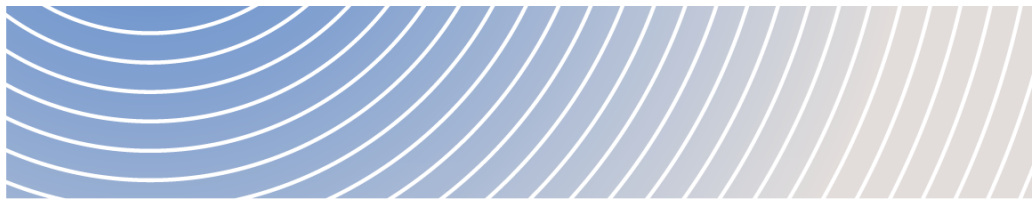


# Guidance: Gender-based Analysis Plus in Impact Assessment



THIS GUIDANCE IS PART OF THE PRACTITIONER'S GUIDE TO  
FEDERAL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS UNDER THE *IMPACT  
ASSESSMENT ACT*

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The [Practitioner's Guide](#) is an evergreen document. Check it periodically, its contents may have been updated because of ongoing engagement and feedback received. If you have feedback, please send it to [guidancefeedback-retroactionorientation@iaac-aeic.gc.ca](mailto:guidancefeedback-retroactionorientation@iaac-aeic.gc.ca).

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# 1. Introduction

This guidance provides practitioners<sup>1</sup> with guiding principles, best practices, examples and tools to apply Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) to impact assessment. Practitioners have different roles and information needs within the impact assessment process. This guidance has information that may be generally applicable to all groups, but it is not designed to address all unique needs.

GBA Plus is an analytical process that can guide practitioners in identifying who is impacted by a project and assess how they may experience impacts differently (see [Annex 1](#) for key terms). Using GBA Plus in impact assessment allows you to describe the broad scope of a project's potential positive and adverse effects under the *Impact Assessment Act*. To be rigorous, the application of GBA Plus must be integral to all project activities, including through its planning, design, implementation, and monitoring phases. A GBA Plus must be comprehensive so that all project activities are informed and influenced by input from diverse groups.

In addition to the legislative requirement to conduct GBA Plus in impact assessment, GBA Plus has long been regarded as a best practice in many disciplines (Johnson and Beaudet, 2013; Canadian Institute of Health Research (CIHR), 2014; Johnson, Greaves and Repta, 2009; Tannenbaum et al., 2019; World Health Organization, 2020). GBA Plus recognizes that historical and current power structures (e.g., laws, policies, governments and other institutions) have shaped society and contributed to inequalities. Designated projects—and the positive and negative impacts they may cause—are layered on top of these structures and also contribute to shaping and reshaping these structures. Recognizing this context is important to understanding why the impacts of a project may be different for diverse groups of people, and how projects have the potential to both reinforce and transform existing inequalities or unequal power relations in communities. Importantly, GBA Plus can be adapted to ensure the methods and approach are culturally appropriate. Many Indigenous organizations have developed culturally competent and distinctions-based GBA Plus resources and tools (see Section 6 for links).

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## 1.1. Benefits of Gender-based Analysis Plus in Impact Assessment

- **Better public participation:** Applying GBA Plus to impact assessment helps practitioners and decision-makers understand, describe and mitigate adverse impacts on diverse populations. GBA Plus drives more meaningful and comprehensive feedback through public discussion. It is also required to stimulate the type of information exchange needed for an assessment. Effective interaction includes considerations of who is “at the table” and works to remove barriers, ensure inclusive practices, cultural relevance and cultural humility for those not “at

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<sup>1</sup> Practitioners are interpreted broadly to mean individuals engaged in the impact assessment process. These can include proponents, consultants hired by proponents, community members and Indigenous peoples engaged in data collection and analysis for an impact assessment.



the table” in an effort to fully represent community members. GBA Plus should be community driven, with an emphasis on including diverse perspectives.

- **Better research:** GBA Plus results in a more complete and rigorous assessment of a project’s potential positive and negative effects on diverse community members.
- **Better evidence:** GBA Plus in impact assessment provides additional relevant evidence to support decision-making.



## 2. Methodologies

GBA Plus is an analytical process—a way of thinking, as opposed to a unique set of prescribed methods. For example, in quantitative statistical analysis, specific methods help analysts to understand relationships between variables. In GBA Plus, the methods and tools used to understand an issue like underemployment among certain populations in a specific community are chosen based on the context and draw from established methods. These might include:

- the use of descriptive statistics (e.g., percentage of people underemployed, disaggregated by gender, age, ability, ethnic origin or other relevant factors);
- interviews (e.g., to contextualize statistics and understand why particular subgroups are underemployed); and
- community forums (e.g., to discuss findings and propose solutions).

