

**MULTI-YEAR
ACTION PLAN
for 2000 - 2003**

for
Implementation
of Section 41 of the
Official Languages Act

Status of Women Canada

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Summary of Multi-Year Action Plan for 2000-2003

Minister Responsible: The Honourable Sheila Copps, P.C., M.P.

Secretary of State Responsible: The Honourable Hedy Fry, P.C., M.P.

Principal Measures Planned

Four principal measures are proposed for 2000-2003 in support of the objectives of section 41 of the *Official Languages Act*, as follows:

- provide social development assistance to official language minority women's organizations and funding for activities consistent with Women's Program criteria and priorities;
- promote greater collaboration between decision-makers and official language minority women's organizations and facilitate the involvement of these organizations in the public policy process, at local, regional, national and international levels;
- encourage official language minority women and official language minority women's organizations to participate in SWC activities related to policy research; and
- promote and facilitate the commemoration of key women's equality dates (Women's History Month, International Women's Day, Persons Day, etc.) by official language minority women and official language minority women's organizations, as well as encourage their greater involvement.

In pursuing these principal measures, SWC will also support the long term objectives of the *Year of La Francophonie in Canada* which are:

- to strengthen the bonds between Francophones in all provinces and territories;
- to strengthen the bonds between Francophones and Anglophones; and
- to promote the advantages of La Francophonie in Canada nationally and internationally.

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Preamble

Status of Women Canada (SWC) is committed to enhancing the vitality of official language minority communities, to supporting and assisting their development, and to fostering the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society.

As the department responsible for the co-ordination of federal efforts to promote gender equality, SWC works in partnership with other federal departments, other levels of government, institutions, and communities to identify and remove barriers that impede full access and participation by all Canadian women. As such, SWC has an important role to play in assisting women from official language minority communities to contribute fully to the development of their communities and to participate equally in the processes and events that shape their lives, within these communities and within Canadian society at large.

As outlined in its 2000-2001 *Report on Plans and Priorities*, SWC's vision is to play a key role in fulfilling the Government of Canada's commitment to building a society that is inclusive and respectful of all Canadians, by promoting gender equality, and the inclusion and participation of the full diversity of women and girls in Canada. SWC's substantive work will be aimed at meeting three key result commitments over the next three to five years, namely: influencing the development of fair and gender-equitable public policy; enlarging the knowledge base on, and enhancing awareness of, women's realities and gender equality issues; and improving the department's effectiveness and efficiency. Each of these key result commitments is further defined and will be supported by planned results over the next one to three years.

SWC's Multi-Year Action Plan for 2000-2003 in support of implementation of section 41 of the *Official Languages Act*, presented herein, is based on this vision of inclusiveness and focuses on supporting the first two key result commitments which are outlined above. The principal measures proposed for 2000-2003 in support of the objectives of section 41 and the corresponding expected outputs have been selected with a view to also advancing the following six of SWC's planned results: to have increased the access of women and women's equality-seeking groups to the public policy development process domestically and internationally; to have strengthened the capacity of non-governmental organizations to take action to advance gender equality issues; to have collaborated with non-governmental organizations to integrate gender-based analysis in public policy-making at national and regional levels; to have enhanced the knowledge base on, and enhanced public awareness of, selected issues through gender-based research, analysis, information and data dissemination; to have generated informed public dialogue on gender equality issues; and, to have enhanced the knowledge, skills and capacity of federal departments (including SWC), other governments, non-governmental organizations and the public at large to conduct gender-based analysis.

This Action Plan is also informed by the expressed needs of official language minority women and official language minority women's organizations across Canada. It commits SWC to supporting four principal measures which are aimed at promoting the inclusion and participation of official language minority women and official language minority women's organizations in gender equality efforts, both domestically and internationally.

SWC recognizes that an enhanced and collaborative role for women's voluntary organizations that is reflective of their diversity, serves to support Canada's continuing leadership, domestically and internationally, in ensuring greater gender equality.

