



Highlights of [GAO-03-320](#), a report to the Committee on Governmental Affairs, U.S. Senate

Why GAO Did This Study

GAO’s work has repeatedly shown that mission fragmentation and program overlap are widespread in the federal government. Implementation of federal crosscutting programs is often characterized by numerous individual agency efforts that are implemented with little apparent regard for the presence and efforts of related activities. GAO has in the past offered possible approaches for managing crosscutting programs, and has stated that the Government Performance and Results Act could provide a framework for addressing crosscutting efforts.

GAO was asked to examine the actions and plans agencies reported in addressing the crosscutting issues of drug control, family poverty, financial institution regulation, and public health systems. GAO reviewed the fiscal year 2001 performance reports and fiscal year 2003 performance plans for the major agencies involved in these issues.

RESULTS-ORIENTED MANAGEMENT

Agency Crosscutting Actions and Plans in Drug Control, Family Poverty, Financial Institution Regulation, and Public Health Systems

What GAO Found

GAO did not independently verify or assess the information it obtained from agency performance reports and plans. On the basis of the reports and plans, GAO found the following:

- Most agencies involved in the crosscutting issues discussed coordination with other agencies in their performance reports and plans, although the extent of coordination and level of detail provided varied considerably.
- Most of the agencies we reviewed reported mixed progress in achieving their fiscal year 2001 goals—meeting some goals, missing others, or not reporting on progress. Some of the agencies that did not meet their goals provided reasonable explanations and/or strategies that appeared reasonably linked to meeting the goals in the future.
- The agencies GAO reviewed generally planned to pursue goals in fiscal year 2003 similar to those in 2001, although some agencies added new goals, dropped existing goals, or dropped goals altogether. Many agencies discussed strategies that appeared to be reasonably linked to achieving their fiscal year 2003 goals.

Agencies Involved in Crosscutting Areas Show Opportunities for Coordination

Agency involved	Crosscutting program areas			
	Drug control	Family poverty	Financial institution regulation	Public health systems
Agriculture		✓		✓
Federal Reserve			✓	
Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation			✓	
HHS		✓		✓
HUD		✓		
Labor		✓		
Justice	✓			
National Credit Union Administration			✓	
State	✓			
Transportation	✓			
Treasury	✓			
Comptroller of the Currency			✓	
Office of Thrift Supervision			✓	

Source: GAO analysis.

www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-03-320.

To view the full report, including the scope and methodology, click on the link above. For more information, contact Patricia A. Dalton at (202)-512-6806.