The appropriate methods for a GBA Plus will depend on the community and project context. Practitioners should provide a rationale for the methodologies they apply, including references to relevant literature, best practices and input from communities.

GBA Plus provides a framework and a set of analytical questions to guide an impact assessment. It is used to identify who is impacted by a project, and assess how people may experience impacts differently in order to improve project design and develop mitigation measures that address these differential impacts (Women and Gender Equality, 2021). GBA Plus considers many identity factors and how these intersect with context and lived experiences to impact how people experience projects. In this way, GBA Plus is an intersectional analysis. An intersectional analysis recognizes that identities cannot be separated from the systems of power and privilege, like racism, colonialism and discrimination (for more information on intersectionality see: Hankivsky 2014; Manning 2014; CRIAW 2021; CIHR 2021).

For impact assessments led by the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (the Agency), Review Panels, and proponents, GBA Plus should be integrated into all aspects of assessments: planning, impact statements, impact assessments, decision making, follow-up, compliance and enforcement.

We know that projects do not impact all people in the same way. Canadian research demonstrates that designated projects impact women, Indigenous peoples and other historically excluded groups in unequal ways (Goldenberg et al., 2010; Nightingale, Tester and Aaruaq 2017; Cox & Mills, 2015; Windsor & McVey, 2005; O’Faircheallaigh, 2013). For example, research has highlighted the links between resource development projects and risks of gender-based violence and sexual harassment for Indigenous, Métis and Inuit women in Canada (Amnesty International, 2016; National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, 2019; Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, 2021). It is, therefore, standard practice in impact assessment to consider a project’s effects on groups that are historically excluded or more vulnerable to a project’s adverse effects. This can include populations close to the project site, young or elderly



populations, or employees of the project. GBA Plus can help engage communities in identifying and interpreting impacts and collaboratively developing mitigation measures.

GBA Plus prompts practitioners to challenge assumptions and ask why a particular disparity exists. This is especially relevant to impact assessment because the “why” allows proponents, federal authorities and individuals involved in impact assessment to identify evidence-based, targeted and appropriate mitigation measures. For example, an impact assessment may identify that there are few women working at similar projects in the area. Asking “why” in this case may identify structural barriers like:

- lack of skill development or educational opportunities for women;
- a limited awareness among project proponents of the benefits of employment diversity;
- systemic sexism and racism in the workplace;
- lack of childcare;
- challenges with rotating work schedules;
- lack of affordable and safe transportation; or
- gendered power dynamics in communities that limit women’s opportunities.

Considered from an intersectional approach, each of these issues may impact diverse groups of women in unique ways and require targeted mitigation approaches. For example, mitigation measures that only address sexism or policies to hire more women generally fail to address the unique and intersecting impact of sexism and racism for Indigenous and racialized women. Women living with disabilities can face multiple intersecting points of discrimination leading to barriers in the workplace and labour force (see: Buettgen et al., 2018, DAWN Canada, 2019).

### **Final Report on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls**

- The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls was a two-year process of truth gathering. The final report from the inquiry was released in June 2019.
- The report provides details on the historical and contemporary contexts related to Indigenous rights and colonization in Canada, and aims to support understandings of violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people.
- The report findings and 231 Calls to Justice are organized into 19 themes. One of the themes focuses on the links between resource development projects and violence against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people.
- One of the Calls to Justice focuses on the need for a comprehensive GBA Plus within impact assessment to uncover and address project impacts on Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people.
- Practitioners are encouraged to read the Calls to Justice and aim to integrate actions to address these calls in their impact assessment practice.



Considering a wide range of different backgrounds, identity factors and experiences can strengthen your analysis of project impacts. It is from these intersectional considerations that important information emerges. For example, Indigenous youth and Elders (whose experiences are shaped by intersecting factors like age, culture, ethnicity and geography) contribute important knowledge to an assessment about how a project might change the environment. Their knowledge may be unique and based on their age, relationship with the land, and relative position in their communities. Men working in the skilled trades and employed in the resource sector are also a diverse group (with varying possible intersections of gender, age, culture, ethnicity, and ability). Some individuals within that group may have experienced systemic forms of exclusion, such as racism, ageism and homophobia. Actions to create safe and healthy workplaces need to account for the intersecting identities of men and may need to account for these structural issues. By thinking about people across a range of identity factors, the impact assessment process can deliberately seek out the views of a diverse range of potentially impacted people and contribute to a better understanding of how those people might be affected by a project.

