UNECE

GENDER RESPONSIVE STANDARDS INITIATIVE

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Report for the Annual Session WP.6
Report

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Working Party 6 created the Gender Responsive Standards Initiative, with the aim of improving gender balance in standards development, and of ensuring that the content and impact of standards, when implemented, are gender-responsive.

The Initiative aims to strengthen the use of standards and technical regulations as powerful tools to attain SDG 5 (Achieve Gender Equality and Empower all Women and Girls), integrate a gender lens in the development of both standards and technical regulations, as well as elaborate gender indicators and criteria that could be used in standards development.
WP.6 GRSI
2021 COMPOSITION & OBJECTIVE

Project Team 1
Knowledge Sharing & Best Practice,
led by Lucy He of Worksafe New Zealand

Project Team 2
Gender Responsive Standards Methodology,
led by Michelle Parkouda of Standards Council of Canada (SCC)

Project Team 3
Network Development,
led by Ray Walsh of Dublin City University (DCU)

1. PROJECT TEAM 1: TRAINING & BEST PRACTICE
   Project Team 1 works to cultivate training and best practice material to support standards bodies/signatories to meet their commitments, under the UNECE Declaration on Gender Responsive Standards. This includes identifying existing materials in the network and training gaps.

2. PROJECT TEAM 2: GENDER Responsive STANDARDS METHODOLOGY
   Project Team 2 works to support NSBs to ensure the standards they develop and the practices they follow are gender-responsive.

3. PROJECT TEAM 3: NETWORK DEVELOPMENT
   Project Team 3 extends the network and brings gender-responsive standards to new fora and constituencies. The team engages with national, regional and international platforms to raise awareness of gender responsive standards.
The team has developed a survey which will be circulated via SurveyMonkey to focal points of National Standards Bodies within the signatory network. The survey will identify NSB training needs and existing capacity related to gender and standards.

Project team 2 has developed a Gender Responsive Standards Methodology, a living document which addresses practical issues of gender responsivity in standardization and the standards development process. A glossary of terms is included to harmonize understanding of key terms.

The project team has brought the GRSI and message of ‘standards for women’s empowerment’ to new constituencies. Since September, the team has presented gender responsive standards at the International Conference on Sustainable Development and to the African Organization for Standardization (ARSO).
80 DECLARATION
SIGNATORIES

International Organization for Standardization (ISO)
International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC)
European Committee for Standardization (CEN) &
European Committee for Electrotechnical Standardization (CENELEC)
African Organization for Standardization (ARSO)
AMFORI
ASTM International
European Environmental Citizens’ Organization for Standardization (ECOS)
Fairtrade International
The Gold Standard
Round Table on Responsible Soy Association (RTRS)
The Standards and Metrology Institute for the Islamic Countries (SMIIC)
The Rainforest Alliance
Responsible Jewellery Council (RJC)
Verra
WOCAN (Women Organizing for Change in Agriculture &
Natural Resource Management)
Albania - General Directorate of Standardization
Argentina - Instituto Argentino de Normalización y
Certificación - IRAM
Austria - Austrian Standards International
Bolivia - Instituto Boliviano de Normalización y Calidad
Bosnia & Herzegovina - Institut for Standardization of
Bosnia and Herzegovina
Brazil - Associação Brasileira de Normas Técnicas
(ABNT)
Canada - Standards Council of Canada
Cuba - Cuban National Bureau of Standards (NC)
Colombia - Instituto Colombiano de Normas Técnicas y
Certificación
Congo - Office Congolais de Contrôle
Costa Rica – Technical Standards Institute of Costa Rica (INTECO)
Cuba - Cuban National Bureau of Standards (NC)
Cyprus - Organisation for Standardisation
Denmark - Danish Standards
Dominican Republic - Instituto Dominicano para la Calidad
Ecuador - Servicio Ecuatoriano de Normalización
France - Association Française de Normalisation
(AFNOR)
Gambia - The Gambia Standards Bureau
Georgia - Georgian National Agency for Standards and
Metrology (GEOSTM)
Germany - Deutsches Institut für Normung
Germany - Deutsche Kommission Elektrotechnik
Elektronik Informationstechnik im DIN und VDE (DKE)
Honduras - Organismo Hondureño de Normalización
Iceland - Icelandic Standards
Israel - Standards Institute of Israel (SII)
India - Bureau of Indian Standards
Ireland - National Standards Authority of Ireland
Italy - Comitato Elettrotecnico Italiano
Italy - Ente Italiano di Normazione
Latvia - Latvian Standard
Lithuania - Lithuanian Standards Board
Luxembourg - Institut Luxembourgeois de la Normalisation, de l’Accréditation, de la Sécurité et qualité des produits et services
Madagascar - Bureau des Normes de Madagascar
Mali - Agence Malienne de Normalisation et de Promotion de la Qualité (AMANORM)
Malta - Malta Competition and Consumer Affairs Authority
Mauritius - Mauritius Standards Bureau
Mexico - Dirección General de Normas
Moldova - Institute for Standardization of Moldova
Morocco - Institut Marocain de Normalisation
Mozambique - Instituto Nacional de Normalização e Qualidade
Netherlands - Netherlands Standardization Institute
New Zealand - New Zealand Standards Organisation
New Zealand - New Zealand IEC National Committee
Norway - Standards Norway
Papua New Guinea - Institute of Standards and Industrial Technology
Peru – El Instituto Nacional de Calidad (INACAL)
Portugal - Instituto Português da Qualidade
Rwanda - Rwandan Standards Board (RSB)
Saint Lucia – Saint Lucia Bureau of Standards
Senegal - Association Sénégalaise de Normalisation
Serbia – Institute for Standardization of Serbia (ISS)
Slovakia - Slovak Office of Standards, Metrology and Testing
South Africa - South African Bureau of Standards
Spain - Asociación Española de Normalización
Sweden - Swedish Institute for Standards
Switzerland - Swiss Institute for Standardization
Thailand - Thai Industrial Standards Institute
Togo - Agence Togolaise de Normalisation
Trinidad and Tobago - Bureau of Standards
Turkey - Türk Standardlari Enstitüsü
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland - British Standards Institution
Uruguay - Instituto Uruguayo de Normas Técnicas
Rwanda
The RSB partnered with the national Gender Monitoring Office to elaborate a joint national action plan to implement the core objectives of the Declaration. These efforts are aimed to support gender responsiveness across the whole standardization value chain.

