
**Social responsibility and sustainable
development — Guidance on using ISO
26000:2010 in the food chain**

*Responsabilité sociétale et développement durable — Lignes
directrices pour l'utilisation de l'ISO 26000:2010 dans la chaîne
alimentaire*

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see www.iso.org/patents).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 34, *Food products*.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

Introduction

Social responsibility is a holistic approach to contribute to sustainable development.

Social responsibility is “the responsibility of an organization for the impacts of its decisions and activities on society and the environment, through transparent and ethical behaviour”. It can be also understood as a tool for innovation and competitiveness now and for future generations.

Organizations in the food chain around the world, and their stakeholders, are becoming increasingly aware of the need for and benefits of socially responsible behaviour in the whole value chain of their operations. Organizations in the food chain willing to implement social responsibility can benefit from using this document in conjunction with ISO 26000:2010.

This document provides guidance on the application of ISO 26000:2010 specifically for organizations in the food chain and is intended to be useful to all types of organizations in the food chain, whether large or small, and whether operating in developed or developing countries. Food chain organizations may use this document in association with other relevant organisations and stakeholders.

Implementation of social responsibility, besides being a source of innovation and attractiveness for the organization, brings many benefits: improved dialogue with stakeholders, improved social cohesion, differentiation from the competition, better reputation, improved economic and industrial performance, a better view of investors, donors, sponsors, etc. and, in the end, productivity gains.

Social responsibility is a powerful tool that helps organizations move from good intentions to good practices linked to the United Nations sustainability framework. This document is intended to support organizations in the food chain that are committed to contribute to the achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. SDG 2 specifically promotes sustainable agriculture, while SDG 12 focuses on sustainable consumption and production patterns (see [Annex A](#) and [Annex C](#)).

Definition and summary of the principles of social responsibility according to ISO 26000:2010

ISO 26000:2010 defines social responsibility as:

“the responsibility 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”.

ISO 26000:2010 describes the two fundamental practices of social responsibility, which are:

- the recognition by an organization of its social responsibility; and
- the identification of, and engagement with, stakeholders.

As with the principles described in ISO 26000:2010, Clause 4, these practices should be kept in mind when addressing the core subjects of social responsibility described in ISO 26000:2010, Clause 6.

Organizations should base their behaviour on standards, guidelines or rules of conduct that are in accordance with principles of right or good conduct in the context of specific situations, even when these

situations are challenging. The seven principles of social responsibility addressed by ISO 26000:2010 are as follows.

- **Accountability:** an organization should be accountable for its impacts on society, the economy and the environment.
- **Transparency:** openness about decisions and activities that affect society, the economy and the environment, and willingness to communicate these in a clear, accurate, timely, honest and complete manner.
- **Ethical behaviour:** an organization should behave ethically, basing its behaviour on the values of honesty, equity and integrity and showing concern for people, animals and the environment and a commitment to address the impact of its activities and decisions on stakeholders' interests.
- **Respect for stakeholder interests:** an organization should respect and consider and respond to the specific interests of other individuals or groups that comprise the organization's stakeholders.
- **Respect for the rule of law:** to comply with all applicable laws and regulations, an organization should take steps to be aware of applicable laws and regulations, to inform those within the organization of their obligation to observe and to implement those measures.
- **Respect for international norms of behaviour:** an organization should respect international norms of behaviour, while adhering to the principle of respect for the rule of law and not become complicit in any negligence, especially in situations or countries where the law or its implementation does not provide for adequate environmental or social safeguards.
- **Respect for human rights:** an organization should respect human rights and recognize both their importance and their universality, promote them, take steps to respect them and avoid passively accepting or actively participating in the infringement of rights.

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Social responsibility and sustainable development — Guidance on using ISO 26000:2010 in the food chain

1 Scope

This document provides guidance on using ISO 26000:2010 in the food chain by focusing on the major aspects from its seven core subjects, namely organizational governance, human rights, labour practices, environment, fair operating practices, consumer issues and community involvement and development.

The main objective is to help organizations in the food chain, regardless of their size or location, to draw up a list of recommendations and move towards a more socially responsible behaviour.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 26000:2010, *Guidance on social responsibility*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 26000:2010 and the following apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <http://www.electropedia.org/>

3.1

organization

entity or group of people and facilities with an arrangement of responsibilities, authorities and relationships and identifiable objectives

Note 1 to entry: For the purposes of this document, the term refers to a single business operator or a group of business operators in whole or in part of the food supply chain: farms, coops, production organizations, processors, transport, handling, services, retails... An organization can be public or private and includes, but is not limited to, sole-trader, company, corporation, firm, enterprise, authority, partnership, association, charity or institution, or part of combination thereof, whether incorporated or not, public or private.

[SOURCE: ISO 26000:2010, 2.12, modified — Note 1 to entry has been modified and Note 2 to entry has been deleted.]

3.2

food chain

sequence of the stages in the production, processing, distribution, storage and handling of a food and its ingredients, from primary production to consumption

Note 1 to entry: This includes the production of feed and animal food.

Note 2 to entry: The food chain also includes the production of materials intended to come into contact with food or raw materials.

Note 3 to entry: The food chain also includes service providers.

[SOURCE: ISO 22000:2018, 3.20]

**3.3
supply chain**

sequence of activities or parties that provides products or services to the organization, directly (supplier 1) or indirectly (supplier *N*)

Note 1 to entry: In ISO 9001, the expression “products and services” is used.

[SOURCE: ISO 26000:2010, 2.22, modified — “directly (supplier 1) or indirectly (supplier *N*)” has been added to the definition and Note 1 to entry has been modified.]

**3.4
value chain**

entire sequence of activities or parties that provide or receive value in the form of products or services

Note 1 to entry: Parties that provide value include suppliers (1 to *N*), outsourced workers (3.11), contractors and others. In ISO 9001, the term ‘external providers’ is used instead of outsourced workers.

Note 2 to entry: Parties that receive value include customers, consumers, clients, members and other users.

[SOURCE: ISO 26000:2010, 2.25, modified — Note 1 to entry has been modified.]

**3.5
internal employability**

person’s capacity to stay in a position to retain work or to find other work quickly, inside the organization

**3.6
external employability**

person’s capacity to stay in a position to retain work or to find other work quickly, outside the organization

**3.7
organizational governance**

system by which an *organization* (3.1) makes and implements decisions in pursuit of its objectives

[SOURCE: ISO 26000:2010, 2.13]

**3.8
international norms of behaviour**

expectations of socially responsible organizational behaviour derived from customary international law, generally accepted principles of international law, or intergovernmental agreements that are universally or nearly universally recognized

Note 1 to entry: Intergovernmental agreements include treaties and conventions.

Note 2 to entry: 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.

Note 3 to entry: International norms of behaviour evolve over time.

[SOURCE: ISO 26000:2010, 2.11]

**3.9
stakeholder**

individual or group that has an interest in any decision or activity of an organization

Note 1 to entry: An organization is responsible for identifying its stakeholders, their needs and expectations and their importance in light of the impacts they can generate on the organization's activity, and vice-versa. To do this, an organization can apply various methods.

Note 2 to entry: A stakeholder may be considered significant by the organization if it can have a significant impact (positive or negative) on the organization's activity, and vice-versa.

Note 3 to entry: In ISO 9001, the term "interested parties" is used.

[SOURCE: ISO 26000:2010, 2.20, modified — Note 1, Note 2 and Note 3 to entry have been added.]

3.10 sphere of influence

range/extent of political, contractual, economic or other relationships through which an organization has the ability to affect the decisions or activities of individuals or organizations

Note 1 to entry: The ability to influence does not, in itself, imply a responsibility to exercise influence.

[SOURCE: ISO 26000:2010, 2.19 modified — Note 2 to entry has been deleted.]

3.11 worker

person who performs work, whether an employee or someone who is self-employed

Note 1 to entry: Farmers can be included in this definition.

[SOURCE: ISO 26000:2010, 2.27, modified — Note 1 to entry has been added.]

4 Recommendations for social responsibility

4.1 Background

Recommendations for social responsibility as it relates to organizations in the food chain are presented as listed in ISO 26000:2010, by core subject and relevant issues of social responsibility. A set of good practices makes it possible to meet these recommendations: Some non-exhaustive examples are indicated in [Annex A](#).

The seven core subjects of social responsibility should be addressed by an organization to define the scope of its social responsibility, identify and report relevant issues and set its priorities.