Practitioners have established expertise in impact assessment. Existing guidance on the assessment of health impacts, social impacts, and human health risks continues to be relevant for the thorough assessment of projects. GBA Plus is an analytical process that should be used within these standardized assessment methods; it is not a prescribed method in and of itself. For many proponents and practitioners, the addition of GBA Plus to impact assessment is not new; for others, GBA Plus refines existing analyses or works to establish links across environmental, social, health and economic impacts to illustrate intersectional and diverse effects.

Importantly, practitioners conducting GBA Plus should:

- have broad knowledge of cultural sensitivity, safety and humility;
- understand best practices for collecting sensitive data confidentially and of community-based research methods; and
- be flexible in adapting methods and practices to the community context.

## 3. Gender-based Analysis Plus - Key steps

Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines (TISG) are established early on in an assessment. They provide project-specific expectations and clearly link GBA Plus to the assessment of potential project effects (e.g., health, social, economic). Using GBA Plus in the TISG helps to ensure that GBA Plus is integrated throughout and results in a comprehensive assessment of positive and adverse project effects, as illustrated in the following example.

### Project example—Voisey’s Bay Nickel Mine

Owned by Vale, Voisey’s Bay is a nickel mine on the north coast of Labrador. It was approved in 1999 following an assessment by a Joint Review Panel (JRP).

The JRP’s work at Voisey’s Bay was “the first time gender [was] formally incorporated into the world of environmental assessment” (Archibald and Crnkovich, 1999, p. 23). The inclusion of gender in the assessment was in part due to the composition of the JRP, which included diverse panel members (highlighting the importance of GBA Plus in all parts of the process, including during panel appointments).

For example, in the environmental impact statement (EIS) guidelines, the JRP required the proponent to provide all data disaggregated by age, gender, Indigenous status, and community. It also requested an explanation of how the proponent used research to identify project impacts on women. The JRP held separate technical hearings focused on women’s issues. Numerous women and women’s organizations delivered submissions and presentations. These submissions raised concerns about the mine’s likely impacts on crime, substance abuse, gender-based violence, and access to country foods. Finally, in its report, the JRP made three recommendations related to women. The province ultimately adopted one recommendation, requiring proponents to develop a women’s employment plan as a condition for mine approval. Requiring women’s employment or diversity employment plans is now common practice for project approvals in Newfoundland and Labrador (Manning et al., 2018).

### Where to start

The following section includes some key points that describe how to start GBA Plus during the early Planning phase of a project assessment.

1. **Understand GBA Plus:** GBA Plus is about people, what makes them diverse, and how designated projects impact people differently. Identities matter—how people identify themselves, and how they are identified by others, affects their experience of the world. In some cases, someone’s identity can influence their power and resources in society, or their possible experiences of discrimination.

The *Impact Assessment Act* refers to sex, gender and intersecting identities (paragraph 22 (1)(s)). The terms sex and gender mean different things, but may also be related to each other. Understanding the distinctions provides clarity and allows for precise measurement



and communication when describing impacts (Clayton and Tannenbaum, 2016). For example, “sex” should be used when describing a physiological difference in exposure, metabolism or effect of a chemical or toxin in a male or female body. Gender should be used when referring to a social impact that affects men and women or gender non-binary people differently, such as caregiving, expectations of gender-specific roles, and relative power to influence decision-making. There are many aspects of identity that intersect with sex and gender such as age, ability, ethnicity and culture. These identities then intersect and interact with structural forms of exclusion (like poverty, racism, colonialism, sexism and ableism) to influence how people and communities experience potential project impacts. GBA Plus must move beyond gender to consider these intersecting identities and structures to fully understand potential project impacts and plan effective mitigations.

- 2. Know the impacted community:** Understanding the history of a potentially impacted community helps to understand its current context. Social processes and power structures that create strengths, resilience and inequalities in communities affect people differently. Community experiences with systemic racism, sexism and colonialism are important to recognize and understand when considering potential project impacts. This knowledge is critical to understanding why some people (and groups of people) are better positioned to benefit from designated projects or why impacts might be different for some subgroups in a particular community.

For First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities, it is essential to understand the pre-colonial history of their communities and the impacts of colonialism. The historical and social context within a community are critical to understanding the issues that are important in that setting, and how these issues should be measured, understood, reported and mitigated.

