

## **ABNT NBR ISO 26000 STRATEGIC PLANNING IN PEACEFUL USE OF NUCLEAR ENERGY**

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### **Abstract**

ABNT NBR ISO 26000 - Guidance on Social Responsibility, launched on December 8, 2010 is the Portuguese version of the standard "ISO 26000:2010 published on November 1, 2010 in Geneva, Switzerland. It is a standard and guidelines for voluntary use, which is intended to guide all types of organizations, of any size, to the use of practices and concepts of economic and environmental responsibility in the pursuit of sustainability and Social Responsibility. This standard provides guidance on concepts, terms and definitions, history, trends and characteristics, principles, practices, themes and issues of social responsibility. Its integration, implementation and promotion of behavior throughout the organization and its policies and practices within its sphere of influence; identifying and engaging stakeholders; communication commitments, performance and other information related to social responsibility. The aim of this paper is to select some of the principles to be applied to strategic planning of the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Among them the Accountability which recommends that the organization to take its responsibility for their impacts on society, economy and environment; the Transparency that recommends for the Organization to be transparent in its decisions and activities that impact society or the environment; the Respect for the interests of stakeholders, recommending that the organization to respect, to consider and to respond to the interests of its stakeholders.

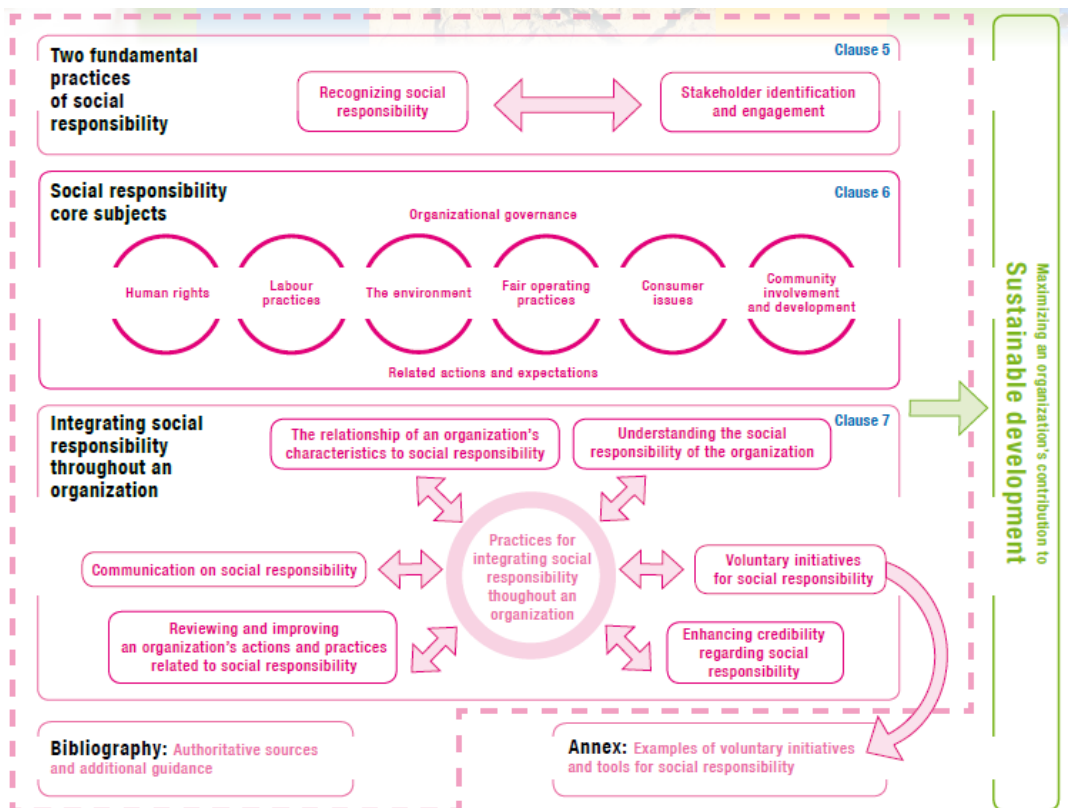
# 1. Introduction

ABNT NBR ISO 26000<sup>[1]</sup> is intended to assist organizations in contributing to sustainable development. It is intended to encourage them 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. It is intended to promote common understanding in the field of social responsibility, and to complement other instruments and initiatives for social responsibility, not to replace them.

In applying ABNT NBR ISO 26000, it is advisable that an organization take into consideration societal, environmental, legal, cultural, political and organizational diversity, as well as differences in economic conditions, while being consistent with international norms of behavior.

ABNT NBR ISO 26000 is not a management system standard. It is not intended or appropriate for certification purposes or regulatory or contractual use. Any offer to certify, or claims to be certified, to ISO 26000 would be a misrepresentation of the intent and purpose and a misuse of this International Standard. As ISO 26000 does not contain requirements, any such certification would not be a demonstration of conformity with this International Standard.