These subjects should be looked at holistically, by considering their interdependence, rather than concentrating on a single issue. Environmental impacts should not be taken into account independently of social impacts but, quite the opposite, by considering the consequences on all of the core subjects.

Economic aspects, as well as aspects relating to health and safety and the value chain, are dealt with throughout the seven core subjects, where appropriate.

Although all the core subjects are interrelated and complementary, the nature of organizational governance plays a crucial role because it enables to take action on the other core subjects and issues and to understand the logic of improving organization performance. Organizational governance includes the notions of strategy and management and, as a result, implements the principles outlined in ISO 26000:2010, Clause 4.

The seven core subjects of social responsibility and their issues are the following (see [Figure 1](#)):

- **organizational governance:** decision-making processes and structures;
- **human rights:** due diligence, human rights risk situations, avoidance of complicity, resolving grievances, discrimination and vulnerable groups, civil and political rights, economic, social and cultural rights, fundamental principles and rights at work;
- **labour practices:** employment and employment relationships, conditions of work and social protection, social dialogue, health and safety at work, human development and training in the workplace;

- **environment:** prevention of pollution, sustainable resource use, climate change mitigation and adaptation, protection of the environment, biodiversity and restoration of natural habitats;
- **fair operating practices:** anti-corruption, responsible political involvement, fair competition, promoting sustainability in the value chain, respect for property rights;
- **consumer issues:** fair marketing, factual and unbiased information, fair contractual practices, protecting consumers' health and safety, sustainable consumption, consumer service and support, and complaint and dispute resolution, consumer data protection and privacy, access to essential services, education and awareness;
- **community involvement and development:** community involvement, education and culture, employment creation and skills development, technology development and access, wealth and income creation, health, social investment.



Figure 1 — Seven core subjects of ISO 26000:2010

4.2 Organizational governance

4.2.1 Challenges for the food chain

The organization in the food chain should notably address the following challenges:

- define and manage a strategic plan incorporating the issues and principles of social responsibility within food chain organizations;
- identify stakeholders (see [Annex B](#)) and their expectations and set the boundaries of social responsibility (spheres of influence) for organizations in the food chain;
- create mutually beneficial relationships with significant stakeholders;

- demonstrate the importance of creating added value for workers and regions (socio-economic footprint) as a result of the strong connection established between agricultural production and the handling/processing of agricultural products.

4.2.2 Issue 1: Integrating social responsibility into the organization's strategic policy and plan

a) Organization's strategic policy and plan

The organization should define and formalize a strategic plan that takes into consideration:

- the vision and values of the organization;
- the issues and principles of social responsibility;
- the needs and expectations of significant stakeholders;
- the results of the analysis of the impact of the organization's social responsibility activities on each of the seven core subjects.

The organization's governance should allocate the resources needed to implement and improve social responsibility.

It should define the governing bodies that will implement, monitor and review the policy of social responsibility laid out in the strategic plan.

b) Organizational governance and management commitment

The governing bodies and all of the organization's management should be made aware about social responsibility as they apply the seven principles from ISO 26000:2010 (summarized in the Introduction) on their respective roles and duties.

A written commitment to organizational governance in social responsibility should cover:

- setting a policy that includes a commitment to fulfill legal requirements;
- the provision of food that does not endanger consumer health and safety;
- the reduction of impacts on the environment;
- consideration of human rights, including in organizations within the sphere of influence and, more generally, in its supply chain;
- prevention of work-related accidents and occupational illness and improvements to working conditions and the quality of life at work;
- commitment to promote social responsibility in its supply chain, develop responsible purchasing practices and develop dialogue with suppliers, particularly farmers;
- contribution to local development in the region;
- coordination of all actions and plans related to social responsibility, preferably by designating a person responsible for the coordination;
- constant performance improvement with regards to the seven core subjects in ISO 26000:2010, establishing indicators and updating them as appropriate;
- sincere, transparent and ethical communication, both internal and external;
- listening to the needs and expectations of stakeholders inside and outside the organization; for organizations with agricultural producers in their sphere of influence, particular attention should be paid to dialogue with the farmer-suppliers' association in terms of the recommendations formulated within the framework of social responsibility;

- the organization's mission, which entails doing all it can to help the organizations in its sphere of influence develop social responsibility.

The written commitment should be communicated internally and to all relevant stakeholders in the sphere of influence.

4.2.3 Issue 2: Identifying and engaging with stakeholders and determining the sphere of influence

The organization should be aware of the importance of establishing and holding dialogues with its stakeholders.

The organization should set up a process enabling it to identify its stakeholders (see [Annex B](#)), their needs and expectations.

The organization should assess the level of importance of these stakeholders with regard to the impact they can have on its activities, and vice-versa (analysis of opportunities and risks).

The organization should rank its stakeholders according to the influence they can have on its development and the level of relationship the organization has with them. To do this, an organization can apply various methods.

A stakeholder may be considered significant by the organization if it can have a significant impact (positive or negative) on the organization's activity, and vice-versa.

For each significant stakeholder, regular dialogue should be established with the organization. For this purpose, the organization can identify those in charge of the dialogue with the stakeholders as well as the minimum frequency of discussions with each significant stakeholder.

The organization should select from among its significant stakeholders those who are to be included in its sphere of influence. These are stakeholders on whose orientations and practices the organization has the ability to act directly, through a strong contractual relationship, acquisition of shares or the involvement of organization representatives in the decision-making bodies.

The organization should then conduct regular updates to the list of stakeholders involved and the evaluation of their expectations and impacts. Related records should be kept.

4.2.4 Issue 3: Identification of, and demonstration of compliance with, applicable legal requirements

The organization should have a regulatory monitoring system applicable to its activity that covers:

- food safety, food quality, food security, food fraud and food defence;
- health and safety at work;
- management of human resources;
- commercial practices and consumer information;
- the environment;
- international norms of behaviour.

The organization should periodically conduct evaluations to demonstrate legal compliance and should plan and carry out actions showing how applicable legal requirements are met, where necessary.

Going beyond regulatory monitoring, the organization may decide to set up a technological, technical and scientific monitoring to further develop its processes, practices and/or products. This monitoring enables the organization to improve its results in product quality, food safety, working conditions and the environment while maintaining or improving its economic performance. The organization should

inform the stakeholders in its sphere of influence about relevant scientific, technological and technical developments, if applicable.

4.2.5 Issue 4: Analysis of the impacts of the organization's activities

The organization should conduct an analysis of the impact of its activities and projects throughout the value chain in accordance with the seven core subjects in ISO 26000:2010.

As far as practicable, a documented procedure should describe the method for identifying, analysing and assessing impacts.

Any significant risk should be subject to monitoring and action plans to bring it to an acceptable level.

The organization should raise awareness among their stakeholders in its sphere of influence on how to implement a similar process.

4.2.6 Issue 5: Practical implementation of social responsibility, reviewing progress and improving social responsibility performance

The organization should set up a management system to address the seven core subjects of ISO 26000:2010. To do this, the organization can refer to management systems and good practices already in place.

The organization should provide the necessary resources to carry out its strategic plan in order to meet its objectives. A planning schedule for all activities is established and followed.

The organization should conduct a review of its management system at regular and predefined intervals, with particular examination of the following input data:

- the thematic areas in the strategic plan and how they affect the seven core subjects in ISO 26000:2010;
- feedback from stakeholders on their perception of the organization, their needs and expectations and any complaints received;
- the results of internal and external assessments of the organization through completing a social responsibility assessment or audits;
- social responsibility indicators in line with the SDGs;
- the results of audits carried out among significant stakeholders in the organization's sphere of influence;
- examination of modifications and projects that could affect the organization's overall social responsibility performance.

For output data, the organization should:

- confirm its commitment to social responsibility;
- define progress goals to be achieved relating to social responsibility;
- supply the resources needed to carry out the set of new defined actions;
- confirm the relevance of its list of stakeholders and its sphere of influence and prioritize and plan actions concerning its significant stakeholders;
- identify areas of improvement to include in its social responsibility report, if necessary.

4.2.7 Issue 6: Accountability and transparency

The organization should communicate, internally and externally, on:

- its commitment to social responsibility;
- good practices they have implemented that relate to the core subjects in ISO 26000:2010; illustrated, where needed, by feedback from internal and external stakeholders;
- social responsibility indicators in line with the SDGs;
- perspectives for improvement and projects related to each core subject, if applicable; organizations that have reached a certain level of maturity and wish to do so, may use a social responsibility report as an accountability tool.

