

Minister for Women
and Gender Equality and Youth



Ministre des Femmes
et de l'Égalité des genres et de la Jeunesse

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Mr. Gérald Lafrenière
Interim Clerk of the Senate
and Clerk of the Parliaments and Chief Legislative Services Officer
2 Rideau Street, Room 408-A
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A4

Dear Mr. Lafrenière

Enclosed for tabling in the Senate, pursuant to Rule 12-23(3) of the Rules of the Senate of Canada, are two copies in both official languages, of the Government Response to the Report of the Senate Standing Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology entitled *The Role of Gender-based Analysis Plus in the Policy Process: reducing barriers to an inclusive intersectional policy analysis*.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Len'.

The Honourable Marc Len, P.C., M.P.
Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth

Enclosures

Government Response to the Senate Standing Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology (SOCl) in its eleventh report entitled *All Together — The Role of Gender-based Analysis Plus in the Policy Process: reducing barriers to an inclusive intersectional policy analysis*

I am pleased to respond on behalf of the Government of Canada to the recommendations made by the Senate Standing Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology (SOCl) in its eleventh report entitled *All Together — The Role of Gender-based Analysis Plus in the Policy Process: reducing barriers to an inclusive intersectional policy analysis* tabled on March 30, 2023.

The Government appreciates the important work undertaken by you and members of the Committee and extends thanks as well to the witnesses who contributed to the study of the implementation of GBA Plus across the federal government and how we might reduce barriers and support a more thorough intersectional analysis. As you know, GBA Plus is a critical tool for understanding not just who is impacted by our policies, programs and other initiatives, but how we can ensure the development of responsive and inclusive policies, programs, and other initiatives.

The Government agrees with the overall intent of the Report and in principle with its recommendations. We have renewed our commitment to GBA Plus as a priority, as reflected in my mandate letter as Minister for Women and Gender Equality and Youth, and this commitment is further demonstrated by investments in recent budgets to enhance availability and access to data.

While it is not referenced in the SOCl report, in November 2022, the Department for Women and Gender Equality (WAGE), the Privy Council Office (PCO) and the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS) released a Management Response and Action Plan (MRAP) in response to the Auditor General's May 2022 report on GBA Plus ("Report 3 — Follow-up on Gender-Based Analysis Plus"). This Action Plan lays out the specific activities that WAGE, PCO and TBS will undertake in response to the gaps identified by the Auditor General's report in order to strengthen overall GBA Plus implementation and accountability.

I am pleased to note that many of the activities and priorities identified in the GBA Plus Action Plan align with the recommendations provided in your report. The report is quite timely in this respect, and I believe that many of the Committee's recommendations can further strengthen our approach. The following response, organized along the eight broad themes of the recommendations, provides greater detail on the Government's approach to strengthening the implementation of GBA Plus.

Theme 1: Rebranding (Recommendation 1)

- 1. That the Government of Canada, led by Women and Gender Equality Canada, rebrand GBA Plus as Gender and Diversity Analysis.***

There have been long-standing concerns with perceptions of the GBA Plus 'brand' as it has evolved over the years, particularly since the focus has shifted to a more intersectional form of analysis. As the Report notes, the first attempt to clarify the purpose of the new tool was the shift from "Gender-based Analysis" to "Gender-based Analysis Plus", but other efforts since then have been made to reinforce the intersectional purpose of the tool. In June 2021, WAGE introduced a new suite of tools to support a more intersectional approach, including a Compendium with links to data and research on diverse groups.

These past efforts have not been sufficient to ensure a truly intersectional tool is applied to federal government initiatives. My December 2021 mandate letter includes a commitment to enhance the framing and parameters of GBA Plus. This commitment is also part of our work under the new MRAP. As a first step, WAGE has recently undertaken an engagement process with experts, stakeholders and partners within and outside of government. Part of this engagement is focused on how we can ensure that GBA Plus is better understood as an intersectional tool that considers identity factors beyond sex and gender.

