

# Honouring our Differences: Gender and Diversity Analysis



Interministerial Women's Secretariat  
Community Services and Seniors  
Government of Prince Edward Island  
2012

## Acknowledgements

This document is a publication of the Interministerial Women's Secretariat, Department of Community Services and Seniors, Province of Prince Edward Island.

This guide is adapted from *Honouring Our Differences: Gender and Diversity Analysis in Public Policy and Programs*. The Interministerial Women's Secretariat gratefully acknowledges the content guidance and editorial advice that was received from the PEI Advisory Council on the Status of Women and to Sandy Bentley, RSW, who researched and compiled the training manual.

Interministerial Women's Secretariat staff provided revisions and additional research.

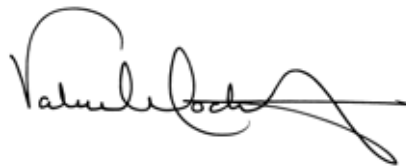
## Letter from the Minister

Gender-based analysis is a tool that can be used to assess how gender and diversity affects the experiences, behaviours and needs of women, men, boys and girls. It can lead to being more informed about the needs of our diverse population.

The Government of Prince Edward Island has taken significant steps towards recognizing and accommodating gender and diversity differences in its public policies. To further assist government in its analysis, the Department of Community Services and Seniors has developed a training manual on gender and diversity analysis.

This booklet, *Honouring Our Differences: Gender and Diversity Analysis* is based on the training manual that was developed for government policy makers. This guide provides community groups, agencies and the general public with information and support for using a gender and diversity lens.

As Prince Edward Island's Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, I am pleased to present this manual, and I hope that you find its contents useful in your work.



Valerie E. Docherty  
Minister of Community Services and Seniors  
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women



Valerie E. Docherty, *Minister*  
Community Services  
and Seniors

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## Introduction

As the Government of Prince Edward Island designs policies and programs, policy makers are working to ensure that gender and other diversities are considered consistently. The purpose of the following guide is to promote use and understanding of Gender and Diversity Analysis (GDA) tools in the wider Prince Edward Island community.

This manual introduces the basics of using a gender and diversity lens. It includes an introduction to the concepts of sex, gender and diversity, and it provides a gender and diversity checklist to assist you in your work to plan actions in the community. Your plans might be to develop policy for your organization, to do a research project, to develop a product, to plan an event or an education campaign, or to make recommendations to policy makers. Using Gender and Diversity Analysis can help improve the results of any of these actions.

Historically, research and product development, and much policy development, relied on able-bodied white male experience as a norm. It was assumed that “one size fit all” when it came to products, policies or programs. The use of GDA reveals more than a few surprises about the value added when differences in male and female – and diverse – experiences are taken into account.

Research on tobacco use provides a good example. The specific risks of tobacco use in women were long overlooked in this research. The early preference to fund research on the effects of smoking on men and the failure to separately examine the effects for women can be explained by several factors. Since the majority of early smokers were upper-class males, the first generation of researchers focused on them. Subsequent researchers assumed that the effects of smoking would be the same for women as men. Nearly all the research involved male subjects and, if women were included, the results were not examined separately but as one total picture of the impacts of tobacco.

As a result, the knowledge of specific effects on women and risks to women’s health – for example, the reasons women smoke, why they have more difficulty quitting and the unique impacts of tobacco on women’s physiology – were unavailable to early stop-smoking campaigns<sup>1</sup>. Those campaigns did not have enough information to plan actions that would give them the results they wanted.

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<sup>1</sup> L. Greaves, N. Jategoankar and S. Sanchez, Turning a New Leaf, Tobacco and the Future, 2006 [http://www.bccewh.bc.ca/publications-resources/documents/Turning\\_New\\_Leaf06-28-06\\_000.pdf](http://www.bccewh.bc.ca/publications-resources/documents/Turning_New_Leaf06-28-06_000.pdf) Downloaded March 29, 2012.



With more resources now committed to examining the impacts of gender and diversity, many new gender and diversity-based differences are coming to light. Sometimes, these new understandings shatter assumptions and long-held beliefs and customs.

## Sex, Gender And Diversity

In everyday conversation, the terms sex and gender are frequently used interchangeably. For the purposes of Gender and Diversity Based Analysis, it is helpful to distinguish between the two.

### Sex

Sex commonly refers to a **biological classification** of males and females based on differences in reproductive organs, physiology and anatomy, genes and hormones.<sup>2</sup>

Sexual differences develop *in utero*, and newborns are classified as either male or female based upon external sexual characteristics.<sup>3</sup>

### Gender

Gender is the social classification of men and women. This classification is based upon the personality traits, qualities, social roles and responsibilities and relations expected for and among women and men. The classification is also affected by what behaviours are generally considered acceptable for and among women and men. Society commonly attributes different power and influence to each gender in different spheres of life.<sup>4</sup>

People express their gender and identify their gender across a continuum from masculinity to femininity. Gender expectations, expressions and relations vary across cultures and across time.

