



# Demystifying GBA+

## job aid



Status of Women  
Canada

Condition féminine  
Canada

Canada 

Analyzing the full impacts of an initiative is a competency. Gender-based Analysis Plus – or GBA+ – is a tool developed by Status of Women Canada to guide this analytical process. Using GBA+ helps you assess the potential impacts – positive or negative – of initiatives on diverse groups of women, men and gender-diverse people, enabling you to identify risks and create mitigation strategies. Diversity helps us to innovate and to consider issues and policy in a different way.

Groups of people are not homogeneous. Although gender is usually conceptualized as a binary (girl/woman and boy/man), there is considerable diversity in how individuals and groups understand, experience, and express gender. The “plus” in GBA+ acknowledges that GBA goes beyond biological (sex) and socio-cultural (gender) differences. We all have multiple identity factors that intersect to make us who we are; GBA+ also considers many other identity factors, like race, ethnicity, religion, age, and mental or physical disability.



All of the work we do affects Canadians. GBA+ is a tool that will prompt you to consider the full impact of government initiatives from the perspectives of diverse people, and to identify potential challenges at an early stage. GBA+ is not something to be tacked on after the fact, nor can it be carried out by just one person. It is a tool that should be used at all stages of the policy cycle, from development to implementation. Start your GBA+ sooner – *before* you write your options or begin your design.

Initiatives vary and there is no single GBA+ template, however there are some key considerations and questions to ask at each step of the process.

In short, GBA+ is about effective analysis – and every public servant has a responsibility to complete GBA+ on all their work.



Watch our microlearning videos part of the *Demystifying GBA+* suite, for an overview of GBA+ and Government of Canada examples (available on [GCpedia](#) and the SWC [YouTube](#) channel).

GBA+ step	Description	Key questions to ask	Answers
<b>Identify key issue</b>	<p>The first step is to identify the context and the gender and diversity issues.</p> <p>Nothing happens in a vacuum. Your initiative may have a narrow objective, but it will always be linked to broader government priorities. The social, cultural, and economic environments are also important. Start by making these connections.</p> <p>Look beyond the topic of the Memorandum to Cabinet or Treasury Board Submission. Consider the depth and breadth of the issue.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ Are you taking a long-term and holistic perspective, looking beyond the topic of the Memorandum to Cabinet or Treasury Board Submission (e.g. considering community impacts of resource development)?</li> <li>✚ Are there historical disparities related to the broader issue (e.g. industry is male-dominated)?</li> </ul>	✚
<b>Challenge assumptions</b>	<p>We all have assumptions. In addition to our individual assumptions, the institution you work for may have formal or informal policies in place that can affect the development or outcome of an initiative. You need to be aware of these. Remember that workplace culture, behaviours, activities or processes all shape your assumptions.</p> <p>Although the proposal you are working on may appear to affect everyone equally, always challenge your assumptions about whether it has gender and other diversity implications.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ Who says it is an issue? / What has triggered the issue?</li> <li>✚ Whose point of view is reflected in defining the problem?</li> <li>✚ What assumptions informed the identification of the topic as an issue?</li> <li>✚ Who is affected by the proposal? How do you know?</li> <li>✚ How are they affected?</li> <li>✚ Who benefits, and why?</li> <li>✚ Could certain groups be affected differently?</li> <li>✚ Are you making assumptions about the uniformity of population groups?</li> <li>✚ If you consider an issue “neutral”, can you support this with evidence?</li> <li>✚ Is it possible that your assumptions prevent you from asking questions and hearing answers?</li> </ul>	✚
<b>Gather the facts - research &amp; consult</b>	<p>Remember that you don't have all the answers...but you can get a better picture of the issue through research and consultation.</p> <p>You need data to assess whether your initiative</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ What type of gender and diversity disaggregated data<sup>1</sup> are already available regarding this issue or policy?</li> <li>✚ What groups of people might experience this issue differently?</li> <li>✚ Do current policies and measures for this issue offer strong</li> </ul>	✚

<sup>1</sup> Disaggregated data refers to data broken down by age, race, ethnicity, income, education, etc. This is sometimes referred to as gender-disaggregated data.

