

## **CPTM Quality and Standards inclusion initiative**

### **The value of standards and the values of the Smart Partnership Movement (SPM)**

On 11 July, 2014, ISO and CPTM organized a joint “webinar” on the “Value of standards and Smart Partnership practice for accelerating economic and social transformation” (see Annex 1). One of the findings of the webinar was the remarkable convergence of the value of standards and the values upon which the Smart Partnership Movement is based, resulting in openings for further collaboration and synergies.

#### **1- Standards contribute to economic and social transformation**

Indeed, standards, in particular international standards, are technical and managerial tools to disseminate technology and good practices to cope with the major challenges of:

- Accessing world markets and facilitating regional trade, as much for agro-food products, manufactured goods, or services such as IT or tourism;
- Optimizing networked infrastructures, such as telecoms, water and energy distribution or transportation;
- Dealing with the intertwined issues of climate change, energy and water efficiency, food supply and the preservation of the environment;
- Designing efficient and adequate buildings and housing facilities;
- Improving the level and outreach of national health systems, by improving health services and the dissemination of health technologies;
- More generally, disseminating and leveraging technology and innovation.

In a nutshell, standards are tools available for all the actors within society to support economic and social transformation of nations and regions, one of the core objectives of the Smart Partnership Movement.

The “standards” which are referred to here are voluntary standards, based on an iterative and open process, where all stakeholders are able to take part, associated with clear processes and procedures to eventually arrive at a consensus, at national, regional and international level, and subsequently disseminate the published

standards. These processes are monitored at national level by the National Standards Bodies (NSBs) and, at international level, by the three apex standardization organizations based in Geneva: IEC, ISO and ITU, with possible regional bodies such as CEN and CENELEC in Europe. Such standards should not be confused with regulations, but seen as preferred tools to facilitate the implementation of legislative and regulatory measures, as part of a “smart government” approach.

## **2- Standards contribute to inclusiveness and benefit from dialoguing and networking**

In order that standards reflect the state of the art and good practices, and become a medium to diffuse knowledge and collective wisdom, it is important that all interested stakeholders are able to contribute, in an orderly way. This is where the second convergence between standardization and the Smart Partnership movement finds its place. Indeed, the SPM advocates inclusive approaches, meaning that all members of society have access to or benefit from technology and innovation, quality of goods and services and financial facilities.

The standardization process is itself inclusive as government, the private sector, the Academia, communities and civil society at large may and should access both to contribute input and to use the resulting standards for their own progress. Through its dialoguing and networking approach, the SPM can be a trigger and a facilitator to increase actual involvement of stakeholders in the standardization process itself, resulting in a more efficient contribution of developing economies.

The NSBs play a central role in this respect, and their contribution to the SPM inclusion initiatives is crucial. They can use the attraction of the Movement to raise awareness on the usefulness of standards, both at the highest levels of governments and industry and to increase participation and take up by the economic players themselves.

Standards, as the crystallization of knowledge, may also be seen as pedagogical tools which the education system may use for training purposes, thus preparing new generations to benefit from the wealth of experience and knowledge that standards imbed. This could be the subject of a future ISO-CPTM webinar.

**ANNEX 1**  
**The Value of Standards & Smart Partnership Practice**  
**for Accelerating Economic & Social Transformation**  
**ISO/CPTM Smart Partnership Group Webinar - Thursday, July 10<sup>th</sup> 2014**

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Participants will have the opportunity to share their knowledge of this subject – particularly in relation to the four topics outlined below.

**Webinar Part 1**

- Economists have studied the role and impact of standards on society and have observed that standards give an important contribution to **public welfare** by:
  - **Improving economic efficiency**
  - **Limiting market failures**
  - **Promoting trade**

**Webinar Part 2**

- It is generally assumed that standards have value (this is recognized at the theoretical level, as noted above). But demonstrating and quantifying the real-world value of standards is not an easy task.

Since the year 2000, several studies have been developed to cover this issue, supported by national standards bodies or external research teams. A number of them followed a **macroeconomic** perspective, evaluating the contribution of standardization to the economic performance of countries, considering indicators such as GDP growth and productivity increase. Others, and in particular those developed applying the ISO methodology, have focused on the **microeconomic** perspective, assessing the contribution of standards to the **creation of economic value** for a company or an industry sector. Extended, lately, to evaluate the impact of standards on **social and environmental performances**.

**Webinar Part 3**

- The third part of the webinar will be dedicated to present some exemplary case studies, highlighting how standards contribute to the organization's bottom line.

**Webinar Part 4**

- Through Smart Partner participants interventions the application of Smart Partnership practice to enhance the value of standards to the users in business, public policy and academia will be forthcoming.

It might be particularly useful to discuss how companies and public authorities can take advantage of research and information available on this subject. Or how it is possible to undertake studies and initiatives in each country to help develop better understanding of the matter – with a view to support stakeholder engagement in standardization and to maximize the benefit of standards for companies and for the public sector.

Background resources:

[http://www.iso.org/iso/home/standards/benefitsofstandards/benefits\\_of\\_standards.htm](http://www.iso.org/iso/home/standards/benefitsofstandards/benefits_of_standards.htm)