SWC promotes the view that efforts to achieve gender equality and efforts to implement the objectives of section 41 of Part VII of the *Official Languages Act* are complimentary. SWC looks forward to continuing collaboration with its many partners and stakeholders in pursuing these efforts.

Part I. Multi-Year Action Plan for 2000-2003

Section I. General Information

A - Description of the Organization

Status of Women Canada (SWC) was established by the Government of Canada in 1976 to co-ordinate policies with respect to the status of women and administer related programs.

SWC's mission is to promote gender equality and the full participation of all women in the economic, social, cultural and political life of the country. SWC pursues its mission by means of:

- the promotion of the advancement of women in collaboration with federal government departments and agencies, local, provincial, and territorial governments, non-governmental organizations, industry and educational and health authorities;
- the provision of technical information and support to the public, client groups and organizations to increase awareness of and facilitate action at local, regional and national levels to advance women's equality;
- the funding of independent research on public policies that affect women and their advancement toward equality;
- the provision of grants to support initiatives of women's and other voluntary organizations working toward equality of women; and
- collaboration with other countries and multilateral international organizations to advance public policy on gender equality.

SWC has identified three key result commitments for the next three to five years which flow from its mission:

- to influence the development of fair and gender-equitable public policy;
- to enlarge the knowledge base on, and enhance awareness of, women's realities and gender equality issues; and
- to improve departmental effectiveness and efficiency.

Additional information on SWC's planned results and key activities can be found in *Part III - Report on Plans and Priorities* of the annual Estimates for SWC, posted on the SWC Internet web site: www.swc-cfc.gc.ca.

B - Period Covered by this Action Plan

This Action Plan covers the period from April 1, 2000 to March 31, 2003.

C - Officers Responsible

Departmental Official Languages Champion:

Florence Ievers
Co-ordinator
Status of Women Canada

Senior Official Responsible for
the Preparation of the Action Plan:

Jackie Claxton
Director General
Women's Program and
Regional Operations

National Section 41 Co-ordinator:

Helen Doyon
A/Policy and Planning Officer
Women's Program and
Regional Operations

Regional Section 41 Co-ordinators:

British Columbia/Yukon

Lorraine Cameron
Regional Director
Status of Women Canada

Prairies/Northwest Territories

Raj Dhir
A/ Regional Director
Status of Women Canada

Ontario

Donna Slater
Regional Director
Status of Women Canada

Québec/Nunavut

Lucie Marchessault-Lussier
Regional Director
Status of Women Canada

Atlantic

Marie-Paule Mattice
Regional Director
Status of Women Canada

Section II. Identification of Community Needs

A - Means Used to Identify Needs of Official Language Minority Communities at National and Regional Levels

Through ongoing contacts with official language minority women's organizations at national, regional and local levels, SWC continuously updates its knowledge of the needs, aspirations and priorities of official language

minority women's organizations. Official language minority women's organizations are encouraged to participate in one-on-one, in-person meetings and in various SWC organized formal and informal consultation activities. Such venues allow official language minority women's organizations to bring their concerns to the attention of the Secretary of State (Multiculturalism) (Status of Women), SWC officials, officials from other departments and levels of government, and other women's organizations.

SWC officials regularly attend activities organized by official language minority women's organizations where community needs and action strategies are identified. At these events, SWC officials receive up-to-date information on the concerns and priorities of official language minority women's organizations and profile departmental information and resources.

Women's Program staff work in collaboration with the Official Languages Support Programs Branch of Canadian Heritage in providing assistance to official language minority women's organizations.

In addition, each year, SWC participates in formal meetings between official language minority community organizations and federal departments, organized by the Department of Canadian Heritage, at regional and national levels. These meetings allow SWC staff to gather information on the needs and concerns of official language minority communities, including those of official language minority women's organizations. SWC takes advantage of these opportunities to provide information on its programs and services and to encourage collaboration with other federal departments, other levels of government, and community organizations in support of gender equality.