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2 Health Canada Exploring Concepts of Gender and Health, 2003. Retrieved from [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/pubs/women-femmes/explor-eng.php#a3](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/pubs/women-femmes/explor-eng.php#a3) Downloaded March 29, 2012.

3 It's important to note that it is increasingly recognized that sex characteristics vary in the degree of their expression along a continuum between male and female with some individuals having some physical characteristics of both sexes.

4 Health Canada, Exploring Concepts of Gender and Health, 2003. [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/pubs/women-femmes/explor-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/pubs/women-femmes/explor-eng.php) Downloaded March 29, 2012.

While there has been considerable progress in gender equality, many gender-based expectations still remain. For example, there is often still an expectation that men will be the main “breadwinners” outside the home and women will be the main “nurturers” who will take care of the children and the home. Measures of unpaid work and access to leisure time have long reflected a heavier load of housework and elder/child care for women.

In workplaces, one way in which gender is reflected is that men and women tend to be clustered in male or female dominated jobs. While defining jobs as traditional or non-traditional for women or for men is becoming less common, it still exists in our society. At the same time, the value of paid work is also influenced by gender. Female-dominated jobs are still generally paid less than male-dominated jobs.

Men and women who step outside the usual activities expected for their gender at home or at work are seen as behaving outside the norm. For example, the first female physicians were known as “lady doctors” and their role in the workplace only came to be accepted over decades of practice. Currently, we are facing challenges of a low number of women entering trades such as carpentry or plumbing. Women and men pioneers in “non-traditional” roles continue to report a sense of added responsibility to set and uphold a personal standard of excellence.

Historically in most cultures, gender experiences mean that women and men have different limitations on them and opportunities before them. Most commonly, women and men have different access to and control over resources such as money, material goods, power or influence.

Peer groups have a role in setting gender roles and expectations. Social institutions – such as media, education institutions, religious organizations and courts/laws – also reflect and reinforce what is acceptable and permissible for and between genders.

**Even though the expression of gender roles, rights and responsibilities changes over time, significant and enduring change often requires both individual and collective efforts.**

<sup>5</sup> Statistics Canada, July 2011. General Social Survey – 2010 Overview of the Time Use of Canadians. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 89-647-X. <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/89-647-x/89-647-x2011001-eng.pdf> Downloaded March 29, 2012.

In 2010, women spent on average 4 hours and 38 minutes on unpaid work activities on a given day. This works out to be 1 hour and 13 minutes more than men.

Regardless of the child’s age, women spent more time on their care than did men. For example, women with children up to the age of 4 spent 6 hours 33 minutes per day caring for them. Among men with children of the same age, the corresponding duration was 3 hours 7 minutes.

--- Statistics Canada, General Social Survey - 2010 Overview of the Time Use of Canadians<sup>5</sup>

Women working full year, full time in PEI averaged 81.8% of men’s average income. PEI has the smallest gender wage gap in the Canadian provinces.

-- Women in PEI: A Statistical Review 2010



### How gendered is our culture?

Developing an awareness of gender is challenging. First, it involves being conscious of the beliefs and norms for gender expression and gender identity, including how they may be changing. Gender is socialized. In other words, it is affected by how we are raised and how we live in our society. Our experiences with gender socialization are both personal and shared with others. **For the most part, gender expectations are something we are not even aware of experiencing.** In everyday life, we are surrounded by messages about gender. In this environment, we risk accepting stereotypes and overlooking biases.

Gender stereotypes are ideas about how boys and girls, women and men are expected to think or act. Children as young as three years of age already refer to their gender and can verbalize how they meet the qualities of being either a girl or boy.

Social science research reveals that **socialization as a boy or girl or as a woman or man begins at birth. It happens over a lifetime and in many subtle ways.** For example, it has been observed that in many cultures adults will hold, touch and talk differently to infant boys than to infant girls. Early expectations for male and female behaviour in childhood begin to set the foundation for adult relations between and among men and women.

Michael Kaufman, co-creator of Canada's anti-violence White Ribbon Campaign, provides leadership training and coaching to find positive ways to prevent and respond to violence against women. In his presentations about engaging men and boys in promoting gender equality, he explores how longstanding, rigid gender norms play a role in social relationships between and among men and women. He examines the many ways gender expectations limit relationships and contribute to men's violence. According to Kaufman, these beliefs and behaviours are learned and can be unlearned.<sup>6</sup>



Role messages, whether subtle or direct, change over time. Hudson's Bay Company once sold Doctor Kits and Nurse Kits. Both kits were exactly the same product, except the Doctor Kit had a picture of a boy and the Nurse Kit a picture of a girl. It could be argued that the kits at one time reflected reality, but it also could be argued that the message that boys become doctors and girls become nurses set expectations and narrow career choices. Even today's toy stores contain very specific (and colour coded) sections for girls and boys. Does the absence of hammers and tool sets in the "girl section" at the toy store have an impact on the future career choices for women?

