

SUSTAINABLE
BUSINESS
INITIATIVE



Global goals, shared ambition

SUPPORTING THE UN GLOBAL GOALS
FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

On 25 September 2015 the 193 members of the United Nations General Assembly formally adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This includes 17 Global Goals for Sustainable Development with 169 associated targets and the principle that no one will be left behind. The goals were developed over two years by an open working group, with representatives from over 70 countries.

The UN Global Goals for Sustainable Development



The consultation on the goals was the largest to date in the UN's history and reached over 8 million individuals. The vision the goals paint of the world we want by 2030 is hugely ambitious and very different from the world we know today.

These are global goals but it will take shared ambition to achieve them.



How big is the challenge?

Achieving this huge vision requires transformational systemic change on an ambitious scale. It is a momentous task that is by no means simple or straightforward and there will be both winners and losers along the way.

Business has a vital role to play. The actions businesses take will be critical to translate the visionary goals into a new reality. A clear tension exists for businesses. They will be the engines of change; however they will also have to change themselves to survive.

Delivering the goals will depend on collaboration across the global economy. The Goals represent a new vision of the world in 2030 and the businesses that exist in that world will be radically different to those we see today. The Goals will provide disruption and opportunity for business.

A challenge also exists for governments. National interest and the international public interest will have to be reconciled. Individual nations must be prepared to pool national interests to recognise the global public interest and act together with business and civil society to succeed. We must be prepared to publicly deliver good and bad news concerning progress on the Goals. Rather than only celebrating success we must be prepared to learn from our mistakes and adapt.



What's the role for accountants?

The accountancy profession has a vital role to play. It has a presence across all sectors of business and public life. The profession enables businesses and other organisations to measure and report their progress and builds trust in those processes and disclosures. Formal measurement of the goals will be done at the national level through the KPIs associated with the 169 targets of the goals. The profession will have a substantial role to play in aligning these systems of measurement. There are three main reasons for having confidence that the profession can deliver:

- We serve the public interest by creating public goods in the form of common bases of measurement, reporting and assurance.
- We can understand the situation around each Goal and their interconnectivity. Measuring progress will require huge amounts of data in which we will need to build trust and accountants can help it make sense.
- We have a distinguished record of building strong local institutions and they will be necessary to achieve the goals.



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What we're doing...

ICAEW is a professional body with an international focus and a public interest role representing 147,000 chartered accountants. The global goals provide a clear and compelling articulation of the public interest. This provides a focus for ICAEW's work through which we can demonstrate our public interest role in a meaningful way.

Our vision is a world of strong economies. Interpreting this in terms of the goals means prosperous and resilient economies, operating in fair and just societies all achieved within what nature can provide. ICAEW passionately believes that we and the profession must step up to this responsibility to serve the public interest, demonstrate our relevance and ensure that real change happens.

Our ambition is to build partnerships to work collaboratively to galvanise every business by reaching every chartered accountant.

Taking the personal into the professional

The Goals represent a universal undiminished and interconnected whole. As a result, we cannot cherry-pick the Goals that suit and reinforce our current stories and which are consequently easy to achieve. We must be bold and embrace the disruption implicit in the Goals and adjust our behaviours to achieve them. This cannot be at the expense of others: the 2030 agenda specifically demands that we prioritize our focus on those furthest behind.

