

Message from the President

Dear Colleagues,

We've just returned from two inspiring days in Geneva, where the IFAN Board came together for a highly productive series of meetings. Our time was filled with insightful discussions, strategic planning, and meaningful collaboration. I extend a heartfelt thank you to our board members for their active engagement, and special thanks to our distinguished guests: Stéphane Châtelet and Mara Rolando from ISO and Gilles Thonet from IEC. Their updates provided valuable insights into the latest developments within their organizations and helped to further strengthen the bridge between IFAN and the broader standards community.

Over the past few months, IFAN has reached several important milestones:

- We've welcomed new members into our growing network
- We hosted a successful International Women's Day webinar, focused on inclusion and leadership
- We are preparing to launch a new global survey, aimed at better understanding the priorities and needs of standards users
- Our working groups remain active and results-driven
- I had the honour of representing IFAN in an ISO-organized webinar on Climate and Women, with a special focus on Clean Cooking. I shared real-world case studies from around the world, showing how standards can make a meaningful difference in addressing this critical issue.
- On the communications front, our social media presence continues to grow, with strong engagement across platforms, reflecting IFAN's truly international footprint.

Looking to the Future: A Shared Vision

As we celebrate what we've achieved, it's just as important to look ahead with clarity, ambition, and purpose. The world of standards is evolving rapidly-and with it, the role of standards users. IFAN is uniquely positioned to ensure that user voices are not only heard, but actively shape the future of standardization. This is your organization, and your ideas, leadership, and energy are what drive our success. If you've been considering getting



IFAN President, Vered Oren

involved-whether by leading a working group, contributing to outreach, or sharing your experience-now is the perfect time to step forward.

Let's continue to build a stronger, more inclusive future for standards users-

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Vered Oren".

Save the Date!

The 2025 Members' Assembly will be held on 20-22 October, location to be confirmed



IFAN Bi-Annual Survey of Standards Users Launched!

IFAN has launched its Survey to better understand the needs and experiences of individuals and organizations that are using standards. This survey is of primary importance for identifying challenges, improving accessibility, and enhancing the usability of standards across industries.

We are reaching to you to request your assistance in distributing this survey to your members, users, or networks who rely on standards in their work. Your support is critical to ensure we gather the maximum and most diverse input possible.

Why your assistance matters:

- The feedback collected will directly help efforts to improve the accessibility and usability of standards.
- A summary of findings will be shared with the standards community, providing valuable insights into overcoming barriers to the adoption and use of standards.
- By participating, your organization will contribute to shaping the future of standardization practices globally.

The survey should not take more than 10 minutes to complete, and responses will remain confidential. It covers topics such as:

- Types of standards used.
- Methods for accessing standards.
- Challenges in integrating standards into workflows.
- Emerging technologies and SMART Standards adoption.

We kindly ask you to share the attached questionnaire with your members or users through your communication channels (e.g., emails, newsletters, websites, social media, etc.). The survey will close on 30 May 2025, so timely dissemination will be appreciated. The link to the survey is: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/DKL2VJX> or the QR code that can be used to access the survey.

Should you have any questions or require further information, feel free to contact us at ifan@ifan.org



Thank you for your invaluable support.



Standards Are Invisible— Until They Fail by Vered Oren



On March 28, 2025, a 7.7 magnitude earthquake struck Myanmar. Although the tremor originated far from Bangkok, it caused the catastrophic collapse of a 30 story high-rise under construction in Thailand's capital. The building, crumbled in seconds-killing dozens and injuring many more.

Investigations quickly uncovered a tragic truth: the collapse wasn't just a natural disaster. It was a man-made failure-caused by a lack of adherence to standards, substandard construction materials, and cost-cutting decisions that ignored seismic risk and soil vulnerability.

This disaster starkly reveals a hidden but devastating reality: **the high cost of not using standards.**

The loss of life is immeasurable. But even from a strictly economic perspective, the costs are staggering-demolished infrastructure, emergency response, lawsuits, halted public services, reputational damage, and the expense of rebuilding. What was meant to be a modern public building, constructed by a joint venture between major contractors, is now a case study in negligence.

Contrast that with what happens **when standards are properly applied.** Standards are often viewed as a regulatory burden or added cost, but in truth, they are among the **most cost-effective investments an organization or**

society can make. International research shows that standards can reduce design errors, lower material waste, improve safety outcomes, and even enhance innovation and market access. In the case of the Bangkok collapse, following internationally recognized structural, seismic, and material standards would likely have prevented the tragedy altogether.