B - Principal Needs Identified at National and Regional Levels

The principal needs of official language minority women and official language minority women's organizations which have been identified and which can be addressed by SWC are as follows:

- continuing funding, technical support and social development assistance;
- resource materials to promote gender equality at community level;
- information on opportunities to participate in the public policy process;
- resources including research publications and research funding to improve participation in the public policy process;
- information on the array of relevant federal and provincial/territorial government resources to assist with ongoing operations and special initiatives of official language minority women's organizations;
- support in promoting greater governmental recognition of the realities and priority issues of official language minority women;
- support in promoting the full and equal participation of official language minority women's organizations in the broader women's equality movement at local, regional and national levels;
- assistance in supporting networking among official language minority women, with particular concern for those in isolated communities where high travel costs act as additional barrier; and
- support for the participation of official language minority women's organizations in international fora.

Section III. Action Plan Contents and Timetable

A - Principal Measures and Activities Proposed to Respond to Community Needs, as well as Expected Outputs

SWC's Action Plan centers on four principal measures designed to promote gender equality and the full participation of official language minority women in the economic, social, cultural and political spheres. These measures are also intended to enhance the vitality of official language minority communities and the full recognition and use of both French and English in Canadian society.

The responsibility of SWC Directorates for implementation of these principal measures is identified below and each measure is supported by a number of key activities which will be pursued. As well, the Action Plan identifies expected outputs related to these measures and activities.

1. Provide social development assistance to official language minority women's organizations and funding for activities consistent with Women's Program criteria and priorities

Responsibility for implementing this principal measure rests with the Women's Program and Regional Operations Directorate. This measure will be supported by a number of activities which will be carried out at national, regional and local levels as appropriate, including the following:

SWC will establish and maintain ongoing communications with official language minority women's organizations and remain well informed about the challenges and barriers which are of concern to these organizations in efforts to advance women's equality.

SWC will make available information, tools and other resources in support of the initiatives of official language minority women's organizations which are aimed at achieving progress in women's equality.

Social development assistance will continue to be provided to official language minority women's organizations and funding to official language minority women's organizations will continue to be recommended for activities consistent with Women's Program criteria and priorities.

SWC will promote strategies of inclusion to ensure that official language minority women's organizations are part of the coalition building within the women's movement.

SWC will facilitate the sharing of relevant resources developed by NGOs, as well as the linking of organizations where efforts would be enhanced through co-operation.

SWC will facilitate access for official language minority women's organizations to information on relevant, recently funded initiatives.

SWC will encourage and assist official language minority women's organizations in efforts to establish collaboration with other departments and levels of government, including efforts to diversify funding support for their women's equality initiatives.

SWC will ensure its visibility among official language minority organizations and encourage their recognition of the efforts and concerns of official language minority women's organizations.

The expected outputs related to this principal measure and these activities include:

- continuing knowledge of the concerns and priorities of official language minority women's organizations in working for women's equality;
- increased awareness of and greater use by official language minority women's organizations of SWC resources;
- **action taken by** official language minority women's organizations at national, regional and local levels to advance women's equality;
- greater collaboration, sharing of resources and information sharing among voluntary organizations and greater recognition of and support for the efforts of official language minority women's organizations; and
- increased collaboration between official language minority women's organizations and government decision-makers.

2. Promote greater collaboration between decision-makers and official language minority women's organizations and facilitate the involvement of these organizations in the public policy process, at local, regional, national and international levels.

Responsibility for implementing this principal measure rests primarily with the Policy Analysis, Development and External Relations Directorate and the Women's Program and Regional Operations Directorate. As well, SWC's Beijing +5 Secretariat, which was created in 1999-2000, will continue to support this principal measure in 2000-2001, the final year of the Secretariat's mandate. The Executive and Information Services Directorate, the Gender-Based Analysis Directorate, the Research Directorate, and the Communications and Consultations Directorate will also support this principal measure as appropriate.

This measure will be supported by a number of activities, including the following:

In the context of carrying out gender-based analysis of government policies and legislation, SWC will continue to examine the specific impact on diverse groups of women including, where relevant, those from official language minority communities, as well as promote gender-based research across federal departments.

