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Chair

Ms. Anita Neville

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• (1520)

[English]

The Chair (Ms. Anita Neville (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.)): I call the meeting to order.

Let me welcome the representatives from the various departments who are here today. Thank you for coming, particularly those of you who came on short notice. We very much appreciate your being here.

As you know, we're doing a study of gender-based analysis. This is the third or fourth meeting. We're investigating what is and isn't going on in government. We're here to learn from you.

I'm going to ask you to present in the order we have you on the agenda, so we'll start with the Department of Human Resources and Skills Development.

Mr. Linklater.

[Translation]

Mr. Les Linklater (Director General, Strategy and Inter-governmental Resources, Department of Human Resources and Skills Development): Good afternoon. I would like to thank the Committee for the opportunity to provide you with background information on the history and approach to Gender Based Analysis in the Department of Human Resources and Skills Development and its predecessor departments dating back to 1954.

Established in 1954 as part of the former Department of Labour, the Women's Bureau (WB) was the first organization in the federal government created to address the concerns of women. When the Bureau was formed, its primary task was to monitor women's growing labour force participation.

As women began entering and remaining in paid employment in far greater numbers, the Bureau's mandate expanded to promoting policies like maternity leave and women's entry into male-dominated occupations.

[English]

From 1954 to 1993 the mission of the women's bureau was to advance the full and equal participation of women in employment. Under that mandate the bureau undertook a number of functions, including research analysis and information dissemination on workplace issues. It contributed to policy initiatives aimed at improving the situation of women in the labour force and regularly consulted and collaborated with unions, employers, other jurisdictions, and non-governmental and international organizations.

By the fall of 1993, when Human Resources Development Canada, or HRDC, was created from the amalgamation of five former departments, including Labour, the women's bureau began to assume a broader focus that reflected the wider range of policies and programs for which HRDC was responsible.

At this time, the bureau was very active in preparing Canada's input for the 1995 Fourth UN World Conference on Women, the Beijing conference. One of the key developments of this conference was the widespread promotion of gender analysis to advance gender equality. In 1995 the Government of Canada made a commitment to integrate gender considerations into departmental legislation, policy, and program development through the advancement of a methodology known as gender analysis.

Gender analysis promotes the consideration of gender differences in policy and program development, thereby seeking to advance gender equality throughout government processes. Accordingly, in July 1995 the women's bureau assumed a new mandate to develop and promote the use of gender analysis throughout the department. To fulfill this commitment, the department developed a proactive approach to integrating gender analysis by tasking the women's bureau with the responsibility of developing gender analysis capacity within Human Resources Development Canada.

In 1999 the women's bureau outlined a new model for advancing gender analysis in the department. The model involved the development of a network of gender advisers located throughout the department who would work toward integrating gender analysis into their area of expertise.

[Translation]

The network, created in 2000, consists of departmental officials who are mandated to apply gender analysis in their work areas.

The Women's Bureau supported the Network of Gender Advisors through the provision of a variety of capacity-building instruments pertaining to training on gender analysis.

•(1525)

[English]

In September 2001 the bureau changed its name to the gender analysis and policy directorate, or GAP, as we called it at HRDC, to better reflect its mandate of promoting gender analysis. This change was part of the implementation of the department's 1999 strategic plan. At this time, senior management, members of the network of gender advisers, and the bureau's team were of the view that the name women's bureau was no longer reflective of its role and placement within the department in either official language.

The directorate worked on the elaboration of a departmental policy on gender analysis in consultation with senior officials over a two-year period. During that same time, GAP began to assume more of a coordination role as members of the network of gender advisers became more active and engaged toward gender analysis issues. At that stage, GAP had achieved one of its original goals; that is, serving as a catalyst and capacity builder for the department in terms of gender-based analysis.

The need for a large gender unit, which at that time consisted of 12 employees, was deemed to be no longer necessary as the message had come across loud and clear that gender analysis had been more fully integrated into the department's policy and program development. As a result, a decision was made to staff the directorate with five people.

[Translation]

The new mandate focused primarily on supporting the Network and maintaining corporate functions such as relations with other government departments and compliance to international commitments.

In September 2003, the Policy on Gender Analysis, which was approved by the National Management Board, was launched. The Policy was developed to provide the Department with a clear framework for meeting its commitments under the Cabinet approved Federal Plan for Gender Equality to integrate gender analysis into all aspects of its work.

The Policy clarifies key concepts, outlines roles and responsibilities of key players and features a results-based management and accountability framework.

We have brought copies of the Policy on Gender Analysis for you, which you may also consult on our Web site. We can give you the address shortly.

[English]

In December 2003, HRDC, as you know, was divided into two distinct departments: Social Development Canada, and Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, HRSDC. As a result of this split, resources were allocated as follows: three staff went to SDC, and two staff to HRSDC.

In March 2004, a decision was made to move two staff to the strategy and intergovernmental relations directorate within the strategic policy and planning branch of HRSDC, of which I am the director general.

The existing policy on gender analysis is being reviewed to ensure that gender analysis is applied within all branches of the department in order to comply with the federal commitment to integrate gender analysis into all aspects of our work. Building on our past achievements, it is now possible to empower each branch to implement its own gender-based analysis approach while developing an accountability mechanism for the department. This approach would ensure that gender policies already established in the former HRDC are reflected and adapted in the newly created department.

While it is necessary to realign existing commitments and planned activities, it is also important to honour our essential commitments, such as Beijing +10 and other international instruments for which Canada is a signatory state, and to build on the work we have done to date.

Having provided a bit of historical context, I would like to conclude by outlining two key challenges faced by the department with regard to GBA. The first is accountability. HRSDC will build on our existing mechanisms. We are exploring a number of options, one of which could be to ensure that gender considerations are integrated in departmental programs and policies. Tools to assess the effectiveness will be developed and could include monitoring through departmental policy committees and providing a challenge function on these issues. The integration and implementation of gender analysis could also be monitored through annual progress reports to senior management, compiled by the strategy and intergovernmental relations branch.

The second key challenge is with respect to our international commitments. Two sets of gender equality commitments Canada has made internationally are particularly important. The first are those Canada and other UN members agreed to at the 1995 UN World Conference on Women, also known as the Beijing Platform for Action, and the follow-up UN session in 2000, both of which will be assessed in the 10-year UN review in March of this year. The second is Canada's ratification of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, CEDAW, and its optional protocol. To date, in preparation for the 48th session of the UNCSW, the strategy and intergovernmental relations branch has been coordinating departmental input and has participated in interdepartmental planning on Canada's priorities and strategy.

At the same time, proposals related to a new policy mandate for gender analysis have been undertaken. As I mentioned, we will be putting forward options to senior management to support gender-based analysis.

•(1530)

[Translation]

My remarks this afternoon have covered a significant amount of historical and policy-related information.

I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have. Thank you.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you very much.

The next presentation will be by Deborah Tunis.

[Translation]

Ms. Deborah Tunis (Director General, Strategic Direction, Policy and Strategic Direction, Department of Social Development): Good afternoon, Madam Chair.

First allow me to thank you for your invitation. We're very pleased to discuss our experience with gender-based analysis at Social Development Canada and to answer your questions. The exchange of views today will be beneficial for us all.

