Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for Business: Priorities, Targets and Reporting

5 – 9 April 2027
Amsterdam - Zuidas business district hotel

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Introduction:

Many companies display the Sustainable Development Goals on websites and reports, yet few can show which targets their operations and products actually affect, how much, or what they intend to change. A long list of supported goals with no baseline invites scepticism from investors, partners and civil society and exposes the company to SDG-washing criticism. This Core Concept course trains managers to prioritise SDG targets from real value chain impacts, set measurable targets and KPIs, use SDG-linked finance and partnerships, and report contribution credibly. Participants leave with an SDG Contribution Plan.

Course Objectives:

- Explain the structure of the UN Agenda for Sustainable Development, its 17 goals, 169 targets and global indicator framework, and how company activity helps or harms progress on them
- Prioritise the goals and targets most relevant to the company using the SDG Compass approach and a value chain impact map
- Define SDG-aligned corporate targets and KPIs with baselines, owners and data sources linked to official SDG indicators
- Assess SDG-linked finance options and Goal 17 partnerships against the SDG Impact Standards
- Review SDG contribution statements for cherry-picking, unsupported claims and omitted negative impacts
- Produce an SDG Contribution Plan that sets priority targets, KPIs, accountabilities and a disclosure approach

Target Audience:

- Sustainability managers responsible for aligning company priorities and programmes with the SDGs
- Strategy and planning managers who translate corporate goals into business unit targets
- Corporate affairs and communications managers accountable for public SDG statements
- Treasury and investor relations managers preparing SDG-linked financing or investor briefings
- Partnership and community investment managers building cross-sector alliances
- Performance and data managers who maintain SDG indicators and dashboards

Course Outline:

Day 1: The UN Sustainable Development Agenda and the Business Case

- Agenda Architecture: 17 Goals, 169 Targets and the Global Indicator Framework
- Goal Interlinkages and Trade-Offs Between Social, Economic and Environmental Targets
- Voluntary National Reviews and the High-level Political Forum as Signals for Business
- UN Global Compact Ten Principles: Responsible Conduct Before Contribution
- SDG Baseline Scan of Current Company Activities and Public Claims

Day 2: SDG Compass and Prioritisation of Goals and Targets

- SDG Compass Five-Step Approach From Understanding the Goals to Communicating
- Value Chain Heat Map of Positive and Negative Impacts by Goal
- Target-Level Screening Using Severity, Scale and Likelihood Criteria
- Stakeholder Input Matrix for Validating Priority Goals
- Priority SDG Shortlist and Rationale Record

Day 3: Setting SDG-Aligned Targets and KPIs

- Impact Logic Chain: Inputs, Activities, Outputs, Outcomes and Impacts per Priority Target
- Business Indicator Selection Against Official SDG Indicators
- Outside-In Target Setting Against Societal Need Rather Than Past Performance
- SDG KPI Definition Sheet: Baseline, Owner, Frequency and Data Source
- Embedding SDG Targets in Business Unit Plans, Product Criteria and Incentives

Day 4: SDG Finance, Partnerships and Credibility Risks

- SDG Impact Standards for Enterprise, Bond Issuers and Private Equity Funds
- SDG Bond and Sustainability-Linked Instrument Alignment With Priority Targets
- Goal 17 Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships: Partner Selection and Shared Results Frameworks
- SDG-Washing Red Flags: Cherry-Picking, Logo Wheels and Unverified Contribution Claims
- Negative Impact Disclosure and Net Contribution Statement Review

Day 5: Case Work and the SDG Contribution Plan

- Food and Beverage Producer Case: Rebuilding an SDG Priority Map
- Real Estate Developer Case: Testing SDG Targets and KPI Definitions
- Commercial Bank Case: Challenging an SDG Bond Framework Claim
- SDG Contribution Plan Drafting and Accountability Assignment
- Peer Review Panel and Contribution Plan Defence

Skills You Will Gain:

- SDG Target Prioritisation
- Value Chain Impact Mapping
- Impact Logic Chain Design
- SDG Indicator Selection
- Outside-In Target Setting
- SDG Finance Literacy
- Partnership Results Framework Design
- SDG Claim Verification

Why Attend This Course:

- Return with an SDG Contribution Plan naming priority targets, KPIs, owners and a disclosure approach for your company
- Replace a broad list of supported goals with a short, defensible set tied to where the business has real impact
- Test your company's SDG statements the way an investor, journalist or civil society reviewer would
- Compare SDG practice with managers from manufacturing, finance, real estate, services and public enterprises

Conclusion:

Credible business action on the SDGs starts with a small number of targets the company genuinely affects and ends with evidence of change, not logos. The course moves from the structure of the UN Sustainable Development Agenda and responsible conduct, through SDG Compass prioritisation and value chain impact mapping, to SDG-aligned targets, KPIs, finance and partnerships, and the red flags that expose SDG-washing. The final day applies these methods to multi-sector cases and produces an SDG Contribution Plan ready to present to leadership.