Canada
The priorities of the SCC Gender Action Plan were improving gender representation in standards development, building gender expertise into the standardization system by developing guidance on how to mainstream gender in the development of a standard; and contributing sound research to this area.

India
The priorities of the BIS Action Plan include creating inclusive committees and connecting with external organizations to promote inclusivity; creating gender responsive standards by developing methodology to assess gender blindness of existing standards and new proposals; and imparting training/awareness.

Portugal
IPO, the standards body of Portugal, has committed to partner with the national Commission for Equality in Labor and Employment, and the Icelandic Standardization body, for the elaboration of a Portuguese Standard on Equal Wages.
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<td><strong>WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION (WTO)</strong></td>
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<td>‘Gender Responsive Standards’,</td>
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<td><strong>COMMONWEALTH STANDARDS NETWORK (CSN)</strong></td>
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<td>‘UNECE Gender Responsive Standards Initiative’,</td>
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<td><strong>INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (ICSD)</strong></td>
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<td>‘Gender Responsive Standards and their Impact on UN SDGs’,</td>
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<td><strong>AFRICAN REGIONAL STANDARDS ORGANIZATION (ARSO)</strong></td>
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<td>“The Importance of Gender Responsive Standards”</td>
<td>27th October 2021</td>
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Why Gender Responsive Standards?

UNECE's work on women's economic empowerment is guided by key global norms and standards that recognize the rights of women and girls everywhere.

1. Are standards neutral?
There is a growing recognition that standards are not neutral, rather they are experienced differently depending on someone's gender.

2. Any examples?
Personal protective equipment is often designed for men. This leaves female healthcare workers further exposed to infection amid the pandemic.

3. What is a gender responsive standard?
A gender responsive standard reflects an understanding of people's differentiated needs, and addresses those of men and women equally.

The Gender-Responsive Standards Initiative is a diverse working group committed to addressing gender imbalance & the harnessing the potential of standards to empower women and girls.

4. Who are the Gender Responsive Standards Initiative?

5. Can I participate?
Absolutely, meetings are open to everyone.

Global Healthcare
Roughly 70 per cent of the global healthcare workforce are women. They hold only 25% of senior roles.

Exposure
In Italy, 69% of women healthcare workers have been infected with COVID-19 compared to 31% of men (2020).

Ill-Fitting PPE
UK's 2017 Trades Union Congress found 71% of women wear PPE that has not been designed for female bodies. In emergency services, only 5% of women said their PPE never hampered their work.

Different Requirements
PPE does not protect all workers equally. This is because — quite often — these specifications are drawn up on the basis of the male body, which is often taken as the reference for the population as a whole.

COVID-19 & Inclusivity
The global health crisis has underscored the dire need for gender considerations in PPE and the structural inequalities faced by women at work. UNECE is committed to gender-responsive standards and driving change in standardization. Standards are vital tools in the achievement of the SDGs.

Face Masks
Research conducted in the United Kingdom found that respiratory equipment "poorly fit" 10.7% of female health workers compared to 7.6% of men (2020).

Under the umbrella of the UNECE "Gender-responsive Standards Declaration", standards bodies work together to make standards – like those on filtering masks, medical gloves and protective clothing – gender-responsive. Some 75 standards bodies have signed the Declaration, taking concrete commitments for action.
Future Activities

GRSI IN 2022

GENDER FOCAL POINT NETWORK

Strengthen continuity and understanding on the activities of the Gender Responsive Standards Initiative (GRSI) through a network of dedicated gender focal points.

DELIVER GENDER TRAINING

Develop training manual on the topic of gender responsive standards. Deliver a series of training workshops based off this report to gender focal points of NSBs. Intended to support NSB develop a gender action plan, practical information on plan development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

DEVELOP TRAINING & BEST PRACTICE

Publication of the Methodology on Gender Responsive Standards. Disseminate survey to identify training needs and existing capacity. Strengthen knowledge sharing between NSBs through WP.6 platform and signatory network.