

Tool - Assessing the Quality of a GBA Plus in the Impact Statement

This document is for information purposes only. It is not a substitute for the [Impact Assessment Act](#) (IAA) or its regulations. In the event of an inconsistency between this document and the IAA or its regulations, the IAA and its regulations would prevail. For the most up-to-date versions of the IAA and regulations, please consult the Department of Justice website.

The purpose of this guidance is to support high quality Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) and is intended to complement the existing [GBA Plus Guidance](#). The tool provides information on the specific criteria used by the Impact Assessment Agency Canada (the Agency) to assess the quality of a proponent's GBA Plus. GBA Plus should be integrated into all aspects of assessments: planning, impact statements, impact assessments, decision making, follow-up, compliance, and enforcement. This tool, however, is focused on quality criteria related to the Impact Statement.

GBA Plus is an analytical tool to support the development of responsive and inclusive policies, programs, and other initiatives. Applying GBA Plus to the impact assessment process helps increase understanding of who is impacted by a project and assess how they may experience impacts differently. With these insights, projects can be tailored to better meet diverse needs in anticipating and mitigating barriers that various individuals and groups might face and to ensure that all people can benefit.

When undertaking GBA Plus, various identity and social factors need to be considered including, for example, age, economic status, education, ethnicity, gender, geography, language, racialization, religion, sex, and sexual orientation. Using disaggregated data and informing actions with the perspectives of diverse individuals helps shed light on the range of experiences, barriers, and inequalities certain people face. It is important to remember that GBA Plus is an intersectional analysis that helps to conceptualize a person, group of people, or social problem as affected by a number of factors. It takes into account people's overlapping identities and experiences in order to understand how these factors can shape social, health and economic opportunities and outcomes, and influence people's experiences. In other words, GBA Plus helps better understand how people can often be disadvantaged or privileged by multiple factors and systems that interact to create different access to project opportunities or benefits.

The [Tailored Impact Statement Guidelines](#) (TISG) provide direction to the proponent on the factors to be considered, the methodology to be followed and information requirements, in order to guide preparation of the Impact Statement. The TISG are developed by the Agency and provided to the proponent early in the IA process. These are tailored for the specific designated project and will help ensure that all potential project effects (e.g., environmental, health, social, economic) are considered. GBA Plus must be fully integrated throughout the proponent's Impact Statement and throughout the analysis of environmental, health, social and economic effects, including the ways in which diverse population subgroups experience these effects.

Rigorous GBA Plus requires the generation, collection and use of both quantitative and qualitative data that are disaggregated (e.g., First Nations, youth, women) and intersected (e.g., First Nations women, young men) so that possible differential effects are identified, and mitigation measures are planned to address adverse effects. Baseline information to support effects analysis can come from government statistics, non-governmental organization reports and academic sources. Additionally, community consultations and meaningful engagement are important to gain a better understanding of context. Instead of starting with a proposed response to an issue, the GBA Plus process requires first identifying people impacted by the issue and then building responses that account for the different ways in which people are impacted. Identifying the experiences and needs of different groups is an iterative and interactive process, best done in consultation with people from various groups and positions in those groups to maximize the diversity and depth of perspectives and understanding.

Following submission of the proponent's draft Impact Statement, it is reviewed for quality, which includes an assessment of the quality of the GBA Plus. Should there be gaps in the GBA Plus, these observations may be highlighted as "Deficient Analysis" and must be addressed in the proponent's final Impact Statement.

For more information on how to conduct a GBA Plus, please refer to the Agency's [Guidance: Gender-based Analysis Plus in Impact Assessment](#).

General Expectations for Incorporating GBA Plus in the Impact Statement (Phase 2)

	Best Practice	Meets Expectations	Deficient Analysis
Integration of GBA Plus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence that the process by which value components were identified, data were collected, and effects were assessed was participatory, intersectional,¹ considered Indigenous and community knowledge and/or was community-led. 	<input type="checkbox"/> GBA Plus is clearly and fully part of the overall Impact Statement. The following Impact Statement sections integrate GBA Plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Alternative means of carrying out the project <input type="checkbox"/> Record of Engagement <input type="checkbox"/> Baseline Conditions (Health, Social, Economic) <input type="checkbox"/> Effects Assessment (Health, Social, Economic) <input type="checkbox"/> Cumulative Effects <input type="checkbox"/> Mitigation and Enhancement Measures <input type="checkbox"/> Extent of Significance Characterization <input type="checkbox"/> Follow-up Programs 	<input type="checkbox"/> GBA Plus has been conducted but is not an integral part of the Impact Statement (e.g., is found only in the annex, and is not integrated with the overall Statement). <input type="checkbox"/> GBA Plus is not linked to the overall Impact Statement. <input type="checkbox"/> GBA Plus has been incorporated in some of the analysis but lacks application to key sections throughout the Impact Statement.
Diverse population groups are considered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis is intersectional and moves beyond the descriptive to ask critical questions about how colonization, racism and other systems of power create disparities. Analysis is community driven, with an emphasis on including diverse perspectives. An interdisciplinary approach has been used to engage individuals with varying perspectives and enhance understanding of complex issues. The MMIWG Calls for Justice² related to resource extraction (13.1 – 13.5) are considered in the impact statement including the specific impacts to Indigenous women and their rights. 	<input type="checkbox"/> Community-relevant, diverse groups have been clearly considered in assessing potential effects of the project. <input type="checkbox"/> There has been meaningful ³ engagement with the public, Indigenous groups, organizations and stakeholders. <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant identity and social factors are analyzed, such as sex, gender, ethnicity, racialization, culture, religion, income, age, sexual orientation, disability, education, geography, language, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Data presented to the extent possible for diverse populations. At minimum, the following MMIWG Calls for Justice are considered (if part of TISG): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The safety and security of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people all stages of the project. <input type="checkbox"/> Equity in project benefits for diverse people is considered. <input type="checkbox"/> Potential for the project to increase demand on social infrastructure has not been included nor have mitigation measures been identified. <input type="checkbox"/> The specific impacts to Indigenous women and their rights have not been considered. 	<input type="checkbox"/> Sex and/or gender has/have been considered in assessing potential effects of the project, but no other identity factors have been assessed. No evidence of intersectional analysis. <input type="checkbox"/> There has been no meaningful engagement with the public, Indigenous groups, organizations and stakeholders. <input type="checkbox"/> Diverse groups are identified, but there is little to no information presented for each. The following Calls for Justice were not considered (if part of TISG): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The safety and security of Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA people all stages of the project. <input type="checkbox"/> Equity in project benefits for diverse people has not been considered. <input type="checkbox"/> Potential for the project to increase demand on social infrastructure has not been included nor have mitigation measures been identified. <input type="checkbox"/> The specific impacts to Indigenous women and their rights have not been considered.