<sup>6</sup> For more information on Michael Kaufman's work, see [www.michaelkaufman.com](http://www.michaelkaufman.com)



## Diversity

**Diversity refers to the classification and self-identification of people based upon their collective experiences or qualities.**

Diversity groupings can include, but are not limited to, sex or gender identity, persons with disabilities, members of visible minorities, Aboriginal peoples, and groupings based on age, income, ethnicity, cultural customs, language, family type or sexual orientation.

Diversity, like gender, does not exist in a vacuum. People can belong to several diversity categories at once – for example, a female with a disability who is a member of a visible minority. All of these variations in our experiences interact. They may create conditions of risk or benefit that need specific attention for equitable treatment. Diversity frequently involves qualities or conditions which may affect a person's opportunity to realize their full potential and to access their basic human rights.

## What is Gender and Diversity Based Analysis?

Gender and Diversity Analysis (GDA) refers to the process of giving attention to how gender and diversity affect the experiences, behaviours and needs of women and men. Further, it looks at how to accommodate these differences and needs.

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. Because it is neutral, GDA has the potential to expand the number and type of options to consider. Because it is based on evidence, GDA also has the potential to give decision-makers more information to use to make their decisions.

Treating everyone the same doesn't always lead to equitable outcomes. For example, a resident of PEI who uses a wheelchair may be eligible to vote in a provincial election, just like his or her able-bodied neighbour, but in order for the voting process to be equitable, the polling station needs to be held in a location that is wheelchair-accessible so that everyone has the ability to vote.

Community members and groups can use GDA so that their policies, their actions in the community and their recommendations to government can better look ahead to potential effects. Using GDA can increase the chances that proposed actions have the intended results for men, for women and for all diverse populations.



GDA is an instrument that can promote **equality** and **equity**. First, it makes differences visible. Second, it makes more policy or program options available in response to differences so that outcomes are more equitable for all.

In the past two decades, gender and diversity tools have been developed and used in virtually every policy sector relating to health, social or economic development. **The more GDA is used, the more it reveals problems with the “one size fits all” approach.**

GDA pays attention to the overall average picture of a situation. In addition, it also prompts questions as to whether the average picture hides or disguises things that may significantly affect the desired outcomes.



Occasionally, people associate GDA with advocacy for women or minorities. In reality, it includes all diversities. It aims to make better policy for more people. It is a **population-wide, comprehensive lens** capturing many aspects of gender and diversity. Applying GDA can result in benefits for women, men and children. This happened, for example, in the changes to Canadian policies on Parental Benefits. Women may be the first to benefit from the ability to take up to 12 months of leave with a new baby, but they are not the only ones to benefit. The policy gives either parent an option to take time for parental leave. More men now take some time away from work on parental leave, which has “allowed men to be able to take more responsibility in care giving during the first year of the child’s life, which based on what we are hearing internationally is a step in the right direction.”<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Les Linklater, Director General, Strategy and Intergovernmental Resources, Department of Human Resources and Skills Development, Testimony to the Standing Committee on the Status of Women, February 2005 (38th PARLIAMENT, 1st SESSION)

### ***Example of the Need for Gender and Diversity Awareness***

#### Worker Compensation Claims

An increase in worker compensation claims in an industrial site prompts a review of occupational health and safety practices.

A gender and diversity analysis would ask questions such as:

Who?

Who is using the site equipment?

Are recent immigrants who may not be yet familiar with English or French using the equipment?

Are women, men or younger workers using the same equipment?

In What Ways Does Difference Matter?

Are written safety instructions understood and applied?

Is there a need for information to be made available in a number of different ways?

Is safety equipment available in appropriate sizes for men, for women and for youth?

Is ill-fitting equipment causing more workplace accidents?

How are Outcomes Affected?

Are more women, men or youth injured?

Do the types of injuries vary between women and men? Between adults and youth?

Who is inclined to take safety risks and why?

Without these more precise questions, we might only ask about general issues such as “Is safety equipment available and is it being used?” Without the specific focus on who uses the equipment and how their requirements might differ from current practice or standards, we could miss crucial information that could limit effectiveness of injury prevention.

