

**DEPARTMENTAL ACTION PLAN  
ON  
GENDER-BASED ANALYSIS**

**IN RESPONSE TO AUDIT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN  
CHAPTER 1, “GENDER-BASED ANALYSIS” OF THE  
SPRING 2009 REPORT OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL OF CANADA**

**PRESENTED BY THE PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE,  
THE TREASURY BOARD OF CANADA SECRETARIAT, AND  
STATUS OF WOMEN CANADA**

**OCTOBER 16, 2009**

## GBA ACTION PLAN

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Government recognizes the importance of continuing to enhance the practice of gender-based analysis (GBA) across all departments and agencies. All players within the federal government share responsibility for making GBA sustainable. Although the responsibility for performing GBA rests with individual departments and agencies, Status of Women Canada (SWC), the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS) and the Privy Council Office (PCO), welcome this opportunity to highlight the role they play in enhancing GBA within the federal government.

In April, 2008, a recommendation was put forward by the House of Commons Standing Committee on the Status of Women for the Auditor General to conduct an audit on the implementation of GBA in the federal government. In May, 2009 the Auditor General released her report and recognized the efforts of central agencies and Status of Women Canada to improve the practice of GBA across government. Further to the audit and the government's response, central agencies and Status of Women Canada have developed an Action Plan which elaborates on the commitments made in the response to the Auditor General's recommendations.

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Office of the Auditor General Recommendation	Response	Actions and Timelines
<p><b>OAG Recommendation 1.56:</b> <i>The Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat and the Privy Council Office should provide support to Status of Women Canada to help the government meet its 1995 commitments to gender-based analysis.</i></p>	<p><b>Response from the Privy Council Office and the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat on the OAG recommendation:</b></p> <p>Agree. Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS) and Privy Council Office (PCO) will continue to work with Status of Women Canada (SWC) and all departments to help government meet its 1995 GBA commitment.</p> <p>In consultation with SWC, TBS and PCO will identify departments facing challenges in meeting their GBA commitments, with a view to holding informal discussions.</p> <p>In support of SWC, TBS and PCO will continue to provide guidance to departments bringing forward policy and program proposals for approval, and challenge them to consider gender issues, when appropriate. The Memorandum to Cabinet (MC) template outlines that departments should include gender issues, when appropriate. In addition to guidance provided in the Guide to Preparing TB Submissions, a new desktop tool on the GBA review function is being prepared for use by TBS program analysts.</p> <p>Finally, TBS and PCO will continue to provide regular training for analysts to strengthen the ability to better communicate the government’s expectations to</p>	<p><b>Related actions to be taken by PCO and TBS further to the response to the OAG:</b></p> <p><i>PCO and TBS will support SWC in identifying departments facing challenges in meeting GBA commitments.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PCO and TBS will continue to provide departments with guidance on the need to consider GBA where appropriate as they develop policy and program proposals, both as part of early consultations and through the challenge function exercised prior to Cabinet’s consideration of these proposals.</li> <li>• PCO and TBS, in consultation with SWC, will collectively schedule and conduct informal consultations with identified departments to discuss GBA challenges, identify support that may be required to address them (i.e. understanding departmental responsibilities, training requirements, development of GBA framework, reporting and evaluation) and agree on milestones for assessing and discussing results. Departments will be identified based on information collected following the completion of the Management Accountability Framework (MAF) assessments, reviews of MCs and TB submissions completed by the end of the Parliamentary session, and departmental self-assessments of both the effectiveness of GBA in the development of policies and programs and of departmental GBA frameworks brought forward to SWC. Initial contact has been made with certain departments identified in the spring 2009 AG report to accelerate provision of support in GBA implementation. A complete round of informal conversations will be completed</li> </ul>

