

Raising Awareness About The Benefits Of Using Standards In Uganda

Standards, formulated by experts, are an agreed way of doing something by implementing best practice, or of manufacturing a product that is fit for purpose and meets user expectations. They bring confidence to regulators, businesses and consumers that products and services are safe, reliable and of good quality. For businesses who implement them, they can help improve performance, reduce risks and increase sustainability.

Standards play an important role in promoting productivity and efficiency, reducing costs, removing barriers to trade, and driving economic growth. They are an agreed way of implementing best practice, and bring confidence to regulators, businesses and consumers that products and services are safe, reliable and of good quality.

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“The challenge is to make these standards known and understood to the people who need them; to bring standards to the people.”

Graham Holloway, Team Leader African Stream, CSN.

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The Challenge: Getting Standards to the people

The Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS) has published over 3,000 national standards so far. However, as these standards are very technical in nature and usually written in English - and with approximately 70% of Uganda's people being small-holder farmers from indigenous backgrounds and speaking in several native languages - it was a challenge to make the standards known and understood in this very multilingual country.



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“We appreciate the CSN for the efforts towards simplification and translation of these standards so that awareness is created... we are optimistic that with our continued collaboration with the CSN, we’ll be able to reach more implementors of these standards and ultimately we’ll be able to (positively) impact the welfare of these people.”

Johnson Ssubi, Technical Executive Assistant, UNBS

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The Solution: Partnering with the CSN to simplify standards

Joining hands with the Commonwealth Standards Network (CSN), the UNBS worked towards producing simplified brochures, complete with illustrative pictograms and easy-to-understand information for the benefit of the farmers. In all, 26,000 brochures were developed, produced and translated into 13 regional languages. Experts from the UNBS Technical Committees identified key ‘do’s and don’ts’ that farmers needed to follow in order to harvest saleable, good quality produce. For each value chain, several translated versions were produced according to the language spoken in each crop region.

The brochures educate the farmers on growing, harvesting, packaging and labelling, storing, and transporting their products, and draw attention to the benefits of following standards.



Above: Graham Holloway, Team Leader African Stream, CSN

The Results: Increased business

The outcomes have been phenomenal. Translating the standards in the local languages have made them more accessible, easily understood and relatable to the farmers, ultimately leading to better quality products and an improved market for their businesses; locally, within the East African region, and even international markets.

Over 600 smallholder farmers were approached during this phase of the project. Feedback from them indicated that this is the first kind of support they had received from any source in years; some of the basic quality requirements outlined in the translated brochures quickly enabled them to make the required changes to bring in more saleable products to market, which significantly helped improve their businesses too.

The CSN is a collaborative network that supports trade, economic growth and prosperity throughout the Commonwealth by promoting increased awareness, development and use of international standards.

International standards play an important role in promoting productivity and efficiency, reducing costs, removing barriers to trade, and driving economic growth. As such, the CSN is especially relevant to National Standards Bodies from Commonwealth nations that are looking to boost support of their nations international trade capabilities.

The CSN is a collaborative network open to all Commonwealth countries, its members are actively involved in shaping its development so that outcomes will best suit their needs.

→ Find out more...

📄 If you would like find out more about the CSN or wish to participate or support this important initiative, please visit www.commonwealthstandards.net

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