

**MULTI-YEAR  
ACTION PLAN  
2003 - 2006**

for  
The Implementation  
of Section 41 of the  
*Official Languages Act*

Status of Women Canada

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## Summary of Action Plan (2003-2006)

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

**Secretary of State Responsible: The Honourable Jean Augustine, P.C., M.P.**

### **Principal Measures Planned**

Four principal measures have been identified for 2003-2006 in support of Section 41 of the *Official Languages Act*. These are:

- provide social development assistance to official language minority women's organizations and funding for initiatives consistent with the Women's Program funding requirements;
- promote greater collaboration between decision-makers and official language minority women's organizations, so as to 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, National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, 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 hopes to contribute to 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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National Official Languages Section 41 Co-ordinator  
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## Preamble

As the department responsible for the co-ordination of federal efforts to promote gender equality, Status of Women Canada (SWC) works in partnership with federal departments, other levels of government, institutions and communities to identify and remove barriers that impede full access to and participation by all Canadian women in all aspects of Canadian society. As outlined in its *Report on Plans and Priorities* (2003-2004), SWC's vision is to play a key role in fulfilling the Government of Canada's commitment to building an inclusive society by promoting gender equality, and the inclusion and participation of the full diversity of women and girls in Canada.

SWC is committed to enhancing the vitality of official language minority communities, to assisting in their development, and fostering the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society. The department has an important role 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 the Canadian society at large.

The SWC's Action Plan for 2003-2006, in support of Section 41 of the *Official Languages Act*, is based on the vision of inclusiveness and focuses on supporting the first two SWC strategic outcomes, identified on page 3 of this document. The SWC strategic outcomes have served as the guidelines for the expected results of the Action Plan 2003-2006, in support of the objectives of section 41.

SWC recognizes that its efforts for gender equality and its commitment to the achievement of the objectives of section 41 of Part VII of the *Official Languages Act* are complementary. SWC looks forward to continuing collaboration with its partners in pursuing these efforts.

## Part I. Action Plan for 2003-2006

### Section I. General Information

#### A - Description of the Organization

Status of Women Canada (SWC) was established by the Government of Canada in 1976 to coordinate policies with respect to the status of women and administer related programs. Its mission is to promote gender equality and the full participation of all women in the economic, social, cultural and political life of Canadian society.

The Agenda for Gender Equality (AGE), a government framework to ensure that gender considerations are taken into account in policy and program initiatives, is the main strategy for advancing the work of SWC. The overarching goal of AGE is to recognize and integrate the diverse realities of both women and men through the use of gender-based analysis (GBA) and gender mainstreaming.

SWC's strategic outcomes are:

- **Strengthened and more equitable public policy:** SWC will continue to work horizontally across the federal government, as well as with other levels of government, to influence the development of policies, research, programs and services that take into account the diversity of women's perspectives and realities. As well, SWC will continue to work with women's and other equality-seeking organizations, so they can play an effective role in influencing program and policy considerations of other institutions.
- **A broader range of informed and effective stakeholders:** This strategic outcome seeks to enhance the capacity and knowledge of key partners and stakeholders so they can engage in their own efforts to advance gender equality. To achieve this, SWC will continue to focus its efforts on two fronts: knowledge building and partnerships.
- **Departmental effectiveness:** This strategic outcome involves increasing SWC's ability to achieve results and strategically focus its resources. For instance, SWC's Accountability Framework for the Women's Program delivery will enhance departmental effectiveness to monitor program performance, measure progress, identify gaps and make necessary adjustments to achieve objectives.

Additional information on SWC's planned results and key activities can be found in SWC *Report on Plans and Priorities* (2002-2003), posted on the SWC Internet web site: [www.swc-cfc.gc.ca](http://www.swc-cfc.gc.ca).

#### B - Period Covered by this Action Plan

This Action Plan covers the period from April 1, 2003 to March 31, 2006.

## **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:

Valerie Lavergne  
Acting Policy and Planning Officer  
Women's Program and  
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Regional Section 41 Co-ordinators:

British Columbia/Yukon

Lorraine Cameron  
Regional Director  
Status of Women Canada

Prairies/Northwest Territories

Deborah Welch  
Regional Director  
Status of Women Canada

Ontario

Jeannine Chauvette  
Acting Regional Director  
Status of Women Canada

Québec/Nunavut

Louise Blais  
Acting Regional Director  
Status of Women Canada

Atlantic

Marie-Paule Mattice  
Regional Director  
Status of Women Canada

## Section II. Identification of Community Needs

### A – SWC Community Consultations

SWC continues to monitor and identify the needs of official language minority women and organizations by using different consultation mechanisms:

- ***On-going Contacts:*** SWC continuously updates its knowledge of the needs, aspirations and priorities of official language minority women through ongoing contacts with their organizations. These contacts provide opportunities for the organizations to bring their issues to the attention of the Secretary of State (Multiculturalism) (Status of Women) as well as to SWC officials, other departments and levels of government, and women's organizations.
- ***Community Activities:*** SWC officials regularly attend activities organized by official language minority women's organizations, as well as others, where needs, concerns, priorities and action strategies are identified and discussed.
- ***Departmental Consultations:*** SWC participates in annual meetings, organized by the Department of Canadian Heritage, to facilitate consultations between official language minority community organizations and federal departments. These meetings allow SWC to gather information on the needs and concerns of official language minority women's organizations, to provide information about its programs and services and to encourage collaboration with other stakeholders. Moreover, SWC ensures that its consultations with women's groups and other equality seeking organizations are inclusive and representative of the diversity of Canadian women, including official language minority women.

### B – Principal Needs

The SWC consultation mechanisms have been instrumental in identifying the principal needs of official language minority women and official language women's organizations. The needs, varied in nature and scope, fall under four broad areas:

#### 1. Access to government programs, services and information

- Official language minority women and their organizations have identified ***access*** as one of the common needs. Some of the specific needs identified include access to: mainstream women's health and social programs and services, information on relevant federal and provincial/territorial government programs, resources required for ongoing operations and special initiatives and information materials such as documents, reports, tools, research publications to promote gender equality at community level.

## 2. Financial, material, technical and social development assistance

- Official language minority women have also identified a common need for social development assistance, including funding and technical support in their efforts to address their issues and respond to the needs.

## 3. Greater participation in the movement for women's equality

- There is a growing need, among official language minority women's organizations and their membership, to become full and active participants in the movement for women's equality within their own constituencies and in the broader women's action at local, regional and national levels. This includes the need for greater participation in domestic and international initiatives.
- It was noted that there is a need to recognize the diversity within the official language community and provide the necessary support mechanisms in order to facilitate full and equal participation by all official language minority women, in the francophone minority rights movement. Of particular concern is the need for support in networking among official language minority women in isolated communities, including in the far north.

## 4. Opportunities to contribute to the public policy process

- As official language minority women seek to enhance their participation in the public policy process, they have identified the need for greater recognition, by departments and agencies, of their presence, particular realities and priority issues, in compliance with Section 41 of the *Official Languages Act*. Official language minority women and organizations have also identified a need for support mechanisms to facilitate their participation in the public policy process.

### Section III. Action Plan for 2003-2006

#### A – SWC Principal Measures: Responding to Community Needs

The SWC Action Plan for 2003-2006 is a comprehensive response strategy designed to address the needs of official language minority women and organizations. The Action Plan commits the department to *four principal measures* to respond to the identified needs, to promote the inclusion of official language minority women in all efforts to advance gender equality and to work in partnership with other stakeholders. The measures were designed, in the context of the SWC strategic outcomes and in compliance with Section 41 of the *Official Languages Act*. The expected results of this action plan will contribute toward full participation of official language minority women in the economic, political, social and cultural spheres and to enhance the vitality of official language minority communities.



To implement the four principal measures, SWC directorates will use different intervention strategies. They will also work in partnership with official language minority women's organizations, collaborate with other stakeholders within the federal Public Service and monitor the progress made in the implementation of the Action Plan.

The four principal measures, the corresponding intervention strategies and the sample of initiatives provided below show the extent of the efforts to be made by the various SWC directorates in implementing the Action Plan 2003-2006.

### **Principal Measure One**

*Provide social development assistance to official language minority women's organizations and funding for initiatives consistent with the Women's Program funding requirements<sup>1</sup>*

#### **Awareness Raising/Knowledge Building**

SWC will:

- consult with official language minority women's organizations to identify effective ways to access SWC resources;
- maintain and develop the SWC Internet site to make a wide range of information available on-line, in both official languages;
- disseminate on a broader scale, within the official language minority community, SWC products, including printed documents such as, policy research papers, updates on key policy issues, reference materials, press releases, etc.;
- ensure the production, in both official languages, of documents, resources, tools, etc. developed through Women's Program (WP) funded-initiatives; and
- facilitate the sharing of relevant resources developed by non-governmental organizations, as well as the linking of organizations where efforts would be enhanced through co-operation.