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	<p>departments on when and how to conduct gender-based analysis.</p>	<p>by summer 2010 with all departments identified in the report.</p> <p><i>In support of SWC, TBS and PCO will continue to provide guidance to departments.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PCO and TBS will continue to participate in panel discussions on GBA for line departments with SWC to communicate their expectations of Departments with respect to GBA.</li> <li>• PCO analysts will continue to draw departments' attention to the requirements of the MC template, through the Guide to Developing MCs, which stipulates that gender issues should be included as a consideration where appropriate.</li> <li>• TBS analysts, through the Guide to Preparing TB submissions, will provide guidance to departments to ensure the requirements of the TB submission are met, including the requirement for consideration of gender issues.</li> </ul> <p><i>TBS and PCO will continue to provide regular training to better communicate the government's expectations.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PCO will continue to offer annual GBA training to new and current analysts. Additional training opportunities will also be made available upon request.</li> <li>• PCO offered its annual PCO GBA training to new and current analysts on September 25, 2009. This training will be offered again in September 2010.</li> <li>• All new analysts entering the Operations Branch participate in an orientation session, which includes guidance to analysts on performing the challenge function, including consideration of</li> </ul>
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		<p>GBA. The Operations Branch at PCO provides economic, environmental, and social policy advice to the Prime Minister and Cabinet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through TBS Boot Camps and other events, TBS analysts will receive ongoing GBA training as well as tools (e.g. GBA pamphlet) to support their GBA challenge function.</li> <li>• TBS Boot Camp, which is scheduled for November 2009, includes a GBA training component. This training may be offered again during the fiscal year, depending on demand and resources.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Office of the Auditor General Recommendation</b></p>	<p><b>Response</b></p>	<p><b>Actions and Timelines</b></p>
<p><b>OAG Recommendation 1.57:</b> <i>To enable the government to meet its commitments to gender-based analysis, Status of Women Canada, in consultation with the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat and the Privy Council Office, should:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>clarify expectations, particularly about when it is appropriate to perform gender-based analysis (GBA) and how to report the findings;</i></li> <li>• <i>establish a plan for facilitating GBA implementation; and</i></li> <li>• <i>better communicate to departments and agencies their responsibilities.</i></li> </ul>	<p><b>Response of Status of Women Canada on the OAG Recommendation:</b></p> <p><i>Clarify expectations, particularly about when it is appropriate to perform gender-based analysis (GBA) and how to report the findings.</i></p> <p>Agree. Status of Women Canada (SWC), in consultation with the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) and the Privy Council Office, (PCO), will work to fully implement the 1995 Gender-based Analysis (GBA) policy. SWC will clarify expectations by asking all departments and agencies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• include a complete assessment of the differential impacts on women and men when developing policies, programs, and legislation that directly affect Canadian women and men;</li> <li>• provide evidence of what gender impacts were</li> </ul>	<p><b>Related actions to be taken by Status of Women Canada further to the response to the OAG:</b></p> <p><i>At the beginning of each Parliamentary session, SWC will support identified departments in improving the integration of GBA in the development of policies and programs.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SWC will partner with departments in identifying an appropriate initiative (policy, program or legislation) that would be developed using GBA. Particular attention will be given to demonstrating differential impacts in the stages of research, data collection and development of options. This should serve as a concrete learning opportunity for future knowledge transfer throughout their organizations. Other departments not included in the Auditor General’s Report that have either distinguished themselves in the use of GBA in the development of policies, programs or legislation, that wish to accelerate implementation of GBA in their policy or program development, or that are responsible for activities that can have</li> </ul>