The Figure 1 refer a schematic overview of the ABNT NBR ISO 26000 and the Figure 2 addresses seven core subjects of social responsibility defined in the standard.



**Figure 1. The schematic overview of the ABNT NBR ISO 26000 standard.<sup>2</sup>**

## Social responsibility: 7 core subjects



\* The figures denote the corresponding clause numbers in ISO 26000.

**Figure 2. The seven core subjects of social responsibility defined in the ABNT NBR ISO 26000 standard.<sup>3</sup>**

## 2. Concepts of the ABNT NBR ISO 26000

The ABRN NBR ISO 26000 provides concepts, terms and definitions related to social responsibility. For this work the most important terms are:

**SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY:** Responsibility of an organization for the impacts of its decisions and activities (include products, services and processes) on society and the environment, through transparent and ethical behavior that contributes to sustainable development, including health and the welfare of society; takes into account the expectations of stakeholders; is in compliance with applicable law and consistent with international norms

of behavior ; and is integrated throughout the organization and practiced in its relationships (refer to an organization's activities within its sphere of influence)

**ORGANIZATION:** Entity or group of people and facilities with an arrangement of responsibilities, authorities and relationships and identifiable objectives. For the purposes of this International Standard, organization does not include government acting in its sovereign role to create and enforce law, exercise judicial authority, and carry out its duty to establish policy in the public interest or honor the international obligations of the state.

**ENVIRONMENT:** Natural surroundings in which an organization operates, including air, water, land, natural resources, flora, fauna, people, outer space and their interrelationships. Surroundings in this context extend from within an organization to the global system.

**ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR:** Behavior that is in accordance with accepted principles of right or good conduct in the context of a particular situation and is consistent with international norms of behavior

**STAKEHOLDER:** Individual or group that has an interest in any decision or activity of an organization

**STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT:** Activity undertaken to create opportunities for dialogue between an organization and one or more of its stakeholders, with the aim of providing an informed basis for the organization's decisions

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:** Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable development is about integrating the goals of a high quality of life, health and prosperity with social justice and maintaining the earth's capacity to support life in all its diversity. These social, economic and environmental goals are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. Sustainable development can be treated as a way of expressing the broader expectations of society as a whole.

**INTERNATIONAL NORMS OF BEHAVIOU:** Expectations of socially responsible organizational behavior derived from customary international law, generally accepted principles of international law, or intergovernmental agreements that are universally or nearly universally recognized. Intergovernmental agreements include treaties and conventions. Although customary international law, generally accepted principles of international law and intergovernmental agreements are directed primarily at states, they express goals and principles to which all organizations can aspire. International norms of behavior evolve over time.

## **2.1. Characteristics of social responsibility**

The essential characteristic of social responsibility is the willingness of an organization to incorporate social and environmental considerations in its decision making and be accountable for the impacts of its decisions and activities on society and the environment.

This implies both transparent and ethical behavior that contributes to sustainable development, is in compliance with applicable law and is consistent with international norms of behavior. It also implies that social responsibility is integrated throughout the organization, is practiced in its relationships and takes into account the interests of stakeholders. A stakeholder has one or more interests that can be affected by the decisions and activities of an organization.

This interest gives the party a —stake in the organization that creates a relationship with the organization. This relationship need not be formal or even acknowledged by the stakeholder or the organization. Stakeholders can be referred to as —interested parties. In determining which stakeholder interests to recognize, an organization should consider the lawfulness of those interests and their consistency with international norms of behavior.

## **2.2. The expectations of society**

Social responsibility involves an understanding of the broader expectations of society. A fundamental principle of social responsibility is respect for the rule of law and compliance with legally binding obligations. Social responsibility, however, also entails actions beyond legal compliance and the recognition of obligations to others that are not legally binding. These obligations arise out of widely shared ethical and other values.

Although expectations of socially responsible behavior will vary between countries and cultures, organizations should nevertheless respect international norms of behavior such as those reflected in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and other instruments. Clause 6 considers the core subjects of social responsibility. Each of these core subjects includes various issues that will enable an organization to identify its main impacts on society. The discussion of each issue also describes actions to address these impacts.

## **2.3. The role of stakeholders in social responsibility**

Identification of and engagement with stakeholders are fundamental to social responsibility. An organization should determine who has an interest in its decisions and activities, so that it can understand its impacts and how to address them. Although stakeholders can help an organization identify the relevance of particular matters to its decisions and activities, stakeholders do not replace broader society in determining norms and expectations of behavior. A matter may be relevant to the social responsibility of an organization even if not specifically identified by the stakeholders it consults. Further guidance on this is provided in 4.5 and Clause 5.

