



From The Women's Health Contribution Program

Supported by the Bureau of Women's Health and Gender Analysis, Health Canada

W O M E N ' S H E A L T H P O L I C Y B R I E F

CONTACT:

Website:

www.centres.ca

Email:

cwhn@cwhn.ca

Toll-free:

1-888-818-9172

Post:

3rd floor,

Jeanne Mance

Building

Tunney's Pasture,

Postal Locator

1903C

Ottawa, ON

K1A 0K9

Gender-Based Analysis in Planning

At Issue

While there has been definite progress in creating greater understanding of gender-based analysis (GBA) there is a need to more fully integrate GBA in research, planning and decision-making.

Our Analysis

GBA reveals critical information about who will or will not be affected by or benefit from a policy. This pertains to women and to men, and to the diversity of circumstances in the male and female populations.

The Centres of Excellence for Women's Health and Working Groups of the Women's Health Contribution Program have developed research studies, publications and workshops on women's health and on GBA for use in GBA training and in policy analysis. The Manitoba and Saskatchewan governments have made use of GBA materials from the Prairie Women's Health Centre of Excellence.

The federal government and many provincial governments have established policies regarding GBA. Some departments provide GBA training and use GBA consistently and have organizational structures addressing GBA. For example, the Women's Health Bureau recently had its scope broadened to become the Bureau of Women's Health and Gender Analysis. The Manitoba-Saskatchewan Region of Health Canada has established an active Gender Based Analysis Interest Group.

However, government reports and planning documents do not always include a GBA, even where such an analysis would be pertinent, even critical. Conducting a GBA may take additional time and this is a frequent reason given for not doing GBA. Also, planners do not always see how GBA will improve policies or program delivery and want specific examples of how GBA has worked. There may be a sense that women have already achieved equality and women should not be considered a priority in initiatives.

GBA must be promoted at higher decision-making levels, but it is also needed at the local level. It is important to have active women's organizations that can use research effectively to work positively with policy makers on GBA.

Our Recommendations

- **Require GBA** in planning documents. Ask for diversity analysis along with the GBA.
- Promote the recognition that while there is greater equality and equity for women recently, there are still many ongoing issues, and there are **still many groups of women who are significantly disadvantaged** in their health and well-being.
- Promote recognition that **GBA can also result in improvements for men.**
- Ensure funding, mandate and direction are given to departments to do training and conduct GBA, **monitor and reward achievement in conducting GBA.**

Advancing the health of women

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- Provide direction and resources to Statistics Canada and the Canadian Institute of Health Information to conduct GBA routinely and **make this analysis and sex-disaggregated data available** in free public reports. Create a working group with researchers and women's organizations to advise Statistics Canada.
- Support **epidemiological research and economic analysis** to complement participatory community-based research to provide quantitative data needed for budget analysis.
- **Continue supporting** the Centres of Excellence for Women's Health, CIHR's Institute of Gender and Health, Status of Women Canada's Policy Research Fund and others in using GBA and in work promoting the use of GBA in planning.
- **Strengthen ongoing support for women's organizations**, who can support GBA in their communities, through improvements to the Status of Women Canada's Women's Program and funding through other government departments.

For More Information

Invisible Women: Gender and Health Planning in Manitoba and Saskatchewan and Models for Progress, Prairie Women's Health Centre of Excellence. Examines how gender sensitivity and women's health issues were reflected in regional health

planning and recommended how regional needs assessments and health plans could be more sensitive to the needs of women.

www.pwhce.ca/invisibleWomen.htm and *Sighting Gender Based Analysis: Phase II of Invisible Women*.

www.pwhce.ca/sightingGba.htm

In collaboration with Manitoba Health, PWHCE published *Including Gender In Health Planning – A Guide For Regional Health Authorities*. Also available – detailed workshop developed for Manitoba Regional Health Authorities. www.pwhce.ca/gba.htm

International Institute on Gender and HIV/AIDS, Gender and HIV/AIDS Programme, Atlantic Centre of Excellence on Women's Health. www.acewh.dal.ca/eng/gender_hiv aids.html, includes International Gender and HIV/AIDS listserv.

Commonwealth Secretariat and ACEWH, *Gender Mainstreaming in HIV/AIDS: Taking a multisectoral approach*. Action plan for mainstreaming gender into HIV/AIDS prevention. www.thecommonwealth.org/Templates/STPDInternal.asp?NodeID=33904

Authored by:

Prairie Women's Health Centre of Excellence

56 The Promenade, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3B 3H9

Phone: (204) 982-6630

Email: pwhce@uwinnipeg.ca

Website: www.pwhce.ca



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