The information related to social responsibility should be complete, understandable, responsive, accurate, balanced, timely and accessible to the stakeholders. It should be updated at regular intervals and in the case of a significant change to the organization's social responsibility strategy.

4.3 Human rights

4.3.1 Challenges for the food chain

An increasing number of raw agricultural materials, food ingredients and other inputs are produced, processed and transported throughout the world. The food chain organizations committed to social responsibility should have the moral duty to incorporate the issue of human rights into their supply chain. Respect for human rights is also increasingly important in society, especially to consumers and buyers.

The organization in the food chain should notably address the following challenges:

- respect human rights for full time, temporary, seasonal, part time, subcontracted workers and any other type of labour recruitment model;
- respect human rights with regards to vulnerable groups;
- avoid, minimize or mitigate environmental impacts that affect human rights related to communities and local people, especially traditional populations (e.g. water scarcity) aiming at balancing economic interest with respect for cultural and social principles of different people;
- respect human rights, within the organization's value chain, in compliance with international norms of behaviour including governance of land tenure;
- combat all discrimination within the organization and its sphere of influence.

Respect for human rights in the value chain is particularly sensitive for:

- activities requiring seasonal workers;
- organizations that subcontract part of their production in other countries, specially developing countries, or that import raw materials, ingredients or other inputs from these countries;
- organizations that set up agricultural-production and/or food-processing activity in developing countries;
- food transportation, especially on ships registered under a flag of convenience.

4.3.2 Issue 1: Due diligence

The organization's social responsibility policy should include commitments related to labour law and the principles of human rights.

The organization should develop a “map” of stakeholders in its supply chain and should identify those who are the most likely to have shortcomings with respect to human rights.

The organization should incorporate human rights criteria when referencing and assessing its suppliers and service providers. In order to do this, the organization should survey its suppliers and service providers on their practices related to human rights and should include requirements for respect of human rights in its procurement data (specifications, contracts, etc.).

For organizations with farmers in their sphere of influence and/or that hire seasonal workers or piece workers, farmers and/or supervisory personnel, awareness training should be given on human rights, especially on hiring, wages, working conditions and accommodation for seasonal workers. This awareness-raising is done in partnership with local representatives of the employers' organization.

4.3.3 Issue 2: Human rights risk situations

The organization should develop a list of situations and countries that may present a risk to human rights for the organization, its subsidiaries or the stakeholders including suppliers in its supply chain. Organizations should especially consider the following situations:

- armed conflicts;
- political instability;
- natural disasters;
- activities with a strong impact on natural resources with effects on human beings;
- complex value chains that can hide undeclared work;
- child labour;
- employment of under-qualified personnel;
- use of forced labour;
- degrading working conditions;
- disrespect for human diversity and differences;
- disrespect of indigenous people;
- disrespect for human dignity, moral and/or sexual harassment;
- corruption;
- respect for the right of the land and of the local communities;
- protection of people vulnerable to the pollution (lands, soil, water, air...);
- protection of the whistleblowers and the human rights defenders.

4.3.4 Issues 3 and 4: Avoidance of complicity — Resolving grievances

The organization should establish actions to prevent any human rights violations within the organization and its supply chain.

An organization that has identified a stakeholder in its supply chain who does not respect human rights should take action to help the stakeholder improve in this matter or excludes it, when necessary, from its supply chain. If the stakeholder is not excluded, the organization should establish close monitoring to measure its progress.

If there is no improvement, the organization should reconsider its involvement with this particular stakeholder and finds an alternative, if possible.

The organization should disclose any reprehensible practices related to human rights to the relevant authorities.

In every instance, the organization should encourage dialogue with the stakeholders in its supply chain to resolve human rights violations.

4.3.5 Issues 5, 6 and 7: Discrimination and vulnerable groups — Civil and political rights — Economic, social and cultural rights

For its activities and those of the stakeholders in its sphere of influence, the organization should commit to combating discrimination; protecting vulnerable groups; respecting civil and political rights; respecting economic, social and cultural rights; and taking local regulations into account. The organization should pay attention to the rights of indigenous people who may be affected in the food supply chain.

The organization should make its management personnel aware of how to identify civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights violations. The organization should contribute to raising awareness in its sphere of influence on these same subjects.

4.3.6 Issue 8: Fundamental principles and rights at work

The organization should respect the fundamental principles and rights at work and should train its workers (including seasonal workers, temporary workers and piece workers) about their rights.

As far as practicable, the organization should work with the value chain to build mutually beneficial relationships by including the social responsibility commitments in these organizations and their respect for fundamental principles and rights at work.

When possible, the organization should make sure it has a sufficiently broad supplier base to be able to maintain its independence and its ability to react if a supplier or service provider is shown to have committed human rights violations.

Organizations with facilities and subsidiaries abroad should make sure that they respect and promote fundamental principles and rights at work in the countries concerned through appropriate monitoring and evaluation methods. The organization should also ensure respect for equitable treatment within these countries in terms of salaries, systems of remuneration and benefits packages.

4.4 Labour practices

4.4.1 Challenges for the food chain

The organization in the food chain should notably address the following challenges:

- develop or maintain the attractiveness of organizations in the food chain in order to attract and mobilize a skilled workforce (especially in rural areas) in the region(s) where the organization has its activity regardless of their origin, personal relationships, prioritizing their work capacity;
- develop workers' skills by supporting technical, technological and regulatory changes to food chain practices and procedures;
- promote working conditions that enables good physical and mental health, employee safety at work and personal growth and well-being;
- create conditions that facilitate social dialogue between employer and workers;
- offer the ability to welcome and socially integrate under- or unqualified workers into the food chain and ensure the development of their skills and enhance their employability;
- promote the integration of seasonal workers, win their loyalty and perpetuate their knowledge;

- promote diversity (social, ethnic, age, gender, physical abilities, etc.) within the organization and its sphere of influence;
- help the stakeholders in the sphere of influence respect working conditions, especially in organizational terms;
- provide wages and other forms of remuneration taking into consideration national laws, regulations or collective agreements including farmers.

NOTE Labour practices and social protection, etc. apply also to the farm operators.

4.4.2 Issue 1: Employment and employment relationships

The organization should make stakeholders in its sphere of influence aware of all applicable legal requirements on this issue. The organization should provide its workers, at the time of hiring, with a work contract as well as a job description specifying to whom they should report.

The organization should aim to promote job stability and continuity, e.g. through using mechanisms to build the loyalty of seasonal workers.

The organization should inform and train all management and supervisory staff on the issues of worker management in order to promote working closely with workers, to make human aspects more central to decision-making or ensure that they are prepared to do so.

The organization should set up measures to mitigate the negative effects of a change in activity (weather event with a drop-in production, public health crisis, significant loss of market share, accident, transfer of activity for economic or other reasons, etc.) on its workers and the workers in its sphere of influence.

Organization management should formally and clearly commit to combating discrimination and guaranteeing equal opportunity in:

- recruitment;
- access to training;
- promotion;
- financial recognition (salaries and bonuses) and other benefits.

The organization should be actively involved in combating all forms of discrimination and harassment. The organization should undertake to establish and follow action plans to promote diversity and equal opportunity. The organization should make sure disabled workers are integrated into the organization. In every instance, measures should be taken to protect the personal information of workers.

In the procurement data it sends to its suppliers, service providers and subcontractors, the organization should formulate requirements related to working conditions and awareness of labour law and how the law requirements are met. The organization should have the means of verifying that the requirements are applied.

As part of its international activity, the organization should pay attention to regulations in the host country, promotes local employment as far as practicable and is part of a dynamic of improving working conditions and developing worker skills.

The organization should not employ forced labour or child labour and should require the same behaviour from its suppliers, service providers, subcontractors and other organizations in its sphere of influence.

Special attention should be paid to foreign and/or migrant workers in the supply chain.

4.4.3 Issue 2: Conditions of work and social protection

The organization's management and supervisory staff should make sure that commitments, defined in cooperation with the workers, are respected (organization and duration of work, leave and working hours).

The organization's management should make sure their workers have a work/life balance, particularly in regard to rest periods and advance notice of changes to working hours (e.g. changes in the work shift and night work).

All elements of the system of remuneration as well as the benefits package should be clearly defined (salaries, bonuses, health insurance, benefits in kind, accommodations, etc.) and communicated clearly to the worker so he or she is familiar with them.