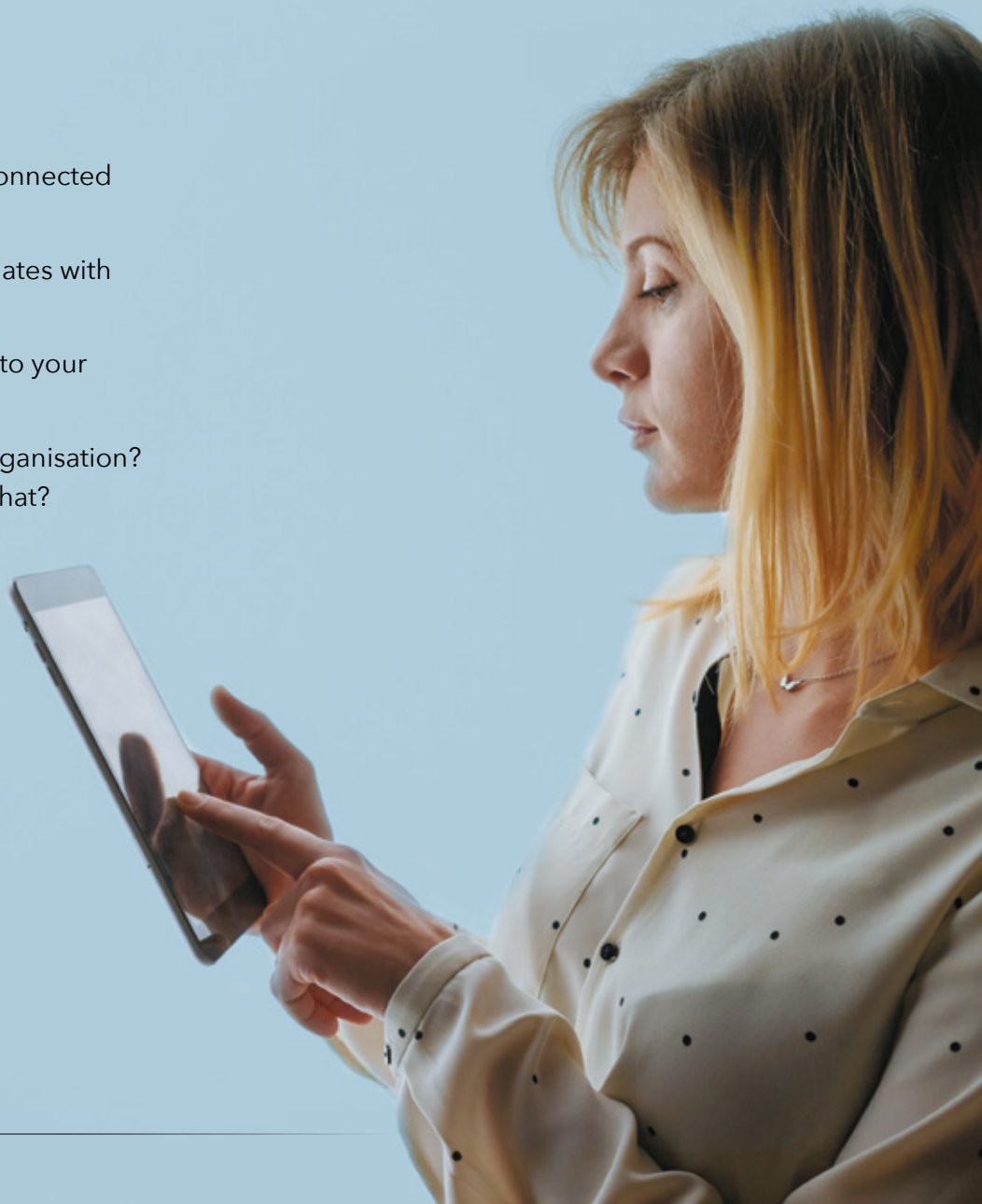
Since the Goals were launched we have run workshops with over 4000 people. To run your own workshop, download ICAEW resources and more visit:

www.icaew.com/globalgoals

WHERE DO WE BEGIN?

As an entry point into this interconnected system we ask:

- 1** What is the Goal that resonates with you personally?
- 2** How would you take this into your professional life?
- 3** What is the Goal of your organisation? How do you connect with that?
- 4** How do your Goals and your organisation's Goals connect with all the others?



ICAEW connects over 147,000 chartered accountants worldwide, providing this community of professionals with the power to build and sustain strong economies.

Training, developing and supporting accountants throughout their career, we ensure that they have the expertise and values to meet the needs of tomorrow's businesses.

Our profession is right at the heart of the decisions that will define the future, and we contribute by sharing our knowledge, insight and capabilities with others. That way, we can be sure that we are building robust, accountable and fair economies across the globe.

ICAEW is a member of Chartered Accountants Worldwide (CAW), which brings together 11 chartered accountancy bodies, representing over 1.6m members and students globally.

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