We know that any potential rebranding of the tool requires careful consideration and meaningful engagement. As the Committee's report noted, witnesses proposed a variety of different names and approaches to improving how GBA Plus is branded and better understood as the rigorous intersectional analysis we all expect it to be. However, any proposed changes would need to take into consideration the strong and well-respected brand that GBA Plus has become internationally after more than 25 years of use in Canada, and for which Canada continues to be seen as a leader. In fact, Canada's expertise and leadership in GBA Plus has been sought by international partners, which has included presentations by Canadian officials to partners from the United States, Morocco, New Zealand and other countries.

As our engagement process continues, we will be taking this input into careful consideration to ensure that any changes made will ensure that GBA Plus as an analytical tool is better understood and applied across the federal government.

Theme 2: Partnerships (Recommendation 2)

- 2. That the Government of Canada partner with a) Indigenous communities, equity-seeking groups, and expert-advocates; and b) civil society organizations and academics to build the knowledge, tools, and infrastructure required for meaningful implementation and evaluation to improve GBA Plus and enhance its application.***

The engagement process that is underway has allowed outreach to external stakeholders and partners whose expertise and/or lived experience is essential to informing our work to enhance GBA Plus. A key objective of this engagement is to ensure that GBA Plus holistically integrates the considerations of diverse groups of people, which will make it more effective at uncovering barriers and negative impacts, and at developing appropriate mitigation strategies. This is not the first time that we

have reached out to draw on the expertise of external stakeholders and partners to consult on ways to improve GBA Plus. In November 2018, WAGE hosted in Ottawa the first national forum on GBA Plus, which brought together a broad range of stakeholders and partners to provide input on GBA Plus. One of the key takeaways of that consultation was a call to ensure continued dialogue on GBA Plus going forward. As such, with the current work underway to reframe GBA Plus, a substantial engagement process is underway that includes consultations with Indigenous partners, diverse equity-seeking and civil society groups as well as academics in this field.

The Government also recognizes that Indigenous perspectives and rights must be incorporated in all aspects of their relationship with Indigenous Peoples, and this includes the enhanced approach to GBA Plus. As such, the Government, through Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) and Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC), has been actively working with National Indigenous Women's Organizations to support their work on culturally relevant/competent GBA Plus to ensure their advice is informed by Indigenous partners' approaches and promote the inclusion of diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis perspectives in GBA Plus.

Theme 3: Auditor General's Reports (Recommendation 3)

- 3. The Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology endorses the conclusions of the Office of the Auditor General's three reports on GBA Plus and therefore recommends that the Government of Canada commit to implementing all recommendations from the Auditor General's 2009, 2016, and 2022 reports on GBA Plus.***

The Government agreed with the recommendations of the 2022 Auditor General Report, which itself builds on the findings and recommendations of past Auditor General audits of GBA Plus.

As noted earlier, in November 2022, the Government submitted to the Standing Committee on

Public Accounts a plan to address the Auditor General's recommendations. The [Management Response and Action Plan](#) includes meaningful action, including developing new training to increase understanding of intersectionality, and introduces a new competency framework to ensure departments have the internal capacity to support GBA Plus application. Work on implementing the actions in the plan is on track and we continue to engage the Office of the Auditor General on the broader work to enhance GBA Plus.

Theme 4: Training and Capacity (Recommendation 4)

- 4. That the Government of Canada improve GBA Plus training and expand the competencies of GBA Plus analysts in all federal departments by:***

- ***partnering with a) Indigenous communities, equity-seeking groups, and expert-advocates; and b) civil society organizations and academics to offer new programs and tools;***
- ***supporting the establishment of interdisciplinary policy professional networks within the federal public service; and***
- ***identifying, documenting and evaluating federal training programs and tools as part of the public reporting put forward by Recommendation 12.***

The Government continues efforts to improve GBA Plus training to build greater capacity across the federal government. In June 2021, a new suite of tools, including a GBA Plus Step-by-Step Guide, a Compendium and Quick Reference were created to support analysts in applying a more rigorous and intersectional approach. As part of this work, a series of tailored trainings were undertaken in different departments and agencies across the federal government.

