

Status of Women Canada, Privy Council Office and Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat Action Plan (2016-2020)
Audit of Gender-based Analysis
Fall 2015 Report of the Auditor General of Canada

General Comment

The Government of Canada is committed to supporting the full implementation of Gender-based analysis (GBA) across federal departments and agencies. GBA helps to ensure that the development of policies, programs and legislation includes the consideration of differential impacts on diverse groups of women and men. In 2015, the Government renewed its commitment to GBA, including by mandating the Minister of Status of Women to, as an overarching goal, ensure government policy, legislation, and regulations are sensitive to the different impacts that decisions can have on men and women.

The Fall 2015 Report of the Auditor General of Canada, “Implementing Gender-based Analysis,” released in February 2016, pointed to the need to do more to fully implement GBA as a rigorous practice across government. It recommended that Status of Women Canada (SWC), the Privy Council Office (PCO) and the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS) work with all federal departments and agencies to identify the barriers to implementing GBA, and to periodically assess and report on progress. It further recommended that SWC assess the resources it needs to deliver on its GBA mandate.

SWC, PCO and TBS are committing to work together, and with other federal departments and agencies, to respond to the three recommendations of the Auditor General Report. The actions outlined below detail the specific activities SWC, PCO and TBS will undertake in response to the gaps identified by the Auditor General, building on progress and lessons learned.

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<p>Recommendation 1.61 The Privy Council Office, Status of Women Canada, and the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, to the extent of their respective mandates and working with all federal departments and agencies, should take concrete actions to identify and address barriers that prevent the systematic conduct of rigorous gender-based analysis. Such actions should address barriers that prevent departments and agencies from taking gender-based analysis into consideration during the development, renewal, and assessment of policy, legislative, and program initiatives, so that they can inform decision makers about existing or potential gender considerations in their initiatives.</p>		
<p>Response from Status of Women Canada to Recommendation 1.61</p> <p>Agree.</p> <p>SWC will continue to develop and deliver GBA tools and training, enhancing the use of a “cluster” approach to engage groups of like-minded departments to ensure appropriate information and tools are available to all sectors and functional communities.</p> <p>SWC will increase the accessibility of tools and resources through a revision and re-launch of the GBA+ GCpedia page in 2016.</p>	<p>In 2016, SWC will work with PCO and TBS to better identify and analyze barriers to GBA+ implementation. This will involve consulting with other federal departments and agencies, including at the Deputy-level, on the barriers preventing the consistent and thorough consideration of GBA+ within government initiatives.</p> <p>SWC will also work with PCO, TBS and other federal government departments and agencies to mitigate known barriers by enhancing GBA+ tools, training, resources and networks. Activities will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expanding GBA+ training for major sectors and functional communities (including by working with TBS to develop guidance tools for evaluators) • Developing a suite of GBA+ products to assist departments and agencies in developing and delivering internal, tailored GBA+ training • Updating and creating new interactive online GBA+ training resources on the SWC website, including by creating new case studies for diverse federal sectors and aligning the content of the GBA+ online course for inclusion in the Canada School of Public Service’s policy training suite 	<p>Summer 2016</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Spring 2017</p> <p>Fall 2017 and ongoing</p>

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<p>SWC will build on the GBA Champions network, established in 2015, to increase senior management awareness, promote collaboration and the sharing of best practices and ensure buy-in for the sustainable implementation of GBA+.</p> <p>SWC will continue to build and strengthen the Interdepartmental Committee on GBA+ as a main forum of information-sharing on GBA+ implementation and activities, including sharing of best practices and strategies, and the establishment of networks of collaboration.</p> <p>SWC will increase awareness amongst federal officials of the use of GBA+ in federal initiatives, through events and promotional activities, an annual GBA+ Awareness week and leveraging other federal opportunities to mainstream GBA+.</p>	<p>SWC, PCO and TBS will support and create new forums for networking and collaboration on GBA+, including among senior leaders. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Steering Committee of senior officials from SWC, PCO and TBS which will meet semi-annually to review progress and lessons learned, and determine priorities • The GBA+ Champions network which meets annually as a forum for networking, sharing of best practices and the development of collaborative action among senior leaders • The Interdepartmental Committee on GBA+, chaired by SWC and involving a broad range of departments, which meets quarterly to share best practices and strategies for GBA+ implementation • New sector-specific GBA+ networks in priority areas (for example, the GBA+ Security Network). 	<p>Fall 2016</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