4.4.4 Issue 3: Social dialogue

The organization should agree to take all necessary and appropriate measures to guarantee workers the right to self-organize and to join a trade union (or any other arrangement), for collective bargaining in a social dialogue.

The organization should promote setting up worker representative bodies and should establish conditions for social dialogue that favours building regular consultation with workers.

NOTE In some cases, the implementation of worker representative bodies can be required by regulations.

The organization, when and where necessary, should undertake to train workers representatives so that they can understand their roles, mission and know the organization's financial performance for the purpose of making their decisions.

The organization should include the worker representative bodies in the social responsibility actions it carries out. The organization should create conditions that facilitate attentiveness and constructive exchanges between employer and workers.

The organization should make the organizations in its sphere of influence aware of the tools for social dialogue for their workers. For organizations with farmers in their sphere of influence, this awareness-raising should be done in partnership with the employers' organization that is a signatory to a collective bargaining agreement.

4.4.5 Issue 4: Occupational health and safety (OH&S)

The organization should develop and regularly update its OH&S practices to prevent work-related injury and ill health to workers and to provide safe and healthy workplaces; consequently, it is critically important for the organization to eliminate hazards and minimize OH&S risks by taking effective preventive and protective measures.

The organization should assess OH&S risks from the identified hazards, while taking into account the effectiveness of existing controls.

Hazard identification helps the organization to recognize and understand the hazards in the workplace and to workers, in order to assess, prioritize and eliminate hazards or reduce OH&S risks.

Hazards can be physical, chemical, biological, psychosocial, mechanical, electrical or based on movement and energy.

The organization should develop a process for the elimination of hazards and reduction of OH&S risks using the following hierarchy of controls:

- a) eliminate the hazard;
- b) substitute with less hazardous processes, operations, materials or equipment;

- c) use engineering controls and reorganization of work;
- d) use administrative controls, including training;
- e) use adequate personal protective equipment.

The organization should implement an action plan to address those risks, to address legal requirements related to OH&S and to prepare for and respond to emergency situations.

The organization should evaluate the effectiveness of these actions.

Workers, including managerial and non-managerial persons, should be made aware of:

- a) the OH&S policy and OH&S objectives;
- b) their contribution to the OH&S, including the benefits of improved OH&S performance;
- c) the implications and potential consequences of not conforming to the OH&S practices;
- d) incidents and the outcomes of investigations that are relevant to them;
- e) hazards, OH&S risks and actions determined that are relevant to them;
- f) the ability to remove themselves from work situations that they consider present an imminent and serious danger to their life or health, as well as the arrangements for protecting them from undue consequences for doing so.

Apart from the awareness needed, the organization should ensure that workers are competent (including the ability to identify hazards) on the basis of appropriate education, training or experience.

The organization should recognize periods of high seasonal activity, which are likely to see increased risks to work-related health and safety.

The organization should organize regular meetings between worker representatives and OH&S inspection authorities.

Since the risks include psychosocial risks, the organization should consider also farmers in a critical situation.

The organization should establish mechanisms to curb, avoid and prohibit practices of psychological violence.

As to OH&S recommendations above, the organization should encourage the organizations in its sphere of influence to set up a similar approach.

4.4.6 Issue 5: Human development and training in the workplace

The organization should guide the ongoing development of the skills of its workers through continuing professional education. Training needs should be clearly defined with workers, taking into account the following input data:

- the results of individual skills interviews;
- the respect and appreciation for diversity and human differences;
- the perspectives for developing internal or external employability;
- technical and organizational development.

The organization should ensure equal access to training for all its workers.

In particular, the organization should develop a training policy to encourage the least qualified workers to benefit from training opportunities in priority. The organization may also establish a voluntary

training policy for workers who find it most difficult to receive training, particularly when there are problems with geographical mobility.

The organization should organize and coordinate training sessions for the stakeholders in order to improve their skills and those of their workers in:

- the environment;
- quality;
- OH&S;
- economic management;
- ethical behaviour;
- the recognition of human diversity towards workers, suppliers, customers and the community, in order to avoid discriminatory or misleading practices in terms of business behaviour.

4.5 The environment

4.5.1 Challenges for the food chain

The organization in the food chain should notably address the following challenges:

- mitigate and adapt to climate change;
- guarantee control of environmental impacts and the conservation of natural resources;
- contribute to responsible production (including the choice of agricultural and livestock products) and consumption, raising awareness among buyers, consumers and other stakeholders;
- promote good environmental practices throughout the sector and the innovative environmental services rendered, in agreement and in ongoing dialogue with the stakeholders;
- communicate with buyers and consumers about key environmental issues;
- help change the perceptions people have as to the place and function of the stakeholders in to food chain (farmers, cooperatives, food chain industry, consumers, etc.) in terms of responsible management of the environment and rural areas;
- avoid environmental degradation, such as deforestation of rain forests due to the development of farm and/or plantation, or slash and burn practices, etc.
- avoid the loss of some species (bees, birds...) or even the extinction of some species;
- consider a more responsible food transportation system where possible (e.g. rail freight, river freight); in case of ships registered under a flag of convenience they should not dispose their waste or fuel and other waste in seas, rivers or oceans;
- promote the concept of circular economy in the food chain.

4.5.2 Issue 1: Prevention of pollution

An organization should implement and improve its practices so as to prevent and reduce pollution, as far as possible and in particular:

- water pollution;
- air pollution;
- soil pollution;

- production of waste that includes toxic waste, non-biodegradable waste and packaging waste.

The organization should make the organizations in its sphere of influence aware of new, less-polluting work practices and methods and, if necessary, assists the organizations in integrating them.

a) **Monitoring and reduction of pollution**

The organization should perform an environmental assessment to identify the sources of pollution in its activities. The organization should then monitor these sources of pollution.

The organization should identify all the substances it uses and/or distributes that are harmful to the environment and should implement tools and methods to control them through optimizing their use. The organization should adopt a policy of selecting products that are less polluting to the environment and less harmful to humans, while taking into account economic performance issues. The organization should keep documentation related to the chemical products it uses and provides access to the documentation related to the products it distributes [Safety data sheet (SDS)].

The organization should manage waste resulting from its activities and should seek treatment techniques that are the most environmentally effective at an acceptable cost, in cooperation with the stakeholders concerned. The organization should make sure its treatment processes are effective, particularly through conducting regular analyses.

Organizations with farmers in their sphere of influence should guide them, with their agreement and through ongoing dialogue, in developing solutions to be reasonable in the use of inputs in their activities and to promote a sustainable agriculture. The organization should provide accurate and updated information and should offer appropriate tools and methods to enable them to:

- practice safe use of agrochemicals in the protection of plants, as well as mineral and organic fertilization, to prevent soil deterioration and pollution;
- apply good practices in animal feeding and care practices;
- reduce agricultural waste (livestock, white water, green water, tank debris, etc.) and encourage recycling;
- prevent accidental pollution (storage of hazardous and/or polluting products, absorbent materials, etc.).

b) **Waste management**

There is a need to raise environmental issues among the persons in charge of purchasing so that they gradually can incorporate waste-reduction environmental criteria into their specifications, as part of the ongoing dialogue with suppliers. Due to its extended producer responsibility, the organization should take all necessary measures in the design of its products to limit, at the source, the quantity and toxicity of waste resulting from the use of its products (see also [4.7.4](#)).

The organization should take all necessary measures in the design and use of its facilities to ensure good management of its waste, in particular:

- limiting the quantity and toxicity of its production waste at the source by adopting the most appropriate clean technologies;
- avoiding, sorting, recycling and repurposing waste;
- ensuring treatment or pre-treatment of its waste, particularly through physico-chemical, biological or thermal means;
- for ultimate waste, ensuring that it is limited in volume and stored in conditions that prevent the risk of pollution or accident;
- reducing food waste along the food chain, from the producer to the consumer;

- adopting appropriate waste disposals methods for non-biodegradable and non-recyclable waste material;
- encouraging the practice of composting biodegradable waste.

The organization should ensure waste monitoring [quantity eliminated by type of waste, changes to the volume of waste brought back to the production unit being used within the organization, and treatment sector (recycling/repurposing/elimination)].

The organization should make its workers and the organizations in its sphere of influence aware of practices for responsible waste avoidance, sorting and treatment.