[English]

Les Linklater has already gone through the roots of gender analysis at Social Development Canada, and I won't repeat that information. The rich tradition the women's bureau at the Department of Labour provided is a good foundation, one we build on in Social Development Canada.

Social Development Canada was created to help the government achieve its goal of strengthening and securing Canada's social foundations. We feel gender analysis is integral to this mission. We strive to enhance the quality of life and promote the inclusion of all women and men in Canadian society, focusing particularly on the key groups of seniors, people with disabilities, children, and families. We recognize there are gender differences within the groups that must be understood in order to build and maintain strong social foundations.

We're committed to continuing and building on the tradition of strong gender analysis we inherited from HRDC, ensuring the potential differential impacts of policies and programs on women and men are identified so decisions at all levels are taken with the best possible knowledge of the impact on both genders. It's important, given the mandate of the Department of Social Development and our social policy leadership, that we manifest leadership on the commitment to gender equality across our policy, program, and service delivery activities.

Since the creation of Social Development Canada we have pursued gender analysis through two interconnected avenues. One is the creation of a specialized unit, and the second is the integration of gender analysis into the core files of our department.

The specialized unit for gender analysis was created in April 2004 as part of the horizontal initiatives and international relations division in the policy and strategic directions branch. As the name suggests, the division has responsibilities for other horizontal and crosscutting files. They also deal with aboriginal issues, minority language communities, and international relations. This synergy has helped in developing our department's preparations for the Beijing +10 conference the UN will be holding in New York shortly.

The overall mandate of the group is to support the integration of gender considerations into the policy, program, and service delivery activities of the department. We have a departmental network of gender advisers, and we are developing a gender analysis policy that is based on the former policy HRDC had, refining that slightly in the social development context.

In terms of human resources, we have a senior manager at the EX level and two policy analysts to support this work.

I have included some information on a couple of the key files we've been working on. One is the participation in the interdepartmental working group preparing for Beijing +10. This includes contributing to the upcoming meetings for the UN Commission on the Status of Women on Beijing +10. It also includes organizing a presentation, "Women's support, women's work: early learning and child care and gender equality", by Martha Friendly, a senior research associate at the University of Toronto and coordinator of the Childcare Resource and Research Unit. This topic was selected as it represented a major policy challenge for the department and we wanted to ensure gender analysis was integrated into policy development work on our child care work with the provinces.

We've also delivered and developed fact sheets for employees on gender and disability and on gender and diversity. We've completed a case study that examines men's and women's needs and preferences with respect to government services: "ServicesStrategy: Understanding the Needs and Expectations of Citizens within a Gender Analysis Context".

Since the creation of the department we've also built gender analysis into the key files of the department. Clearly, many of the topics on which the department is engaged, whether it's child care, caregivers, or pensions, have significant impact on gender equality. We're trying to ensure that these are considered and reflected in our policy development.

On the poverty front, we're aware that the low income rate among females in Canada has been declining since the mid-1990s, although single-parent families are almost four times more likely to live with low income than two-parent families. The national child benefit, we believe, is having an impact, but the broader issues about family formation and family dissolution are a challenge in terms of dealing with issues of child poverty.

● (1535)

As to the early learning and child care file, this of course has lots of gender implications in terms of mothers working outside the home, women having a greater tendency than men to work part-time or take on non-standard work in order to accommodate parenting and caregiving. The number of single-parent families continues to increase and the vast majority of staff in regulated child care are women.

In our other files, whether we're looking at pensions, CPP issues, or caregiving, we're examining gender consideration.

In terms of the mechanisms that exist within the department—and I think you'll be interested in talking about accountability measures in the department—we have a series of management committees, including a policy committee at the ADM level that reports to the deputies. We've been looking at the various committee structures within the department to consider where the best place is to ensure gender issues are considered fully, whether it's at our policy and program committee or at our management committee.

One of the ongoing challenges is to find the right balance between the specialized gender unit and its role vis-à-vis integrating gender considerations more directly in the core files in order to ensure that gender is consistently addressed in all policy, program, and service delivery work of the department. We also want to find ways to ensure we address intersections of diversity, such as gender and minority language groups or gender and disability.

We do have some staffing to do in the gender unit. We are going to try to re-energize the network of gender-based advisers and develop a specific Social Development Canada gender analysis policy.

We have some stats in here in terms of the representation in the workforce at the executive level and in terms of our overall workforce.

I look forward to answering any of your questions after my colleague from CIDA has given her presentation. I rushed through so she'd have lots of time and we'd have time for questions.

The Chair: Thank you. That's very thoughtful of you.

Julie, would you like to go ahead, please?

Again, let me thank you, because it was on very short notice. We appreciate your coming.

Ms. Julie Delahanty (Acting Director, Gender Equality Division, Policy Branch, Canadian International Development Agency): Thank you.

I am very pleased to be able to speak to the Standing Committee on the Status of Women about CIDA's experience with gender-based analysis.

I just want to say that the paper I submitted is a little more robust than what I'm going to say today. It was a bit unclear whether I'd actually be here today, so I have cut my remarks down a bit. You can refer to the fuller paper; the researcher can, anyway.

[*Translation*]

I've been asked to speak specifically about the mandate, resources, challenges and accountability of gender-based analysis at CIDA.

• (1540)

[*English*]

I'll start with some background information on CIDA's work in gender-based analysis. I'll then outline some of the mechanisms of accountability, and finally I'll conclude with some of the reasons for CIDA's success in implementing gender-based analysis and some of the ongoing challenges of using gender-based analysis to inform our work.

I want to begin by stressing that CIDA uses gender-based analysis as a tool for achieving gender equality within our mandate for sustainable development and poverty reduction. In other words, gender analysis can provide insights into how gender equality can be promoted to ensure development goals.

CIDA's first policy on women in development was implemented in 1976, but CIDA's concerted effort in the area really began in 1984. A women in development—or WID—unit headed by a director was established in the policy branch, and it spearheaded the creation of a policy calling for the integration of WID using a strategy of institutionalization; in other words, incorporating WID throughout all programming, including the use of gender-based analysis.

CIDA and the international development community gained in knowledge and experience throughout the 1980s and the early 1990s, and the lessons learned informed the review of the WID policy that was prepared for the fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995. The 1995 foreign policy statement, “Canada in the World”, reflected the importance of the rights of women in our international relations, and gender equality—at the time it was considered women in development—emerged as one of six program priorities of official development assistance. This emphasis provided a further mandate for gender-based analysis at CIDA.

[*Translation*]

The 1999 policy on gender equality has as its goal “the achievement of equality between women and men to ensure sustainable development”. Its three objectives express the main development challenges we aim to address, and have now been translated into corporate development results. The policy document itself provides staff with basic gender analysis guidelines for use in program planning. A modular three-day training course is also available to CIDA staff, as well as an introductory training course on line at CIDA's Web site.

[*English*]

CIDA's gender equality staff play a leadership role in promoting gender mainstreaming within the agency. To support the policy there is a gender equality division based in policy branch, while each of the programming branches has either a gender equality specialist or has identified a gender equality focal point. Together, this staff makes up the gender equality core group, which fosters discussion and exchange of best practice within the agency.

The specialists work internally to integrate gender equality considerations in various agency processes, provide ongoing support to staff and partners to understand and address gender equality dimensions in policy development and program delivery, and work externally in cooperation with other donors and partners.