We recognize our work on training needs to expand. Among the actions to be undertaken as part of the MRAP are several relating to training, including collaboration with key delivery partners to:

- develop a GBA Plus Learning Pathway to chart a clear path for GBA Plus training for public servants (with the Canada School of Public Service); and,
- develop a key competency framework and certification program in GBA Plus for federal public servants.

This work will leverage expertise from outside government, including academia. Consultations with external experts have informed, and will continue to inform, improvements to the methodology underlying GBA Plus, as well as ensuring that any improvements to training expand the competencies of analysts undertaking GBA Plus. Moreover, interdepartmental networks of GBA Plus Champions and working-level GBA Plus “focal points” continue to meet

regularly to share knowledge and best practices across government departments.

In addition to these efforts, ISC and CIRNAC as lens leaders will continue to work with and inform Women and Gender Equality Canada and the Canada School of Public Service to include Indigenous considerations in enhanced and new training through, for example, the GBA Plus Learning Advisory Committee.

Moreover, the engagement process currently underway with Indigenous partners and equity-seeking groups and civil society experts will inform the development and update of WAGE’s GBA Plus suite of training and tools.

These efforts are intended to help ensure that GBA Plus is culturally competent so that Indigenous identities, social contexts and perspectives are considered in all intersectional analyses across the Government of Canada. “Culturally competent GBA Plus” refers to an approach that is influenced by Indigenous partners’ GBA Plus

frameworks and that acknowledges the unique historical, cultural, political, and socio-economic realities of First Nations, Inuit and Métis, that understands colonialism and racism, that is strength-based and inclusive of gender diversity, and that values Indigenous knowledge.

The Government's approach to enhancing GBA Plus makes it better aligned with the approaches of Indigenous partners than it has been in the past, since it takes into consideration intersectionality and gender diversity, as well as the role of structures and systems of power and oppression in creating inequalities and barriers.

Theme 5: Timing (Recommendations 5,6,7)

- 5. That the Government of Canada identify GBA Plus as a priority in initial policy design, in addition to subsequent policy development, implementation and evaluation.***
- 6. That the Government of Canada, through Women and Gender Equality Canada, prioritize improving the timeliness of GBA Plus, including by creating a strategic plan identifying measurable outcomes and ensuring that the tools and resources necessary for early GBA Plus consideration are available through the federal government.***
- 7. That, in order for GBA Plus to be included as a consideration for parliamentarians during the legislative process:***
 - the Standing Joint Committee on the Library of Parliament study the feasibility of providing GBA Plus of government bills, when relevant data are publicly available;***
 - the Government of Canada table GBA Plus for all government bills when introduced in either chamber of Parliament;***
 - parliamentarians are encouraged to include GBA Plus when drafting House of Commons private members' bills and Senate public bills; and***
 - Women and Gender Equality Canada establish resources for parliamentary committees to support their use of GBA Plus when considering legislation.***

The timing of GBA Plus has been a long-standing issue, as concerns have been expressed about poor analysis undertaken within short timelines. It is for this reason that early and continuous application is emphasized in GBA Plus tools and training. The Step-by-Step Guidance emphasizes the importance of applying GBA Plus consistently across all phases of the policy development process - from identifying the issue, to analyzing the needs, differences and inequalities among groups, to developing options, and to implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the initiative.

The *Canadian Gender Budgeting Act* is a foundational element of the Government of Canada's strategy to improve equality and diversity. GBA Plus is one of the tools that supports gender budgeting and is mandatory for all budget proposals. Key aspects of GBA Plus, such as the timing of when a GBA Plus was conducted, has been a common

reporting feature in the Statement and Impacts Report on Gender, Diversity, and Quality of Life (previously the Gender Report) over the past four federal budgets.