4.5.3 Issue 2: Sustainable resource use

The organization should assess practices to:

- optimize energy consumption and promote renewable energy;
- limit the use of non-renewable resources such as petrochemical synthesis, coal, etc.;
- be reasonable in the choice of materials for its packaging;
- optimize the use of water (recycling, optimized cleaning, closed circuit, rain water, etc.);
- optimize the use of raw materials and soil;
- use natural resources sustainably.

The organization should make its workers and the organizations in its sphere of influence aware of biodiversity and how to use resources responsibly, especially water and energy.

The organization should incorporate environmental aspects into the design and development of its products (eco-design), using, if possible, a product life-cycle assessment approach.

a) Energy

The organization should be aware of its energy consumption levels by main consumption items under its control (e.g. cold/hot production, compressed-air production, etc.). The organization should regularly review its energy consumption and should seek to identify areas of potential energy savings. The organization should use an indicator that breaks down energy consumption by production unit.

In its equipment investments, the organization should favour solutions that help reduce energy consumption. Beyond these actions to improve energy efficiency, the organization should assess the techno-economic feasibility of contributing to the development of renewable energies (methanation, biomass-energy, solar energy, wind turbines, etc.).

b) Wrapping and packaging

The organization should prioritize the use of sustainable wrapping and packaging materials as much as possible and should monitor:

- the possible impact on food safety, consumer health and the conservation and shelf life of products;
- the environmental impact of the materials-production sector, preferring (when possible and when a recovery procedure exists) the use of materials that are biodegradable or from renewable resources;
- the prevention of waste and losses (product restitution rate);
- the reuse and recycling in order to minimize the impacts of these materials on the environment.

The organization should establish practices that reduce its wrapping and packaging and should train/educate operators in charge of packaging design about eco-design and, if necessary, about product life-cycle assessment.

c) **Water**

The organization should manage its water consumption by main consumption categories (broken down by production unit). The organization should regularly review its water consumption and seek to identify areas of potential savings. The organization should implement measures to reduce its water consumption (recycling, process optimization, closed circuit, etc.).

The organization should seek to know and limit its water footprint by taking into account the methodologies being built around the water footprint.

With internal and external stakeholders in the same catchment area and the same water network, the organization should identify the best practices to implement to meet its own water needs without putting other users at a disadvantage.

Organizations with farmers in their sphere of influence should provide appropriate tools and information that will enable them to be reasonable in water supply and use.

The organization should establish goals and action plans to align water key performance indicators.

d) **Raw materials and land**

The organization should ensure sustainable use of raw materials so that they are produced or procured in conditions that use land, natural resources and ecosystems sustainably.

The practices should be adapted to local soil conditions, all the while guaranteeing local populations access to food.

The organization should establish a set of measures to optimize its use of raw materials and should limit losses and waste (by controlling production methods, volumes and tempo and through mastery of skills, etc.). These measures may be based on technical advice to suppliers, inspections, controlling procedures and mastery.

4.5.4 Issue 3: Climate change mitigation and adaptation

The organization should be aware of its main sources of emission of GHG (greenhouse gases) and should assess them regularly and every time there is a major change to its organization, products or infrastructures. The organization should formalize its actions to reduce its GHG emissions, e.g. by establishing/updating an action plan to reduce its GHG emissions and by keeping records of its actions.

The organization should study the logistics flows of its activities and should look for ways to optimize economic viability. The organization should contribute to develop some logistical solutions beneficial to local stakeholders in the region.

The organization should make its workers and the organizations in its sphere of influence aware of good practices to implement in order to mitigate the impact of their activities on climate change.

Organizations with agricultural and food producers in its sphere of influence should provide them with high-quality information on relevant and appropriate tools and methods:

- to reduce GHG as much as possible when conducting their activities while still guaranteeing the quality level expected, production yields and the same level of economic performance;
- to incorporate, in their choice of species and/or varieties, changing climate conditions so as to implement crop management techniques adapted to their objectives for yield, quality, production and reduction of GHG.

4.5.5 Issue 4: Protection of the environment, biodiversity and restoration of natural habitats

Through various biodiversity organizations (environmental associations, natural resources conservatories, etc.), the organization should be aware of the sensitive and protected plant and animal species in the vicinity of its production site(s). The organization should work with them on biodiversity preservation programme.

The organization should research the impact of its activities and its supply chain on biodiversity.

For its activities, the organization should establish methods and practices to protect biodiversity. The organization should raise awareness among its workers and the organizations in its sphere of influence (especially its suppliers) on protecting biodiversity.

Organizations with farmers (or food producers) in its sphere of influence should provide them with high-quality information so they can implement recognized good practices to protect biodiversity such as diversification of planted seeds.

4.6 Fair operating practices

4.6.1 Challenges for the food chain

The organization in the food chain should notably address the following challenges:

- promote transparent and responsible policy commitment practices and avoid conflicts of interest;
- adopt responsible purchasing behaviour that takes into consideration the specific characteristics of agricultural production (atomization of production structures, price volatility, cyclical nature of agricultural production, etc.) and maintain the economic sustainability of the various partners in the food chain;
- pay fair value to each link in the food chain, taking into account in a fair manner the added value contributed by each of these links and avoiding abuse of power or abuse of a dominant market position;
- prevent all types of fraud, particularly that which concerns usurping the nature, identity or quality of products.

4.6.2 Issue 1: Anti-corruption

The organization should identify the active and passive risks of corruption at all levels of its activities (in particular in the areas of purchasing, sales, consulting for products and services) and should implement all appropriate means and practices to counter corruption.

4.6.3 Issue 2: Responsible political involvement

When it participates in public political processes or undertakes lobbying in the public sphere, the organization should apply fair and transparent practices and reject any behaviour such as manipulation, blackmail, disinformation, intimidation or coercion.

Anyone in the organization (workers, shareholders, members) with a representational mandate — be it public or private, trade-union or political — outside the organization should ensure that the measures taken serve the collective interest and not only the interest of their organization, so as to avoid any appearance of conflict of interest.

4.6.4 Issue 3: Fair competition

The organization should set up collective and cooperative methods of action between operators in the same sector regarding fair competition.

The organization should commit to the conformity of the products it markets and related information (nature, identity, intrinsic characteristics, formulation, etc.) in order to reject all commercial fraud.

4.6.5 Issue 4: Promoting social responsibility in the value chain

At its level, the organization should undertake to define and implement a responsible commercial, purchasing and sales policy and to promote these types of policies and responsible practices within its sphere of influence. This should be based on:

- a commitment from operators in charge of purchasing to demonstrate impartiality and objectivity and to avoid any situation likely to lead to a conflict of interest;
- a balanced customer-supplier relationship based on trust, mutual respect and reciprocal commitments: marketing rules should be clearly defined and understood by the two parties and formalized, if possible, in a written contract, abusive clauses should not be imposed on key points such as responsibilities, guarantees and penalties;
- adequate resolution of disputes (supplier information, resolution of dispute in a given time, etc.);
- development of provisional purchasing management, when possible, to give visibility to suppliers;
- incorporation of ethical, social and environmental criteria into purchasing policies and practices beyond the sole “price” criterion;
- commitment to participating in equitable distribution of the added value within the value chain and to practising predefined and reasonable payment periods.

The organization should commit to encouraging and raising awareness among the organizations in its value chain about progressively implementing social responsibility.

4.6.6 Issue 5: Respect for property rights

Any organization benefiting from another organization’s innovation should do so in complete agreement and transparency with that organization. The organization should respect the innovation process (patent, invention, etc.) and the precedence of knowledge of stakeholders in its sphere of influence and should undertake to share profits with them, proportionately and consistent with the final added value.

The organization should not claim profits from these property rights, whether directly (usurpation, counterfeiting, pirating, etc.) or indirectly (distorted communication on their value), if it does not itself apply the rules and duties of these property rights. The organization should respect traditional knowledge (e.g. traditional specialties guaranteed, official signs or professional codes of practice) as well as rights pertaining to geographical indications among its partners and competitors within the value chain.

The organization should establish measures to guarantee the confidentiality of any intellectual data another organization may share with it (specifications, formulas, etc.).

Organizations with farmers in their sphere of influence should pay as much attention as possible to maintaining land for agricultural use and to transferring this land for agricultural purposes.