For other historically excluded groups, like 2SLGBTQQIA people, people with disabilities, and youth, the barriers to participating in impact assessment processes and the experience of project risks and benefits are unique. Deep knowledge and trust are needed to ensure their views are included. Ideally, trusted community-based groups or experts would facilitate the involvement of historically excluded groups in impact assessment.

- 3. Early, meaningful engagement and consultation:** Engage in early, meaningful and ongoing community consultation that deliberately seeks out participation from diverse groups within the community. Meaningful engagement can start with asking diverse community members how they want to be engaged and what they need for meaningful engagement to occur (e.g., resources, support, time) (FemNetNorth & DAWN, 2014). Community engagement and consultation supports an understanding of the social and historical context of the community. Ensuring broad participation and asking “who is at the table and who is missing?” helps practitioners develop relationships within the community to support the accurate scoping of potential issues of importance to communities within the impact assessment. Asking critical questions about who is represented can also expose existing power inequities that limit participation by some individuals or groups. For example, practitioners may require separate consultation sessions for some community members to create a safe space where they can raise their concerns. The *Impact Assessment Act* emphasizes early, meaningful engagement and broad-based consultation and is not

exclusive to GBA Plus but is part of the assessment as a whole. For more information, see our [guidance on public participation](#).

4. **Establish a baseline:** To accurately assess project impacts over the short and long terms, analysts need an accurate baseline of the community. Without an accurate baseline, it is difficult to determine whether negative and positive effects are associated with the project or other issues.

Baseline information about the community should:

- a. include qualitative and quantitative data that presents a detailed socioeconomic profile of the community;
- b. disaggregate data by sex, age, ethnicity, Indigeneity, ability and any other community-relevant identity factors;
- c. incorporate, where possible, information from government statistics, non-governmental organization reports, academic sources and community consultations. These sources can be used to describe community contexts (including history), existing inequalities, and existing gender issues in the community (e.g., gender-based violence, gendered divisions of labour, and gender roles, responsibilities, decision-making/resource control); and
- d. complement existing data sources with community-developed indicators and locally collected data (see, for example, Shandro et al., 2014).

Establishing a baseline community profile will mean recognizing and valuing diverse forms of data and knowledge, including Indigenous and community knowledge. For more details, consult the Agency's [Guidance on Indigenous Knowledge](#) and [Guidance on Considering Community Knowledge](#) within the impact assessment process. The [annex](#) provides information on existing statistical data sources to support your collection of baseline information.

5. **Assessment of effects:** Steps 1–4 provide the foundation for the assessment of potential project effects. Meaningful engagement, understanding community context and issues, and a thorough and accurate baseline allow for a comprehensive effects analysis.

The project-specific Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines will set out the Agency's requirements for the proponent's Impact Statement, including the application of GBA Plus throughout the effects analysis.

### **GBA Plus in Effects Assessment**

[Kudz Ze Kayah](#) Project, Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board (2020)

- Effects to personal safety, specifically violence against women and gender and sexual minorities, were examined as part of the project assessment.
- The effects analysis focused on community effects (including effects to families and community well-being) and work effects (including harassment and abuse).
- Existing data on impacted communities reviewed in relation to published reports and research on the links between resource projects and violence against women were used to demonstrate that the project was likely to have significant adverse effects on the safety of women and gender and sexual minorities.
- A series of mitigation measures was proposed to address these predicted effects.

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## **3.1. Best practices**

- Multiple sources of information may be needed, including qualitative and quantitative data. Methods of information collection should remain flexible and responsive to communities. Practitioners should seek to/be open to gather[ing] information through means other than written submissions, such as oral communications, artistic means, ceremonies or cultural expressions.
- Outcomes and measurement methods should reflect community and Indigenous knowledge. For example, how are outcomes defined in that particular community? How does the community interpret social, economic, health and environmental effects? What indicators does the community propose to measure these effects?
- Analysis should move beyond the descriptive (e.g., percentage of low-income people) to be intersectional by asking critical questions about social roles, relationships, relative power in communities and intersections among these factors that create disparities. For example, the practitioner could ask if there are limited employment or educational opportunities among subsets of the population, or if there are historical or contextual issues that have limited certain groups' access to opportunities (e.g., links between access to education and childcare in remote communities). Statistics need to be situated within the broader community context in order to be meaningful.
- Use the best available evidence where data are missing or limited. Practitioners may need to collect primary data. A best practice is to engage community members directly in data collection and in documenting community issues.