SWC will bring attention to the priority issues of official language minority women at inter-departmental and inter-governmental meetings and support, where appropriate, the active participation of official language minority women's organizations in these meetings.

SWC will involve official language minority women's organizations in SWC's international activities, particularly those related to Canada's participation at the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women and the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly entitled *Women 2000* in June 2000 and those related to follow-up to the first international conference on *Women and La Francophonie*.

SWC will continue to take into consideration the diversity of women, including official language minority women, in the nomination and selection process for non-governmental representatives to serve on Canadian delegations.

SWC will continue to maintain and develop its Internet site and to make a wide range of information available, in both official languages, including its printed documents such as press releases, policy research papers, reference materials and updates on key policy issues.

SWC will continue to ensure that official language minority women's organizations have access to SWC policy documents and other communications, in both official languages.

SWC will continue to involve official language minority women's organizations in its various consultations mechanisms, i.e. teleconferences, meetings, roundtables and to recommend their participation in those of other federal departments, as well as those of other levels of government.

SWC will work to expand formal and informal consultations with women's organizations including official language minority women's organizations.

SWC will inform official language minority women's organizations regarding opportunities for input into the public policy process, with particular emphasis on public policy processes related to SWC's priorities and key issues.

The expected outputs related to this principal measure and these activities include:

- **the development of action plans by other departments for the implementation of gender-based analysis in their policy development which** consider of the diversity of women, including official language minority women;
- policy and legislative changes which reflect gender considerations in SWC areas of focus and consider the diversity of women, including official language minority women;
- inclusion of gender considerations in federal-provincial/territorial policies, frameworks, principles, reports, positions and resolutions **which** consider of the diversity of women, including official language minority women;
- **participation of official language minority women's organizations in federal policy events sponsored by SWC and in federal policy or legislative development processes on key gender equality issues;**
- participation of official language minority women's organizations in various consultations by SWC, other federal departments and other levels of government and in international fora;
- **equitable access to policy documents, communication materials and other information by** official language minority women's organizations; and
- equitable access by official language minority women's organizations to information on opportunities for input to the public policy process.

3. Encourage official language minority women and official language minority women's organizations to participate in SWC activities related to policy research

Responsibility for implementing this principal measure rests with the Research Directorate. This measure will be supported by a number of activities, including the following:

SWC will continue to ensure that official language minority women's organizations have access to all policy research papers, studies, etc. funded under its policy research mandate, that calls for proposals are sent to official language minority groups and that the research work funded will reflect the diversity of the Canadian population including official language minority women.

SWC will continue to monitor all electronic mail received in the Research Directorate's e-mail box and reply promptly to all requests for copies of publications, requests for additions to the contact list of researchers and requests for information on the Policy Research Fund and the Research Directorate.

The expected outputs related to this principal measure and these activities include:

- **equitable access to** policy research papers, studies, etc. by official language minority women and official language minority women's organizations;
- **participation of** official language minority women and official language minority women's organizations in policy research;
- dissemination of information and publications to official language minority communities and others with particular interest in the concerns of official language minority women; and
- additions to the contact lists of researchers and to the mailing lists from official language minority communities.

4. Promote and facilitate the commemoration of key women's equality dates (Women's History Month, International Women's Day, Persons Day, etc.) by official language minority women and official language minority women's organizations, as well as encourage their greater involvement.

Responsibility for implementing this principal measure rests primarily with the Communications and Consultations Directorate. The Executive and Information Services Directorate and the Women's Program and Regional Operations Directorate will also support this principal measure as appropriate.

This measure will be supported by a number of activities, including the following:

SWC will continue to maintain and develop its Internet site and to make a wide range of information available, in both official languages, including its printed documents such as press releases and other information on the Governor General's Awards in Commemoration of the Persons Case and Women's History Month promotional materials.

SWC will continue to inform official language minority women's organizations and official language minority communities of SWC resources to facilitate the commemorating of key events and to facilitate their participation by such means as ensuring that they are aware of the annual call for nominations for the Governor General's Awards in Commemoration of the Persons Case.