Progress has been noted on GBA Plus timing in budget measures, as a greater share of measures now have GBA Plus applied early or mid-stage than in the past. This reflects an increasing awareness of GBA Plus and the greater availability of disaggregated data, which have supported efforts to embed GBA Plus as a whole-of-government approach, well integrated in the policy development process. There is also an increase in the number of measures that rely on existing GBA Plus in the last two budgets—this is partially attributable to the extension of existing government programs. In some instances, existing analysis is also strengthened through the inclusion of new data.

Moreover, departments have to report annually on the impacts of their programs on gender and diversity through the Departmental Results Report. Links to all departments GBA Plus annual Supplemental Information Tables and highlighted key program impacts are reported on Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat website.

While there is evidence of some progress, we are aware that there is still more work to do, particularly with respect to ensuring that GBA Plus is applied to all stages of the policy cycle.

It is also noted that the *All Together* report discusses some statistics related to GBA Plus implementation in the federal budgets 2019, 2021 and 2022 (page 42). The report notes that 8% of Budget 2019 proposals employed GBA Plus, a share which increases to 15% in Budget 2021 and 85% in Budget 2022. The Department of Finance is unable to confirm these statistics, as all budget measures employ GBA Plus. This is straightforward to verify through a simple count of the measures in each of these three budgets – there are roughly 200 measures, and 200 corresponding GBA Plus summaries in the accompanying Gender/Impacts Report. It is possible that the *All Together* report intended to reference instead one of the quality metrics of the GBA Plus summaries in the budget, such as the timing of when GBA Plus was performed, or the proportion of budget proposals that included a GBA Plus Responsive Approach – that is, budget proposals with a mitigation strategy when a barrier or negative impact was identified. The Department of Finance is willing to assist with data precision on these aggregated statistics if needed.

The Committee's recommendations under the theme of "Timing" included calls to better support the application of GBA Plus to legislative proposals of the Government, as well as Private Members' Bills and Senate Public Bills. With respect to the application of GBA Plus to government bills, GBA Plus is mandatory in Memoranda to Cabinet (MC), the budget process and Treasury Board submissions. As such, GBA Plus would be mandatory for any legislative proposal that goes to Cabinet through an MC. With respect to supporting the application of GBA Plus to non-government legislative proposals - Private Members' Bills and Senate Public bills – the Department for Women and Gender Equality maintains public access to training and other tools that may be used by Parliamentarians to apply GBA Plus to a proposal. Guidance has been developed on applying GBA Plus to evaluation, but more must be done.

Theme 6: Resources (Recommendation 8)

8. That the Government of Canada ensure adequate funding is provided to a) Indigenous communities, equity-seeking groups, and expert-advocates; and b) civil society organizations and academics to facilitate their engagement and partnership with the government on GBA Plus.

The Government has long recognized that we cannot advance on GBA Plus without drawing on the expertise and lived experience of stakeholders and partners outside government, including Indigenous partners and equity-seeking groups, civil society organizations and academics. For this reason, in November 2018, the Government hosted a national Forum on GBA Plus, which had over 1,000 participants representing government and external stakeholders and partners, to share information and best practices on GBA Plus. WAGE is currently engaging with federal departments, academia, partners, and stakeholders on the work to enhance the framing and parameters of GBA Plus, with particular attention to the intersectional analysis of race, Indigenous identity, rurality, disability and sexual identity, among other characteristics. As part of this engagement, federal departments are collaborating to consolidate and refresh current tools, identify gaps with a view to develop additional tools to guide robust and intersectional GBA Plus to design more responsive policies, programs, and services. A key lesson heard from that exercise was “Nothing about us without us”: to ensure that GBA Plus continues to advance, engagement with Indigenous partners and equity-seeking groups is essential. The recent engagement process that has involved outreach to a range of external stakeholders and partners underscores the importance placed on advice from outside government.

Moreover, ISC and CIRNAC are supporting the work of National Indigenous Women’s organizations, specifically the Native Women’s Association of Canada, Pauktutit Inuit Women of Canada and Les Femme Michif Otipemisiwak, to develop or update their GBA Plus frameworks and tools, as well as to support GBA Plus capacity. These and other Indigenous partners have also received funding to conduct engagement or research to support GBA Plus on specific initiatives.