CIDA's and Canada's gender equality leadership has included policy formulation and the development of practical programming tools, among other things, and I've provided a few of those for you. Donor agencies in developing countries continue to look to Canada to provide expertise, resources, and leadership in this area.

The 1999 policy strengthened accountability for gender equality at CIDA.

[Translation]

It provides that every branch and all program branches, partners and operating officers are responsible for implementing CIDA's policy on gender equality.

[English]

A number of mechanisms exist for ensuring accountability for gender-based analysis and gender equality results at CIDA. The three main mechanisms include, first, agency guidelines for project planning and reporting established requirements for gender analysis and for the completion of a gender equality assessment form. Managers fill out the form with the gender equality specialist, who must sign off on it. The form is intended to lead to more consistent provision of gender equality technical advice into programming.

Second, annual performance reports include identification of gender equality results and a requirement to report on how projects are promoting gender equality.

Finally, a performance assessment framework has been developed as a tool to assess agency performance on gender equality. Its focus is on development results achieved. The framework has wider potential uses in the planning and monitoring of projects and country programs, as well as in assessing possible partner institutions. It is in the final stages of the pilot phase and is expected to have agency approval in April. The performance assessment framework for gender equality represents the first attempt by CIDA to develop a framework for the implementation of an agency policy and is being watched with interest by the international community.

A number of factors have contributed to CIDA's success, including having a clear gender equality policy and a mandate to implement it; using the findings of gender-based analysis to actually shape the design of policies, programs, and projects; incorporating gender equality at all levels and in all types of activities, from policy formulation and dialogue through to program design and project planning, implementation, and assessment; benefiting from the use of local expertise in our partner countries; having organizational structures, procedures, and norms that promote gender equality—for example, engendering and using the organization's planning cycle and accountability frameworks; being explicit with gender equality results and indicators in the programming; and finally, commitment of staff at all levels.

There are, however, challenges to building real understanding, capacity, and commitment to the idea of gender equality, and I'll just name a few that we've identified. Gender equality issues come into play across everything we do, and the social change required for progress on gender equality is complex and long term. Mainstreaming as a strategy has particular challenges unless explicit gender equality results and indicators are set and adequate human and financial resources are applied. Developing capacity is difficult

given the workloads of staff and the complexity and changing nature of our work. Accountability is essential but complex, requiring capacity, systems, and ongoing management attention and commitment.

Gender equality needs to be recognized as a field of professional expertise and gender analysis as a key category of development thinking. Again, adequate resources, both human and financial, need to be assigned to gender equality.

New programming modalities have created new challenges. For example, gender equality hasn't been given sufficient analysis and priority in poverty reduction strategy papers and in sector-wide approaches and other program-based approaches. There is a need to adapt our approaches to gender equality integration within these new programming realities. Entry points for this could include policy dialogue; capacity development; inclusion of gender equality expertise, particularly at the local level; and promoting equitable participation of women and men in decision-making processes.

Finally, uneven or flagging political will for gender equality has created particular challenges. Due to significant success on gender equality, there is a feeling among some that it's time to move on to newer emerging issues, despite the fact that significant disparities in gender equality persist. At the international level, some of the areas where we have made inroads are under threat; for example, in the area of sexual and reproductive health.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak to you today.

● (1545)

The Chair: Thank you very much. Thank you all for your presentations.

I'm going to start with Ms. Yelich.

Mrs. Lynne Yelich (Blackstrap, CPC): Thank you.

I would like to ask each of you to walk me through your jobs. You each have a department or you have it set up so there are many people doing this analysis. I would like to know, at what point do you look at the legislation? What are some of the questions you ask? I'd like each of you give me a case in point. You mentioned social development in your area, human resources, but there must be something that comes to mind right now that you have studied and you put gender analysis to it. You have asked questions. What kind of questions do you ask? Where do you get your ideas from? How it can affect everyday circumstances?

I want each of you, if you could, to find one piece of recent legislation and tell me at what point you start looking at it from a gender analysis, and then I would like you to tell me where it stops. Does it go anywhere? Does it go to cabinet? Does it go to committee or does it get shelved? After your analysis is done, and you've brought some fairly good ideas to it, what happens to those? Perhaps each of you could respond, please.

Mr. Les Linklater: It's a very good question. I think one good example that comes to mind from an HRSDC perspective is employment insurance. A recent experience we had with EI parental benefits is a tangible example of policy development that underwent a degree of gender-based analysis.

In terms of policy development within the department, there are a series of policy committees that exist. There's one at the DG level, one at the ADM level, and another that the deputy chairs with the senior executives. Policy initiatives do go through these committees on their way to the minister.

My responsibility as chair of the policy committee at the DG level is to ensure that the questions around gender analysis are asked and that the responsible branch bringing forward aspects of policy development think about the gender implications of what they're doing.

In the case of EI we did provide some feedback to the policy group that was working on parental benefits. It became apparent that there wasn't any analysis around differentials for lone parents, for example. Understanding that most single parents are women, the proposals on parental benefits would have differential impacts on men and women. That was taken into consideration as the policy development progressed, to ensure that those factors were brought to bear on the analysis.

In terms of follow-up with the program structures we have, a lot of EI programming is delivered by the provinces through LMDAs, for example. Using that as another example, we do have evaluations where gender impacts are collected in the data that we receive and we are able to monitor the impacts that our policies have based on sex.

•(1550)

The Chair: Thank you.

I'm going to have to go to one of the others because we're on a time limit here.

Deborah Tunis.

Ms. Deborah Tunis: One of the newer responsibilities that Social Development Canada has is to look at the issues around caregiving. Minister Ianno was appointed as Minister of State for Families and Caregivers. We've been trying to do some policy work, because previously the responsibilities for that file were with Health Canada and it's just recently come to us.

A number of the people on the little team that we've put together to look at caregivers actually came from the gender analysis group, because they're bright people and they're interested in asking the kinds of policy questions that you'd like to be asked.

I was interested that when we took it to the policy committee within our department—which I chair, as Les does in his department—it was actually our ADM who was saying the statistics that we had in the presentation about the percentage of people who are involved in caregiving he felt didn't really reflect the fact that women are actually still doing the primary caregiving role. And although men are reporting as assisting in caregiving for family members, their involvement is often in terms of shovelling snow, or going up to pick up groceries, or taking someone to a medical appointment, whereas

women have the more intensive role in the sense that it's often daughters, or spouses, or whatever, who are trusted to perform more the intimate caregiving role that would involve bathing, administering medication, or those kinds of things.

Those kinds of questions are routinely asked as we're trying to frame a policy response. When we have interdepartmental meetings, certainly the representatives from Status of Women hold us to account if the kinds of statistics or facts that we are providing don't break down the gender issues as clearly as they think they should be. I do think that in the policy development there is a good, robust discussion of gender issues. Once those then move forward through cabinet consideration and whatever policies.... We're not expecting big things in the budget tomorrow, but hopefully in the budget next year there will be some measures for caregivers so that those do get reflected.

In terms of your question about what impediments are that we might encounter, or where we feel those issues get blocked, the Department of Social Development is a pretty new department, and I haven't encountered there being blockages on the issues that I've been working on, which range from child poverty to people with disabilities, or others.

