SABS

GENDER RESPONSIVE STANDARDS and STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT (GRSSD)



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Implementation of the Declaration on Gender Responsive Standards and Standards Development (GRSSD)

Purpose Of The Document

This document outlines the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) action plan that seeks to support gender equality through empowering and encouraging women participation in standardisation.

Inadequate participation and underrepresentation of women in standardisation remains a global challenge. As part of a global effort to address this problem SABS seeks to proactively focus on initiatives that are expected to improve the participation of women in standardisation activities thereby enhancing gender responsible standards and standards development.





Background

SABS signed the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Declaration on Gender Responsive Standards and Standards Development in September at the ISO General Assembly hosted by South Africa in 2019. The declaration commits signatories to create and implement Gender Action Plans (GAP) to support more gender-balanced and inclusive standards development processes, as well as to strengthen the gender responsiveness of standards and standards development.

The UNECE "Gender Responsive Standards Initiative" aims at providing a practical approach for standards bodies to take a step towards making the standards they develop and the standards development process they follow gender responsive.

The initiative started work in 2016, in response to a mandate by the Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies (WP.6). The Declaration was approved at the 28th annual session of the WP.6 on 15th November 2018 with the aim 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.
- elaborate gender indicators and criteria that could be used in standards development.

International Organisation for Standardization to which SABS is a founding member (since 1945) as well as other ISO member National Standards Bodies have demonstrated their commitment to sustainable development goals (SDG 5), gender equality, by signing the UNECE Declaration on Gender Responsive Standards and Standards Development.



ISO Action Plan on Gender Responsible Standards and Standards Development

ISO signed the UNECE Declaration in May 2019 and has further developed a three year plan as represented in Figure 1. The purpose of the ISO gender action plan is to:

- Deepen the understanding of gender representation in ISO work
- Assess the gender implications of standards
- Ensure that ISO work and activities include a gender perspective



The SABS action plan on Gender Responsive Standards and Standards Development seeks to address women representation in SABS standards committees and working groups including leadership portfolios. The evaluation of existing gender statistics in committees and working groups provide the basis for proactive development and implementation of the action plans



TARGETS OF WOMEN REPRESENTATION IN SABS STANDARDISATION

WOMEN REPRESENTATION AND LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

Target 1

Women leadership positions in SABS committees is 30% over the period of 3 years (i.e. from 2021 -2024).

Target 2

Women representation in SABS standards working groups is 35% over the period of 3 years (i.e. from 2021 -2024).

Target 3

Women representation in technical committees and sub-committees is 30% over the period of 3 years (i.e. from 2021 -2024).





Status of women representation in ISO, IEC, ARSO and SADCSTAN

ISO representation

The South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) hosts ten ISO committee secretariats and 60% of the secretariats are held by women. The SABS further hosts six chairpersonships in ISO committees and 33% of the chairpersons are women. SABS holds convenorship to at least 10 ISO Working Groups of which 30% of the convenors are female.

Current status of women representation in the International Electro-technical Commission (IEC)

- The SABS National Committee hosts one IEC committee secretariat and this portfolio is held by a male expert.
- The SABS National Committee hosts three chairpersons in the IEC committees and 33% of the chairpersons are women.
- The SABS National Committee convenes at least three IEC WGs of which all WG convenors are male.

Current status of women in ARSO and SADCSTAN committees

The African Organization for Standardisation has recently reviewed its committee structures with the establishment of 81 technical committees. The SABS is currently in the process of appointing experts and where relevant nominations of chairpersons to lead these committees. This process is expected to enhance the women representation in both ARSO and SADCSTAN



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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GRSSD

The SABS framework and action plan is underpinned by extensive stakeholder engagement initiatives that address the key pillars:

- Gender representation within the SABS organisation and SABS technical committees
- Gender responsiveness in national standards
- Outreach and advocacy

SABS Framework of gender responsiveness initiatives



GENDER REPRESENTATION

- Gender demographic - SABS wide
- Target - 50% women representation on supervisory and management portfolio
- Gender demographic - SABS Technical Committees
- Target - 30% women representation in technical/sub-committees
  - 30% women in leaderships position in SABS committees



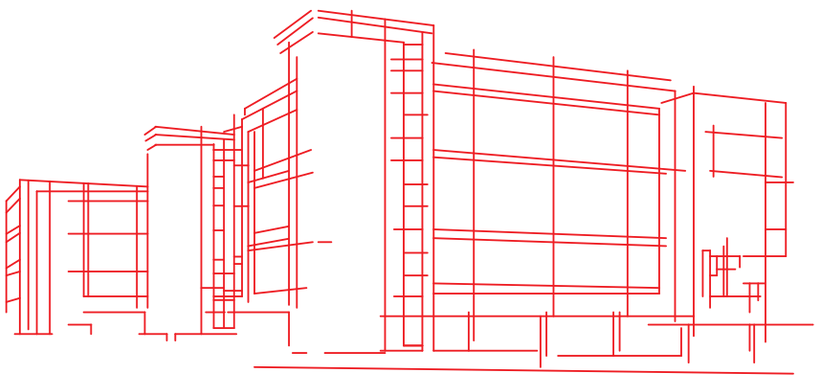
GENDER RESPONSIVENESS - NATIONAL STANDARDS

- Assess the catalogue of SANS and current programme of work on gender responsiveness
- Adopt tools to support SABS Committees in the development of gender responsive standards



OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY

- Promotional and marketing material on gender responsive standards
- Stakeholder engagement on Gender Equality



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