Using standards saves lives. But it also saves money.

And this is where standards users come in. Engineers, architects, contractors, inspectors, regulators, and procurement professionals-all play a pivotal role in making standards real. They are not just implementers; they are decision-makers. When users are informed, trained, and empowered to prioritize standards, disasters like Bangkok become preventable-not inevitable.

At IFAN, the International Federation of Standards Users, we champion this vital role. We believe that standards only fulfill their purpose when users apply them with understanding, responsibility, and integrity.

Let this be a wake-up call. **Standards are not optional. They are essential.** They are invisible when things go right-but when they are ignored, the consequences couldn't be more visible.

Let's continue our mission-to elevate the voice of standards users, prevent avoidable disasters, and build a safer, more resilient world.





On Becoming SMARTer: Evolving Standards for the Digital Age Through Data Analytics and Insights

By David Tsipenyuk,

Who is a member of IFAN and Associate Director of Growth at Get More Brain, he is focused on advancing the digital evolution of standards. Get More Brain partners with Standards Development Organizations (SDOs) and standards users, providing next-level technology to streamline and enhance the access, utilization and distribution of digital standards.

This article observes a growing trend of utilizing data analytics to enhance digital standards, moving towards a more user-centric approach. By analyzing user interactions and preferences, SDOs can personalize experiences and create "SMART" standards that are more relevant and accessible. Effective implementation requires collaborative dialogue between SDOs and users to streamline access and address challenges like data silos and privacy concerns. Ultimately, data-driven strategies enable standards to dynamically adapt to the digital age, better serving the evolving needs of users in the workplace.

A Gradual Shift Towards Enhanced Understanding

In my experience supporting organizations across various sectors with digital standards and technical materials, I've observed a gradual but significant shift towards leveraging data insights. For Standards Development Organizations (SDOs) and end-users alike, exploring the potential of data analytics offers opportunities to refine efficiency, deepen user understanding, and gain a more comprehensive view of content impact. This evolution suggests a move towards utilizing data as a valuable tool for improving user experience, informing decision-making, and facilitating planning, ultimately contributing to the creation of adaptable standards that better serve their purpose.

Understanding Your Audience: Building Relevance Through User Awareness

Within the standards community, we recognize the essential role these documents play. The evolving digital and work landscape prompts us to consider how we can maintain the relevance and accessibility of our standards. This exploration involves considering the potential of digital tools, including data analytics, to develop a more nuanced understanding of our end-users. By examining patterns and preferences beyond traditional demographics, we can begin to cultivate a more detailed understanding of user needs, enabling us to adapt our offerings in ways that resonate with their requirements.

Personalizing User Experiences: Exploring the Potential of SMART Standards

For end-users, the application of standards in diverse work environments presents unique considerations. Simply providing comprehensive documents may not fully address the practical application of these standards.

Exploring the potential of data analytics allows us to gain insights into how standards are utilized in various contexts. For example, the interactions of an electrical engineer, designer, and electrician with standards may differ. By capturing relevant metrics, we can explore ways to refine user experiences based on roles, projects, and tasks.

This exploration extends beyond traditional metrics like downloads. By examining user interactions, identifying areas of

interest, considering content curation, and understanding search language, we can consider ways to refine standards to be more relevant and user-friendly. As we observe the ISO/IEC SMART Initiative, we recognize the existing tools and formats that may facilitate this approach. This data-informed perspective may contribute to a responsive and adaptable standards ecosystem.

Empowering Access: Fostering Dialogue and Consideration

Navigating complex systems and seeking relevant information can present challenges. By considering the potential of data analytics and SMART solutions, we can explore ways to streamline access, offer relevant information, and provide support. This consideration involves a collaborative dialogue between SDOs and users, allowing for the sharing of experiences, feedback, and contributions to the ongoing refinement of standards.

By working together and considering data insights, we can strive to ensure that our standards remain relevant, accessible, and effective in a changing world. We are committed to supporting our community through this process, providing resources and guidance for contemporary standards management. Together, we can foster a more informed and considered approach to standards development.

Addressing Considerations: Potential Factors in Data Adoption

Simply put, there are several factors that may influence resistance to adoption:

- Data might be in different places, so it's hard to see the whole picture.
- "We might not have people who know how to use data."
- People might not want to change how they do things.
- We need to keep people's data safe.

