

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE AND ACTION PLAN – ORIGINAL

Evaluation Report Title: Evaluation of the Access to Justice in Both Official Languages Initiative
Approval Date of Evaluation by the Deputy Minister (12/2021):

<p>Recommendation 1: To ensure the broadest reach possible of individuals and communities who may benefit from the activities funded by the Initiative, including those who are more isolated or marginalized, the Programs Branch, in collaboration with the Official Languages Directorate, should facilitate the engagement of a broader range of organizations as part of its information pillar.</p>
<p>Rationale for Recommendation: The initiative has accomplished a great deal by establishing a comprehensive strategy to provide legal information in both official languages. To this end, the evaluation helped to identify the need to diversify and broaden the range of organizations involved in implementing activities related to the initiative’s Information pillar to ensure that there are no systemic barriers to accessing the available support for certain eligible groups or individuals. For example, a legal information centre may be successful in providing legal information to the community at large but may not be able to reach some sub-groups of the target population. In other words, some potential recipients may be willing to go to the service provider, while in other cases the service provider must go to the recipients in their own environment. The COVID-19 pandemic has also had a significant impact on organizations implementing legal information activities; for example, vulnerable populations have been particularly affected by the pandemic, and it has been difficult for many funded organizations to reach them in person.</p>
<p>Management Response: The Programs Branch and the Official Languages Directorate agree with this recommendation.</p> <p>Having a greater diversity among the organizations would increase the impact of the Initiative on individuals and communities.</p>

Action(s)	Deliverable(s)	Accountability	Planned Completion Date
What SMART action(s) will be taken to address this recommendation?	Expected deliverable(s) to demonstrate the completion of the action.	Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) responsible for implementing the action.	
Conduct research to identify new recipients who could help to address this need.	An overview of groups that may be eligible for funding.	Senior Assistant Deputy Minister (SADM), Policy Sector	September 2022
Raise awareness of the Support Fund among groups and encourage them to submit funding applications if they have projects that may be eligible.	An email to the organizations identified.	SADM, Policy Sector	April 2023

Recommendation 2: To maximize the contributions of the Advisory Committee on Access to Justice in Both Official Languages and the Federal-Provincial-Territorial (FPT) Working Group, the Official Languages Directorate should consider having each hold two meetings per year, including one in-person (when feasible), and to find opportunities for both entities to collaborate directly when appropriate.

Rationale for Recommendation: The Advisory Committee and the FPT Working Group are seen as highly relevant forums for fostering coordination, sharing information and establishing priorities. As noted throughout the evaluation, improving access to justice in both official languages requires the participation of a wide range of government and non-government actors. The Advisory Committee and the FPT Working Group are the only means that allow these stakeholders to come together regularly and discuss relevant issues and challenges.

The evaluation suggests that further interaction between both of these structures would facilitate their respective work. In practical terms, this means that government representatives from the FPT Working Group could attend part of the Advisory Committee meeting, as appropriate, and vice versa. This would promote greater transparency on the overall strategy to provide legal information in both official languages and the emergence of a shared vision among all key stakeholders.

Management Response: The Official Languages Directorate agrees with this recommendation in principle.

FPT Meetings: The FPT Working Group has decided to meet semi-annually in 2021–2022. This frequency should continue in the future, unless otherwise indicated by Working Group members. **Advisory Committee Meetings:** The Advisory Committee’s terms of reference provide for one meeting per year. However, there may be times when more than one consultation session per year would be useful, especially during the year preceding the renewal of the five-year objectives of the Access to Justice in Both Official Languages Support Fund. The Official Languages Directorate will consider holding a second meeting per year, depending on specific needs. **Collaboration between the two groups:** To promote interaction between the two groups, the PT co-chair of the FPT Working Group is formally invited to each Advisory Committee meeting. In addition, the FPT Working Group’s terms of reference indicate that community stakeholders will participate by invitation only and within the parameters determined by the FPT co-chairs. As a result, the Official Languages Directorate is not in a position to regularly invite Advisory Committee representatives to Working Group meetings. The Official Languages Directorate is of the opinion that one way to increase the interaction of all players involved in access to justice in both official languages would be to organize a summit on access to justice in both official languages as part of the government’s next five-year Action Plan for Official Languages. This summit could bring together members of the FPT Working Group, the Advisory Committee, academia, the Canadian Francophonie and other federal government departments.

Action(s)	Deliverable(s)	Accountability	Planned Completion Date
What SMART action(s) will be taken to address this recommendation?	Expected deliverable(s) to demonstrate the completion of the action.	ADM responsible for implementing the action.	
Plan two FPT Working Group meetings per year, one in person, when possible.	Agendas for formal FPT Working Group meetings in the fall and spring of each year starting in 2021–2022.	ADM, Public Law and Legislative Services Sector	December 2022
Explore the possibility of holding two meetings per year for the Advisory Committee, depending on consultation needs.	Taking into account the five-year cycle of the program, establish a schedule of meetings in advance, indicating the years when it would be useful to convene semi-annual Advisory Committee meetings.	ADM, Public Law and Legislative Services Sector	December 2022

<p>Study the possibility of organizing a summit on access to justice in both official languages as part of the development of the Justice component of the government's 2023–2028 five-year Action Plan for Official Languages.</p>	<p>Discussion notes about the summit or other documents related to the proposed directions for the next Action Plan for Official Languages, if applicable.</p>	<p>ADM, Public Law and Legislative Services Sector</p>	<p>April 2023</p>
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<p>Recommendation 3: To further include equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) considerations in the ongoing management of the initiative, the Programs Branch, in collaboration with the Official Languages Directorate, should explore new data sources that can support its ongoing Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) efforts.</p>
<p>Rationale for Recommendation: The evaluation found that the Department of Justice has incorporated EDI considerations into the ongoing management of the initiative. The Department of Justice has conducted a GBA+ and has encouraged key stakeholders to pay more attention to these considerations. It also found that reporting activities related to initiative-funded activities do not systematically collect identity data on project participants for the Information or Training pillars. In addition, there was no data available to help us better understand the diversity in the pool of potential recipients of initiative-funded activities. While this in itself is not surprising, as such data have not been collected in the past, it provides an opportunity to continue to improve existing information and use all available data to reasonably inform decision-making.</p>
<p>Management Response: The Programs Branch and the Official Languages Directorate agree with this recommendation.</p> <p>Management recognizes that an increase in relevant data is essential to conducting GBA+, which in itself will improve the incorporation of EDI considerations into the ongoing management of the Initiative.</p>

<p>Action(s) What SMART action(s) will be taken to address this recommendation?</p>	<p>Deliverable(s) Expected deliverable(s) to demonstrate the completion of the action.</p>	<p>Accountability ADM responsible for implementing the action.</p>	<p>Planned Completion Date</p>
<p>Inventory the data we currently collect and the sources of that information to develop a profile of our information needs.</p>	<p>A data inventory and information needs profile.</p>	<p>SADM, Policy Sector, in collaboration with the ADM, Public Law and Legislative Services Sector.</p>	<p>September 2022</p>
<p>Inform Support Fund recipients of our information needs specific to GBA+ and gather their comments and suggestions to support our review.</p>	<p>An email to recipients sharing the current inventory of data, our needs and their responses.</p>	<p>SADM, Policy Sector</p>	<p>December 2022</p>
<p>Search for other sources of data that could address the information needs.</p>	<p>Add other data sources to the inventory.</p>	<p>SADM, Policy Sector, in collaboration with the ADM, Public Law and Legislative Services Sector</p>	<p>April 2023</p>