

## What is ISO 26000?

### Summary background of ISO 26000

International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) is a network of the national standards institutes of 157 countries (on the basis of one member per country) with a central Secretariat in Geneva, Switzerland to coordinate the system. ISO is a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) whose members may be delegates mandated by national governments or drawn from trade associations or national partnerships depending on how each country sets up its standards institute. So ISO is a bridging organisation in which a consensus can be reached on solutions that meet both the requirements of business and the broader needs of society, such as the needs of consumer and users stakeholder groups. The Bangladesh Standards and Testing Institution (BSTI) became a member of ISO in 1974.

ISO 26000 was accepted as the international guidance standard on SR, and 'SR' as a term is used world-wide. Some countries were concerned that the application of ISO 26000 could become a non-tariff barrier to trade. However the reality is that companies associating themselves (their products and their production processes) with ISO 26000 can actually gain a market advantage.

### ISO 26000 guideline at a glance

The ISO 26000 guideline covers what it calls the seven core subjects and seven core principles of SR. These will be discussed thoroughly in the next two chapters. ISO 26000 also provides guidance on how to integrate SR throughout an organisation, this is covered in chapter five. An electronic version of the full guideline is available on the ISO official website.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.mdos.si/Files/ISO\\_FDIS\\_26000\\_final%20draft.pdf](http://www.mdos.si/Files/ISO_FDIS_26000_final%20draft.pdf)