

# PECB

*When Recognition Matters*



CONTRIBUTION OF  
ISO 26000 TO SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT

# Social responsibility and ISO 26000

In November 2010, the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) published ISO 26000, a guidance standard on Social Responsibility (SR). This international standard was developed by an international working group consisted of more than 450 participating experts and national committees in more than 90 countries.

ISO 26000 provides guidance on how businesses and organizations can operate in a socially responsible manner. It is very important to emphasize that this international standard provides guidance only, and not requirements. Also it clearly states that, as a standard, it is not intended or appropriate for certification purposes. The standard offers guidance across a variety of important themes related to Social Responsibility including human rights, labor, environment, consumer protection, fair operating practices and community development.

Social Responsibility is a very wide-ranging concept, however, when it comes to explaining the term, ISO defines it in a few words: “the responsibility of an organization for the impacts of its decisions and activities on society and the environment, through transparent and ethical behavior.”

The main objective of Social Responsibility, as well as of ISO 26000 as a standard, is contribution to sustainable development.

## What is sustainable development?

The term Sustainable Development gained a wide international recognition at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in 1992. It defines the development that meets the needs of society while living within the planet's ecological limits, and without endangering the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

## Contribution of ISO 26000 to sustainable development

As people are being more and more conscious on social and environmental issues, such as human rights, disparity amongst the rich and poor, gender inequality, child and forced labor, climate change and loss of biodiversity, corporation social responsibility programs are gaining value. A great number of companies worldwide have already integrated social responsibility into their business strategies in order to meet their stakeholders' expectations.

ISO 26000 encourages businesses to go beyond legal compliance, recognizing that compliance with law is a fundamental duty of any organization, and an essential part of their social responsibility.

ISO 26000 assists businesses and organizations in maximizing their contribution to sustainable development by integrating, implementing and promoting socially responsible behavior. Activities and decisions of socially responsible businesses can (and usually they do) make a meaningful contribution to the sustainable development by taking into account economic, social and environmental issues in an integrated manner.

Sustainable development has three dimensions (economic, social and environmental) which are interdependent; for instance, the elimination of poverty requires the promotion of social justice and economic development and the protection of the environment.

While some companies implement practices that contribute to socio-economic development, others may be more focused on contribution to the environmental sustainability.

Looking at real-world examples, Toyota, one of the largest automobile manufacturers in the world, is a company to be taken as an example for its social responsibility initiatives. The company is committed to contribute to a harmonious and sustainable development of society and the earth through all business activities that it carries out in many countries and regions. The company actively promotes and is engaged in activities that contribute to the enrichment of society including education, grants given for environmental activities and efforts at biodiversity conservation and tree planting toward sustainable development of the world and society.

Starbucks Corporation is another global company having social responsibility at the core of its overall business strategy. Continuous efforts on improving social and economic conditions for farmers, minimizing environmental impact, making a positive contribution in the communities where they serve, and providing a great work environment for partners, have played an active role to the success of the company. Examples of voluntary initiatives that Starbucks has taken include recycling and reduction initiatives and utilizing fair trade products.

There are many other companies to be mentioned regarding Social Responsibility, such as IKEA, TOMS Shoes, Cadbury, H&M, The Body Shop, etc., and which have made their commitments towards sustainable development and have integrated social responsibility as an integral part of their business models.

## Conclusion

Organizations of all types, regardless of their size or location, are becoming increasingly aware of the need for and benefits of socially responsible behavior and contribution to the sustainable development. International Organization for Standardization (ISO) has developed ISO 26000, with the intention to promote common understanding in this field and to assist organizations to integrate socially responsible behavior into the organization.

During the last few years, the increasing awareness on social responsibility is meanwhile increasing the necessity for experts in this field.

PECB (Professional Evaluation and Certification Board) is a personnel certification body for a wide range of professional standards. It offers ISO 26000 training and certification services for professionals wanting to support an organization in the implementation of a Social Responsibility program, persons responsible for Social Responsibility program conformity in an organization, auditors wanting to master the social responsibility program audit process, and staff involved in the implementation of the ISO 26000 standard.

### ISO 26000 and Professional Social Responsibility Trainings offered by PECB:

- Certified ISO 26000 Lead Implementer (5 days)
- Certified ISO 26000 Lead Auditor (5 days)
- Certified ISO 26000 Foundation (2 days)
- ISO 26000 Introduction (1 day)

ISO 26000 Lead Auditor, ISO 26000 Lead Implementer and ISO 26000 Master are three certification schemes accredited by ANSI ISO/IEC 17024.

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