4.7 Consumer issues

4.7.1 Challenges for the food chain

The organization in the food chain should notably address the following challenges:

- ensure food safety: ensure the production and marketing of safe food products to guarantee consumer safety;

- consider consumer health over the long term: incorporate health and nutrition issues into the development, production and processing of food items and the communication related to these products;
- contribute to taste diversity and promote cultural heritage: protect the diversity and specific nature of national and regional cultural and gastronomic heritage;
- facilitate access to food for all: provide the most disadvantaged populations with access to a food supply that is sufficient in quantity and of good quality in health, nutritionally and organoleptically;
- promote and educate about responsible production and consumption: educate consumers about healthy, responsible and sustainable methods of consumption by communicating about responsible food chain production and the related social and environmental impact and issues in the short and long term.

4.7.2 Issue 1: Fair marketing, factual and unbiased information and fair contractual practices

All communication aimed at consumers, regardless of the information channel (labelling, website, mobile phone, advertising, leaflets, etc.), should be:

- direct, fair and not deceptive;
- accurate, factual and verifiable or justifiable;
- understandable, clear and comprehensible to all categories of consumers concerned;
- non-discriminatory;
- in line with public health messages (e.g. issued by government agencies).

and should not, in any way, mislead the consumer as to the true nature or true characteristics of the product and/or the production and processing methods (e.g. irradiated food, GMOs...).

In its communication, the organization should respect ethical rules that govern the communication and advertising sectors.

In the case of a claim related to sustainable development/social responsibility, the recommendation is that the labelling should refer to a website on which the claims are detailed and justified and on which the organization's social responsibility report is published, if applicable.

The organization should agree not to communicate on unproven properties and messages, in particular those that concern official labels and collective branding (PGI- Protected Geographical Indication, organic, etc.), and to limit itself to the associated guarantees.

Organizations which communicate on their products through private certification labels should be prepared to provide information on specifications (at least a summary) and control methods free of charge to consumers (e.g. via a website).

Organizations marketing directly to private individuals (mail orders, door-to-door selling, sales at exhibitions or trade fairs, organization store or franchise) should ensure that the consumer is familiar with general sales conditions before the sales transaction is completed. These general sales conditions should be understandable, legible and comprehensible to all categories of consumers concerned.

4.7.3 Issue 2: Protecting consumers' health and safety

In addition to fulfilling any requirements applicable to health and hygiene (good hygiene practices, HACCP plan, control of nonconforming products and traceability and withdrawal/recall of products), the organization should include food safety in its management system. To do this, the organization should establish measures and procedures (internal and external system of traceability, public health crisis management/prevention procedure, monitoring, etc.) in order to minimize, where required, potential impacts of a public health crisis on consumer health.

The organization should conduct a regulatory monitoring and be aware of scientific and technical developments related to potential food health hazards. The organization should undertake to research, individually or collectively, alternative solutions when a new potential risk is identified, as soon as there are serious scientific doubts.

The organization should undertake actions to control the presence of compounds in its products, including in packaging when it comes into contact with food items, which present a potentially medium- or long-term proven health risk. The organization should set up plans to analyse and research these substances in its semi-finished and finished products.

Consumer health and safety issues should be considered beginning with product design in the choice of raw materials, ingredients, technical additives, processing aids and technological processes.

Before implementing any new technologies, new food items or molecules, the organization should collect and analyse all existing data concerning the use of these new technologies or molecules in food and any potential related risk. This can be done in cooperation with relevant organizations (public and private research institutes, technical centres...).

The organization should train all the workers who have an impact on the production, from the research and development to the commercial communication.

When inappropriate consumption of a product (overconsumption, risks related to certain categories of vulnerable consumers, etc.) is likely to cause medium- or long-term health problems, the organization should disseminate consumption advice adapted to the target public by all appropriate information channels (labelling, website, advertising, leaflets, etc.).

4.7.4 Issue 3: Sustainable consumption

To allow consumers to play a role in sustainable consumption, the organization should seek to develop environmentally and socially reliable products. When informing consumers about these product characteristics, the organization should communicate, in a comprehensible, transparent and non-deceptive way, the information on the social and environmental impact of these products throughout their life cycle (use and end-of-life included), using recognized and coordinated methodologies and technologies when they exist.

The organization should include the issue of food waste (including packaging) in the development of its new products and processes with a view to reducing waste.

The organization may also offer consumers the opportunity to come and see the product production and manufacturing processes for themselves and discuss with workers and farmers if applicable, subject to compliance with hygiene, human safety and confidentiality rules.

When the organization's activity concerns the farming and/or transport and/or handling of live animals, it should ensure the well-being of the animals (e.g. with good practices guides).

4.7.5 Issue 4: Consumer service, support, and complaint and dispute resolution

The organization should establish measures to avoid, anticipate and manage nonconforming products, in particular by offering consumers the option to return products within a specified time or other appropriate solutions.

The organization should have procedures enabling it to respond to all relevant requests and questions from consumers.

All relevant requests should be handled and information on the handling of the nonconformity, e.g. the causes and corrective actions, should be automatically communicated to the consumer who filed the complaint.

4.7.6 Issue 5: Consumer data protection and privacy

Organizations that keep consumer files should guarantee the confidentiality of data pertaining to consumers.

Data obtained legally and with the agreement of the consumer should be part of a suitable protection system that is tested regularly.

4.7.7 Issue 6: Access to essential services

In the case of an exceptional event that causes serious disturbance in the food chain, and as far as possible, the organization should ensure implementation of procedures (like a Continuity of Operations Plan) in conjunction with other operators in the sector. This should enable the organization to deliver a minimum production and/or supply level to the local population adapted to the particular nature of the situation.

Considering that food is a fundamental need and that today, a part of the population does not have access to food (quantitatively or qualitatively), the organization should endeavour to develop (without jeopardizing its competitiveness) new product and service offers adapted to this segment of the population (“social business”).

4.7.8 Issue 7: Education and awareness

Consumer education and awareness should include a variety of actions involving all of the organization’s communications materials: product labelling, advertising, website, mobile applications, shop posters, collective campaigns on product promotion and information and sustainable communication methods, etc.

As far as possible and within its scope of action, the organization should contribute to educating and raising awareness among consumers on taste, nutrition and the need to maintain a healthy and balanced diet, on the methods of production/processing of agricultural and food products, and methods of consuming and using the products it markets, including sustainable consumption methods and food safety.

The organization may act within a collective regional framework to convey relevant, consensus-based, non-intimidating information on agriculture and food.

With regard to nutrition-health, the organization should become the channel for messages broadcast by public authorities as part of governmental plans being developed.

4.8 Community involvement and development

4.8.1 Issues for the food chain

The organization in the food chain should notably address the following challenges:

- ensure and vitalize the regional integration of food chain organizations in order to maintain economic and social activity throughout the regions;
- promote the trades, practices and know-how of the food chain industry to communities and people in the region where the organization operates;
- act locally in terms of food aid for needy people and reintegration of the most vulnerable population groups.

4.8.2 Issue 1: Community involvement

The organization should identify the main players in local community life (local authorities, associations, NGOs and any other individuals or legal entities) in the regions where it is established, whether or not they are affected by the organization’s activities and projects.

The organization should examine possibilities for contributing to projects and actions organized by these players with a view to social responsibility. Particular attention should be paid to projects that make it possible to:

- maintain or create employment in the region;
- develop services and the attractiveness of the region, particularly projects for agro-tourism and to promote local agricultural and food chain products;
- contribute to feeding and reintegrating the most disadvantaged people through participation in food aid activities when it is technically and economically possible and by ensuring safety of food items (e.g. donation of food products, donation of equipment, logistical support, etc.);
- consider redistribution of surplus food to vulnerable people by hospitality and catering services;
- respect for and consider of traditional and/or local cultural methods and issues relating to production as a way of preserving cultural diversity.

The organization should be attentive to and should assist, where necessary, workers in its sphere of influence who wish to volunteer for local development projects and solidarity projects. This assistance can take various forms: adjustments to the work schedule, administrative/logistical/financial support, etc.

4.8.3 Issue 2: Education and culture

To contribute to education and culture at the local level, the organization should gradually:

- become involved in the initial training courses in its sector through welcoming trainees and/or apprentices and/or through participation in school and university programmes;
- inform the directors of studies for those training course of its real current and future needs in terms of training and qualification; in this way, the organization contributes to the establishment of training programmes that are consistent with changes in the job market in the food chain;
- play a role in helping others to discover the trades, practices and processes of the food chain industry as well as of agriculture, if the organization has farmers in its sphere of influence. This industry promotion can take place in particular through welcoming teachers and students to its production sites, subject to compliance with hygiene and human safety rules;
- become involved, where applicable, in local cultural and traditional events, especially when these have a relation to the organization's products, activities or values.

