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PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES RESPONSIBLE PROCUREMENT



Play a part in sustainable development

AN INITIATIVE OF THE QUEBECOIS PLATFORM OF RESPONSIBLE PURCHASING (ECPAR)
TO INCITE ITS MEMBERS, THEIR SUPPLIERS AND EVERY OTHER ORGANISATION TO
ADHERE TO COMMON PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES

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Espace québécois de concertation sur les
pratiques d'approvisionnement responsable

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Preamble

The Espace québécois de concertation sur les pratiques d’approvisionnement responsable (ECPAR) aims to optimize the efforts of buyers to disseminate and implement best practices in responsible procurement.

The ECPAR invites its members and all other organizations (buyers and suppliers) seeking to adopt responsible procurement to adhere to common responsible procurement principles and guidelines.

In doing so, the ECPAR pursues these goals:

1. Foster the consideration of social, environmental and economic issues from the life cycle perspective for goods and services procurement.
2. Mobilize supply chain stakeholders and stimulate concerted actions for responsible procurement.

Approach

The responsible procurement principles and guidelines are rooted in the practices and perspectives of ECPAR members and were developed from a list of criteria pertaining to social, environmental, economic, product, service and supplier governance issues set out by the ECPAR according to the following reference standards:

- **BNQ 21000** – Guide for the application of the *Sustainable Development Act* in business and organization management practices
- **GRI (G3.1 et 4)** – Global Reporting Initiative
- **ISO 14 000** – Environmental management
- **ISO 26 000** – Social responsibility
- **Global Compact**
- **OHSAS 18001** – Workplace health and safety
- **SA 8000** – Social responsibility standard

A series of consultations with ECPAR-member businesses, government organizations, research centres, environmental and socioeconomic groups and consultants was carried out in order to enhance and validate the content of this document.

Responsible procurement principles and guidelines

The principles and guidelines outlined herein are considered relevant to all organizations. They may be applied in whole or in part according to business realities and the capacity of influence with a view to ensure continuous improvement.

Principle 1 EXEMPLARITY
Be an example of corporate responsibility by implementing responsible internal practices

Guidelines

1. Comply with all applicable tax, environmental and social laws, the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and ensure that all suppliers also do so.
2. Ensure the implementation of corporate responsibility principles within the organization in order to gain greater legitimacy when conveying requirements to the supply chains.
3. Base practices on recognized reference standards.
4. Ensure that the organization's procurement practices (price negotiation, production time, order frequency, etc.) do not lead to irresponsible supply chain choices.
5. Adopt ethical business practices within the organization.

Principle 2 GOVERNANCE
Be committed to responsible procurement and motivate employees and suppliers to do the same

Guidelines

1. Develop policies and other governance tools to integrate corporate responsibility and ethical issues into procurement practices.
2. Implement responsible procurement development, application, monitoring and accountability processes.
3. Transparently and proactively communicate procurement-related risks, opportunities and requirements to internal and external stakeholders.
4. Ensure that the responsible procurement approach applies stakeholder mobilization principles, especially for suppliers.
5. Encourage, promote or reward the efforts of purchasing teams and suppliers seeking to comply with responsible procurement requirements and provide support whenever necessary.
6. Take part in initiatives driven by efforts and experiences in order to progress and find solutions to key responsible procurement issues.

Principle 3 EQUITY AND EFFICIENCY
**Use responsible procurement to create and fairly distribute value
across the supply chains**

Guidelines

1. When acquiring goods, choose products based on their actual cost to organizations by considering the total cost of ownership.
2. Rely on life cycle thinking to prioritize the responsible procurement practices that will be implemented by accounting for the social and environmental risks and opportunities and potential costs and benefits.
3. Ensure that the responsible procurement practices that are implemented do not exclude small and medium suppliers.
4. Ensure that the costs to implement the responsible procurement practices are fairly shared by the contractor and suppliers.
5. Ensure that compliance with responsible procurement requirements can be fairly and objectively assessed, recognizing the participation of suppliers in corporate responsibility programs that meet the criteria of established environmental management systems (e.g. ISO 14 000) and the credibility principles set out by ISEAL.

