Active Participation of the community
according to ISO 26000*

Practical Guide
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1. Importance of the subject

Organizations that decide to form links or any kind of relation with the communities where they operate are shown to possess a broader sense of respect towards those involved with a number of civic and democratic values. This in turn strengthens the sustainable development of the community through the active participation components of the community and recognition of the organization as an interested part.

Community development is influenced by the productive activities and services that occur in the area, which is why organizations can promote the improvement of quality of life of its inhabitants, through appropriate participation and distribution of responsibilities. In this context the organization is able to contribute to job creation and income generation through the implementation of technologies, educational programs, investment and diversification of economic activities, and supporting organizations and social welfare institutions within the community. It is also very important the contribution generated by the cultural, artistic and health sector through its promotion and preservation.

All those social forces that strive for the welfare of a community are those that achieve important goals in terms of equality and respect for their rights, elimination of discrimination, public participation, and strong relations with organizations in the environment. That is why every organization has the possibility of establishing as part of their organizational activities, ongoing relations with these social groups and investing in community development beyond a philanthropic perception.

Through the involvement and representation of the interests of a community, the company should be able to respect the rights set forth in its policies, rules and principles (such as the Millennium Declaration, United Nations, Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and the Copenhagen Declaration) in order to promote the rule of law and a democratic process that allows active participation and community development. To accomplish this, the organization shall establish processes to identify impacts to operations, and thus be able to mitigate, optimizing community development and support of interest groups or vulnerable.

2. Definitions

Community: any kind of social settlement in a delimited geographical area, which for the present context refers to the operational environment of one or more organizations.

Active Participation: Represents the consideration and recognition of a company towards the welfare of a community and a proper relation with it. Understand as a philanthropic support or social responsibility for issues of socioeconomic and environmental development in the community.

Community development: is a process that has long-term results, socioeconomic, political and cultural interests and conflicts considering for the improvement of life quality in the population.

Development of skills: essential component to generate productive and decent jobs that promote community development.

3. Self-assessment guide on critical issues related to the subject

With respect to the active participation of the community, the organization should take into account the following provisions:

Issue 1: Active participation of the community:

- Keeps relations transparent, free of bribes or improper actions with political representatives and members of local government?

- Has participation in local associations, contributing to the well and the goals of the community?

*Based on: ISO 26000:2010. Guidance on social responsibility.

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- Contributes to the establishment, monitoring and implementation of development programs, and formulation of policies that benefit the surrounding communities?

- Determines priorities for investment in community development through processes of consultation with members of the same, taking into consideration vulnerable and disadvantaged groups?

Issue 2: Education and culture:

- Looks to protect and preserve cultural heritage for places where the activities of the organization have any impact?

- Promotes cultural activities in order to assess and understand their traditions, so respect them and support them in all activities of the organization?

- Considers awareness and provides education in human rights terms?

- Engages in actions to improve local education quality and accessibility, in turn seeks to develop opportunities for vulnerable groups?

Issue 3: Job creation and skills development:

- Consider supporting the improvement and development of programs that promotes capacity building within the community?

- Looks for partnerships with community members or other stakeholders, to create conditions for job creation and support for disadvantaged or vulnerable groups?

- Analyzes the impact of their investments on poverty and employment conditions in the community?

- Pays attention to the possible impact that occurs when performing subcontracting and temporary work arrangements on the socioeconomic status of the community?

- Analyzes consciously, when migrating to new technology, profits and losses in employment opportunities for a population?

Issue 4: Development and access to technology:

- Consider fighting against hunger and poverty by implementing low-cost technologies?

- Looks to make alliances with interested organizations to support the technological and scientific development, considering linking members of the community?

- Makes contributions and research for the implementation of innovative technologies to improve environmental quality and social development of the community?

- Establish terms and conditions for technology transfer, if applicable, to disseminate and implement new technologies to improve local development?

Issue 5: Creating wealth and income:

- Consider supporting linked organizations to operate properly according to the legal framework?

- Stimulates economic activity in the community through diversification initiatives?

- Consider strengthening the value chain through appropriate initiatives for capacity building and opportunities for local suppliers?

- Consider the economic impact generated by influencing or fail to affect a community?

- Consider supporting initiatives of individuals and organizations seeking to create jobs locally?

- Consider helping to develop entrepreneurs and community associations for social welfare programs disadvantaged or marginalized groups?

- Consider contributing to pensions and retirement of its employees?

- Meets with the payment of taxes and works with the relevant authorities?

- Supports and gets involved with social welfare organizations and human rights protection, they need support?

Issue 6: Health

- Considers strengthening the awareness about preventive measures and threats to health and major diseases that can affect the community?

- Considers supporting the accessibility for the whole population to essential health services and quality of life?

- Looks forward to eliminate adverse impacts to health due to the activities of the organization, either by production processes or quality of goods and service?

- Considers contributing to access to medicines and vaccines to the community, and promoting recreational and sports activities?

- Pays attention and seeks to solve problems of malnutrition or disease in children?

Issue 7: Social Investment

- Evaluates their own initiatives in conjunction with the community to make improvements in it?

- Considers form alliances with government agencies and organizations interested in sustainable use of resources and increase productivity?

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- Contributes with programs for the increased of resources, opportunities and capabilities for the community?

- Takes into account socio-economic development of the community through planned investment projects?

- Avoids creating dependency in the community to the company due to its presence and influence, without impairing their development by creating a balance of social investment?

4. Good integration practices

4.1. Planning the integration of the issue to the organization

The active participation of the organization and the community must be an integrated and jointly process, taking into consideration factors for the development of it, having first assessed the possible negative or positive organizational activities. Should be respected all social, political, and cultural right creating a way which all interest or opinion will take into account, considering formal or informal groups within the community. In turn, the organization must support and encourage job creation and skills (within the value chain and local community), access to technologies and information, partnership and community programs (to promote entrepreneurship and guidance gender), law enforcement, awareness and investment in public health and welfare.

4.2. How to carry out the integration?

Once made an organizational analysis that determines the potential impacts and opportunities for investment and support for the communities involved, the company must create tangible changes in the role of business in relation to society. Therefore should be created policies, procedures, documents and records to improve the framework of the organization in terms of active participation of the community in the value chain and develop it through the generation of jobs and social value groups. For the achievement the organization must support and invest in partnership with other community organizations for the improvement of life quality for the population, considering and respecting the law, in addition to the standards and principles.

4.3. Verification

To achieve an adequate active community involvement with the organization, it must be respect the principle of legality and human rights of the inhabitants. This requires a process of verification and monitoring arrangements which are integrated with community organizations, investment records in the community, interviews with staff and community members, business documents and records, and audits. The

organization should be able to make adjustments and concrete plans for the relation with the community, generating mutual benefits and improving their corporate image, quality of work, identity and sense of philanthropy, and its own management system.

5. What to do if that risk is present?

The organization may face circumstances or crisis that affect the quality of community life or respect for human rights. Examples of these externalities can be natural disasters, political or military conflicts and economic crisis or food. Therefore, should be prepared with contingency plans and mitigation, by involving partners or partners who can contribute to philanthropic causes, to the affected communities. Where mainly, in order of priority, should be assisted vulnerable groups previously identified by the organization, through immediate coordination with international humanitarian aid groups and the public authority.

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