In recent years, the Government has, where resources permitted, provided funding to an external stakeholder and partner to support work on GBA Plus. This has included, for example, the development of a GBA Plus competency-based framework. While current departmental planning does not include additional initiatives to directly fund external stakeholders and partners to support GBA Plus, the Government continues to support community-based research which can inform GBA Plus, such as research funding announced through the Federal 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan. Moreover, in 2023-24, the 2SLGBTQI+ Secretariat at WAGE will continue to support the integration of 2SLGBTQI+ considerations across the federal government, including the implementation of the Federal 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan, which will include working to deliver the new 2SLGBTQI+ program funding to support the growth, sustainability, and leadership of 2SLGBTQI+ community organizations, including \$40 million in new capacity-building funding. The Institute for Gender and the Economy (GATE) at the University of Toronto

is building a community of practice in gender-based analysis by scaling their Gender Analytics training program, to be used by the Canadian public. Also, Indus Community Services are being supported by WAGE as they develop a toolkit and outreach plan for at-risk populations and survivors of human trafficking that integrates a GBA Plus.

National Indigenous Women's Organizations (NIWOs) have each identified GBA Plus as a priority through their whole-of-government relationship agreements with Canada. CIRNAC facilitates outreach and engagement across departments to inform the development of federal policies, programs, and legislation that reflect the needs, interests, as well as intersectional GBA Plus perspectives of Indigenous women, girls, and gender-diverse people.

For example, through Budget 2021, CIRNAC funded three five-year projects with each of the three national Indigenous women's organizations providing \$1.1 million in targeted GBA Plus capacity funding to support the organizations' capacity to undertake the necessary research, data collection, outreach, collaboration and advocacy on gender and diversity issues. This allocation envisions flexibility and enables customization for GBA Plus capacity within each organization, respective of their policy priority areas.

Theme 7: Data (Recommendations 9,10,11)

- 9. That the Government of Canada ensure identity indicators are built into federal programs in order to provide disaggregated data on program recipients and impacts.***
- 10. That Statistics Canada, in cooperation with federal departments and agencies, enhance the collection, analysis and dissemination of data useful for GBA Plus.***
- 11. That the Government of Canada ensure that data is collected using a culturally relevant approach, developing best practices in consultation with a) Indigenous communities, equity-seeking groups, and expert-advocates; and b) civil society organizations and academics regarding both data collection and use, with a specific emphasis on including qualitative, diverse data.***

The Government continues to make strategic investments in disaggregated data to support robust GBA Plus. Budget 2021 provided Statistics Canada \$172 million over five years, with \$36.3 million ongoing, to support more data collection that is more representative of the diversity of the Canadian population, providing statistical data that highlights the experiences of women, Indigenous Peoples, 2SLGBTQI+ people, racialized Canadians, and people with disabilities and when robust statistics can be produced, other intersectional characteristics of these groups. These data can help build a more equitable Canada by bringing fairness and inclusivity to decision-making. The Disaggregated Data Action Plan (DDAP) is a whole-of-government approach led by Statistics Canada to reveal challenges faced by the most vulnerable populations in the country and helping create a more equitable Canada. These investments will improve

the Government's ability to obtain data that can be disaggregated for more than one or two identity factors. For example, the Government recognizes that few data points may exist that can currently be disaggregated for both an Indigenous identity group and gender (e.g., First Nations women) and that access to useful disaggregated data related to Two-Spirit, Indigenous non-binary and gender-diverse individuals is limited.

Departments face unique challenges with regards to access of data in the context of Indigenous self-determination, Indigenous data sovereignty and the transfer of services to Indigenous partners. As such, departments are increasingly turning to alternative methods such as use of qualitative data sources. National Indigenous Women's Organizations have expressed the importance of using more qualitative data, lived experiences and Indigenous Knowledges in the context of GBA Plus.

Under the recent MRAP, the Government committed to developing a plan for making disaggregated data available and accessible to federal departments and agencies. Moreover, the MRAP also includes commitments to develop tools and guidance to encourage the development and use of culturally competent disaggregated data.