## **2.4. Integrating social responsibility**

Because social responsibility concerns the potential and actual impacts of an organization's decisions and activities, the ongoing, regular daily activities of the organization constitute the most important behavior to be addressed. Social responsibility should be an integral part of core organizational strategy, with assigned responsibilities and accountability at all appropriate levels of the organization. It should be reflected in decision making and considered in implementing activities.

## **2.5. Determining relevance**

All the core subjects, but not all issues, have relevance for every organization. An organization should review all core subjects to identify which issues are relevant.

To start the identification process, an organization should, where appropriate:

- list the full range of its activities;
- identify stakeholders;

- Identify activities of the organization itself and of the organizations within its sphere of influence. The decisions and activities of suppliers and contractors can have an impact on the social responsibility of the organization;
- determine which core subjects and issues might arise when the organization and others within the sphere of influence and/or the value chain carry out these activities, taking into account all applicable legislation;
- examine the range of ways in which the organization's decisions and activities can cause impacts on stakeholders and on sustainable development;
- examine the ways in which stakeholders and social responsibility issues can impact the decisions, activities and plans of the organization; and
- Identify all issues of social responsibility that relate to day-to-day activities as well as those that arise only occasionally under very specific circumstances.

Although an organization itself may believe it understands its social responsibility, it should nevertheless consider involving stakeholders in the identification process to broaden the perspective on the core subjects and issues. It is important to recognize, though, that issues may be relevant even if stakeholders fail to identify them.

In some instances an organization might assume that because it operates in an area with laws that address core subjects of social responsibility, then compliance with the law will be sufficient to ensure that all the relevant issues of such core subjects are addressed. A careful review of the core subjects and issues in Clause 6 may reveal, however, that some relevant issues are not regulated or are covered by regulations that are not adequately enforced or are not explicit or sufficiently detailed.

Even for core subjects or issues covered by the law, responding to the spirit of the law may in some cases involve action beyond simple compliance. As an example, although some environmental laws and regulations limit emissions of air or water pollutants to specific amounts or levels, an organization should use best practice to further reduce its emissions of those pollutants or to change the processes it uses so as to completely eliminate such emissions.

Other examples are a school that voluntarily decides to reuse rainwater for sanitary purposes, and a hospital that could decide not only to comply with laws regarding its labor practices, but also to launch a special program for supporting the work-life balance of its personnel.

## **2.6. Determining significance**

Once an organization has identified the broad range of issues relevant to its decisions and activities, it should look carefully at the issues identified and develop a set of criteria for deciding which issues have the greatest significance and are most important to the organization. Possible criteria include the:

- extent of the impact of the issue on stakeholders and sustainable development;
- potential effect of taking action or failing to take action on the issue;
- level of stakeholder concern about the issue; and
- Identification of the societal expectations of responsible behavior concerning these impacts.

Issues that are generally considered to be significant are non-compliance with the law; inconsistency with international norms of behavior; potential violations of human rights; practices that could endanger life or health; and practices that could seriously affect the environment.

## **2.7. Establishing priorities for addressing issues**

An organization should determine and commit to its priorities for integrating social responsibility throughout the organization and its daily practices. Priorities should be established from among the issues considered significant and relevant (see 7.3.2). Stakeholders should be involved in the identification of priorities (see 5.3). Priorities are likely to vary over time.

Organizations should consider the following to determine whether an action to address an issue is a high priority or not:

- the current performance of the organization with regard to legal compliance, international standards, international norms of behavior, the state-of-the-art and best practice;
- whether the issue can significantly affect the ability of the organization to meet important objectives;
- the potential effect of the related action compared to the resources required for implementation;
- the length of time to achieve the desired results;
- whether there can be significant cost implications if not addressed quickly; and
- The ease and speed of implementation, which may have a bearing on increasing awareness of and motivation for action on social responsibility within the organization.

The order of priorities will vary among organizations.

In addition to setting priorities for immediate action, an organization can establish priorities for consideration of issues that are relevant to decisions and activities that an organization expects to carry out in the future, such as building construction, employing new staff, hiring contractors or conducting fund-raising activities. The priority considerations will then form part of the planning for these future activities.

The priorities should be reviewed and updated at intervals appropriate for the organization.

## **2.8. Selected principle: ACCOUNTABILITY**

The principle is: an organization should be accountable for its impacts on society, the economy and the environment. This principle suggests that an organization should accept appropriate scrutiny and also accept a duty to respond to this scrutiny.

Accountability involves an obligation on management to be answerable to the controlling interests of the organization and on the organization to be answerable to legal authorities with regard to laws and regulations. Accountability for the overall impact of its decisions and activities on society and the environment also implies that the organization's answerability to those affected by its decisions and activities, as well as to society in general, varies according to the nature of the impact and the circumstances.