**Projects can have positive or adverse health, social or economic effects.**

Enhancement and mitigation measures can help address these effects. For example:

- Health effects
  - Workplace wellness programs can meet the different health needs of diverse subgroups of employees.
  - Jurisdictions could examine what health services are offered in the region, whether those services address the needs of diverse populations, and whether the services can address the current and longer-term potential health impacts of the project.
- Social effects
  - Transient, male-dominated workforces can have adverse social impacts in communities, particularly for young and Indigenous women. The interrelationships between sexism, racism and colonialism shape these impacts (National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, 2019). Robust workplace education and sensitivity training, as well as strict enforcement of harassment, alcohol and drug policies, may be required. Enforcement must include real consequences for harassing or violent behaviour.
- Economic effects
  - Housing costs—the proponent could ensure adequate housing is built for its workers in order to reduce the burden on the local housing stock.
  - As with all data collection, analysis or reporting, practitioners involved in impact assessment should be aware of:
    - ethics protocols for dealing with primary data;
    - protocols for the collection and reporting of data within Indigenous communities (Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, 2014; First Nations Information Governance Centre, 2013); and
    - confidentiality guidelines for disaggregated data from small or unique populations (Statistics Canada, 2011).
  - Use an interdisciplinary approach: To enhance understanding of complex issues, engage individuals with varying perspectives, skills in qualitative and quantitative methods, and community-based perspectives.
  - Be aware of unintended consequences:
    - For example, project workers may create economic benefits for community businesses. However, project workers may also increase vehicle traffic, which may increase risks to safety. This safety risk may affect specific subgroups of the community, such as children or seniors.
    - Workplace health services for project workers are a positive way to support workers' health and well-being, but those services may have unintended consequences if they draw health professionals away from community services, thus limiting or reducing personnel available to community members.

**Table 1: Examples: What difference does GBA Plus make?**

Without GBA Plus	With GBA Plus
The mine will aim to recruit workers from surrounding communities (target: 60% of workforce).	Extensive community consultation revealed that unemployment is a particular issue for young men and Indigenous women. Consultations addressed employment and educational opportunities in the community and culturally-specific needs. As a result, the proponent will seek community input to help develop targeted hiring and skills training goals for these two underrepresented groups to work across a range of positions and seniority levels. Workplace policies will also focus on such additional concerns as the need for flexible work schedules to accommodate cultural needs, and for cultural sensitivity and anti-racism training.
Concerns related to housing cost and availability will be addressed by building temporary housing at the worksite.	Separate consultations with local Indigenous women's groups were held and a detailed history of impacts of transient populations, including colonial legacies, was prepared and discussed. Within this context, Indigenous women highlighted specific impacts: safety concerns, demand on local community resources (e.g., housing, policing, health and social services), appropriate employment conditions for Indigenous women at the project site (e.g., separate housing), the need for cultural competency training and enforceable safety rules at the project site.
It was determined that the contaminant of potential concern did not have a significant impact on the local community.	Were different thresholds by sex considered? Is it possible that the contaminant would have different physiological impacts in males and females? How do we know? Was the contaminant present in air, soil or water? Is it possible that some community members may be more impacted, such as children, the elderly, pregnant or breastfeeding women, and people who eat country foods?



## 4. Gender-based Analysis Plus in decision-making

The impact assessment report sets out the positive and adverse effects that are likely to be caused by the carrying out of the project. Based on the report, which includes the GBA Plus, the Minister of Environment and Climate Change or Governor in Council must decide whether a project's adverse effects that are within federal jurisdiction, and adverse effects that are directly linked or incidental to other federal decisions that would allow the project to be carried out, are in the public interest.

The application of GBA Plus to the impact assessment process allows for a more detailed and specific description of positive and adverse effects, as well as more detailed enhancement and mitigation options. For example, if a project is expected to have a positive economic effect in the neighbouring community, the application of GBA Plus will provide specific details about who will benefit, who may be adversely affected and whether specific mitigation measures are warranted.

The application of GBA Plus is expected to refine the analyses of social, economic or health effects to enhance understanding and improve mitigation efforts. For example, if the impact assessment described a negative effect to country food harvesting, the GBA Plus may refine our understanding of this effect by highlighting that the specific country food was primarily harvested by women or that part of the harvesting process (e.g., the preparing of meat or fur) was completed primarily by women.

