

# Bridging The Standards Gap In The Fisheries Sector 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.

Following standards is about good business sense – to make products that are of the right quality, to meet consumer demands at a price they are willing to pay. The key is to pass on that knowledge of what good looks like, to boost confidence in bringing better quality produce to more formal markets and attract better business.

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*“The biggest challenge for fisherfolk is to access local and international markets. Many lacked the knowledge or even the existence of the standards. This is where the CSN comes in to fill the knowledge gap.”*

*Enoch Mutumba, Consulting Expert, CSN.*

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### **The Challenge: Bringing standards to the fisherfolk**

The Uganda Department of Fisheries Resources (DFR) and the Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS) have worked together with the CSN to simplify existing national guidelines and standards for post-harvest fish handling. However, as these guidelines are very technical in nature and are written in English - and with the vast majority of Uganda's rural people only having English as a second language, if at all - it has been a challenge to make the standards known and understood in this very multilingual country.

In order for fishermen, fish handlers and traders to access both local and international markets, they need to meet certain standards.



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*“The CSN is always on the lookout for standards gaps. This is where a good standard exists for a product or service, but it’s not reaching the people who need to work to it. What we’ve tried to do is use creative solutions to enable people to understand the requirements and receive training.”*

*Graham Holloway, Team Leader African Stream, CSN.*

*“The CSN has been critical for us as a sector. This knowledge and material has improved livelihoods and changed the socioeconomics of our people. We thank CSN for this project and UNBS for their support.”*

*Omanyi Paul, Assistant Commissioner, Fish Quality and Safety.*

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### The Solution: Partnering with the CSN to simplify standards

The Commonwealth Standards Network (CSN) partnered with the UNBS to help produce five simplified guideline booklets complete with illustrative pictograms and easy-to-understand information to educate and train the fishermen. These were then translated into three different languages. Posters have also been produced and training programs delivered, for both the fisherfolk and also for auditors to enable certification to the standards.

Training has so far been delivered in ten locations, across six districts. To date over 2,500 fisherfolk have been reached, although tens of thousands more still require training.

The brochures, posters and training educate the fishermen on types of fish, the post-harvest handling of fish, and other standards required to reach international markets.



Above: Graham Holloway, Team Leader African Stream, CSN.

### The Results: Market access

This has gone a long way to improving the fishery industry in Uganda and in particular, the post-harvest handling of fish, and brings wider market access for this sector.

Instilling good practices has increased the quantity of good fish that can be sold, and has attracted higher prices owing to the improved quality of the product.



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](http://www.commonwealthstandards.net)

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