Principle 4 ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY
**Implement procurement practices that reduce environmental
impacts**

Guidelines

1. Choose the products and suppliers that post the best environmental performances by implementing acquisition practices that account for environmental issues.
2. Assess procurement needs to ensure they are essential and determine the products and services that are best adapted to these needs.
3. Opt for a procurement approach driven by the 3R-R.
4. Contribute to the development and marketing of greener and more sustainable products by, for example, supporting the development of eco-design and innovation.
5. Collaborate with suppliers who are members of reuse and recycling networks.

Principe 5 SOCIOECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Implement practices to ensure that the goods and services that are acquired are produced in compliance with human and labour rights and provide maximized benefits to workers and the community

Guidelines

1. Select suppliers who can demonstrate their performances in terms of human resource management and occupational health and safety.
2. Select suppliers who can demonstrate their contributions to the socioeconomic development of their communities.
3. Foster the development of an economy of proximity whenever possible.
4. Encourage suppliers who assess and manage the potential impacts of their activities on local communities.
5. Acquire goods and services from social economy enterprises (NPOs, co-ops, membership organizations, organizations with social and professional integration missions) whenever possible.
6. When suppliers do not comply with labour laws or the principles of worker and community rights, collaborate with stakeholders (local or regional when suppliers are located abroad) to determine the measures that should be applied.

Definitions and references

3R-R A hierarchy of actions for sound waste management: source reduction, reuse, recycling and reclamation (RECYC-QUÉBEC).

Responsible procurement A procurement option that integrates environmental and social criteria into the goods and services acquisition process in an effort to reduce environmental impacts, increase social benefits and support the economic sustainability of organizations throughout the life cycles of the products and services (Sustainability Purchasing Network, 2006).

Capacity to influence ISO 26 000 stipulates that the extent of an economic relationship with a partner and the relative importance of this relationship for each organization constitute indicators to estimate the capacity to influence.

Criterion A standard or rule to establish the order or ranking of decision-making criteria (translation, Larousse, 2012).

Ethical behaviour A behaviour that is in line with accepted principles on good or just conduct within the context of a given situation and in keeping with international standards of behaviour. (translation, Larousse, 2012).

Social, environmental, economic, product, service and supplier governance criteria Developed by the ECPAR, the list of criteria is available online at ecpar.org (in French only).

Sustainable Development A type of development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable development is based on a long-term approach that takes into account the inextricable nature of the environmental, social and economic dimensions of development activities (Québec, *Sustainable Development Act*, 2006).

Eco-design A product and process design approach that integrates environmental considerations to reduce environmental impacts throughout the life cycle of the product or process (translation, Grand dictionnaire terminologique).

Economy of proximity An economy of proximity is defined as a mode of economic organization based on direct relationships between businesses and between businesses and consumers and ties to community life. The goal is to increase wellbeing by ensuring that the territory is enhanced by and for those who occupy it. An economy of proximity constitutes a source of employment and strengthens the vitality of the territory (translation, L'économie de proximité :

une réponse aux défis majeurs de la société française, Avis du Conseil Économique, Social et Environnemental (CESE), octobre 2010, 190 pages).

Social economy enterprise The social economy includes the activities and organizations driven by collective entrepreneurship (NPOs, co-ops, membership organizations) that merge social missions and economic activity and which integrate democratic governance into their bylaws and operations. Social economy enterprises aim firstly to serve their members and the community, upholding the primacy of people and labour over capital in earnings distribution. For more information on the social economy, please refer to the *Guide de référence sur l'économie sociale produit* released by the Chantier de l'économie sociale (in French only).

Governance A system by which an organization makes and applies decisions in order to reach its objectives (ISO 26000).

ISEAL's Credibility Principles The principles are available on the website of ISEAL, a NPO that aims to strengthen standards systems for people and the environment.

Guidelines A text that aims to prescribe or propose a code of conduct (translation, Larousse).

Life cycle thinking A production and consumption concept that aims to account for the environmental, economic and social aspects of a product or service throughout its life cycle. The life cycle of a product includes:

- Extraction and processing of raw materials
- Production
- Packaging and distribution
- Use
- End of life

Principle The basis for a behaviour or a decision-making process (ISO 26000).

Corporate responsibility The contribution of businesses to sustainable development issues based on their sphere of influence (ISO 26000).

Extended producer responsibility An environmental measure by which a producer's material and financial responsibility for its product is extended to the post-consumption phase of the product's life cycle.