

	Program	Corporate
	Subject	Gender and Diversity Analysis Policy
Effective Date: December 15, 2014	Authorized by:	
Revised Date:	Deputy Minister	

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To provide guidance to Department staff to utilize a Gender and Diversity lens in policy and program development.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 **Diversity:** the classification and self-identification of people based upon their collective experiences or qualities. Diversity can include, but is not limited to, groupings based on sex, gender identity, race, ability or disability, age, income, ethnicity, cultural customs, language, family type or sexual orientation. Some examples of diversity groupings include women, transgendered persons, persons with disabilities, members of visible minorities, minority language groups, and Aboriginal peoples.
- 2.2 **Gender:** the social classification of men and women. This classification is based upon the personality traits and qualities, social roles and responsibilities, and relations expected and considered acceptable for women and men and among the genders. Gender is often but not always associated with a person's sex (See 2.4, below).
- 2.3 **Gender and Diversity Analysis (GDA):** the process of giving systematic attention to how gender and diversity affect the experiences, behaviours and needs of women and men and diverse groups with attention to differences and needs. GDA analyses how public policy and programs can be framed to accommodate identified differences and needs.
- 2.4 **Sex:** a biological classification of males and females based on differences in reproductive organs, physiology and anatomy, genes and hormones.

3.0 POLICY STATEMENT

- 3.1 GDA is an instrument that can promote equality and equity by making differences visible and increasing policy or program options available in response to differences so that outcomes are more equitable for all.
- 3.2 Developing an awareness of gender and diversity involves being conscious of the beliefs and norms related to gender expression and gender identity, including how they may be changing. Society commonly attributes different power and influence to each gender in different spheres of life.
- 3.3 With many public messages about gender and sex, there is a risk of accepting stereotypes and overlooking biases. The application of GDA helps to circumvent the risk of allowing stereotypes or biases to remain unexamined.
- 3.4 Because people can belong to several diversity categories at once (for example, being a female with a disability who is a member of a visible minority), variations in experiences interact. This can create conditions of risk (multiple disadvantages) or benefit (multiple advantages) that warrant specific attention for equitable policy and program design.
- 3.5 GDA is used so that policy makers and program developers can better anticipate potential impacts of legislation, policies or programs and increase the chances that proposed legislation, policies or programs have the intended results for men, for women and for all diverse populations.
- 3.6 The application of GDA is neutral, meaning that it does not advocate one course of action over another. It is also evidence-based, meaning that it is based on what is known about women, men and diverse groups in a particular situation.
- 3.7 Because it is neutral, GDA has the potential to expand the number and type of policy and program options to consider. Because it is based on evidence, GDA also has the potential to provide enhanced information for decision-making.
- 3.8 GDA is not to be treated in isolation from or separately from routine policy analysis or program planning. Integrating GDA as a constant mechanism in all streams of policy and/or program development ensures that relevant differences become more visible during the process and outcomes for diverse groups are considered.
- 3.9 Assuming that attention to gender and diversity may not be warranted can result in overlooking significant issues. It is always prudent to ask whether gender and diversity conditions apply. To bring gender and diversity issues clearly into focus during the policy or program development process requires a) rigid attention to a few basic questions about potential policy impacts and b) knowing what sources are available for answers at every point of the policy process.

4.0 PROCEDURE STATEMENT

- 4.1 The manual, *Honouring Our Differences: Gender and Diversity Analysis in Public Policy and Programs*, will provide guidance for the development and implementation of GDA for the Department and will be digitally available to all staff.
- 4.2 The Interministerial Women's Secretariat will provide training on GDA to Department staff, as required.
- 4.3 Staff are encouraged to consult with the Interministerial Women's Secretariat Director regarding GDA for policy and/or program development.
- 4.4 GDA is best applied at every stage of policy development from exploring the elements of a policy issue through to policy response, program design, implementation, communication and evaluation.

5.0 REFERENCES

- 5.1 *Honouring Our Differences: Gender and Diversity Analysis in Public Policy and Programs*