#### **Funding and Technical Support**

SWC will:

- continue providing social development assistance to official language minority women's organizations;
- facilitate access to information on relevant WP initiatives, as well as others such as the Regional Partnerships Fund and the Official Languages Innovation Fund, resulting from the federal government's Action Plan for Official Languages;
- make funding available to official language minority women's organizations for initiatives that are consistent with its funding requirements;
- provide funding to support training on Gender-Based Analysis;
- assist financially and with the recruitment of federal government officials for a workshop in Vancouver on the non-sexist use of the French language;

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<sup>1</sup> To implement Principal Measure One, SWC will use the following intervention strategies: 1. Awareness Raising/Knowledge Building, 2. Funding and Technical Support, 3. Building/Broadening Partnerships.

- encourage recognition of the diversity of official language minority women's organizations to help diversify funding for their initiatives; and
- increase co-funding between SWC and other departments for initiatives undertaken by official language minority women's organizations.

### **Building, Broadening Partnerships**

SWC will:

- promote strategies that ensure that official language minority women's organizations are part of the coalition building within the women's movement;
- identify ways to support inter-regional networking among official language minority women organizations living in the far north;
- encourage Anglophone groups outside Quebec and Francophone groups within Quebec to take into account and integrate in all their activities the diversity within official language minority women; and
- facilitate greater networking, collaboration and partnership among official language minority women's organizations that receive WP funding.

### **Principal Measure Two**

*Promote greater collaboration between decision-makers and official language minority women's organizations so as to facilitate the involvement of these organizations in the public policy process at local, regional, national and international levels<sup>1</sup>*

### **Facilitate On-Going Consultations**

SWC will

- expand formal and informal consultations with women's organizations including official language minority women's organizations;
- advise other federal departments and levels of government to ensure the participation of official language minority women in consultations;
- facilitate the development of partnerships between official language minority women's organizations and federal departments; and
- facilitate dialogue, greater collaboration and partnerships and information sharing among official language minority women's organizations.

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<sup>1</sup> To implement Principal Measure Two, SWC will use the following intervention strategies: 1. Facilitate On-going Consultations, 2. Support Active Engagement in Public Policy Process

## Support Active Engagement in Public Policy Processes

SWC will:

- inform official language minority women's organizations regarding opportunities for input into the public policy process, particularly those related to SWC;
- involve official language minority women's organizations in SWC's international activities (e.g. Canada's participation at the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, follow-up to the international conference on *Women and La Francophonie*);
- give full consideration to the representation by official language minority women when seeking expertise and/or participation on delegations for domestic and international activities;
- encourage the participation of official language minority women in SWC funded initiatives; and
- continue gender-based analysis to examine, identify and address implications on women, including official language minority women.

### Principal Measure Three

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

SWC will:

- continue to ensure that official language minority women's organizations have access to policy research papers, studies, etc. funded under its policy research mandate;
- ensure that calls for proposals are sent to official language minority groups;
- ensure that funded research initiatives reflect the diversity of the Canadian population including official language minority women; and
- continue to monitor all electronic mail received and reply promptly to requests for publications, requests for additions to the contact list of researchers and requests for information on the Policy Research Fund and the Research Directorate.

### Principal Measure Four

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

SWC will:

- continue to inform official language minority women's organizations and official language minority communities of SWC resources to facilitate the commemoration of key events;
- encourage greater involvement of official language minority women in: Women's History Month, International Women's Day, National Day of Remembrance and Action Against Women, Persons Day;
- make a wide range of information and promotional materials available, in both official languages, on the Governor General's Awards in Commemoration of the Persons Case,

Women's History Month, National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women and International Women's Day; and

- facilitate participation by ensuring awareness about the annual call for nominations for the Governor General's Awards in Commemoration of the Persons Case.

## **B – Consultations**

SWC will use different mechanisms to consult with official language minority women and organizations in an effort to ensure the effective implementation of its Action Plan.

- **Community Outreach:** SWC will continue to ensure the visibility of SWC programs and services by maintaining on-going contacts with members of official language minority communities and through collaboration with official language minority community and news organizations. For example, SWC will continue to participate in annual information exchanges organized in recognition of "Les Rendez-Vous de la Francophonie". SWC will continue to participate in "Micro-Midi", a CBC French radio program which promotes increased awareness of federal government programming and services in B.C. and the Yukon.
- **Information Provision:** SWC will promote its programs, services, resource materials and on-line resources in official language minority community newsletters, regional media and the Department of Canadian Heritage's *Bulletin 41-42*. It will continue to distribute to official language minority organizations Calls for Policy Research Proposals, which will also be posted on the SWC Internet web site.

A variety of bilingual communications products for special events will be sent to individuals and organizations, including official language minority women's organizations to promote 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.