Being accountable will have a positive impact on both the organization and society. The degree of accountability may vary, but should always correspond to the amount or extent of authority. Those organizations with ultimate authority are likely to take greater care for the quality of their decisions and oversight. Accountability also encompasses accepting responsibility where wrongdoing has occurred, taking the appropriate measures to remedy the wrongdoing and taking action to prevent it from being repeated.

An organization should account for:

- the impacts of its decisions and activities on society, the environment and the economy, especially significant negative consequences; and
- The actions taken to prevent repetition of unintended and unforeseen negative impacts.

## **2.9. Selected principle: TRANSPARENCY**

The principle is: an organization should be transparent in its decisions and activities that impact on society and the environment. An organization should disclose in a clear, accurate and complete manner, and to a reasonable and sufficient degree, the policies, decisions and activities for which it is responsible, including their known and likely impacts on society and the environment. This information should be readily available, directly accessible and understandable to those who have been, or may be, affected in significant ways by the organization. It should be timely and factual and be presented in a clear and objective manner so as to enable stakeholders to accurately assess the impact that the organization's decisions and activities have on their respective interests.

The principle of transparency does not require that proprietary information be made public, nor does it involve providing information that is privileged or that would breach legal, commercial, security or personal privacy obligations.

An organization should be transparent regarding:

- the purpose, nature and location of its activities;
- the identity of any controlling interest in the activity of the organization;
- the manner in which its decisions are made, implemented and reviewed, including the definition of the roles, responsibilities, accountabilities and authorities across the different functions in the organization;
- standards and criteria against which the organization evaluates its own performance relating to social responsibility;
- its performance on relevant and significant issues of social responsibility;
- the sources, amounts and application of its funds;
- the known and likely impacts of its decisions and activities on its stakeholders, society, the economy and the environment; and
- Its stakeholders and the criteria and procedures used to identify, select and engage them.

## **2.10. Selected principle: RESPECT FOR STAKEHOLDER INTERESTS**

The principle is: an organization should respect, consider and respond to the interests of its stakeholders. Although an organization's objectives may be limited to the interests of its



owners, members, customers or constituents, other individuals or groups may also have rights, claims or specific interests that should be taken into account. Collectively, these individuals or groups comprise the organization's stakeholders.

An organization should:

- identify its stakeholders;
- recognize and have due regard for the interests as well as the legal rights of its stakeholders and respond to their expressed concerns;
- recognize that some stakeholders can significantly affect the activities of the organization;
- assess and take into account the relative ability of stakeholders to contact, engage with and influence the organization;
- take into account the relation of its stakeholders' interests to the broader expectations of society and to sustainable development, as well as the nature of the stakeholders' relationship with the organization;
- Consider the views of stakeholders whose interests are likely to be affected by a decision or activity even if they have no formal role in the governance of the organization or are unaware of these interests.

### **3. Conclusions**

The objective of the social responsibility (SR) is to make a contribution to a sustainable development. An organization's performance in relation to the society in which it operates and to its impact on the environment that has become a critical part of measuring its overall performance and its ability to continue operating effectively. This is, in part, a reflection of the growing recognition of the need to ensure healthy ecosystems, social equity and good organizational governance.

In the long run, all organizations activities depend on the health of the world's ecosystems. Organizations are subject to greater scrutiny by their various stakeholders. In the peaceful use of nuclear energy it is more important and they can influence reputation and a relationship with governments, the media, suppliers and the community in which it operates.

Integration of SR in the management of organizations must begin by understanding the principles and the fear expressed in the central SR standards, these concepts should be incorporated into the daily management and organization, maximizing their contribution to sustainable development. This should be a continuous process of practice and improvement in management activities and decision-making and it is essential to engage stakeholders in every step of the process.

The SR must be understood by following these steps: (i) identify the aspects of each of the key themes most relevant (ii) prioritize them based on the goals, needs, impacts and interests of all stakeholders (participating the whole process), (iii) evaluate the sphere of influence and means to spread the SR, and (iv) always proceed diligently (due diligence).

The selected principles for the strategic planning in peaceful use of nuclear energy are:

- Accountability that recommends the organization to take its responsibility for their impacts on society, economy and environment;
- Transparency that recommends for the Organization to be transparent in its decisions and activities that impact society or the environment;
- Respect for the interests of stakeholders that recommend the organization to respect, to consider and to respond to the interests of its stakeholders.

The next step would be determining relevance and the significance for integrating social responsibility. Priorities should be established from among the issues considered significant and relevant. Stakeholders should be involved in the identification of the priorities for immediate action and for consideration of issues that are relevant to decisions and activities in the future. The priorities should be reviewed and updated at an appropriate interval.

### References

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