

# SIS' strategy on gender responsive standards

## Background

Based on the text of the UN Sustainable Development Goal 5 on gender equality and the Gender Responsive Standards Declaration signed by SIS, we should initially focus on gender as male and female. Not expanding the concept any further will enable progress to be achieved in SIS' sector, the relatively traditional and conservative standardization sector.

Drawing up gender responsive standards will place new demands on standardization and on our experts. Focusing on raising awareness will enable us to open the doors to new stakeholders and broaden participation in the longer term.

In this context, we define a gender responsive standard as a standard which reflects an understanding of physical differences and gender roles, and equally addresses the needs of women and men.

## Our starting point is that

- The gender distribution on SIS' standardization committees and among SIS employees is relatively equal.
- There is a large amount of variation in gender distribution between different standardization areas and representation is sometimes skewed in certain areas.
- Equal representation (between the sexes) does not automatically mean that greater attention will be paid to gender aspects in standards.
- Many standards are written based on a traditional view of gender and language, in which references to men are often used generically and no consideration is given to differences in strength and size between the sexes.
- Much of the test data and other data on which standards are based is not representative of all parts of the population.
- SIS' work is to draw on the research results and studies that are available in the field.

## Our objective

At an initial stage, SIS' objective is to create understanding and conditions for the development of standardization deliverables that integrate the gender dimension.

## We plan to do so by

- Working for a gender-neutral approach in standardization.
- Develop checklists and tools to support participants, experts and managers in writing standards that incorporate the gender dimension, based on the international tools that are being produced by CEN and ISO.
- Increasing awareness of the problems by providing information and training on the concept of "gender responsive".
- Supporting Swedish representatives and employees in national and international standardization work on these issues.

SIS also wishes to demonstrate initiative on this issue by

- Supporting other standardization organizations on gender work, including within the remit of SIS' international development projects (IU).
- Working with other organizations on gender issues, inter alia in the fields of accreditation, certification and standardization in Sweden.
- Having the ambition to ensure good gender distribution among speakers at workshops and events arranged by SIS.

The first step in enabling this is to produce a gender action plan for the next three years, describing work on the above points.

In the longer term, it is likely that this focus will enable SIS to attract new target groups and ensure that more voices and ideas are highlighted in the standardization work. If we ensure that the standards produced work equally well for women and men, work on drawing up and using our standardization deliverables should also become equally attractive to both sexes.