So I can't answer the second part of your question as well as you might be looking for.

Julie.

•(1555)

Ms. Julie Delahanty: I'm struggling a bit to come up with an example, because we work at such different levels at CIDA from programming to policy. But I've been thinking of one, which is that last year we started work on our trade-related capacity-building policy at CIDA, because that's a new area of work for Canada and for CIDA. You were asking about our day-to-day work, or what I would do from day-to-day. Part of it was to comment on the policy itself to make sure the policy itself was integrating gender equality considerations throughout. Then as an addendum to that, or in addition to that, I produced a gender equality and trade-related capacity-building tool that would help program managers to integrate gender equality into their programming in the field.

I also in fact accompanied a group to Bangladesh to develop one of our new large-scale, trade-related capacity-building projects in Bangladesh, and used the tool and tried to come up with ways to address certain areas of the programming. Part of it was around private sector development, so it involved ensuring that we were addressing the needs of women, the needs of workers, because in Bangladesh there's a large number of garment sectors that work in the export zone. We were dealing with their issues when they were leaving work, when they were losing their jobs—social safety net sorts of projects. There's a whole range of things that we do at very different levels, and it includes policy, commenting, creating tools, and advising managers on particular projects.

The Chair: Thank you.

Madame Brunelle.

[*Translation*]

Ms. Paule Brunelle (Trois-Rivières, BQ): Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.

I noticed that, during the implementation, a network of advisors on male-female issues was in place in all the departments. Does that network still exist?

I'm trying to determine the connection that can be established between that network and Ms. Tunis's comments that one of the challenges is to strike a fair balance between the unity of gender-based analysis and its role in more directly integrating issues concerning men and women into core files.

I don't know whether I'm being clear. In fact, if this advisory network exists, would it make it possible to integrate gender-based analysis in your various files?

Ms. Deborah Tunis: The network still exists. However, there have been changes among the employees. Consequently, it's still a challenge to acquire knowledge of issues and the possibility of meeting challenges.

Robert Coulter is responsible for that network.

[English]

Mr. Robert Coulter (Director, Horizontal Initiatives and International Relations, Policy and Strategic Direction, Department of Social Development): The network of gender advisers still existed fully in the department of HRDC, and it still exists within Social Development Canada. Members carried on in their jobs. They are still in the various policy branches and program branches of the department, and I think it's fair to say that those members contribute on an ongoing daily basis to the work of the department. I think our challenge, as a new department and as the department is coalescing, is to fully reinvent that network throughout all of the department.

But yes, in response to your question, the network does exist, and we have had a few opportunities to come together around some events. The most notable one was a presentation on gender-based analysis and child care. It's sort of the outset of some of the work that the department is doing around early learning and child care. So it does exist and will continue on.

The Chair: Ms. Galarneau, go ahead please.

[Translation]

Ms. Louise Galarneau (Director, International Relations, Department of Human Resources and Skills Development): Thank you for your question. It's obviously not easy to maintain a network. As Deborah said, you always have to ensure, despite staff turnover, that the knowledge is maintained and shared among people. It's pointless simply to have one person in the unit. However, it's essential that that person disseminate the elements of the Policy on Gender-Based Analysis as broadly as possible.

We recently observed that the twin departments that have been separated, if I can put it that way, represent very particular policy challenges. We're asked to do a great deal, but in very specific areas. It seems to us that, in order for this network to be as effective as possible, we absolutely have to examine places where new policies are being developed.

In my department, for example, when it comes to learning, you absolutely have to know whether men and women are equally involved in postsecondary education. That's in fact the case: women are participating very well. Our research has shown us that women

are participating in postsecondary education to a greater degree than we had hoped for. There are still certain minor problems, in that women still tend to go into more traditional areas. We also have to look into the reasons why young boys are leaving school sooner and becoming unemployed, and so on.

That's one of our challenges. I hope the budget that is to be presented soon will include literacy. These are the things we're particularly focusing on.

However, the question is whether the network is there to answer these questions and whether, when documents are prepared and sent to the Policy Committee, all the arguments are in place to answer questions asked on this issue by managers and senior managers. We have to reinvent this network every year or every 18 months. The network is not a stable thing; it can't stay the same.

● (1600)

Ms. Paule Brunelle: Does that mean we don't have to convince people of the utility of gender-based analysis, but that it's quite difficult to put all this operation in place?

Ms. Louise Galarneau: It's not hard to convince people. I think everyone's seen the results. Whether it's a social aspect, with children, or employment, with employment insurance, we've seen things such as the increase in participation by men. I wouldn't say it's fabulous, but more men are now requesting parental leave than at the start. That's more or less making it so that men are occupying a greater place as care providers. As a result, women aren't the only ones doing it.

The idea is to build on the base and, from there, to move further. I don't think it's difficult. We have to target, rethink and become more effective than we've been in what we've done.

[English]

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Ms. Bulte.

Hon. Sarmite Bulte (Parkdale—High Park, Lib.): Thank you very much.

I'm delighted you're here. With the breakup of the human resources department into skills and development, I don't know where the question falls. Perhaps it falls to both of your departments.

I'm interested in how you collect your data. One of the great things is that we can't really make effective policy unless we have disaggregated data. When I did the former Prime Minister's task force on women entrepreneurs, when I asked how many self-employed were non-standard—and I hate the word “non-standard” because I think it's becoming more and more standard, and the reality is that there are more and more self-employed women than there are women in the labour force—we couldn't find that answer, because nobody had to ask that question. You had to go back and disaggregate the data; it wasn't there.

How does gender-based analysis help us look at places where legislation is leaving women behind, where women are falling through the cracks, especially with respect to the self-employed?

I'll give you an example. We have things such as maternity leave in place, all based on EI payment, which the self-employed can't pay. Now you have a compassionate care leave that, again, the self-employed can't pay. According to OECD data, women are starting more self-employment businesses in Canada than in any other OECD country. Who's dealing with that? Who's catching that? How are we ensuring the self-employed women don't fall through the cracks?

In compassionate care—when you're speaking about care, it's always the women who give the care; that's a fact of life, yet self-employment doesn't allow us to contribute through EI or in any other way. What will ever make us wake up and realize that while this is great for the labour force of standard, or working, people, the reality is that today's labour force has more and more women who are self-employed? How do we address that?

• (1605)

Mr. Les Linklater: You raise a number of very critical questions around the EI program at large, and how a growing proportion of the labour force does not have access to the programming under it, because it is a contributory program. That's based on legislation.

In terms of moving forward to broaden our approach—our coverage—or providing comparable programming to those who are not members of EI, it would be a very costly undertaking outside of the parameters of the EI program, and to adjust EI would, of course, require legislative change.

In terms of our policy development, and moving forward over the longer term, we are well aware this is an issue. It's not just the self-employed, and self-employed women; a number of groups are finding themselves outside the ambit of employment insurance. New immigrants, for example, are finding it hard to get the training and skills they need to be able to integrate, or the benefits they need to maintain their responsibilities outside the labour force. From our perspective, these are key policy questions. We are turning our attention to them, to move forward, but in terms of quick solutions—short of a significant infusion of resources outside EI, it would be very difficult to move forward in the short term.

The Chair: Go ahead.