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	<p>identified at each stage of research, data collection, and development of options;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• on a yearly basis, using SWC’s <i>GBA Performance Measurement Template</i>, undertake a self-assessment of the effectiveness of using GBA in the development of policies, programs and legislation, and report their results to SWC;</li> <li>• and report in their departmental performance reports or similar instruments if differential gender impacts were identified in the development of policy and program outcomes of government initiatives.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Establish a plan for facilitating GBA implementation;</i></b></p> <p>Status of Women Canada, in consultation with TBS and PCO, will establish a plan for GBA implementation by asking all departments and agencies to put in place the following elements of a GBA framework:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a GBA departmental statement of intent or policy;</li> <li>• a responsibility centre to monitor the implementation of a GBA framework and the practice of GBA;</li> <li>• SWC gender-based analysis guides, manuals, or other appropriate information for promoting GBA; and</li> <li>• mandatory GBA training for all senior</li> </ul>	<p>important differential socio-economic impacts on women and men could be included in this first phase of implementation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During the winter of each year, SWC will provide targeted training on the use of a tool that it has developed, a <i>Performance Measurement Template</i>, for the identified departments to self-assess the effectiveness of GBA in the development of their selected initiatives. This information, to be sent to SWC by the spring of each year, will inform both the conversations to be held with departments in the summer of each year and assist in collecting case studies for learning purposes.</li> <li>• In fiscal year 2009-2010, SWC will work with TBS to define guidelines on how to report in Departmental Performance Reports whether differential impacts were observed in the development of selected initiatives.</li> <li>• SWC will communicate the guidelines to departments and provide support on their use.</li> </ul> <p><i>At the beginning of each Parliamentary session, SWC will support identified departments to put in place elements of a GBA framework.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using a diagnostic tool and providing hands-on technical assistance, SWC will offer to help departments to complete or build their GBA frameworks.</li> <li>• In fiscal year 2009-2010, SWC will explore a variety of training options, including the services of the Canada School of the Public Service, to best accommodate the needs of departments in ensuring their senior officials, analysts and</li> </ul>
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	<p>departmental officials and analysts and other appropriate staff;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identification of GBA frameworks in their reports on plans and priorities and reporting on their implementation in their departmental performance reports or similar documents; and</li> <li>• yearly self-evaluation and reporting to SWC on departmental GBA practices, using SWC’s Organizational Capacity Assessment tool.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Better communicate to departments and agencies their responsibilities</i></b></p> <p>SWC, in consultation with TBS and PCO, will better communicate its expectations with respect to GBA to all departments and agencies by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensuring that they understand their responsibilities;</li> <li>• defining expectations, in a revised Status of Women Canada GBA Guide, of when to perform GBA, implement GBA frameworks, and report on findings; and of roles and responsibilities;</li> <li>• regularly reporting through SWC’s public web site on the progress made on GBA implementation and practice; and</li> <li>• continuing to chair the Interdepartmental Committees on Equality for Women and on GBA in order to coordinate and monitor the progress of the implementation of commitments related to GBA.</li> </ul>	<p>other appropriate staff are trained in the use of GBA. Departments, starting with those identified in the AG report, will be expected to have in place the necessary training by summer 2011.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During the winter of each year, SWC will provide targeted training on the <i>Organizational Assessment</i> tool, which departments will use to self-assess progress on putting in place departmental frameworks. This information, to be sent to SWC by the spring of each year, will inform both the conversations to be held with departments in the summer of each year, and provide valuable information on best practices.</li> </ul> <p><i>SWC will inform identified departments about and guide the implementation of the GBA Action Plan.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SWC will maintain regular contact with departmental officials and continue to hold regular meetings of the GBA Interdepartmental Committee, which acts a learning forum, and associated working groups.</li> <li>• In collaboration with TBS and PCO, SWC will continue to coordinate and participate in panel discussions to communicate expectations and clarify the roles and responsibilities of each central agency and SWC with respect to GBA.</li> <li>• SWC will consult departments on the creation and/or updating of tools such as a GBA guide and GBA training.</li> <li>• SWC will post on a yearly basis on the SWC website GBA government activities, case studies and best practices culled from departmental self-assessments.</li> </ul>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SWC will continue to serve as a Centre of Excellence on GBA.</li> <li>• To accelerate improvement in the quality of information provided by departments on policy and program proposals brought forward for review by the central agencies and to increase the number of departmental GBA frameworks, SWC will provide targeted support during the fiscal year of 2009-2010 to those departments identified in the May 2009 Auditor General report. This will help them become self-sufficient and prepare for the first rounds of informal discussions in the summer of 2010.</li> </ul>
<b>Office of the Auditor General Recommendation</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Actions and Timelines</b>
<p><b>OAG Recommendation 1.79:</b> <i>To measure progress on fulfilling the government’s 1995 commitment to implementing gender-based analysis (GBA), Status of Women Canada, with the support of the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat and of the Privy Council Office, should assess the implementation of gender-based analysis across the federal government and the effectiveness of GBA practices.</i></p>	<p><b>Response of Status of Women Canada to Recommendation 1.79:</b></p> <p>Agree. To measure progress on fulfilling the government’s 1995 commitment, Status of Women Canada (SWC), with the support of TBS and PCO, will assess the performance of gender-based analysis (GBA) across the federal government and the effectiveness of GBA practices on a yearly basis by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- collecting results from departmental self-assessments of GBA practices and reporting these through the SWC Management Accountability Framework (MAF), and departmental performance report (DPR);</li> <li>- collecting results from departmental self-assessments on the implementation of departmental GBA frameworks and reporting these through the SWC MAF and DPR; and</li> </ul>	<p><b>Related actions to be taken by SWC further to the response to the OAG:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By the summer of 2010, SWC will collect results of the self-assessments by the identified departments on both the effectiveness of GBA in their development of policies and programs and on departmental GBA frameworks. Based on the information collected, SWC will be able not only to improve the technical assistance and support it provides to departments in future years, but also:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ inform the discussions PCO and TBS hold with departments; and</li> <li>○ add to the ongoing collection of best practices and case studies for learning and reporting purposes.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• SWC will report in its MAF how it is leading this horizontal initiative in consultation with PCO and TBS and will report on best practices and case studies from departmental self-assessments results.</li> </ul>

