The ISO 26000 Social Responsibility International Standard – A Brief Review

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Presentation for Global Compact Network Canada & Ryerson University Institute for the Study of CSR Webinar on Using the UN Global Compact and ISO 26000 as Frameworks for Corporate Sustainability
December 12, 2013
Organization of Presentation

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About ISO

• ISO = International Organization for Standardization
• ISO is an international federation of national standards bodies
• ISO is a non-governmental body
• All ISO standards are voluntary
• ISO has consistently attracted the participation of governments, inter-governmental bodies, the private sector, and consumer organizations in the development of voluntary, market-based standards designed to enhance the ability to conduct trade across borders
• Within Canada, the Standards Council of Canada (SCC) is the national standards body that participates on behalf of Canada on ISO issues, and manages ISO-related activity within Canada, working with standards development organizations such as the Canadian Standards Ass’n (CSA)³
ISO 26000 builds on a foundation of other ISO standards

• The ISO 26000 international standard is designed to build on the ISO 9000 “quality management” series of international standards

• The ISO 9000 series is well known for espousing the “plan, do, check, act” approach to achieving quality objectives within an organization

• “Quality management” = the practice of ensuring customer satisfaction by consistently meeting customer expectations

• ISO 9001 has the highest profile in ISO 9000 series. Can be certified to it. 1 million certifications around the world.
Other relevant ISO standards

• ISO 10001 (codes of conduct); ISO 10002 (complaints handling); ISO 10003 (dispute resolution) customer satisfaction standards

• ISO 14000 series of environmental management systems (EMS) standards, within which organizations can have their operations registered/certified to ISO 14001

• ISO 22000 – food safety

• ISO 31000 – risk management

• ISO 55000 – asset management

• Non ISO standards that emulate ISO: OHSAS 18001, SA 8000, AA 1000
Background on ISO 26000

• ISO working group (WG) worked from 2005 – 2010, following previous 5 years of feasibility studies.

• At last WG meeting in 2010, there were 450 participating experts and 210 observers from 99 ISO member countries and 42 liaison organizations involved in the work. National Mirror Committees around the world.

• Co-chaired by Sweden and Brazil, ~equal representation from developed & developing countries

• Participants: UNGC, UNEP, WHO, OECD, ICC, ILO, IOE, GRI, SAI, envtal orgs, Consumers Intl, Cdn govt, U.S., Europe, Japan, China, Australia, India, Brazil, etc.

• a *consensus* standard- remarkable achievement
ISO 26000 Scope

To develop an international standard that should:

• Assist an organization in addressing their social responsibilities
• Provide *practical guidance* related to:
  - operationalizing social responsibility
  - identifying and engaging with stakeholders and
  - enhancing credibility of reports and claims made about SR
• Assist organizations in *establishing, implementing, maintaining, improving social responsibility frameworks*
• *Emphasize performance results and improvements*
• Increase consumer satisfaction and confidence
• *Promote common terminology* in the Social Responsibility field
• *Be consistent with and not in conflict with existing documents, treaties and conventions and other ISO standards*
• Broaden awareness of social responsibility
• *Not intended to reduce authority of governments*
Nature of Standard

- All ISO standards are voluntary
- ISO 26000 is an international standard, defined as:“a document, established by consensus and approved by a recognized body that provides, for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for activities or their results, aimed at the achievement of the optimum degree of order in a given context “(ISO/IEC Guide 2:2004 [39], definition 3.2)

- **Target Group:** To be applied by all types of organizations (private, public and non-profit)

- **Type of Standard:** ISO international standard providing guidance, not intended for third-party certification.

- **Relation to Law:** ISO 26000 operates within and is subject to international and domestic legal frameworks and is not itself an international law nor is it a national law or regulation
Social responsibility defined in ISO as:

- the responsibilities of an organization for the *impacts of its decisions and activities* on society and the environment, through **transparent and ethical behaviour** 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 behaviour*; and
  - is *integrated throughout the organization* and *practised in its relationships* (activities within its sphere of influence)
Structure of ISO 26000

• Definitions
• Context
• Principles of Social Responsibility
• SR and Stakeholders
• Guidance on SR Core Subjects
• Guidance on Integrating SR throughout the Organization
• Communicating on SR
• Use of Voluntary Initiatives
• Review and Improvement
ISO 26000 SR Principles

• Accountability
• Transparency
• Ethical Behaviour
• Respect for stakeholder interests
• Respect for the rule of law
• Respect for international norms of behaviour
• Respect for human rights
ISO 26000 Core SR Subjects

• Organizational governance
• Human rights
• Labour rights
• Fair operating practices
• The environment
• Consumer issues
• Community involvement and development
Alignment with:

- UN Global Compact
- OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises
- Global Reporting Initiative
- UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights
Some firms drawing on ISO 26000

- Volvo
- Agnico Eagle
- Toronto Hydro
- NewGold
- Canadian Electricity Assn Sustainable Electricity Company
- Air France
- Schneider Electric
- Petrobras
- Toshiba
- Fujitsu
- AngloGold Ashanti
- Ricoh
- Horizon Utilities
Questions?

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Thank you!