Ms. Deborah Tunis: I just wanted to address one of the first things you raised, about the data questions, because I think it is critical. Certainly in the files I've been associated with, Statistics Canada—through their General Social Survey, which has looked at caregiving and seniors issues, or the National Longitudinal Survey on Children and Youth, or the Participation and Activity Limitation Survey, which looks at people with disabilities—has been good on the social side about getting us the data we need to look at the differential impacts on women and men.

I don't know on your side if you always have the data sources. We're always jealous of HRSD, because they have labour force statistics that come out every month and all of those kinds of things that I think are tracking the kinds of things you need to do....

I guess, as I go back to think about some of the responsibilities we're starting to develop on the social economy with our parliamentary secretary, those are issues where I think, when we start collecting data on them, we will have to be very mindful of the

challenge you've laid out, because if you don't have the data you can't make the arguments. You're absolutely right.

Hon. Sarmite Bulte: You can't make policy in a vacuum.

Mr. Linklater, just going back to you and specifically to a program, the self-employed assistance program—I think that falls under your area—what is being done on a gender-based analysis there? When our task force travelled across the country, among the things we heard with respect to those programs, especially for women, were that the times they were given were inconsistent with their child-rearing needs, and that women like to be mentored with women at the same time. What is being done to address those concerns of women, which clearly show that women learn differently, manage differently...? We are different.

I think that is a terrific program. So what's being done in that sense? Are you addressing the specific needs of women?

What they need also on the EI side.... I know there was a pilot project in London, Ontario, where you didn't have to be EI-eligible for it. And what about the woman who's been out of the workforce, who has had a child and now wants to get back into the labour force, perhaps through something like self-employment assistance training, who doesn't qualify because she's been out longer than is necessary? Are those things being taken into account?

I think it's a terrific program, but again, women are falling through the cracks. It's not the men who are falling through the cracks; it's the women who are falling through the cracks.

• (1610)

Mr. Les Linklater: I take your points, and I think these are challenges that a lot of our local offices have to deal with when they're faced with the volumes of clients who are coming through their doors looking for our supports.

I'm sure our staff are doing their very best possible to accommodate people in their individual needs, but given volumes and demands and finite resources, it is difficult to do as well as we would really like to do.

But from a perspective of understanding the needs and the requirements that women in particular have in reintegrating into the labour force, I think we have made some incredible strides forward in the parental benefits program as well as the compassionate care program, which is a step in the right direction, toward helping to support the needs of individuals who are trying to balance these increasing pressures between their personal and professional lives.

Hon. Sarmite Bulte: Thank you.

Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP): I was pleased to hear the discussion around EI coming, because I'm actually going to follow up on that theme. I have some statistics here that talk about the fact only 32% of women received EI in 1999. Over 40,000 unemployed women a year are not covered because of the new EI rules—they're not so new anymore. This drop in coverage from 70% in 1989 to 32% in 1990 is partly as a result of the fact that women are predominantly overrepresented in the part-time employment jobs under 15 hours a week. They did not pay premiums prior to 1996 and so on.

Significantly, they say that 80% of part-time jobs are now filled by women. Before you answer, briefly I want to get both of you on pensions as well. Women in pensions, well over 40% of women—these are Stats Canada numbers, by the way—over 65 living alone struggle to make ends meet with income below the low-income cut-off. From 1999-2000 about 65% of people receiving both old age security and the guaranteed income supplement were women, compared to 35% of men, who tend to rely more heavily on occupational pensions and RRSPs for income.

It's dismaying to me to hear that gender-based analysis has been conducted for what seems like a significant number of years, and yet we have these dismal numbers on the impact on women in society. It looks like lip service to gender-based analysis, because we have an EI change in 1995, which is now well documented, about the adverse impact on women, and yet we don't see the significant kinds of changes that need to happen.

So I think the question is, with existing legislation that's already in place, what is being done to subject it to a detailed meaningful gender-based analysis with benchmarks and accountability built in that's going to see some of these changes? It's only going to get worse as we get the baby boomers hitting age 65, for example, on the pension income.

Mr. Les Linklater: In terms of what we're seeing, I think it's important to note that the participation rates of women in the labour force overall have increased quite significantly over the last little while, and in particular the last 15 to 20 years. The reality of today's labour market is not necessarily reflective of the time and place when these policies were developed and implemented.

At this point, as has been mentioned earlier, the rise in self-employment—or as we do call it, non-standard work—and the differential impacts is something we are aware of. We do know where the pressure points are for women and men in the labour market.

In terms of moving forward with policy development, as I indicated earlier, in terms of broadening coverage for the program, because it is contributory and it is based on legislation, we would be looking at fundamental changes. But beyond that, I think we need to take a step back to look at what our overall objectives are for the labour market moving forward, and what are the tools that we need to be able to support men and women in their participation in the labour force.

It's more than just EI. EI is one tool. But there are a number of other opportunities that we may be able to take advantage of moving forward in our policy development, where of course it will be informed by the results of the data we've collected to date.

•(1615)

Ms. Jean Crowder: I do recognize that EI is only one part of the puzzle when I talked about the pension specifically. But one of the things we know—and this comes out of the Health Canada report around the social determinants of health—is the fact that people with the lowest incomes are five times more likely to report poor or only fair health than those with higher incomes. That's why they accepted that health depends in part on having adequate food, shelter, and income. It's the income.

What we also know is that there is a huge opportunity lost when we have people struggling with poverty, because they can't be contributors to the labour force in a meaningful kind of way. So although EI is only part of the puzzle, these programs do not operate in silos, and people do not live in silos. So I wonder, when you're talking about policy development, what kind of gender-based analysis is happening on a broader way on income security issues. They're fundamental for how people live, and if we don't deal with this it has impacts all the way through the system, whether it's health care, whether it's pensions, or whether it's education.

Ms. Deborah Tunis: The challenge that you've raised, in terms of existing pieces of legislation and looking at the Canada Pension Plan and what the child-rearing dropout provisions are and whether those provisions should be extended more broadly, those are challenging issues for the department, in part because we share the responsibility with the Department of Finance and with the provinces. There is a triennial review process that allows for examination of how well those big instruments are dealing with some of the changing circumstances of Canadian society, in terms of how flexible they are.

Every time we do an examination of poverty issues, Canada feels that for seniors...we've seen declines in poverty amongst seniors, but whenever we do decks or presentations, we always identify that there is a particular group of low-income women who are not well served by our current instruments. How you get those instruments then to change is in part the role, the shared responsibility, of parliamentarians and bureaucrats to look at how well those instruments are serving that particular population and how that kind of change happens. It happens slowly.

The Chair: Thank you.

I'm going move to Mrs. Grewal.

Mrs. Nina Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells, CPC): Thank you, Madam Chair.

Please, could you provide us with a concrete example of how the use of gender-based analysis improved the program or policy in your department? If so, could you briefly describe how that program or policy was flagged for gender-based analysis and who conducted the gender-based analysis?

The Chair: Who would like to go first?

Julie, are you comfortable?

Ms. Julie Delahanty: I'm rich with examples. I'm just having a hard time thinking of one.

Again, it's difficult for me because we work at a program level and at a policy level—we all do, right? But trying to think of a specific example....