	Best Practice	Meets Expectations	Deficient Analysis
Data and Methodologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualitative and quantitative data are presented, with flexibility to integrate Indigenous knowledge (e.g., lived/living experiences, input through storytelling, song, or oral history). Conduct an intersectional assessment of the potential effects the project may have on groups within the community. Best available evidence is used where data are missing or limited. 	<input type="checkbox"/> Data presented are disaggregated throughout, and clearly support conclusions. ⁶ <input type="checkbox"/> Follow-through is clear from baseline and effects analysis to mitigation and enhancement measures. <input type="checkbox"/> Effects analysis considers how colonization, racism and other systems of power may create disparities. <input type="checkbox"/> Data gaps or limitations are clearly described (e.g., ability to disaggregate) and approaches undertaken to address gaps and limitations are outlined, where appropriate. ⁷ Efforts are made to address data gaps with other sources and/or generalized from existing data. <input type="checkbox"/> Methodologies used are identified and rationale is provided. <input type="checkbox"/> Results of the cumulative effects analysis consider and describe effects across diverse population groups, where appropriate. ⁸ <input type="checkbox"/> It is clear, or stated, that analysis and reporting of data follows protocols for 1) collection and reporting of data within Indigenous communities and 2) confidentiality guidelines for disaggregated data from small or unique populations. ⁹	<input type="checkbox"/> Data are sparse and/or do not support the conclusions of the GBA Plus. <input type="checkbox"/> Data gaps or limitations are not described. <input type="checkbox"/> Methodologies used are not identified. <input type="checkbox"/> Some data are presented, but are not integrated throughout the Impact Statement.
Mitigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unintended consequences of the mitigation measures have been explored.¹⁰ Evidence of community engagement and input in identification of mitigation measures and methods for evaluating their effectiveness. 	<input type="checkbox"/> The proposed mitigation or voluntary commitments ¹¹ (where relevant) clearly address the issues identified in the GBA Plus. <input type="checkbox"/> Uncertainties associated with mitigation measures are characterized and appropriately disaggregated. Evidence/data are included to support the rationale.	<input type="checkbox"/> The proposed mitigation or voluntary commitments (where relevant) address few of the issues identified in the GBA Plus.
Follow-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of community engagement and input in identification of follow-up measures and plans, as required. 	<input type="checkbox"/> Proposed indicators for follow-up clearly link to GBA Plus and propose relevant indicators and data collection for diverse population groups.	<input type="checkbox"/> No means of follow-up have been proposed. <input type="checkbox"/> Indicators do not reflect the outcomes and areas of uncertainty identified in the GBA Plus.

¹ People are made up of multiple identity factors (e.g., age, gender, disability, etc.) that overlap and intersect with systems of power like racism, colonialism and sexism to create unique opportunities and/or barriers. An intersectional analysis allows us to understand how people may be differentially impacted by projects as a result of these intersections. For more information on intersectionality, please refer to [Women and Gender Equality Canada's Introduction to Intersectionality](#).

² See: The Final Report on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) and the Calls for Justice: [Final Report | MMIWG \(mmiwg-ffada.ca\)](#)

³ The parameters of what constitutes meaningful engagement are described in the following:
<https://open.canada.ca/en/content/principles-and-guidelines>

⁴ 2SLGBTQQIA refers to Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex and asexual people.

⁵ See: [Guidance: Assessment of Potential Impacts on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#)

⁶ Data are used to refer to information used in the analysis; this can be qualitative or quantitative information. Indicators of rigour for quantitative and qualitative data differ and should be considered in judging quality.



⁷ In some cases, it will not be appropriate to address gaps in data. For example, if community members have indicated that data are too sensitive to disclose or inappropriate to collect then proponents can simply provide this rationale. Efforts should be made to address data gaps with other sources and/or generalized from existing data.

⁸ Where appropriate in this case depends on the effect being analysed to the environment, health, social and economic conditions. For some environmental effects, it may not be appropriate to analyse effects for population groups (e.g., geological faults).

⁹ References should be included in the Impact Statement that community protocols were followed or that ethical guidelines for data collection were followed.

¹⁰ For example, if there is an intention to build housing for workers, have the impacts on the community housing market and availability, particularly for low-income people, been explored? If there is an intention to build onsite health services to reduce impact on community services, has staffing been planned to ensure human resources are not drawn from community services?

¹¹ Voluntary commitments refer to measures that a proponent identifies as commitments, but which are not enforceable through a federal decision statement.