This process of refining might reveal unique impacts on women in terms of disrupted cultural practice, loss of income (if the food source is sold or if materials are used for saleable crafts), and possibly diminished health (through the loss of a nutritionally-dense traditional food source). This very thorough description of effects to country food harvesting would allow for more obvious links to targeted mitigation measures, such as changes to the project footprint to protect the source of the country food, or monitoring programs to ensure predicted effects are accurate. The application of GBA Plus did not propel this effect on country foods into consideration, but it allowed for a more detailed analysis of who was impacted and possible mitigation measures.

The Minister of Environment and Climate Change or Governor in Council's public interest decision would be based on the impact assessment report and a consideration of:

- the designated project's contribution to sustainability;
- the extent to which the adverse effects within federal jurisdiction or that result from federal decision are significant;
- mitigation measures;
- the impact the designated project may have on any affected Indigenous groups and any adverse impact that the designated project may have on the rights of Indigenous peoples; and



- the extent to which the effects of the designated project hinder or contribute to the Government of Canada's ability to meet its environmental obligations and climate change commitments.

These considerations could be refined further by examining disaggregated data and applying GBA Plus to describe which specific subgroups may be most impacted. For example, the impacts on Indigenous peoples' rights could be different for Elders, young people or women. Once the public interest decision is made, the Minister issues a decision statement with conditions, which may contain mitigation measures to address adverse effects (including those highlighted by the GBA Plus).

Other effects described in the impact assessment report that are outside federal jurisdiction may be jointly addressed by provincial, territorial or Indigenous jurisdictional partners or voluntarily by proponents. Federally, the government could apply complementary measures, such as federal programs, to the project area to support the mitigation of impacts that are outside federal jurisdiction. The federal government, if needed, could work collaboratively with Indigenous, provincial and territorial governments to appropriately target federal programs (e.g., targeted skills development programs for underrepresented groups, Indigenous wellness programs for impacted communities' health promotion programs).



## 5. Gender-based Analysis Plus in follow-up programs

Follow-up, monitoring, compliance and enforcement are distinct processes during the impact assessment and are subject to varying legislative requirements. In some cases, mitigation measures or follow-up plans related to GBA Plus are implemented voluntarily as part of good practice prior to the start of a project or as part of project plans. For example, proponents may commit to developing employment-equity hiring plans and to reporting on progress in implementing these plans. Follow-up programs verify the accuracy of the impact assessment and the effectiveness of any mitigation measures.

Follow-up program requirements are implemented by proponents. Other partners may also have specific requirements based on their jurisdiction and may have a role in reviewing and analyzing the results of a follow-up program required through the *Impact Assessment Act*.

### Example of GBA Plus in monitoring and follow-up

Red Mountain Gold Mine, British Columbia (Approved 2019)

- Proponent commits to using a GBA Plus to assess outcomes included in the project's social and economic monitoring plan.
- Lack of childcare in the community cited as a barrier to local employment; proponent commits to support childcare programs if necessary.

The Agency leads on compliance and enforcement and focuses on promoting, monitoring and facilitating proponents' compliance with conditions set out in decision statements. Any adverse effects within federal jurisdiction, including any effects highlighted by the GBA Plus that have associated conditions, would be monitored through this mechanism. The Agency may also establish monitoring committees to provide oversight for follow-up and adaptive management. These committees may include local community members, among other stakeholders.





## 6. Conclusion

Overall, the goal of GBA Plus is to understand how a project might affect diverse groups of people differently and identify ways to address these impacts to ensure a more equitable distribution of benefits where possible.

The addition of GBA Plus to impact assessment does not change the basic review processes that Agency staff and federal authorities conduct once they receive a proponent's Impact Statement. Agency staff will assess the Impact Statement for conformity with the Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines and conduct a technical review to assess the quality of the Impact Statement. The Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines, issued at the end of the Planning phase, will provide project-specific guidelines to the proponent. GBA Plus will be integrated throughout the Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines such that the analysis of effects (e.g., environmental, health, social, economic) will include an analysis of disproportionate effects on diverse subgroups where applicable.

As described in section 3, the basic steps to applying GBA Plus include gathering appropriate data, understanding the project's context, and asking analytical questions to determine whether the project is expected to have disproportionate effects on diverse or potentially vulnerable subgroups. Agency staff will look for some key indicators that the GBA Plus was integrated throughout the Impact Statement and that the analysis was thorough and complete (see Table 1). Note that not all expectations listed in the table will necessarily be required for each project. The depth and extent of analysis will vary according to project-specific circumstances, including the potential issues associated with each project. Overall expectations that apply to the Impact Statement as a whole—such as clearly reporting on methods and data used, and transparently reporting data gaps, assumptions and a rationale for the methodological approach—also apply to the GBA Plus aspects of the report.

