

Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies (WP.6)
Gender-Responsive Standards Team of Specialists teleconference discussion notes and actions
8 February 2023, 12:00 CET

Item	Subject	Discussion / Action
1a	Roll call	Michelle Parkouda (Chair), Lucy He (Vice-Chair), Stephanie Eynon (Vice-Chair), Gisele Beleck, Maria Cassens-Sasse, Fernanda de Castro Boria, Viviana Conti, Kory Eguino, Zakaria Ghattas Masoud, Carla Gordon, Maria João Graca, NC-Hylton, Johanna Kamulumbu, Mansha Marwa, Rachel McCarthy, Pascale Mienville, Clementine Mukamana, Frazana Mursal Alizada, Fiona O'Donovan, Natalia Ortiz de Zarate Crespo, Ihsan Övüt, Susana Santos, Lise Schmidt Aagesen, Sarid Sriduandao, Florence Uwatwembi, Silvia Vaccaro, Laura Villegas, Deborah Wautier, Pan Wei Secretariat: Lance Thompson, Tauno Kangur
1b	Approval of the Agenda	Agenda agreed with no modifications
2	Approval of 14/12/2022 minutes	Minutes of the 14 December 2022 call agreed with no modifications.
3	Update website pages	The secretariat briefly presented the updated website design. The GRS pages are available at: https://unece.org/trade/wp6/gender-responsive-standards These pages have been aligned with all WP.6 subgroups in order to keep a harmonized look and feel. The previous pages are still accessible through the previous links; however, these will be discontinued in the coming weeks. The recent publication of the <u>Guidelines</u> is on-line and available in English, French, Russian and Spanish; Arabic and Chinese soon to come. These are on the top page at the bottom. The video animations are also on-line on the top page at the bottom. ⇒ Experts are requested to take a look through the pages to see if there is any information missing or if there should be any updates.
4	Update on signatories to the Declaration	The secretariat announced that there are three new signatories to the <i>Declaration on Gender-Responsive Standards and Standards Development</i> : Cameroun 78th signatory on 16 December 2022; Montenegro 79th signatory on 21 January 2023; and Serbia the 80th signatory on 1 February 2023. The secretariat explained that it is actively trying to reach out to national standards organizations to request that they consider signing, first concentrating on those who expressed an interest in the past. There was one standards body that explained that it is committed to gender-responsive standards and gender equality in standards development, but that it does not have the resources at this time to comply with all of the obligations outlined in the <i>Declaration</i> .
5	Gender Action Plan Repository	It was noted that there are currently only three submissions for the <u>Gender Action Plan repository</u> (Austria, Ecuador and Rwanda). The Chair surveyed for interest to fill this in and what could be done in order to get more responses. It was also reminded that this repository is meant to be used to develop a publication on best practices that could be used to compare between types of bodies and types of economies and that if the publication was to be developed in 2023, the main text would need to be developed by the GRS Annual Meeting in the end of May 2022. Experts provided some input on why there may not be so many responses and what measures could be taken: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was underlined that the experts working on gender action plans are responsible for other topics within their organizations with varying priorities; filling out such a

		<p>long template is not a top priority and may be deferred because of that. This would be additional work for Focal Points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of questions is a bit large, and some may be intimidated by the number of questions • Some may not want to respond to certain questions as it may be awkward to their organization (including being identified by name) • Certain questions in the template require consultation with other colleagues / entities • The situation is evolving, so respondents may not want to fill it out until everything is put in place. • The context of some SDOs may not be easily understood through the questions, so a free-text additional information section would be necessary. <p>It was underlined that we are guessing at reasons; we're trying to find solutions without really knowing what the problems are. We should check how many people have visited this page.</p> <p>There was a question seeking to learn more about gender action plans and if there exists some models. It was underlined that the annex to the <i>Declaration</i> already provides some guidance on what can be in a GAP, as well as the <i>Guidelines</i>. GAP may also be part of national law and some provisions may be laid out in other national references.</p> <p>The Chair asked if the group sees value in this work and the consensus was positive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ The group requested the secretariat to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Modify the questionnaire to indicate that not all questions are obligatory ○ Modify the questionnaire to indicate that organizations can update as often as they would like their submission (older versions would be kept on line – secretariat only checks for grammar and spelling); perhaps with a phrase that mentions that a GAP can be an iterative process ○ Modify the questionnaire to add a free text “any additional consideration” ○ If there are still no responses in the next two or three months, we might consider making it possible to respond “anonymously” – though we will be looking to be able to compare economy sizes and organization types. ⇒ The Chair requested meeting participants to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Look through the template and see within the next two weeks if responding to the questions is doable ○ For those that confirm it is doable, to provide their completed questionnaire (again, not all questions obligatory) ideally by mid-March; mid-April at the latest in order to be included in the subsequent analysis for a publication.
6	Gender Code List project	<p>Fernanda de Castro Boria has been identified as the project leader.</p> <p>The objective of <u>the project</u> is to provide informative lists that people can consult in order understand responses to questions on salutation, biological sex and gender identity. This is also part of a request within the UNECE for each working party to work on digitalization and this work would aim to make lists that can be referenced in electronic data exchanges like those proposed by UN/CEFACT.</p> <p>A comment was raised that we are not experts on gender in this group so we should refer to existing work on the topic. The secretariat had done background research for a first draft document and underlined that there is not yet any authoritative list published by an international standards body on the topic yet, so there is a need for this work.</p> <p>The document should be ready by May.</p> <p>One of the main challenges of the document will be the translations to other languages as a word-to-word translation may not be possible without losing a good deal of meaning. The project team will therefore try to develop versions in French, Spanish and Russian.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ The first meeting of this group is scheduled for 14 February from 15:00 CET, anyone is welcome to join, please contact the secretariat for connection details ⇒ Experts who would like to consult the first draft and provide input are invited to send an email to the secretary who will then share the draft.
7	Discussion on the Guidelines	<p>Experts were asked to provide some feedback on the <u>Guidelines on Gender-Responsive Standards</u> and how it is currently being leveraged.</p>