I can give you an example of a program in a developing country in which we work. For example, when we began working in the private sector in Bangladesh, there was a desire to work in the private sector. That was the broad thing that we were working on. And after a gender-based analysis was done, through the analysis it was shown that there were many destitute widows in Bangladesh—probably the poorest of the poor are women who have no male support. So a specific project was begun to actually build roads. It was a road maintenance project.

Part of it was an infrastructure project. It was a double project. There was an infrastructure project to build roads. Based on the analysis of what was going on generally in Bangladesh in the context of destitute widows, the decision was made to hire only destitute widows to build the roads. Along with that, there was training on small enterprise development. So out of that project, not only were roads built by women, who then had income, but they were also trained in, basically, micro-enterprise, trained to start their own businesses. I can't remember the numbers right now, but they're quite astounding. Something like 140,000 widows in Bangladesh began their own enterprises, their own small business, as a direct result of the program.

When we started out, that could have just been a road project. But we have gender specialists working in the Bangladesh program, who went into the managers and said, how are you going to see gender equality results in this project? That's a question we ask for every single project we do. It's not just, have you done the analysis and have you seen what the impact is going to be on men and women, but also, what kind of gender equality results are you going to achieve in this project? This is a challenge that's put to every single manager at CIDA. Part of our accountability mechanism is that all managers at CIDA, for every single project and program, have to meet with a gender equality adviser and discuss their project. As a result of that interaction, that kind of programming comes out of it, so that we actually have specific programming that has broader objectives for development for the country, but that actually also leads to gender equality results.

• (1620)

The Chair: Thank you.

Who else would like to comment briefly?

[*Translation*]

Ms. Louise Galarneau: We're examining the policy document. There have been a number of initiatives in past years. There's one that we absolutely have to refer to that was accepted in the employment insurance field, and that's compassionate care benefits.

For the provision to be included in the bill, we conducted an analysis on the fact that women most often provide these services. Most of the time, these women aren't paid. It's unpaid work. The fact that employment insurance can offer six weeks of benefits for this kind of... We can offer the same opportunity to men and to women, and to offer paid benefits. It's a proposal that wasn't accepted even a short time ago. It's still being evaluated.

We intervene at every stage in the gender-based analysis process. As Ms. Bulte said earlier, data collection is important. For all our programs, we try to ensure we have a complete data base in policy development and then in evaluation. When we get to the evaluation and see there has been progress or a regression in certain areas, we take action in an attempt to correct the situation.

In the case of compassionate care benefits, we haven't yet obtained the evaluation results.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Mr. Powers.

Mr. Russ Powers (Ancaster—Dundas—Flamborough—Westdale, Lib.): I have a few questions.

Mr. Linklater, in 2000 you created the network of gender advisers.

And, Ms. Tunis, the question will probably carry over to you afterwards since there was a split in your department.

So this entity was created. Is it still existing? Or has there been some evolution of that consultation or analysis you've created?

• (1625)

[*Translation*]

Ms. Louise Galarneau: The network, which was established in 2000, was particularly active at first. Starting in December 2003, when the department was divided in two, activities nevertheless continued on both sides. The two departments often continued exchanging expertise.

I took part in a session on the role of our advisors responsible for recovering unpaid cheques in employment insurance and other areas. We wanted to see how gender-based analysis could adapt to the procedures in place for recovering unpaid amounts, in order to consider the specific situation of women. We've continued to provide information on that subject.

Currently, since we have a lot of new policies and want to develop others, we're focusing on areas where we know something new is happening.

We're analyzing what's going to happen in the labour market in the twenty-first century and seeing how we can get everyone to participate fully in the labour market. Women obviously have an important role to play in this area. We have to ensure that every way of entering the job market corresponds to the needs of each person.

Ms. Bulte referred earlier to the issue of women who want to start up small businesses and of particular ways of doing so. We're currently trying to ensure the greatest degree of flexibility in program implementation. The communities are working with the colleges and Cegeps so that programs are suited to the needs of each of these populations. These are things we're trying to look at in the greatest detail. Gender-based analysis is helping us do that.

I didn't have the time to talk about literacy, but we're doing the same thing in that area. Women have particular literacy problems. They're not necessarily problems with reading, but perhaps with numbers. We're trying to see how we can break down that barrier.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Russ Powers: I don't know how your answer matched up to my question about how the network of gender advisers was still in place within the department.

Anyway, we'll move on.

There was a split-off in the department; Ms. Tunis, you've referred to it by saying there is gender analysis in key areas. Seeing there had been a combined department in advance, is gender analysis in areas under your purview still just only in key areas, or is it evolving?

Ms. Deborah Tunis: A network of gender advisers still exists across the department. My comments focus primarily on some of our key files, but when you walk around our floor, you'll still see signs that say "I am a gender adviser" outside various cubicles, and people do still get together. Bob had mentioned getting together to listen to Martha Friendly, or different speakers. A director and two people, two FTEs, are dedicated to this from a central corporate strategic policy perspective, and then there are advisers associated with the various teams—the child care team, the caregivers team.

Is that okay?

Mr. Russ Powers: Okay, is GBA mandated for every area under the two new departments?

Ms. Deborah Tunis: Yes.

Mr. Russ Powers: Thank you.

Julie, I have two quick questions.

You referred to an introductory training course online, on CIDA's website. Is this what we have here? Is it accessed by anybody who goes into your web page?

• (1630)

Ms. Julie Delahanty: Yes, and we provide it on CD, because for many of our developing-country partners, web access isn't as good. That's why we have it on a CD.

Mr. Russ Powers: This is the final question in my last couple of moments.

Can you talk about your performance assessment framework—in other words, this tool you've developed?

Ms. Julie Delahanty: Sure.

We've developed a tool to link to our policy. We have three policy objectives, which are human rights, participation of women, and access to resources. For each of the three areas we've outlined development results that we're expecting to find in the program.

What's a bit different about this assessment framework is that it's a framework to assess the policy, as opposed to something that's looking at specific programs or specific projects. What it's doing is looking through all the reporting at CIDA to see how managers are reporting on gender equality at the end—we're only looking at projects that are already 80% completed—to see whether we're having results at the corporate level for gender equality. It's a bit different from doing, say, an evaluation of a project or a program, because it's using only the material that's involved right there at CIDA.

So far we've developed three different tools. One is for our responsive and directive funds, one is for our core or institutional funding, and another is for our Canadian partnership branch funding—essentially our funding to NGOs within Canada. There are three different mechanisms to review the results in each of those different areas.

We've only just finished the pilots, so the results aren't yet available. An interesting thing to note is that we did an institutional analysis, using this, of one of our partners, the UNDP, which is a large multilateral partner of Canada. As a result of that initial pilot, we reported on the results to the UNDP board. It was an informal,

friendly sort of thing, but it actually led to a whole process within the UNDP, and now they're doing their own internal analysis of gender-based programming in the UNDP. So it's already had some spinoff effects.

So far we don't know whether we're going to be able to use the tool itself as a tool at CIDA for assessment, because it was actually much more difficult than we had anticipated, in that a lot of it has to do with whether officers are reporting well enough on what they are experiencing. Some of the issues are internal to CIDA, and we're trying to work those out with upper management to try to get a tool that's going to work for an assessment.