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<p>Response from the Privy Council Office to Recommendation 1.61</p> <p>Agree.</p> <p>PCO will continue to require that departments and agencies consider the application of GBA+, as appropriate, in the development of Memoranda to Cabinet (MCs) and will continue to challenge departments on their use of GBA through the normal policy development process.</p> <p>To further build the capacity of PCO analysts to ensure that GBA+ considerations are taken into account, when appropriate, in the development of departmental proposals (i.e. MCs), PCO will make the on-line GBA+ training provided through Status of Women Canada mandatory for PCO analysts who are responsible for playing a challenge function and providing advice on policy, program, and legislative initiatives.</p> <p>PCO will also work to develop and implement a policy considerations checklist to accompany the submission of MCs. This tool will guide departments and agencies in</p>	<p>PCO is updating its guidance for development of Memoranda to Cabinet (MC) to include more specific direction on GBA and to link to Status of Women GBA+ tools.</p> <p>Over one-third of positions at PCO have been identified for mandatory GBA+ training, given their role in providing advice on policy, program and legislative initiatives. This training will also be mandatory for all PCO Executives (EX-01 – EX-05). Promotion and tracking of this training will be integrated with the employee performance management cycle. PCO has set a target to achieve and sustain a 90% rate of completion of this training by the end of September 2016.</p> <p>PCO will implement a policy considerations checklist as a mandatory component of MC development. With respect to GBA+, the aim will be to verify GBA+ earlier in the MC development process to ensure that there is time to address any concerns about rigour or capacity before an MC is</p>	<p>Fall 2016</p> <p>Fall 2016</p> <p>Fall 2016</p>

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<p>ensuring that proposed initiatives consider GBA+, as appropriate. A particular emphasis will be placed on ensuring that appropriate questions are considered when determining whether or not a full GBA+ is required, and a rationale is included in those cases where GBA+ is not conducted. This tool may also be used to ensure that other existing policies, acts, directives and considerations that are part of normal policy development process are appropriately considered in MC development.</p>	<p>finalized, as well as to engage other departments (e.g., SWC) as appropriate. It is envisioned that this checklist will require sign-off by Senior Management, which will increase the visibility of and accountability for GBA+. The use of this tool to help guide the policy development process will enable a more thorough, evidence-based analysis of gender considerations to inform MC development and Ministerial decision-making.</p>	
<p>Response from the Treasury Board Secretariat to Recommendation 1.61</p> <p>Agree.</p> <p>The Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (the Secretariat) periodically undertakes in-depth reviews of Treasury Board policy instruments. The Secretariat will maintain its internal guidance that gender-based analysis (GBA) considerations should be taken into account, as appropriate, when developing and reviewing Treasury Board policy instruments.</p>	<p>TBS published guidance in 2014 to outline its expectations for departments and agencies to provide clear evidence in TB Submissions that gender-based considerations have been taken into account, as outlined in the Secretariat’s “<i>Detailed Guidance for Writers</i>” in writing Treasury Board Submissions. This <i>Detailed Guidance</i>, which includes links to Status of Women GBA+ tools, is periodically reviewed.</p> <p>During its periodic review of this guidance document, the Secretariat will undertake consultations to identify and address any barriers preventing departments and agencies from ensuring that gender-related considerations are reflected in TB Submissions.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>2016 and ongoing</p>

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<p>As evaluation is one means of assessing program initiatives, the Secretariat will also support Status of Women Canada (SWC) by providing input to the development of guidance for evaluators on GBA and by assisting the dissemination of completed guidance to departmental evaluation functions through the Secretariat's established channels within six months of the completion of the guidance.</p>	<p>TBS will continue to review and update the GBA+ training it provides to Program Analysts and Program Executive Directors on an annual basis. This training will also be extended to policy writers and regulatory analysts by the end of 2016. TBS will also provide TB Ministers with an orientation on GBA+ and the value that findings from gender-based analysis add to inform their decision-making on TB Submissions.</p>	<p>2016 and ongoing</p>
	<p>TBS will also continue to use its proposal considerations checklist, which includes gender considerations, as part of its challenge function and advice in support of the TB decision-making process. This checklist will be adapted and tailored for use by TBS policy writers as well as regulatory analysts beginning in 2017.</p>	<p>2016</p>
	<p>TBS will consult with SWC during the interdepartmental consultations for new and amended TB policy instruments, as well as discuss gender-related considerations at TBS senior management committee meetings.</p>	<p>Spring 2016 and ongoing</p>
	<p>The Secretariat will assist SWC to develop its guidance documents to ensure that evaluators are informed about gender considerations when evaluating federal programs.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
	<p>The Secretariat will disseminate this guidance to the federal evaluation community across government through GCconnex or other policy forums; interdepartmental meetings of heads of evaluation; and presentation(s) to federal evaluators, where possible.</p>	<p>Winter 2017/18</p>