Along with the Data Strategy for the Federal public service, Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat is to develop and refine guidance to enable departments and agencies to collect and use GBA Plus disaggregated data at the program level, including, for instance, by using Statistics Canada linkable file environments where feasible.

To better understand the inequalities of diverse population groups, the DDAP adopts a Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) lens to critically analyze all intersecting identity factors. Through this work on ongoing investments in disaggregated data and support for community-based research, analysts across the federal government will have better access to the data and research they need to apply a more rigorous and intersectional GBA Plus.

Statistics Canada is improving and expanding data collection allowing for greater opportunities for disaggregation within key population groups through the use of its flagship surveys namely: the Labour Force Survey (LFS), the Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS), and the General Social Survey.

In the first year of the implementation of the DDAP, the agency increased sample sizes for flagship surveys, such as the [Labour Force Survey](#), the [Canadian Community Health Survey](#) and the [General Social Survey](#). Increases to sample sizes and other methodological innovations are also being examined for other surveys, such as the [Survey on Access to Health Care and Pharmaceuticals During the Pandemic](#), the [Mental Health and Access to Care Survey](#), and the [Canadian Social Survey](#). Content has also been added to existing and new surveys ([Canadian Social Survey](#), [Survey Series on People and their Communities](#), [Canadian Survey on Business Conditions](#), [Census of Population](#)), and [administrative data](#) has been linked and integrated to existing data holdings ([Canadian Census Health and Environment Cohort](#))

to allow further disaggregation by population group and geography level, all allowing for a more robust GBA Plus.

Statistics Canada continues to develop rigorous disaggregated research and analysis, so Canadians can increase their understanding of equity, diversity, and inclusion of diverse groups. The Agency uses a variety of dissemination products including flagship publications, infographics, and the Research to Insights series to communicate the insights to Canadians. Moreover, Statistics Canada has made data visualization and other visual aids, such as charts, geographical maps, or other graphical products, part of the Agency's efforts to help users access, explore and compare Statistics Canada data. In addition, the Agency continues to develop or enhance existing Hubs to provide specific related data and information on a given population or specific topic.

A key component of the DDAP is that new data and analyses will be easily accessible to the public, policymakers, and data users through the Gender, Diversity and Inclusion Statistics Hub. The Hub provides a wide range of indicators, research, and analytical reports on diverse population groups to promote intersectional analyses.

The Government of Canada works within a complex data landscape with regard to access to disaggregated data in the context of Indigenous self-determination and data sovereignty, the need to reduce the reporting burden for Indigenous partners, and the work to advance the transfer of services to First Nations, Inuit and Métis. Through ISC, the Government continues to work with Indigenous partners and apply GBA Plus to support its work on a Transformational Approach to Indigenous Data, including the creation of distinctions-based data strategies that will ultimately alleviate data gaps for GBA Plus.

In addition to this work, various federal departments and agencies have also implemented data initiatives specific to their work areas. One such initiative, for example, is the State of the Criminal Justice System, launched in 2019 by Justice Canada's Research and Statistics Division which was designed using a GBA Plus lens. This initiative aims to monitor the performance of Canada's criminal justice system, by identifying and measuring progress towards key outcomes of a system that is fair, effective, and efficient. The framework for this initiative includes outcomes specific to reducing the overrepresentation of Indigenous and Black people in the criminal justice system. Performance is publicly reported through a report and online dashboard. Currently, the dashboard includes thematic pages for three population groups: Indigenous Peoples, Women, and youth. The thematic pages provide a pre-filtered view of indicators with relevant disaggregated data, as well as narrative information about the social contexts in which different population groups come into contact with the criminal justice system. Furthermore, it identifies areas where disaggregated data are not yet available and suggests potential areas for future data development. Additionally, to support policymakers, researchers and communities, including in the conduct of GBA Plus analysis, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) and Statistics Canada are collaborating on the Rural Canada Statistics Portal, which provides disaggregated rural data across various key indicators in support of the

Minister of Rural Economic Development's mandate commitment referencing "[improving] community-level rural data reporting".