But at best, it's also going to be very useful as a management tool for our program officers to use, or for directors general and directors to use, to see what kind of results they should be looking for in their overall programming, and to roll that up to the corporate level.

Mr. Russ Powers: Thank you, Madam Chair.

The Chair: Madame Bonsant.

[*Translation*]

Ms. France Bonsant (Compton—Stanstead, BQ): Good afternoon. I was reading documents on the status of women. You're talking about a Canada action plan that dates back to 1995. Ten years later, there are government employees, young women journalists at the CBC who are still underpaid relative to their male counterparts.

Can you explain to me why that's still the case, when we've been talking about gender equality, equality of roles and so on for 10 years? Why are they still underpaid? Don't all answer at the same time.

Ms. Louise Galarneau: I've been living with the reality of the issue of male-female equality for 30 years. The first International Women's Year was in 1975 or 1976, I believe. I was there. We started talking about it. The tools have been refined over the years. Based on our statistics—we can't hide it—women still earn less than men, not only women journalists at the CBC. If you consider the situation in general economic terms, we've made progress. The progress has been slow, but it's there.

However, gender-based analysis was one of the tools advocated in the plan to address one of these problems. It's not necessarily the only tool. We should continue addressing this subject in the public arena. That's important. As officials, we're trying to correct situations when we see them, but we don't have all the union bargaining and other powers.

That's a fact. That's what we're doing, for example, when we take part in Beijing + 10 or other events. Our reports are clear; we're not denying the situation. It's precisely when all this is in the public arena that we can try to address these situations head on and everyone can see what can be done to solve the problem.

• (1635)

Ms. France Bonsant: There's also another thing that's a problem for me. I'm going to say it with a bit of emotion in my voice. I'm talking about employment insurance benefits for someone who's having a baby, when she's entitled to them. I've met women farmers, young women who own their own farms. Two weeks after delivery, they take their babies into the barn to milk the cows.

Why is it called employment insurance when it's about pregnancy? Mothers aren't short of work. This is a period in their lives when they're in the midst of a work stoppage in order to give birth to children, and you call it employment insurance.

You also talk about employment insurance in relation to the six-week compassionate care leave, as though that could be limited to a period of six weeks. I find that illogical.

We're talking a lot about employment insurance, since you're here. Forty percent of people are entitled to employment insurance. Then we talk about poor children. If there are poor children, that's because somewhere there are poor parents.

Employment insurance is an important issue that will have to be looked at. My comment is a bit negative. Employment insurance benefits are benefits for someone who loses his or her job. That's not the case when a woman delivers or is nursing. Find another name. Do something. Someone should help. That's all I had to say, with a bit of emotion in my voice.

Ms. Louise Galarneau: We're going to work on it.

Ms. France Bonsant: Thank you very much.

[English]

Ms. Jean Crowder: I noticed in the briefing document the researcher prepared for us that in May 2003 HRDC officials made a policy statement about incorporating gender analysis into policy, program, legislative, service delivery work, and so on. I also noticed in the briefing document that the 2004-05 reports on plans and priorities for both new departments do not highlight gender issues. I wonder if you could comment specifically.

We had CIC in last week, and they are required to report out to Parliament on an annual basis about their progress. I wonder if you could comment specifically on what mechanisms you have in place to report out publically on the success or lack thereof of GBA.

I wonder if you could also talk about how you'd envision more accountability, because as I've already outlined, clearly there are pieces of legislation out there that do not support gender equality.

Mr. Les Linklater: In fact, I spent most of my career at Citizenship and Immigration and was there when the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act was brought into force with the legislative requirement. In my experience I have found it to be a very useful tool for bringing the issues to the fore. To my knowledge, CIC is the only department to date that administers an act with that requirement.

From a HRSDC perspective in terms of accountability issues and public reporting, I think there is room to improve the way we function within our internal policy committees and in our accountabilities to the deputy and the minister in terms of the policy analysis we put forward. We can build on the strengths we have with the training and the capacity of the network members who are in the department to ensure those gender considerations are brought to bear when we are bringing forward policy options for the minister and for her to take to her colleagues for consideration.

We have come a long way, but with the reorganization and the split of the department, we need to regroup and we need to find the best way forward with the tools we have, bearing in mind that the

appropriate accountability mechanisms may need to be refined and improved through our policy processes.

In terms of public reporting, I think from our perspective, with the data we collect through our programming, we are at a bit of an advantage compared to other departments, with our ability to drill down a bit more than others on that. As we do report publicly, there are some aspects; early returns on LMDA evaluations, which are not yet public, do have gender breakdowns in terms of outcomes for active measures; programming, for example.

• (1640)

Ms. Deborah Tunis: A lot of the reporting that has happened in social development is associated with some of our federal-provincial agreements. The national child benefit people put out a progress report with provinces and territories. Provinces do their own reporting under the Early Childhood Development Agreement, but then the Government of Canada does the progress report. For people with disabilities, the office for disability issues puts out an annual report on how people with disabilities are faring.

All of those reports do have gender breakdowns. Because I was recently at the office for disability issues, I know they do it in that case, certainly similar things to what Les said. But for the national child benefit the evaluations do look at gender issues, and the reporting on early child development does break down boys' and girls' outcomes.

Ms. Jean Crowder: The gender breakdown is there, but is the analysis done on the impact?

On another issue, the Auditor General has pointed out—for example, under some of the health agreements—the data is gathered, but no analysis is done, and there's no consequent policy development as a result of it. It's fine to have sex-disaggregated data, but we actually want to know what it means.

Ms. Deborah Tunis: I believe that is happening across all the files in the Department of Social Development. Certainly when we look at child poverty, we're looking at the impact of lone parents, and the number of mothers who happen to be in that situation. On caregiving, we're doing that. On the child care file, that's happening. The group looking at seniors policy is looking at it in terms of women and men. On the disability front, that's happening as well.

I think you're actually asking two questions. One is whether the analysis is done; the other is whether policy proposals acting on that come forward. There I think we're doing a better job in terms of some of the issues we're framing now. I do think there is a challenge in terms of applying that analysis to some of our existing mechanisms.

The Chair: Ms. Torsney.

Hon. Paddy Torsney (Burlington, Lib.): Thank you.

It's great that we have representatives from some of the most dynamic departments. The challenges you face are really quite fascinating, because each little change in policy has huge implications.

I was thinking about it when Ms. Crowder was asking about the situation for older women particularly, and their attachment and access to pensions, which are government supported; pension plans by companies are government supported through our tax system. I hope my generation of women will have more attachment and more access to pensions.

Yet over the last two days, the business section of the newspaper, for me, has been completely depressing. Yesterday the *National Post* had a woman on the cover; of all the pictures on the inside, one was of another woman, and there were many pictures of men. I don't even know if there was a woman today in the *Globe and Mail* business section. I think there was one in the OPG announcements; they had 11 people appointed to their board, and there was one woman. I was thinking about it in the context of getting more women elected; where the heck are the women in the business world, as well, at the top echelon?

These things we're talking about do have an effect on the markets. They will certainly affect women getting access. As Ms. Bulte said, they want to be entrepreneurs, and yet when we introduce a program of parental leave, or EI for self-employed earners, it will also affect young men I went to school with who are now entrepreneurs.

