1. United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Meaning

The **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** are **17 global goals** adopted by all UN member countries in **2015**. These goals aim to achieve a better and more sustainable future by **2030**. They focus on improving people's lives, protecting the environment, and promoting economic growth.

Key Points

1. Global Development Goals

- SDGs are a common plan for all countries to solve major world problems.
- They help governments, businesses, and people work together.
- The target year to achieve these goals is **2030**.

Example: India works towards reducing poverty through various welfare schemes.

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2. Focus on People

- SDGs aim to improve the quality of life for everyone.
- They include goals like ending poverty, hunger, and ensuring good health and education.
- Every person should have equal opportunities.

Example: Providing free education to children under the Right to Education Act.

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3. Protect the Environment

- SDGs encourage the protection of natural resources.
- They promote clean water, clean energy, and climate action.
- They aim to reduce pollution and conserve forests and wildlife.

Example: Planting trees to reduce pollution and improve air quality.

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4. Promote Economic Growth

- SDGs support decent jobs and sustainable industries.
- Businesses should grow without harming society or nature.
- Economic development should benefit everyone.

Example: A company creating employment while using eco-friendly production methods.

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5. Partnership for Development

- Governments, businesses, NGOs, and citizens should work together.
- International cooperation is necessary to solve global challenges.
- Shared responsibility leads to better results.

Example: Different countries working together to reduce climate change.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals

Goal No.	SDG
1	No Poverty
2	Zero Hunger
3	Good Health and Well-being
4	Quality Education
5	Gender Equality
6	Clean Water and Sanitation
7	Affordable and Clean Energy
8	Decent Work and Economic Growth
9	Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure
10	Reduced Inequalities
11	Sustainable Cities and Communities
12	Responsible Consumption and Production
13	Climate Action
14	Life Below Water
15	Life on Land
16	Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions
17	Partnerships for the Goals

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2. National Guidelines on Responsible Business Conduct (NGRBC)

Meaning

The **National Guidelines on Responsible Business Conduct (NGRBC)** were issued by the **Government of India** in **2019**. These guidelines encourage businesses to operate **ethically, responsibly, and sustainably** while considering society, employees, customers, and the environment.

Objectives

- Promote responsible business practices.
- Protect the environment.
- Respect human rights.
- Ensure ethical governance.
- Contribute to sustainable development.

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9 Principles of NGRBC (Easy Explanation)

1. Ethical and Transparent Business

- Businesses should act honestly and ethically.
- They should follow all laws and avoid corruption.
- Transparency builds trust.

Example: A company maintaining accurate financial records.

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2. Sustainable Products and Services

- Companies should produce safe and environmentally friendly products.
- Waste and pollution should be minimized.
- Resources should be used efficiently.

Example: Manufacturing recyclable packaging.

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3. Employee Well-being

- Employees should receive fair wages and safe working conditions.
- Equal opportunities should be provided.
- No discrimination should exist.

Example: Providing health insurance and safety equipment to workers.

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4. Respect for Stakeholders

- Businesses should consider the interests of customers, suppliers, investors, employees, and society.
- Stakeholders should be treated fairly.

Example: Listening to customer complaints and resolving them quickly.

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5. Respect Human Rights

- Companies should protect human rights.
- Child labour and forced labour should not be used.
- Equal treatment must be ensured.

Example: Hiring employees without discrimination based on gender or religion.

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6. Protect the Environment

- Businesses should reduce pollution.
- They should conserve water, energy, and natural resources.
- Climate-friendly practices should be adopted.

Example: Installing solar panels in factories.

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7. Responsible Public Policy

- Businesses should support fair government policies.
- They should not engage in unethical lobbying or bribery.

- Policy participation should be transparent.

Example: Giving honest suggestions to the government for improving business laws.

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8. Inclusive Growth

- Companies should contribute to community development.
- CSR activities should improve society.
- Development should benefit all sections of society.

Example: Building schools in rural villages through CSR funds.

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9. Responsible Customer Engagement

- Businesses should provide quality products and truthful information.
- Customer privacy should be protected.
- Complaints should be handled fairly.

Example: Clearly mentioning ingredients and expiry dates on food products.

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3. Need and Benefits of Sustainability Reporting

Meaning

Sustainability Reporting is the process through which a company shares information about its **environmental, social, and governance (ESG)** performance. It explains how the company impacts society, the environment, and the economy, in addition to its financial performance.

Need for Sustainability Reporting

1. Improves Transparency

- It shows how responsibly a company operates.
- Stakeholders receive clear and reliable information.
- It builds public confidence.

Example: A company publishing its annual carbon emission report.

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2. Builds Trust

- Customers and investors prefer companies that are socially responsible.
- Reporting demonstrates accountability.
- Trust improves the company's reputation.

Example: A business sharing details of its CSR activities.

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3. Meets Legal and Regulatory Requirements

- Many companies are required to disclose ESG information.
- It helps comply with government regulations and stock exchange norms.

- Compliance avoids legal issues.

Example: Listed companies in India filing Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reports (BRSR).

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4. Supports Better Decision-Making

- Management can identify risks and opportunities related to sustainability.
- It helps in planning long-term business strategies.
- Better information leads to better business decisions.

Example: A factory reducing electricity consumption after reviewing its energy report.

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5. Contributes to Sustainable Development

- Sustainability reporting helps companies align their activities with the SDGs.
- It encourages responsible use of resources.
- Businesses contribute to long-term economic, social, and environmental well-being.

Example: A company setting targets to reduce plastic waste.

Benefits of Sustainability Reporting

1. Enhances Company Reputation

- Responsible companies gain a positive public image.
- A good reputation attracts customers and investors.
- It strengthens brand value.

Example: Consumers preferring brands known for environmental protection.

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2. Attracts Investors

- Investors increasingly consider ESG performance before investing.
- Sustainability reports help them assess long-term risks and opportunities.
- Companies with strong ESG practices may find it easier to raise capital.

Example: An investor choosing a company with strong environmental practices.

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3. Improves Risk Management

- Reporting helps identify environmental, social, and governance risks early.
- Companies can take corrective action before problems grow.
- This reduces financial and reputational losses.

Example: Identifying high water usage and introducing water-saving technologies.

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4. Increases Operational Efficiency

- Measuring resource use often reveals opportunities to reduce waste and costs.
- Efficient operations benefit both the business and the environment.

- Productivity and profitability can improve.

Example: Switching to LED lighting to lower electricity bills.

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5. Supports Long-Term Business Growth

- Sustainable practices improve resilience and competitiveness.
- Responsible businesses are better prepared for future challenges.
- They are more likely to achieve long-term success.

Example: A company using renewable energy to reduce future energy costs.

Quick Revision Table

Topic	Main Purpose	Example
United Nations SDGs	Achieve sustainable development globally by 2030	Planting trees to support Climate Action (SDG 13)
NGRBC	Guide Indian businesses to operate ethically and responsibly	Installing solar panels to reduce pollution
Sustainability Reporting	Report a company's environmental, social, and governance performance	Publishing an annual ESG or sustainability report