**Table 2: General Expectations for Incorporation of GBA Plus**

<b>Area of Focus</b>	<b>Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Insufficient Analysis</b>
Integration of GBA Plus Plus	GBA Plus is clearly and fully part of the overall analysis. Findings are described throughout the Impact Statement where relevant.	GBA Plus has been conducted but is found in the annex, is clearly an add-on to the overall analysis or an aside. GBA Plus is not linked to the overall Impact Statement.
Diverse population groups are considered	Multiple, community-relevant, diverse subgroups have been clearly considered through intersectional analyses in assessing potential effects of the project.	Sex and/or gender has/have been considered in assessing potential effects of the project, but no other diverse subgroups have been assessed. No evidence of intersectional analysis.
Data and methodologies	The data presented are thorough and clearly support conclusions. Follow-through from baseline to effects analysis is clear. Efforts to collect community-specific data are described. Data gaps or limitations are clearly described.	Data are sparse and/or do not support the conclusions of the GBA Plus. Data gaps or limitations are not described.
Mitigation	The proposed mitigation (where relevant) clearly addresses the issues identified in the GBA Plus.	The proposed mitigation (where relevant) addresses a few or none of the issues identified in the GBA Plus.
Follow-up	Proposed indicators for follow-up clearly link to the GBA Plus and propose relevant indicators and data collection for diverse subgroups.	No means of follow-up have been proposed. Indicators do not reflect that a GBA Plus has (or should have) been conducted.

## 7. Resources

There are several existing sources of information, methodological guidance, introductory training and case examples to support the application of GBA Plus to impact assessment:

- [GBA Plus Introductory Course](#), Women and Gender Equality Canada
- [Online Training Modules, Integrating Sex and Gender in Health Research](#), Canadian Institutes of Health Research
- [A Culturally Relevant Gender Application Protocol](#), Native Women's Association of Canada
- [Métis-Specific Gender-based Analysis \(GBA Plus\) tool](#), Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak / Women of the Métis Nation
- [Why gender matters: A resource guide for integrating gender considerations into Communities work at Rio Tinto](#), Rio Tinto International
- [Gender Diversity and Inclusion: A Guide for Explorers](#), Prospectors and Developers Association
- [A Guide To Gender Impact Assessment For The Extractive Industries](#), Oxfam Australia
- [Gender Analysis and Impact Assessment: Canadian and International Experiences](#), Canadian International Resource and Development Institute
- [Strengthening Impact Assessments for Indigenous Women](#), Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women
- [Gender and Diversity Analysis in Impact Assessment](#), Walker, Reed and Thiessen
- [Meet the Methods series: Quantitative intersectional study design and primary data collection](#), Canadian Institutes of Health Research
- [Meet the Methods series: "What and who is Two-Spirit?" in Health Research](#), Canadian Institutes of Health Research

In addition to these GBA Plus-specific information sources, there are documents on existing best practices related to impact assessments that outline considerations for issues related to diversity, equity and inclusion:

- [Best Practices in Environmental Assessment: Case Studies and Application to Mining](#), Lauren Arnold and Kevin Hanna, University of British Columbia and Canadian International Resource and Development Institute
- [Health Impact Assessment International Best Practice Principles](#), Quigley et al., International Association for Impact Assessment
- [Minimum Elements and Practice Standards for Health Impact Assessment](#), Bhatia et al., 2014
- [Social Impact Assessment: Guidance for Assessing and Managing the Social Impacts of Projects](#), Vanclay et al., International Association for Impact Assessment



## Annex 1: Key Terms

**Sex** refers to a set of biological attributes in humans and animals (CIHR, 2015). It is primarily associated with physical and physiological features including chromosomes, gene expression, hormone levels and function, and reproductive/sexual anatomy. Sex is usually categorized as female or male but there is variation in the biological attributes that comprise sex and how those attributes are expressed (CIHR, 2015).

**Gender** Socially- constructed roles, behaviours, expressions and identities of girls, women, boys, men and gender-diverse people. It influences how people perceive themselves and each other, how they act and interact, the distribution of power and resources in society, and people's social, health and economic outcomes.