	<p>will have a more significant impact on a particular group of people, or whether barriers exist.</p> <p><b><u>Conduct research</u></b></p> <p>The data you use should be gender-disaggregated and should include other intersecting identity factors, such as Indigenous status, age or disability. If information is not available, don't abandon your analysis. Identify gaps in existing data and consider making data collection part of your initiative's objectives and evaluation measures.</p> <p><b><u>Consult stakeholders</u></b></p> <p>Make sure to use GBA+ when you design your consultation process. It is not enough to consult the general public and then apply your findings to all groups. Seek out multiple viewpoints. Engage Canadians of various identities, and consult broad and inclusive sources to deepen your analysis. Don't forget: accessibility issues, social conditions and economic considerations can all affect someone's ability to participate in your consultation process.</p>	<p>gender and diversity analysis?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> What other types of disaggregated data are needed to understand the gender (and other) dimensions of the issue?</li> <li> How will your research methods ensure that the collection of gender and diversity disaggregated data is facilitated?</li> <li> Are there examples of policies and programs that are similar?</li> <li> Do you have information on your clients, partners, or target groups? Have you consulted diverse sources?</li> <li> Does the information suggest that the issue or initiative potentially affects diverse groups of people in different ways? If so, how?</li> <li> Does the initiative improve the situation for all? Or does it have unintended differential impacts or create barriers for some groups of people?</li> <li> Have the views of affected people been included in the design of the proposed initiative?</li> <li> What types of measures are needed to ensure equitable representation during consultation processes?</li> <li> Are certain types of infrastructure in place to ensure that specific population groups can participate (e.g. caregivers)?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Develop options &amp; make recommendations</b></p>	<p>Your choice of words can also have an impact — consider them carefully.</p> <p>The results of your consultation and research should inform your options and recommendations at all stages of initiative development and implementation.</p> <p>Using the data you have gathered, indicate how the options you propose respond to the specific issues you identified. Present your GBA+ findings to decision-makers clearly.</p> <p>If you have found that your initiative could have</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> What would decision-makers expect to know in order to make an informed decision?</li> <li> What are the desired end-results being sought for this initiative?</li> <li> What are the outcomes that stakeholders would expect from this initiative?</li> <li> What outcomes will improve current inequitable situations between women and men, and between different groups of people?</li> <li> What indicators are you using to gauge the results of this initiative?</li> <li> How do proposed options reflect the information gathered and</li> </ul>	<p></p>

	<p>differential impacts or unintended barriers, suggest strategies to strengthen the proposal. And be sure to highlight your plan to fill any data gaps that your GBA+ identified.</p>	<p>the consultation carried out in relation to gender and diversity?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ Are the issues identified in the GBA+ incorporated into options as risks, or addressed through mitigation strategies?</li> <li>✚ In what ways will gender and other considerations be a significant element in weighing and recommending options?</li> <li>✚ Would this serve to reinforce or address historical inequities?</li> <li>✚ Have you looked beyond the Memorandum to Cabinet or Treasury Board submission? Have you considered the implementation of the Treasury Board Submissions, Memoranda of Understanding, Provincial-Territorial agreements, contribution agreements etc.?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Monitor &amp; evaluate</b></p>	<p>GBA+ also applies to the evaluation and monitoring of your initiative. The design of your evaluation framework and approach to monitoring can help address inequality and build capacity. Make sure your evaluation identifies groups who are positively or negatively affected by the initiative. Highlight data gaps and address unintended outcomes for diverse groups. Incorporate them into strategy renewals or management responses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ Is the policy/program operating in a manner that is effective and appropriate for different groups of people?</li> <li>✚ Are the policies and programs being adapted to account for unanticipated gender-specific differences?</li> <li>✚ Are targeted interventions being used to ensure that the policies and programs are accessible to diverse groups of people?</li> <li>✚ Is information about the program/policy equally accessible to different demographic groups?</li> <li>✚ Are diverse groups equally involved in the implementation?</li> <li>✚ How are different groups of people involved in the management and monitoring of the initiative?</li> <li>✚ Are gender and cultural stereotypes being reinforced in the delivery of the program?</li> <li>✚ How will the differential impacts of targeted interventions on different groups of people be monitored/evaluated?</li> <li>✚ Have baseline indicators been established to measure the effectiveness of the initiative, and are they conducive to assessing the impact on diverse groups of people?</li> <li>✚ If not, what data collection methods would be conducive to measuring outcomes for diverse groups of people?</li> <li>✚ What indicators would you need to use to assess progress for</li> </ul>	<p>✚</p>

		<p>diverse groups of people?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ Are there gaps in the quantitative or qualitative data needed to effectively measure outcomes? How could these gaps be filled?</li> <li>✚ What additional data is needed to better understand the different impacts?</li> </ul>	
<b>Communicate</b>	<p>Use GBA+ when considering how to communicate your initiative.</p> <p>Identify your target audiences, and tailor your messaging appropriately. Show how your initiative supports diversity, and use inclusive examples, languages and symbols. Review your messaging to ensure you are not perpetuating stereotypes. Whenever possible, choose images and language that challenge harmful stereotypes.</p> <p>Finally, remember to share or discuss your GBA+ results within your organization. This will demonstrate due diligence, foster buy-in with stakeholders, and identify areas for further action.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ Does the communications strategy use messaging that will reach diverse groups of people?</li> <li>✚ Do the identified target audiences reflect the diversity of people affected?</li> <li>✚ Are the examples, language and symbols used in the communication products gender and diversity appropriate?</li> <li>✚ How would a communications strategy need to be designed to respond to the needs of different groups of people?</li> </ul>	✚
<b>Document</b>	<p>It is essential to document your analysis and findings throughout the cycle of the initiative.</p> <p>Why?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ The data and analysis that guided your recommendations provide meaningful background information.</li> <li>✚ You may be asked to provide evidence that a GBA+ was conducted and to explain the process that guided your recommendations.</li> <li>✚ This information could inform a future proposal.</li> </ul>	✚	✚