When the organization processes or markets food items under official labels of quality and origin (PGI- Protected Geographical Indication, etc.) or food items containing ingredients with these labels, it should comply with the rules of these product certifications and participate—individually or through the collective associations concerned—in the policy of defending and promoting certified productions.

4.8.4 Issue 3: Employment creation and skills development

As far as possible, and when there are equal skills, the organization should give priority to local hiring in both its internal recruiting and in its supply chain. The organization should develop relationships with local stakeholders in charge of employment and reintegration (local mission, job centres, etc.) and should participate, when possible, in job forums organized in the region.

As part of developing and expanding its activities, the organization should give priority to establishing its new activities in its original region as long as the skills are available there, the set of technical, logistical and commercial conditions is economically viable and liveable, and such an action is logical from an environmental point of view (proximity to markets and/or supply sources).

The organization should make it possible for its underqualified workers to take degree-granting courses with a view to developing their internal and external employability. With other organizations

in its sphere of influence, the organization should organize a system of continuing education to enable workers to develop their skills and gain access to vocational training, if possible. If an organization worker has a professional project in the region in line with the organization's activities and its social responsibility policy, the organization should be aware and should provide technical and/or administrative assistance to the worker if possible.

4.8.5 Issue 4: Technology development and access

The organization should examine the possibility of developing new technologies that are more respectful of the environment and humans and should get involved in focus groups and development groups for these new technologies (testing network, technical centres, competitiveness clusters, etc.).

4.8.6 Issue 5: Wealth and income creation

The organization should have an understanding of the socio-economic consequences of de-listing a supplier or service provider and should provide sufficient notice to allow the latter to maintain its jobs and ensure its economic activity for the long term.

As far as possible, the organization should maintain or develop a policy of local service and products purchasing, when skills and rates are equal, particularly concerning the network of small local businesses that can perform maintenance or construction work.

When an organization has farmers in its sphere of influence, it should establish measures to assist them in their economic performance, paying particular attention to young people, new producers and vulnerable producers.

4.8.7 Issue 6: Health

The organization should make sure it controls the risks for the health of members of the community associated with:

- cooling towers for cold production, with the risk of contamination by harmful elements (Legionella);
- atmospheric emissions of dust or toxic elements;
- access to external people when authorized;
- facility explosion (silo, generator, etc.);
- pumping water into swimming areas;
- risk of siphoning from the organization's internal water network into the public water supply;
- sound, olfactory or visual nuisances that can cause stress and malaise in individuals living nearby.

Organisations with farmers in their sphere of influence should advise them on risks to the health of members of the community, for instance phytosanitary treatments for crops located near population.

NOTE The health of external people and workers is closely linked to the organization's activities. However, worker health is addressed under the core subject entitled "Labour practices" (see [4.4](#)).

4.8.8 Issue 7: Social investment

Organizations which set up local sponsorship activities should do so by taking into account:

- their understanding of the local role of the sponsored organization (culture, sport or education);
- the extent of its involvement with the sponsored organization, taking care not to be the sole or main sponsor on whom the economic viability of the organization rests;
- the ability of the sponsored organization to give an accounting to its sponsors and partners.

The organization should develop a regular report of its sponsorships and its actions that contribute to local development and demonstrate the absence of a conflict of interest between the members of its management and the governing bodies of the organizations sponsored.

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Annex A (informative)

Examples of good practices

This annex contains a non-exhaustive collection of examples of good practice, which can be helpful to an organization when implementing its own social responsibility strategy and identifying its level of maturity in the process.

Table A.1 — Examples of good practices

Issue	Examples of good practices ORGANIZATIONAL GOVERNANCE	Related SDGs
Issue 1: Integrating social responsibility into the organization's strategic policy and plan	Analysis table of social responsibility issues that helps to identify positive and negative impacts, cross-referencing each of the organization's processes with each of the seven core subjects and the seven principles in ISO 26000:2010	all
	To realize this analysis, the organization needs internal and external inputs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — international frameworks-studies: SDGs, Global Compact, FAO, OECD, GRI (Global Report Initiative) — market analysis — mega trends (prospective analysis) 	all
	Train organization administrators in social responsibility issues (e.g. training administrators of cooperatives in management and organizational governance issues)	all
Issue 2: Identifying and engaging with stakeholders and determining the sphere of influence	Use of a method to rank stakeholders related to the sphere of influence	all
	Co build with the stakeholders the strategic policy and plan	all
	Establishment of a formal communication plan with the stakeholders (the contact information of the stakeholder and a preferred intermediary, the needs and expectations of the stakeholder, the organization representative in charge of dialogue with the stakeholder, the frequency and nature (meeting, transmission of data, etc.) of exchanges)	all
	Carry out a perception survey of stakeholders about the strategic policy and plan	all

Table A.1 (continued)

Issue	Examples of good practices ORGANIZATIONAL GOVERNANCE	Related SDGs
Issue 3: Identification of, and demonstration of compliance with, applicable legal requirements	Description of the organization of the monitoring system (regulatory/technical/technological/scientific/competition) in an overall monitoring table, defining the source of the monitoring for each topic (websites, trade shows, visits to companies in the same sector, subscription), the person in charge of the monitoring, the frequency of the monitoring and the procedure to demonstrate how compliance is achieved	all
	Monitoring contains specific food chain topics like: food safety, phytosanitary products, best practices in food chain, animal welfare	all
	Subscription to an external system of regulatory monitoring or membership in a trade union	all
	Sharing major developments (new regulation, new competitor initiative, new technology, etc.) in management meetings and planning actions to modify process	all
	Completion of regular, planned sessions to review how compliance with legal requirements is achieved	all
Issue 5: Practical implementation of social responsibility, reviewing progress and improving social responsibility performance	Establishment of a social responsibility committee within the organization or designation of a person in charge of social responsibility. This person or this committee is directly connected with the board/manager.	all
	Development of a social responsibility process mapping including environmental, safety at work, quality, social, societal and economic issues	all
	Definition of the KPI (Key Performance Indicator) related to the social responsibility policy and plan. These indicators are examined within the framework of a social responsibility management review	all
	Identification of people in charge of the social responsibility process, establish goals/objectives and yearly check to have a gratification system	all
	Annually management review of the social responsibility process	
	Adoption and/or certification to VSS (Voluntary Sustainability Standards) using information provided by UNFSS (United Nations Forum on Sustainability Standards)	all
Issue 6: Accountability and transparency	Publication of a report on social responsibility in order to inform the stakeholders about the organization's process	all
Issue	Examples of good practices HUMAN RIGHTS	Related SDGs
Issue 1: Due diligence	Incorporation into the purchasing policy and specifications of criteria for committing to respecting human rights and combating discrimination. If possible, assessable criteria	8, 10
	Develop a procurement process based on ISO 20400 sustainable procurement	12
Issue 2: Human rights risk situations	Establish a method to identify analyse and reduce risks to human rights that can be implemented in various areas in the organization and in the supply chain: governance, finance, purchasing, R&D (Research and Development), HR (Human Resource), marketing, internal and external communication, personal information management, etc.	16

Table A.1 (continued)

Issue	Examples of good practices HUMAN RIGHTS	Related SDGs
Issues 3 and 4: Avoidance of complicity — Resolving grievances	Communication plan and plan for awareness-raising/training for personnel and worker representatives on situations of discrimination	4, 5, 10
	Establish a method to identify, analyse and reduce risks to complicity in the organization and in the supply chain	16
Issues 5, 6 and 7 Discrimination and vulnerable groups — Civil and political rights — Economic, social and cultural rights	Signature of an organization agreement on equal opportunity (gender equality, anti-discrimination, senior citizens, disabled, etc.)	5, 10
	Training for management personnel on managing disabilities	4, 10
	Communication plan, even a plan for awareness-raising/training, of stakeholders in the value chain, particularly suppliers, on human rights, workplace gender equality, promoting diversity and combating discrimination	5, 10, 16
Issue	Examples of good practices LABOUR PRACTICES	Related SDGs
Issue 1: Employment and employment relationships	Charter and pathways to integration for new workers and seasonal workers, and interim	8, 10
	Establishment of complementarity (continuity) of contracts among local businesses	1, 8
	Training on social legislation (e.g. training set up by cooperative partners or farmers). In the case of training for farmers, these sessions will be held in conjunction with the local representatives of the employers' organization	4
	Participation in associations of employers	1, 8
	Joint agreement on gender equality in the workplace	5
	Ethical and social charter, developed by the management and the Worker Representative bodies, including in particular commitments on values	8, 16
	Support system, internal reinsurance fund, survival plan	1, 3, 8
Issue 2: Conditions of work and social protection	Management of social perspectives: asking questions of workers and then considering the ethical and social charter adapted to the organization's set-up	8, 16
	Organization health insurance, meals subsidies, shared canteen, pension plan, etc.	8
	Work from home, adjustments to work schedule, voluntary part-time work, etc.	8
	Nurseries, concierge	8
	Adaptation of the work to disabled people	3, 8
	Housing assistance for workers	8
Issue 3: Social dialogue	Implementation of a works council	8, 16
	Conduct opinion and satisfaction surveys of personnel	8, 16
	Presentation of social dialogue bodies to new workers (e.g. in the welcome booklet)	8, 16
	Training of worker representative bodies	4
	Presentation of the collective agreement and its conditions to all workers	8, 16