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<p>When developing Treasury Board policy instruments related to program evaluation, the Secretariat will examine options to help departments and agencies consider government-wide policy considerations, such as GBA, when assessing the performance of federal programs</p>	<p>As part of its review of the <i>Standard on Evaluation for the Government of Canada</i>, the Secretariat will specify that departments are to consider government-wide policy considerations such as GBA+, when assessing the performance of federal programs.</p>	<p>Spring 2017</p>
<p>Recommendation 1.62 Status of Women Canada, with the support of the Privy Council Office and the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, to the extent of their respective mandates, should periodically assess and report on the implementation of gender-based analyses in federal departments and agencies and their impacts on policy, legislative, and program initiatives.</p>		
<p>Response from Status of Women Canada to Recommendation 1.62</p> <p>Agree.</p> <p>SWC will explore new ways to gather additional information about GBA capacity and GBA application across government.</p> <p>SWC, in collaboration with TBS and PCO, will report on a regular basis on the status of GBA implementation across government based on information gathered in annual GBA progress reports from Deputies.</p> <p>SWC will continue to monitor participation in the GBA online course and will share this</p>	<p>SWC, PCO and TBS will develop and implement a more robust framework to monitor progress on GBA capacity and implementation across government, as well as identify GBA+ informed outcomes and results. This will be done in part by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • collecting information from departments and agencies on GBA implementation via a detailed <i>GBA+ Survey</i> to all Deputies on an annual basis • working with other government departments to explore development of gender equality indicators in key areas, in order to track progress • developing a “GBA+ dashboard” to track progress in departments in key areas 	<p>2016 and ongoing</p> <p>Spring 2016 and ongoing</p> <p>Fall to winter 2016/17</p> <p>Summer 2016 and ongoing</p>

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<p>information with OGDs on a regular basis.</p> <p>SWC will prepare, in collaboration with PCO and TBS, a 5 year GBA progress report in 2020, including lessons learned and strategic directions moving forward.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifying new ways to periodically report on the implementation of GBA+ across government, including lessons learned, sharing of best practices and strategic directions moving forward. <p>SWC, PCO and TBS will also work together to play a more proactive role in ensuring GBA is applied in Cabinet submissions, including those related to key government priorities.</p>	<p>Winter – 2016/17 and ongoing</p> <p>Summer 2016 and ongoing</p>
<p>Privy Council Office Response to Recommendation 1.62</p> <p>Agree</p> <p>PCO will support SWC in identifying those departments and agencies that are performing well in relation to GBA+, as well as those for whom further support or training may be required.</p> <p>PCO will assist SWC in identifying examples where GBA+ has impacted the outcomes of policies, programs and legislation, which may provide informative case studies and lessons learned. This work will be facilitated by greater awareness of GBA+ considerations developed through training, as well as the policy considerations checklist which will assist in tracking the conduct of GBA+ by departments and agencies.</p>	<p>The GBA Champion and the analyst responsible for GBA+ will continue to consult with colleagues in policy groups to promote and provide advice on GBA+, as well as to identify initiatives which may provide valuable case studies on the impact of GBA+.</p> <p>PCO will explore the use of the policy considerations checklist to systematically track the consideration of GBA+ in the development of MCs to support decision-making. PCO will also explore options to include GBA+ and gender considerations more broadly in other monitoring processes that may be developed.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