-- PEI Interministerial Women's Secretariat brochure, *Guidelines for Gender and Diversity Considerations in Policy Design and Implementation*, 2011

In the above example,

- Only looking at the overall situation (without paying attention to sex, gender or diversity) may result in overlooking differences in sex-related body type that affect the helpfulness of safety equipment.

- Only looking at sex (not gender or diversity) may result in overlooking the kinds of injuries women experience that men do not (and vice versa).
- Only looking at sex and gender (not diversity) may result in overlooking the needs of youth, or overlooking the literacy level and languages used in safety instructions.

Considering sex, gender and diversity together results in better questions. These better questions lead to more options to meet the needs of the affected group. When they answer these questions, decision-makers are more likely to have better outcomes for all – in this case, to prevent more workplace injuries. The results will not unintentionally discriminate against any group and will be more equitable.

Commitment to Gender and Diversity Analysis creates an environment where the skills and abilities to develop gender and diversity inclusive policy and design gender and diversity sensitive products can grow and develop.

## Gender and Diversity Based Analysis Checklist

The following questions are a tool for applying gender and diversity lens when analyzing or researching a policy or program. Further, the questions will help identify information gaps and highlight where there is a need for further inquiry.

### Planned Action

Draft the policy, action or recommendation your group is planning.

### Intended Audience(s)

Who is your action being planned for and who will it affect? Members of a community organization? Members of the general public? Government officials?

### Intended Outcomes

List some of the results you intend to come out of your planned action.

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**As a first step, it is always important to consider your personal biases or general community assumptions about the policy at hand.**

While this might seem like an unnecessary or impractical step – especially when timelines are tight – it actually might be one of the most important parts of the process. Your personal experiences affect how you view issues. For example, if you are a senior male who has never had children, you might view a policy issue relating to childcare differently than a mother who has young children.

Yes  No  Have you considered what personal experiences and history could affect your view of this particular issue?

*What are your experiences? How can you overcome potential biases?*

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## Information Sources

Accurate, specific information about women, men and diverse groups is very important to Gender and Diversity Analysis. The information is needed to give a clear picture of how different genders and diverse groups experience their lives. Information should include both quantitative information (such as statistics and numbers) and qualitative information (such as stories or consultations in workshops).

Yes  No  Is there information available that would provide accurate data for the diverse groups and subgroups?<sup>8</sup>

*What are your sources of information? Where can you find further information?  
How will you ensure you have enough information about each diverse group or subgroup you want to consider?*

## Gender and Diversity Checklist:

Yes  No  Have you considered the unique needs of diverse groups?

*Which groups have unique needs? What are their unique needs?*

Group	Affected?	Unique Needs
Francophones	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Women	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
People with disabilities	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Aboriginal people	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Visible minorities	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Children	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Seniors	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Others	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Subgroups (where two or more diversities intersect)		

<sup>8</sup> A Subgroup describes where two or more diversities intersect, for example, an immigrant female with a disability.

Yes  No  Have you considered the unique needs of women and men?  
*What are they for men? What are they for women? Are the unique needs based on sex or gender differences?*

Group	Unique Needs
Women: Needs based on sex differences	
Women: Needs based on gender differences	
Men: Needs based on sex differences	
Men: Needs based on gender differences	

Yes  No  Have you identified any unique barriers for women or men? Are there unique barriers for identified groups or subgroups?  
*What are they? How can these barriers be overcome?*

Identified Groups	Unique Barriers	Solutions to Barriers

Yes  No  Have you considered the potentially different outcomes for each of the groups and subgroups?  
*For each of the identified groups, separately list the potential outcomes. How are they different? Are there negative outcomes for certain groups while positive outcomes for others? Why are the outcomes different?*

Identified groups	Potential Outcomes	Differences in Outcome

Yes  No  If there are potentially different outcomes, can the proposed policy be altered to make outcomes more equitable?

***List the aspects of the policy or program with potentially different outcomes for diverse groups. List ways they could be altered for more equitable outcomes.***

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Yes  No  Can different outcomes that cannot be altered be explained?

***List the different outcomes that cannot be altered. How can these differences in outcomes be explained reasonably?***

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Yes  No  Have you completed a cost/benefit analysis for gender and diversity accommodation, action or inaction?

***List results of analysis or explain why analysis is unnecessary.***

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## Conclusion

Developing gender and diversity knowledge depends on attention to unique differences in life experiences, opportunities and constraints. If you assume that attention to gender and diversity is not warranted, this can result in overlooking significant issues. The historical evolution of gender and diversity analysis clearly reveals that differences often exist even when they are not immediately apparent or assumed to be non-existent. As a result it is prudent to always ask whether gender and diversity conditions apply.

To bring gender and diversity issues clearly into focus, the two most important steps are

1. To focus attention on a few basic questions about potential impacts and
2. To know what sources are available for answers to those questions at every point of the process.