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	<p>- reviewing departmental memoranda to Cabinet, TB submissions, and other key decision-making documents to determine concretely whether gender differences were taken into consideration in the design or modification of policies, programs, or legislation.</p> <p><b>Response of the Privy Council Office and the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat to Recommendation 1.79:</b></p> <p>Agree. As a result of the 2005 Policy on Management, Resources and Results Structure (MRRS), the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS) now has a complete inventory of all Government of Canada programs, and most of these programs are supported by performance measurement frameworks. This inventory of programs could be searched to identify programs by subject, including those explicitly identifying gender issues.</p> <p>Assessment of departments' performance against gender-based analysis (GBA) commitments made by the federal government is not the responsibility of TBS. However, through the Management Accountability Framework, TBS assesses departments' capacity to develop TB submissions that properly address legal and government priorities, commitments, and obligations. The GBA component is assessed through Area of Management 5 (AOM 5)—Quality of TB submissions. It is the analysis undertaken by departments that is relevant for monitoring and reporting on progress.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SWC will continue to review selected departmental MCs and seek access to TBS submissions from departments and other key decision-making documents as an additional tracking measure and means of gathering more case studies and best practices.</li> <li>• SWC will undertake a roll-up of departmental self-assessments of the effectiveness of GBA and of the implementation of GBA frameworks completed by identified departments by the summer of 2010. The exercise will be repeated on a yearly basis to include new departments requiring targeted assistance.</li> <li>• Examples of best practices and case studies will begin to be reflected in SWC's Departmental Performance Report starting in the fall of 2010.</li> </ul> <p><b>Related actions to be taken by PCO and TBS further to the response to the OAG:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PCO and TBS will continue to ask that departments consider the application of GBA in the development of their MCs, TB submissions and other policy documents when appropriate, and will continue to challenge departments on their use of GBA through the normal policy development process. This approach will be reinforced by the informal conversations and follow-up meetings held with identified departments.</li> <li>• PCO and TBS will continue to perform the challenge function on departments' application of GBA as policy and funding proposals are advanced for Cabinet consideration. In addition to coordinating the informal conversations described above, PCO and TBS will also continue to participate in panel discussions and training sessions on GBA for line departments</li> </ul>
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	<p>The Privy Council Office has developed a template that outlines how GBA should, when appropriate, be considered throughout each step of the policy and program development process. This template is shared with line departments and serves as guidance.</p>	<p>to ensure that their expectations, roles and responsibilities are communicated to departments.</p>
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