Theme 8: Federal Leadership and Accountability (Recommendations 12,13,14,15)

12. That Women and Gender Equality Canada report to Parliament annually on the results of the GBA Plus departmental implementation survey, and the use and application of GBA Plus by all federal agencies and departments; and that this report evaluate a) the impact of GBA Plus on policy and program decisions and outcomes and b) federal training programs and tools.

13. That the Clerk of the Privy Council be a Champion for GBA Plus, leading the Privy Council Office, and working with the Treasury Board Secretariat and Women and Gender Equality Canada to support GBA Plus implementation throughout the federal government.

14. That by 31 December 2023, each federal department and agency appoint a GBA Plus Champion who will work to:

- develop a centre of excellence with resources and tools specific to the needs of their work;***
- implement best practices for GBA Plus; and***
- improve departmental performance on GBA Plus, as measured by Women and Gender Equality Canada's annual implementation surveys and reported as per Recommendation 12.***

15. That the Government of Canada factor the quality of departmental implementation of GBA Plus into senior management performance evaluations.

The current engagement process has included discussions at the level of deputy heads across the federal government, ensuring that the most senior leaders in government are part of the work to advance GBA Plus across federal departments and agencies, including a Deputy Secretary GBA Plus Champion at the Privy Council Office. Under the MRAP, deputy heads of federal departments and agencies will continue to be engaged on GBA Plus, which will include, for example, an annual meeting to review progress across federal departments and agencies on the implementation of GBA Plus institutional capacity frameworks.

Improving accountability and transparency continue to be important considerations in the current work to enhance GBA Plus, with the Department for Women and Gender Equality acting as an enabler of systemic change, working in partnership with central agencies to improve government-wide performance and competency. Moreover, this is a collaborative effort with other government partners, as my mandate letter notes that this work is to be supported by the Minister of Housing and Diversity and Inclusion, the President of the Treasury Board of Canada, the Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, the Minister of Rural Economic Development, the Minister of Tourism and

Associate Minister of Finance and the Minister of Employment, Workforce Development and Disability Inclusion.

With respect to the Committee's recommendation concerning GBA Plus Champions in each federal department and agency, work to improve GBA Plus is ongoing. Progress is evident: the GBA Plus Implementation Survey – which asks federal departments to report on the state of GBA Plus implementation within their organization – shows that most departments and agencies (79 percent in 2019-20) had a GBA Plus Champion or other senior management representative leading GBA Plus, and that more organizations had a Champion than in the previous (2018-19) survey. However, there is still work to be done, and the Government continues to work across departments to improve GBA Plus governance and capacity, including through regular engagement with the GBA Plus Champions network and the Interdepartmental Committee of working-level GBA Plus focal points.

The Auditor General's May 2022 report called on the Government to monitor regularly and comprehensively and report publicly on the status of GBA Plus implementation across the federal government, including plans to advance GBA Plus implementation. This broadly aligns with the Committee's recommendation on public reporting on GBA Plus implementation. The departmental GBA Plus Supplementary Information Tables produced with Departmental Results Reports show the GBA Plus institutional capacity. The different links to these tables are available on Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat website.

Moreover, to respond to these calls for more transparency, the Government has committed to:

- To adjust the reporting requirements on institutional capacity in the Supplementary Information Tables as required by Women and Gender Equality Canada;
- improving the annual GBA Plus Implementation Survey by addressing the methodological and other concerns identified by the Office of the Auditor General of Canada; and,
- ensuring public reporting of information that demonstrates progress and challenges at a government-wide level and over time.

As a first step in this work, I am pleased to report that summarized results of all four GBA Plus Implementation Surveys undertaken to date have been posted on the WAGE departmental website. As we go forward with future surveys, the results of these will continue to be made publicly available.

I would once again like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Standing Committee for your important work and for your commitment to ensuring that various intersecting identity factors and lived experience of different groups of women, men and gender-diverse people are considered throughout the development of the Government's policies, programs and other initiatives.