Some things have been done. Many years ago, we made the changes on EI Ms. Crowder talked about; we did actually make some changes, to top up, when they were the single income in the family. The reachback for training was specifically geared toward women, so they could have access to training; the CPP dropout provisions are specifically geared for women who've been in the labour force. As a result of, we hope, gender-based analysis, we've done some good things.

Even the parental leave changes. Yesterday a young woman who'd just gotten married mentioned she was pregnant; somebody else said, "Yes, that's why I don't like hiring young women who are just getting married." I said, "With parental leave now, you'd better be concerned about all young people". There should be more fairness in the workplace, as people are evaluating whom to hire—you don't say "Girls get pregnant, so I don't want to hire them".

Have we done some more analysis of some of these policies to see if they did the right thing? When we've made changes to pension legislation, RRSPs...are we seeing the support? Is the generation coming up going to see these benefits? Do we have to tinker again?

I was particularly struck when you were talking, Deborah, about the child care program. There's been a lot of talk in the House about old white men bringing in this policy. I'm happy they are, of course, but in fact most of the workers are women. When we look at the policy around child care—we're looking at people who access child care, and the child care workers—have we done some analysis on the impact of infusions of money and training? It's really about early learning and making sure it's better child care for Canadian children. How do we affect the outcome for the children who are accessing child care, so they have a better start in life?

I leave it out there for comment.

My only question to Ms. Delahanty is this. I notice it says we have a program available to CIDA staff, but is it mandatory for CIDA staff?

• (1645)

The Chair: Who wants to go first?

Hon. Paddy Torsney: Deborah was itching.

Ms. Deborah Tunis: I don't want to talk about the pension issue. That's the part I know the least about. But I think that as you mentioned in terms of the CPP dropout that was particularly designed for women, there is work going on in the department to look at CPP and at whether there's any fine-tuning that can be done to it that would affect gender.

When you were talking, I was thinking of a study I recently participated in—and there'll be a report coming out, I think in May—of the OECD. It's comparing different countries in terms of their family-friendly policies and is called *Babies and Bosses*. It was looking at the amount of leave we provide to parents and comparing us with other countries—the U.K., Finland, and Sweden, in this particular one. Exactly the same thing is happening in Finland, which has very generous leave provisions for new parents; I think it's actually three years. What they found is that young women can't get into the workforce because employers won't hire them.

What they were suggesting is that the changes that have been made to the EI to allow a year's parental leave.... I think the OECD report, when it comes out, is going to say Canada has it about right: that's the amount of time a person can be out of the labour force without having a significant negative implication for the future.

Those kinds of studies that we participate in look at whether we have it right, whether the EI parental leave provision is the right amount of time to support the person in their child-caring responsibilities but also to not have too big an impact. That kind of thing does go on.

The team that's been working on child care is primarily a female team that has been looking at those issues. I think they're supporting the minister very well in bringing into consideration the gender issues involved in a quality system of child care and, hopefully, what it will mean in terms of raising the incomes of women, who are often the ones providing the child care, in the future.

• (1650)

Hon. Paddy Torsney: And who often have children themselves.

Ms. Deborah Tunis: And who have children themselves, yes. These are great issues, I think.

Mr. Les Linklater: You asked earlier about evaluation of the changes that have been made. In terms of the parental leave benefits, I think there are some lessons that are quite telling.

To provide just a few statistics, after the changes were made in 2000, we calculated that in 2000-01 about 180,000 people took parental benefits. That number increased after the changes to about 211,000 parents in 2001-02, which is an increase of about 18%.

About 90% of the new parental claims were from women, but what is quite telling from the changes is that the claims from men increased by almost 80% over that same period, from 13,000 to over 23,000 a year later. Moving in that direction has allowed men to be able to take more responsibility in caregiving during the first year of the child's life, which, based on what we're hearing internationally, is a step in the right direction.

Going back to something Deborah said earlier, we can't take credit for all of the success, because it really was a partnership with the provinces and territories, who had to be on board to align their labour legislation with the changes to EI to permit the leave provisions.

Hon. Paddy Torsney: Right. I guess I look forward to even further analysis of it too, because hopefully... We're talking about quality of life. That's why we have governments, and that's why we have taxation systems and why we bring in programs and try to make sure our society is the most productive. Men care very much about their children and will have an improved quality of life by having access to these kinds of supports as well. Certainly it'll improve them as employers—

The Chair: Ms. Torsney, you might just allow Julie Delahanty to answer, as well.

A brief answer, please.

Ms. Julie Delahanty: I'll just answer your question about mandatory training. We did have mandatory training in gender-based analysis at CIDA for many years. It was cancelled after a number of years because the entire CIDA staff had gone through it, including upper management. Now, we have had until this year mandatory training for new development officers who were coming in. But that's it. We've just redeveloped the course and we're actually deciding amongst ourselves whether it should be mandatory or not, because making anything mandatory always creates a certain amount of blow-back.

So that's the answer.

Hon. Paddy Torsney: I encourage you to continue to do these.

I'm probably running out of time.

The Chair: Yes, you are.

Hon. Paddy Torsney: I hope we can move further, because I hear it from the business community as well. Everybody wants a little more time and wants to be there on compassionate leave and everything, and it's not gender specific.

The Chair: Let me ask you this, colleagues. We've been around the room and everybody has had an opportunity to ask a question. Does anybody have any further questions?

Ms. Yelich, I'm sorry.

Mrs. Lynne Yelich: I didn't want to leave without letting you know that you really didn't answer the last part of my question, which was about where the disconnect is. You have the studies and the committees. You told me what you do when you go through gender analysis. I would say your gender analysis is done.

The thing is, how do we get your findings to the House of Commons? Through us as legislators, I guess. What part do we play now? I think it's incumbent upon you to bring this information to us and to say where there are some shortcomings.

You all are doing, I think, a very good job. You're doing your gender analysis—that's clear—and you're doing quite a good job. But there's a disconnect; otherwise, why are we studying whether you people are doing it or not doing it? I see you're doing it. The disconnect is in our not implementing it. I think it's incumbent upon you to make us go to work on that, so you start getting us some information.

The Chair: On that note, I'm going to say thank you to all of you for coming. I think this has been a very informative and lively session. We may ask you back again as we move through this study, but I appreciate your coming today. This is very helpful.

Thank you.

Do you have a question?

• (1655)

Hon. Sarmite Bulte: I just want some information, after you say your thank you, on where we're going next with the committee.

The Chair: We're done. Thank you.

Go ahead.

An hon. member: Are we off the record?

The Chair: No, we're not off the record yet.

Go ahead.

Hon. Sarmite Bulte: Who are we seeing next? Do we have a list of other departments that are coming?

The Chair: We were just working on that the other day.

What do we have?

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. Richard Rumas): We have a meeting on Thursday scheduled with Professor Pauline Rankin, from the Pauline Jewett Institute of Women's Studies at Carleton University. Then there's the break. Following the break, we have a meeting set up where we'll have the Department of Finance, the Department of Health, and the Department of Justice appearing.

Hon. Sarmite Bulte: Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you.

What we are doing is following a work plan established by the researcher, Julie Cool, prior to your joining the committee. We've been following it, with some amendments according to the availability of people. We'll probably have three more sessions on this.

Again, thank you very much.

The meeting is adjourned.

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