Table A.1 (continued)

Issue	Examples of good practices LABOUR PRACTICES	Related SDGs
Issue 4: Occupational health and safety (OH&S)	Risk analysis in relation to the health and safety of the workers. Exposure measurements for the most sensitive jobs	3, 8, 16
	Ergonomic studies and adaptation of the job/process/work place with ergonomic material	3
	Welcoming and training seasonal workers on job-related risks	3, 4
	Awareness-raising/training for workers (including farmers) on safety, health and handling hazardous products. For example, group purchasing of personal protective equipment and training on how to wear this equipment	3, 4
	The organization refers to International Standards (e.g. ISO 45001)	3
	Give the possibility to have a physical training to be adapted to the work conditions	3
	Support the development of mobile health units for the workers	3, 8
	Training for farmers' representatives on identifying psychosocial symptoms in producers in their sphere of influence	3, 4
Issue 5: Human development and training in the workplace	Regular (annual) individual interviews, including a point on training needs and on the worker's short- or medium-term skills development	4
	Monitor training sessions by type and category of workers trained	4
	Training for workers (including farmers) on safety, product quality and the environment. Information on these subjects (publications, websites, etc.)	4
	Organization of literacy training programmes through relevant organizations for workers with difficulties reading and writing	4

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Table A.1 (continued)

Issue	Examples of good practices THE ENVIRONMENT	Related SDGs
Issue 1: Prevention of pollution	The organization identified wastewater/rainwater sewer systems and areas and activities likely to pollute the natural environment	6, 14
	Pre-treatment of wastewater to significantly reduce pollution (e.g. decantation, reeds...)	3, 6, 14
	Treatment of potentially contaminated water from traffic and parking areas	3, 6, 14
	Use of best techniques available (for instance as described in the Best Available Technology Reference Documents) — reaching the wastewater levels recommended	6, 9, 14
	Organizations check with the relevant authorities that the information provided is consistent with regulations and, where applicable with the specifications of the official quality and origin labels	12
	Limiting the effects of phytosanitary treatments: testing and/or self-testing treatment devices to assess the effectiveness of the application, choice of products with a lower impact on the environment, well focused on the treatment and with low residual effects, implementation of measures to limit run-off on the ground or dispersion in the air	2
	Plant cover	2, 6, 12, 15
	Formulating cattle feed so as to limit waste (nitrogen, phosphorus, etc.)	2, 12
	Spreading — Repurposing effluents	6, 12, 14
	Collection of fermentable waste and repurposing through methanation to produce electricity and heat to be used in production	7, 12
	Implementation of actions to reduce water consumption: recycling cooling water, installation of water meters in all areas of high consumption, irrigation systems enabling water savings (pressure, location, etc.) and recovery of rain water	6, 12
	Energy efficiency plan: use of electronic speed variators instead of mechanical variators, installation of high-yield engines instead of old electric engines, insulation, heat recovery, cogeneration, free-cooling, installation of glazed windows in production rooms (longer natural light), installation of electric submeters at the highest consumption points, installation of rapid-opening shutters on refrigerators and diagnostic freezers, thermal bridges in cold rooms, green terraces and walls, etc.	7, 13
	Choice of clean and efficient processes: installation of wood-fired boilers, solar panels, voluntary replacement of a fluid with a high global-warming potential with a natural fluid (e.g. NH ₃ , CO ₂), construction/renovation of buildings to High Environmental Quality standards	7, 13
	Waste management by minimizing by-products, composting organic waste, recycling processing and packaging materials, and saving energy and water	6, 14

Table A.1 (continued)

Issue	Examples of good practices THE ENVIRONMENT	Related SDGs
Issue 2: Sustainable resource use	Use of recycled materials in product design	12
	Conduct product life-cycle assessments of its products	2, 12
	Favour the use of organic inputs (such as biomass), whenever possible, with a view to minimizing the use of fossil and other inputs that are more polluting and slowly absorbed by the environment	12, 13
	Sustainable food packaging: — alternative materials, such as corrugated materials, bioplastics, etc. — edible packaging — spoilage prevention to help food waste reduction — upcycling, which allows packaging to be converted into second-life products — Use of digital printing instead of offset printing	6, 9, 12, 14
	Harvest time: adequacy, flexibility, scheduling	12
	Issue 3: Climate change mitigation and adaptation	Report on GHG (greenhouse gas) emissions and an action plan to limit emissions
References to Paris agreement, Kyoto Protocol, CDP (Carbon Disclosure Protocol), Science-based target, ISO 50001, 4 for 1 000		13, 17
Commitment through a charter with self-testing and action plans for transport companies or for transportation		11, 13
Voluntary replacement of a fluid with a high GWP (Global-Warming Potential) with a natural fluid (e.g. NH ₃ , CO ₂)		13
Training of drivers in energy-efficient driving		4, 11, 13
Sustainable transport: reducing the energy use and GHG related with food transport, by: — reducing sourcing products that travel by air — using suppliers and shippers that are working to improve the fuel efficiency of their fleet		13
Harvest time: adequacy, flexibility, scheduling		12

Table A.1 (continued)

Issue	Examples of good practices THE ENVIRONMENT	Related SDGs
Issue 4: Protection of the environment, biodiversity and restoration of natural habitats	Promote maintaining areas of agricultural biodiversity (e.g. hedges, grassy areas, flowering/nectar-plant/polliferous uncultivated land, low walls, ponds, isolated trees, fringes of woodland, etc.)	14, 15
	Completion of a biodiversity report Creation of a biodiversity assessment tool with other local actors to enable farmers to assess the biodiversity that exists on their farms (monitoring pollinators, earthworms, ground beetles, butterflies, wild flora and fauna, etc.)	14, 15, 17
	Installation of a lake or water source for irrigation, adjusted at access points to promote the development of local biodiversity (plant and animal, bird migration corridors...), in partnership with associations, authorities of the countries...	6, 14, 15, 17
Issue	Examples of good practices FAIR OPERATING PRACTICES	Related SDGs
Issue 1: Anti-corruption	Adherence to an ethical business charter developed by a business collective	16, 17
	Provide education on anti-corruption to all workers	4
	Follow for instance the FAO program anti-corruption or the recommendation of OECD anti-corruption network for Eastern Europe and Central Asia	8, 10, 16, 17
Issue 2: Responsible political involvement	Formal written list of public, private and trade-union bodies in which the organization's representatives sit	16
	Disclose the status of political donation (how much, to whom, etc.)	16
Issue 3: Fair competition	Annual review and update of all product-related communication materials (brochures, leaflets, website, etc.)	12
	Provide education on anti-competitive behaviour to all workers	4
Issue 4: Promoting social responsibility in the value chain	Respect for the code of good practices within the supply chain developed by the High-Level Forum of the European Commission for a better functioning food chain	8, 10, 12
	Completion of a questionnaire by suppliers and service providers, with a system for marking all of the core subjects in ISO 26000:2010 and feedback to suppliers and service providers along with a social responsibility improvement plan	8, 10
	Monitor or audit suppliers to check if they comply with the Code of Conduct	12, 16, 17
	Provide education or training to suppliers on social responsibility	4
	Follow the guidance of ISO 20400 sustainable procurement	12, 16, 17
Issue 5: Respect for property rights	Encouragement and technical support for town councils in the regions covered by the organization abroad with a view to increasing forest cover through planting indigenous species	9
	Provide education on intellectual property rights to workers	4
	Integrate IP (Intellectual Property) protection issue in contractual agreement with business partners	16