**Sex, gender and intersecting identity factors** are terms that describe people. This terminology is used in the *Impact Assessment Act*. Sex and gender are distinct concepts but are interrelated through complex pathways. Each person identifies differently along the spectrums of sex and gender and in relation to many other identity-related factors such as national or ethnic origin, indigeneity, age, sexual orientation, religion, socio-economic condition, place of residence, or ability. How people identify, how people express their identity, and how society views their identity affect the way people are treated in society and their relative power (including access to resources and decision-making power).

**Gender-based analysis plus (GBA Plus)** is a process used to assess how diverse groups of women, men and non-binary people may experience policies, programs, and initiatives. The “plus” in GBA Plus acknowledges that GBA goes beyond biological (sex) and socio-cultural (gender) differences. We have multiple identity factors that intersect to make us who we are; GBA Plus also considers many other identity factors like race, ethnicity, religion, age and mental or physical disability (Department for Women and Gender Equality, 2019).

## Annex 2: Data Sources for Reference

- The [Statistics Canada Gender, Diversity and Inclusion Statistics](#) provides data, disaggregated by gender, on the following topics: education and skills economic prosperity and participation leadership, crime victims, poverty and health/wellbeing.
- The [Women in Canada: A Gender-based Statistical report](#) provides data related to women's family status, education, employment, economic well-being, unpaid work, health, and more. It also includes chapters on immigrant women, women in a visible minority group, Indigenous women, senior women, and women with participation and activity limitations.
- The [UN Gender Statistics Minimum Set of Indicators](#) is a collection of 52 quantitative indicators and 11 qualitative indicators addressing relevant issues related to gender equality and/or women's empowerment.
- [Aboriginal Peoples Survey](#) (APS) is a national survey of First Nations people living off reserve, Métis and Inuit living in Canada. The 2017 APS is a thematic survey with a focus on participation in the Canadian economy. It collects important information concerning Indigenous people such as health, language, housing and mobility.  
The survey collects information on: type and severity of disability, use of aids and assistive devices, help received or required, educational attainment, labour force status, experiences and accommodations at school or work and Internet use.
- The [Canadian Survey on Disability](#) (CSD) gathers information about Canadians aged 15 and over whose daily activities are limited due to a long-term condition or health-related problem.  
The survey collects information on: type and severity of disability, use of aids and assistive devices, help received or required, educational attainment, labour force status, experiences and accommodations at school or work and Internet use.
- The [Canadian Community Health Survey](#) provides population-level information on health determinants, health status and health system utilization. It is comprised of two types of surveys:
  - an annual component on general health; and
  - a focused survey on specific health topics.
- The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, in co-operation with the policing community, collects police-reported crime statistics through the [Uniform Crime Reporting Survey](#) (UCR). The UCR Survey was designed to measure the incidence of crime in Canadian society and its characteristics.
- The [Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces](#) collects information on Canadians' experiences related to their safety in public and private spaces. Questions are asked about these personal experiences at home, in the workplace, in public spaces and online.
- The [General Social Survey: An Overview](#) gathers data on social trends in order to monitor changes in the living conditions and well-being of Canadians, and to provide information on

specific social policy issues. Current themes for this survey are caregiving, families, time use, social identity, volunteering and victimization.

- The [Labour Force Survey](#) is a monthly survey which measures the current state of the Canadian labour market and is used, among other things, to calculate the national, provincial, territorial and regional employment and unemployment rates.
- The [Dimensions of Poverty Hub](#) includes dashboard of 12 indicators to track progress on deep income poverty as well as the aspects of poverty other than income, including indicators of material deprivation, lack of opportunity and resilience.
- The [Canadian Income Survey](#) (CIS) is a cross-sectional survey developed to provide a portrait of the income and income sources of Canadians, with their individual and household characteristics.
- The [National Apprenticeship Survey](#) (NAS) looks at factors affecting the completion, certification and transition of apprentices to the labour market.
- The [First Nations Food, Nutrition & Environment Study](#) gathers information from 100 randomly selected First Nation communities across Canada about:
  - current traditional and store bought food use
  - food security
  - nutrient values and environmental chemical hazards in traditional foods
  - heavy metals and pharmaceutical metabolites in drinking and surface water
- The new [First Nations Labour and Economic Development Survey](#) will focus on Indigenous participation in the economy, including information on:
  - factors effecting economic participation
  - labour mobility
  - entrepreneurship
  - post-secondary education
  - targeted skills training
  - sources of income
  - financial well-being
  - physical and mental health
  - sense of belonging
- The [First Nations Regional Health Survey](#) is the only First Nations-governed, national health survey in Canada. It collects information about on reserve and northern First Nations communities, and is based on both Western and traditional understandings of health and well-being.



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