		<p>Some experts were not aware of the finalized publication with its layout, so were happy to see the final publication on the website.</p> <p>CEN/CENELEC noted that they are testing to see how to utilize the guide.</p> <p>SCC is implementing the content.</p> <p>BSI underlined that some topics are currently of higher demand (i.e. sustainability) and that these are eclipsing other cross-cutting themes and are capturing resources. It was suggested that we could use the momentum of these other topics in order to piggy-back the concept of gender-responsive standards.</p> <p>WorkSafe-NZ confirmed that their expert committees sometimes push back on the topic of gender-responsive standards, noting that their first priority is always safety first. But that they are able to integrate gender-responsive standards into this priority.</p> <p>Perhaps some training material could be useful. (see below)</p> <p>Perhaps a high-level publication, accessible to all might help (see next point).</p>
8	Proposed GRS publication in 2023	<p>Paper on “why gender-responsive standards are better standards for everyone” with some examples and linking it to other cross-cutting topics (environmental, sustainability, digital)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text should be short – to encourage everyone to pick it up • Text should be easily accessible to everyone in order to ensure uptake • This could build upon some of the work done following the COP27 and the London Declaration. <p>⇒ The secretariat volunteered to put together some text if the experts might put together a skeleton of the key points</p>
9	Training / other materials	<p>The secretariat provided some details on resources that currently exist (LearnQI e-learning platform; the training material developed under the XB project for the April-May webinars).</p> <p>The Chair asked if there were any gender-responsive trainings that experts have participated in elsewhere. References were made to the WP.6 LearnQI platform and some organizations have provided dedicated trainings.</p> <p>It was underlined that we may need to provide various types of material tailored to the type of audiences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was noted that “gender” may be culturally sensitive depending on the participants and that the Western European perspective might not be fit for purpose in all countries. Using other terms (women’s equality) may be more appropriate for some languages. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We could try to leverage the content rather than insisting on the wording. ○ Albeit noting that there are official translations of certain terms within the UN that we cannot change in a translated document (“gender-responsive standards” in English is translated as “normes tenant compte des questions de genre” in French so cannot be translated as “normes pour l’égalité homme-femme” unless that is what is written in English). • It was also noted that technical audiences might require a different approach as they will likely question why they should concentrate on such a topic and how it is relevant to their technical work. • It was also noted that the current e-learning training may be a little general and more detailed material may be helpful (Level 1, Level 2, Level 3) <p>It was also noted that we could put together content for academic experts to bring the topic to students. The secretariat reminded that there is an initiative on Education on Standardization within WP.6 and that such material for academic experts should be done in collaboration with this group. The launch of that group’s Focal Point Network takes place on 1 March for anyone who is interested.</p> <p>⇒ Experts who are interested in the topic of training material are requested to contact the secretariat</p> <p>It was also mentioned that it could be beneficial to have a slide or two of information that could be used by experts in order to further disseminate this work.</p> <p>⇒ The secretariat suggested to share with the leadership an email recapping the currently available information for their comments and then to package that as a slide or two that experts could use.</p>

		It was concluded that we are working towards packaging the material to assist experts to pick up and use the guidance and that we may have several “packages” which we could market.
10a	AOB: translations	Briefly discussed the translation of documents. Lucy He said that she could help to look at final versions of Chinese documents to double-check. Frazana Alizada noted that it could be useful to have a Persian-language version of certain topics in order to increase visibility and help bring this material to Afghans, for example where there is not much available on the topic.
10b	AOB	The secretariat requested participants who have not yet done so to take the 2-minute survey for experts in order to confirm contact details and areas of interest. Survey at this link .
		Next GRS call: 5 April from 10:00 CET (Geneva)