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

## **C – Proposed Evaluation Framework**

SWC will put in place the necessary systems and processes in order to achieve the expected results in compliance with Section 41 of the *Official Languages Act*. The Action Plan requires that directorates ensure that their approaches and processes are inclusive of and responsive to the official language minority women needs. Each directorate will report on its contributions to the SWC commitment to the expected results. The Annual Status Report will indicate the progress made in implementing the Action Plan.

- **Evaluation Framework:** SWC will develop an evaluation framework, which will

include directorates' performance indicators and measurement tools.

- **Active Monitoring:** SWC will monitor the implementation of the Action Plan, by looking at the various aspects, including principal measures, intervention strategies of directorates and the various initiatives taken to ensure achievement of results. This will include monitoring access to information about its programs, services, events, commemorative dates, and initiatives by official language minority women and organizations. SWC will monitor the number of requests for policy research papers and requests for information on the Policy Research Fund. As well, the department will monitor feedback received from questionnaires enclosed with all copies of publications.

Community feedback on the Action Plan will be reviewed by SWC's coordinators for Section 41 and will serve for proposed revisions. The Department of Canadian Heritage will be consulted on the Action Plan, particularly the proposed measures and expected results.

#### **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, the Grants and Contributions budget, staff time and operating budget resources required for such activities as teleconference calls, travel of staff and groups to meetings, as well as interpretation, translation and distribution of materials.

**SECTION IV : EXPECTED RESULTS AND INDICATORS<sup>2</sup>**

**SWC Strategic Outcomes:**

1. *Strengthened and more equitable public policy* 2. *Broader range of informed and effective stakeholders*

**SWC Consultations Mechanisms:** 1. *On-Going Contacts* 2. *Community Activities* 3. *Departmental Consultations*

IDENTIFIED NEEDS	PRINCIPAL MEASURES	EXPECTED RESULTS	INDICATORS
1. Access to Government Programs, Services and Resources  2. Financial, Material, Technical and Social Development Assistance	1. Provide social development assistance to official language minority women's organizations and funding for initiatives consistent with the Women's Program funding requirements  2. Promote greater collaboration between decision-makers and official language minority women's organizations	Enhanced Organizational Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Official language minority women's organizations develop effective community action skills to reach out to, organize and mobilize their membership to address identified needs at local, regional and national levels</li> <li>○ Official Language minority women's organizations acquire relevant knowledge to access SWC funding and technical assistance, participate in consultations and events and be represented on delegations.</li> <li>○ Official language minority women's organizations take steps to diversify their sources, particularly co-funding, technical support and tools from federal, provincial/territorial and local sources.</li> </ul>
3. Greater Participation in the Broader Women's Equality Movement	3. Encourage official language minority women and official language minority women's organizations to participate in SWC activities related to policy research	More Inclusive Public Policy Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Official language minority women's organizations develop action strategies to facilitate community mobilization for public policy consultations.</li> <li>○ SWC directorates integrate, in their action plans, steps to respond to official language minority women's issues in public policy processes.</li> <li>○ Evidence of representation of official language minority women's organizations in federal policy initiatives sponsored by SWC, including consultations with other stakeholders</li> </ul>
4. Opportunities to Contribute to the Public Policy Process	4. Promote and facilitate the commemoration of key women's equality dates <sup>3</sup> by official language minority women and official language minority women's organizations as well as encourage their greater involvement	Active Role and Full Participation in Women's Movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Official language minority women's organizations identify mechanisms to become more proactive in community-led initiatives organized at local, regional and national levels to advance women's equality.</li> <li>○ Official language minority women's organizations identify and communicate with key partners to engage in the broader women's equality movement</li> <li>○ Women's groups involve official language minority women's organizations in local, regional and national initiatives.</li> </ul>

<sup>2</sup> In Compliance with Sections 41 and 42 of the *Official Languages Act*

<sup>3</sup> Women's History Month, International Women's Day, National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women, Persons Day, etc.

## **Section V. Communications Plan**

### **Measures Proposed to Publicize the Action Plan**

SWC's Action Plan will be made available to all SWC staff, the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Official Languages, the Senate Standing Committee on Official Languages and other key organizations.

The Action Plan will be posted on the SWC website.

Participants at the regional and national Federal Institutions – Official Language Minority Community meetings co-ordinated by Canadian Heritage will be informed of the Action Plan's availability.

## **Section VI. Signatures**

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National Official Languages Section 41 Co-ordinator  
Status of Women Canada  
Telephone: (613) 947-0932

Date

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Florence Ievers  
Co-ordinator  
Status of Women Canada

Date

**Part II. Questionnaire: What do you think of the Action Plan for 2003-2006?**

**General comments:**

**Strong points:**

**Areas for improvement:**

**Suggestions:**

**Please return this form to:**

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