

ISO 26000

Guidelines for creating a Social Responsibility framework

ISO 26000 was published in 2010 by the International Organization for Standardization. It offers guidance on Social Responsibility (SR) activities and outcomes only, beyond legal requirements, and does not set out requirements for certification.

ISO 26000 assists organizations in focusing on sustainable development, with the core notion that businesses are wholly connected to the communities, locally and globally, where they operate. It addresses the concerns of multiple stakeholders, and promotes a holistic approach to business, which incorporates widely recognized societal values.

The guidelines highlight seven key principles on SR. These are: Accountability; Transparency; Ethical behaviour; Respect for stakeholder interests; Respect for the rule of law, Respect for international norms; and Respect for human rights. Additionally, there are seven core subjects, which define distinct areas of activity.

Human Rights

ISO 26000 takes a comprehensive view to Human Rights, with organizations expected to respect an individual's civil, economic, political, social and cultural rights, with a particular focus with regard to vulnerable groups.

Consumer Issues

ISO 26000 outlines organizations' responsibilities towards consumers, providing safe and healthy products, accurate information about products' manufacture and raw materials, and to help promote the notion of sustainable consumption.

Labor practices

ISO 26000 states that organizations have a duty to provide safe and healthy working conditions and to engage in dialogue with workers, and their representatives, in order to fully address employees' rights and concerns.

Community Involvement & Development

ISO 26000 promotes organizations' involvement with local communities in order to create better social and cultural environments, whereby society in general benefits from the act of companies behaving as a 'good neighbors'.

The Environment

Within the framework of ISO 26000, being responsible towards the environment means fully considering the impact of business activities on the natural world and taking steps to remedy and reduce this impact.

Organizational Governance

ISO 26000 calls for transparent and accountable business operations, whereby company leaders are expected to nurture a culture of decision-making that incorporates the wider principles of SR within an organization.

Fair Operating Practices

ISO 26000 defines Fair Operating Practices as dealing with commercial stakeholders, including customers, suppliers and other partners, within the law, in a fair and fully accountable manner.

