https://unglobalcompact.org/academy>

### Library Resources (not exhaustive)

- Guidance on GHG accounting, decarbonization planning, and SBTi.

**Explore more SDG13 related resources on the UNGC Library**

[https://unglobalcompact.org/library/search?search%5Bissue\\_areas%5D%5B%5D=211&search%5Bsustainable\\_development\\_goals%5D%5B%5D=121&search%5Bkeywords%5D=&search%5Bcontent\\_type%5D=](https://unglobalcompact.org/library/search?search%5Bissue_areas%5D%5B%5D=211&search%5Bsustainable_development_goals%5D%5B%5D=121&search%5Bkeywords%5D=&search%5Bcontent_type%5D=)

### Call to Action: Forward Faster

- Climate Action Track – Commit to science-based targets aligned with 1.5°C and disclose annually.

Make a commitment

<https://forwardfaster.unglobalcompact.org>



## SDG 16 Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions

**Focus:** Ethics, transparency, anti-corruption, governance.

### Programs & Initiatives

- **Business Integrity Initiatives**  
A global platform promoting anti-corruption and transparency across industries.
- **Promoting Corporate Purpose & Incentivizing Integrity**  
Tools to embed ethics, purpose, and responsible leadership in company governance.

### Academy Courses (not exhaustive)

- Doing Business with Integrity.
- Promoting Corporate Purpose and Incentivizing Integrity Across the Company.

Explore the UNGC Academy

<https://unglobalcompact.org/academy>

## Library Resources (not exhaustive)

- Anti-bribery toolkits.
- Good practice reports on ethical corporate governance.

Explore more SDG16 related resources the UNGC Library

[https://unglobalcompact.org/library/search?search%5Bissue\\_areas%5D%5B%5D=301&search%5Bsustainable\\_development\\_goals%5D%5B%5D=151&search%5Bkeywords%5D=&search%5Bcontent\\_type%5D=](https://unglobalcompact.org/library/search?search%5Bissue_areas%5D%5B%5D=301&search%5Bsustainable_development_goals%5D%5B%5D=151&search%5Bkeywords%5D=&search%5Bcontent_type%5D=)



## SDG 17 Partnerships for the Goals

**Focus:** Multi-stakeholder collaboration, impact reporting, SDG financing, public-private alignment.

## Programs & Initiatives

- **SDG Ambition Accelerator**  
Supports companies in embedding SDG targets into core business operations.

## Academy Courses (not exhaustive)

- Becoming a business leader on the global goals.
- Partnering for Impact.
- SDG Ambition Learning Pathway.
- Sustainable Finance Collaboration Lab.

Explore the UNGC Academy  
<https://unglobalcompact.org/academy>

### Library Resources (not exhaustive)

- How to understand and take action on the Global Goals.
- Partnership tools and SDG benchmarking frameworks.

#### Explore the UNGC Library

[https://unglobalcompact.org/library/search?search%5Bsustainable\\_development\\_goals%5D%5B%5D=161&search%5Bkeywords%5D=&search%5Bcontent\\_type%5D=](https://unglobalcompact.org/library/search?search%5Bsustainable_development_goals%5D%5B%5D=161&search%5Bkeywords%5D=&search%5Bcontent_type%5D=)

### Call to Action: Forward Faster

- Finance & Investment Track – Commit to aligning corporate finance and investments with SDG outcomes.

#### Make a commitment

<https://forwardfaster.unglobalcompact.org>

*While the above highlights resources aligned with the five priority SDGs of this report, the United Nations Global Compact offers a broad portfolio of programs and tools grounded in the Ten Principles and ESG frameworks to support private sector engagement across all 17 Sustainable Development Goals.*