Moving Forward with Thoughtful Adaptation

The evolution towards enhanced standards is an ongoing process. By thoughtfully considering data insights, we can contribute to the ongoing refinement of standards. This involves cultivating a dynamic environment where standards evolve in response to user needs. Let us continue this dialogue, share our perspectives, and collaborate to foster a more informed and effective standards community.





2025 China's National Teenagers Standardization Olympiad



The 2025 National Teenagers Standardization Olympiad kicked off in March of 2025, and is planned to be held in late May and early June. As the only competition focusing on standardization popularization and education, it is quite popular and warmly welcomed by Chinese teenagers.

This year, we have received over 150 Middle school and High school teams (each teams includes 3 students and 1 teacher) nationwide to participate. After the Semi-final and Final to be held separately in late May and early June, 12 teams of each group will be selected to compete for the final awards, with 4 teams getting a pass to the 20th International Standards Olympiad to be held in August in Seoul, Korea. For this year's Olympiad, except the First, Second and Third prize, an IFAN Special Award

will be set up for the first time to award students with excellent performance.

China Association for Standardization (CAS) has been organizing the National Teenagers Standardization Olympiad since 2020, to enhance the teenagers' awareness on standards and standardization and to support Chinese teenagers to join the international standardization exchanges by actively participating in International Olympiad. By the end of 2024, we have totally 422 teams from 14 provinces participating in the National Teenagers Standardization Olympiad and 19 teams in total participating in International Standards Olympiad. In 2024, the four Chinese teams participating in the 19th International



The Chinese Team



Standards Olympiad winning Silver, IEC Award and Honorable Mention Award among 20 teams from 11 countries.



Winner's certificate



Empowering Women in Standardization: Insights from IFAN's Webinar

On the occasion of International Women's Day, 8 March 2025, IFAN proudly hosted the webinar **Authentic Voices - Inspiring Women through Shared Standardization Journeys**, bringing together influential women who have made a significant impact in the world of standards. The session aimed to encourage greater female participation in standardization and highlight the importance of diverse voices in shaping global standards.

A Dynamic Discussion Led by Experts

The webinar was expertly moderated by **Gabriela Ehrlich**, who set the stage by emphasizing the critical role of standards in ensuring safety, security, and innovation. She emphasized that although women comprise more than half of the global population and exhibit significant physical and cognitive differences from men, they remain underrepresented in standardization processes. This gap must be addressed to ensure that standards reflect the needs of all people.

The panel featured four outstanding women from different areas of standardization:

- **Sonya Bird** (UL Standards & Engagement)
- **Solange Blaszkowski** (Philips)
- **Rachel Menda Shabat** (Cybersecurity Expert)
- **Sally Swingewood** (ISO)

Key Takeaways

The discussion provided valuable insights into the experiences of women in standardization, the challenges they have faced, and the opportunities available to those who wish to get involved. Here are some of the key messages from the panellists:

✓ **Women's Perspectives Strengthen Standards** - Standards influence everything from safety regulations to technological advancements. A more inclusive approach ensures they are more broadly relevant, considering a more diverse set of needs.

✓ **The Power of Speaking Up** - Women in standardization committees should not hesitate to confidently share their expertise, challenge existing norms and speak up to get their unique viewpoints heard. This, and contribute to shaping the future of industries.

✓ **Standardization is a Tool for Global Change** - Whether in cybersecurity, safety, security or the environment, standards drive innovation, make the world a safer, more secure place and improve lives worldwide.

✓ **Building Networks & Collaboration** - Engaging in standardization offers access to a global community of experts, fostering professional growth and collective progress.

✓ **Authenticity Matters** - The panellists agreed: Women don't need to "think like a man" to succeed. Instead, they should embrace emotional intelligence, share their unique perspectives and expertise to contribute to meaningful change.

Encouraging Future Participation

One of the key messages from the webinar was the importance of actively encouraging more women to take leadership roles in standardization. The panellists emphasized that technical committees need diverse voices to ensure fair and inclusive decision-making. They also encouraged new participants to ask questions, challenge assumptions, and contribute fresh perspectives.

A Call to Action

As we celebrate International Women's Day, IFAN reaffirms its commitment to fostering inclusivity in standardization. We invite women across industries to explore opportunities in this field, contribute to shaping global standards, and be part of a movement that drives positive change.

Let's continue this conversation and work together to make standardization a more inclusive and diverse space for all!

To view the Webinar, [click here](#)



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IFAN Publications: www.ifan.org/ifan-publications

Contact IFAN: ifan@ifan.org