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<p>Response from Treasury Board Secretariat to Recommendation 1.62</p> <p>Agree.</p> <p>As part of its challenge function with departments and agencies to incorporate gender considerations (where appropriate) into the design of policies, programs, initiatives, and services, the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat will, by fall 2017, conduct a review of relevant Treasury Board submissions to assess and report on how gender-based analysis (GBA) is being considered in various policy or program proposals from federal departments and agencies, according to the guidance and tools available for preparing a submission.</p>	<p>In assessing progress of departments and agencies in considering gender, the Secretariat will track relevant data in TB Submissions to identify and address barriers to the effective use of GBA+ to achieve better program, policy and service outcomes, as well as to develop and share lessons learned to strengthen the TBS challenge function in the future.</p> <p>Specifically, by Fall 2017, the Secretariat will assess and report on how GBA+ was considered in Submissions presented to TB over the period of September 2016 to June 2017, by tracking the following factors for each Submission:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If GBA+ was required, was it conducted? • If GBA+ was conducted, were results of the GBA+ or specific gender considerations incorporated into the design of the policy/program/initiative/service? • If GBA+ was not conducted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Were gender issues identified and/or partially taken into account to improve the program, or were any follow-up measures put in place to track gender implications over time? ○ Were barriers identified that prevented the completion of a GBA+? <p>Based on the findings from this review, lessons learned and recommendations will be developed and shared with SWC in late 2017. The findings will identify departments and agencies that are effectively</p>	<p>Fall 2016</p> <p>Fall 2017</p> <p>Winter 2017/18</p>

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<p>Beginning in 2017, the Secretariat will also monitor progress on the integration of GBA for targeted regulatory submissions.</p> <p>A relevant deputy-minister-level committee will be engaged on the status of GBA to discuss government-wide implementation of</p>	<p>incorporating gender considerations in policies, programs and initiatives being presented to TB, as well as those departments and agencies requiring additional support.</p> <p>Beginning in 2017, the Secretariat will also assess and report on how GBA+ is being considered in Governor in Council Regulatory Submissions by tracking each Submission. The Secretariat will review the data and share lessons learned as part of its overall commitment to strengthen its challenge function.</p> <p>The Secretariat will also take action to better integrate GBA+ in the life-cycle of the federal regulatory development process. This involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working towards integrating GBA+ in the first step of the regulatory process, that is, the initial assessment of the level of impact of a regulatory proposal • Revising guidance documents for federal departments and agencies on the development of the Regulatory Impact Analysis Statement (RIAS), a public document published in the Canada Gazette, along with the legal text of a regulatory proposal • Conducting training for analysts on GBA+, specifically on how to conduct GBA on applicable Regulatory Submissions, such as those relating to social security (pensions, employment insurance), financial assistance (student loans), citizenship, refugees, immigration, veterans benefits, labour, criminal justice, etc. <p>The Secretary of the Treasury Board leads the Public Service Management Advisory Committee (PSMAC), which consists of 43 deputy-level members of federal departments. The Secretariat will allocate time in early</p>	<p>2017 and ongoing</p> <p>2017 and ongoing annually</p>

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GBA and its impacts on policy, legislative, and program initiatives.	2017, and then on an annual basis, for the Head of Status of Women Canada to engage PSMAC on the status of government-wide implementation of GBA+ and its impacts on legislative, policy, and program initiatives.	
Recommendation 1.63 Status of Women Canada should assess the resources it needs to deliver its gender-based analysis mandate and assign sufficient resources to its periodic assessments of and reporting on gender-based analysis.		
<p>Response from Status of Women Canada to Recommendation 1.63</p> <p>Agree.</p> <p>SWC will determine the resources required to effectively deliver the Government of Canada's GBA mandate and identify potential sources of funds.</p>	<p>SWC, in collaboration with PCO and TBS, has developed a Strategic Plan to outline what activities and resources are required to effectively deliver on the Government of Canada's GBA mandate. This includes developing an implementation plan for the new funds allocated to SWC as part of Budget 2016 to strengthen GBA capacity at SWC to support the more consistent application of GBA across government.</p> <p>SWC plans to focus resources on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • building GBA+ capacity across government including by increasing online and other training and tools for additional government sectors and functional communities • intervening strategically to provide gender advice to inform the development of key government initiatives • working closely with other government departments to enhance the availability of gender-disaggregated data and gender-based research in priority areas, and developing gender equality indicators in key areas in order to track progress • monitoring and reporting on progress. 	2016 and ongoing