The expected outputs related to this principal measure and these activities include:

- **equitable access to** resource materials and information by official language minority communities to encourage the commemoration of key dates; and
- participation of official language minority women in activities to commemorate key dates.

In pursuing these four principal measures, SWC will also support the long term objectives of the *Year of La Francophonie in Canada* which are:

- to strengthen the bonds between Francophones in all provinces and territories;
- to strengthen the bonds between Francophones and Anglophones; and
- to promote the advantages of La Francophonie in Canada nationally and internationally.

B - Proposed Means by which the Institution will Inform the Official Languages Minority Communities of its Programs and Services

Promotion of Women's Program financial and technical assistance will continue to occur through already established community contacts.

Calls for policy research proposals will continue to be distributed to official language minority organizations and posted on the SWC Internet web site.

Dissemination and promotion of policy research papers, including the use of electronic publishing, will continue. All published research reports will be posted on the SWC Internet web site in both official languages.

A variety of bilingual communications products for special events such as International Women's Day, Women's History Month, National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women and the Governor General's Awards in Commemoration of the Persons Case will be sent to individuals and organizations on SWC's mailing lists, including official language minority women's organizations.

SWC will continue to expand the information available on its Internet web site.

SWC will continue to publish all public documents, in both official languages.

SWC will continue to ensure visibility of SWC programs and services by such means as proactive contacts with members of official language minority communities and, when feasible and appropriate, through collaboration with official language minority community newsletters and official language minority media.

SWC will continue to participate in Canadian Heritage co-ordinated consultations with official language minority organizations, at national and regional levels.

C - Measures Proposed to Evaluate Success of Expected Results

Measures to evaluate the success of expected results will include the following:

The expected outputs included in this action plan will guide all directorates in preparing input for SWC's Annual Status Report and in proposing any required revisions or additions to the action plan.

SWC will gather community feedback concerning the measures proposed through already established, ongoing contact with official language communities.

Through ongoing and proactive contacts, SWC staff will also gather feedback from official language minority women regarding SWC resource materials, including materials to commemorate key dates.

SWC will monitor the number of requests for policy research papers and other information on the Policy Research Fund from official language minority organizations, as well as feedback received from questionnaires enclosed with all copies of publications.

SWC will ensure systematic internal mechanisms to control the quality of official languages translation and regular contact with key clients.

SWC will assess, on a case-by-case basis, the extent to which objectives of initiatives funded by SWC have been met.

Community feedback on this action plan will be reviewed by SWC's national and regional official languages section 41 coordinators and will serve to support proposed revisions to the action plan.

SWC will develop an evaluation framework for the Policy Research Fund which will incorporate consideration of the diversity of women, including official language minority women.

SWC will develop a departmental evaluation framework which will include directorates' performance indicators and measurement tools.

Feedback from Canadian Heritage will assist in reviewing and assessing the action plan and the results expected.

D - Financial and Other Resources Dedicated to the Completion of the Action Plan

SWC resources utilized to implement this Action Plan include portions of the budget of the Policy Research Fund, portions of the Grants and Contributions budget of the Women's Program, staff time and operating budget resources required for such activities as teleconference calls, travel of staff and groups to meetings, as well as interpretation, and translation and distribution of materials.

Section IV. Communications Plan

Measures Proposed by the Institution to Publicize the Action Plan Inside and Outside the Institution

SWC's Action Plan will be made available to all SWC staff and provided to key organizations at the national and regional levels, the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages and the Standing Joint Committee on Official Languages. As well, SWC will post the Action Plan on its website for consultation by staff, partners, stakeholders and the general public. Participants at the regional and national Federal Institutions - Francophone Community Consultations co-ordinated by Canadian Heritage will be informed of the Action Plan's availability.

Section V. Signatures

Helen Doyon
National Co-ordinator – Section 41
Status of Women Canada
Telephone: (613) 947-0206

Date

Florence Ievers
Co-ordinator
Status of Women Canada

Date

Part II. What do you think of the Multi-Year Action Plan for 2000-2003?

General comments:

Strong points:

Areas for improvement:

Suggestions:

Please return this form to:

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