



NATIONAL RESOURCE GUIDE



Enhancing National Sector Gender-Based Analysis (GBA)
Plus Capacity Project

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Purpose

This GBA Plus Resource Guide is a national effort across all seven umbrella organizations that represent the immigrant and refugee sector in their respective provinces and regions. The project was led by the Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (AAISA) in partnership with Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC (AMSSA), Saskatchewan Association of Immigrant Settlement and Integration Agencies (SAISIA), Manitoba Association of Newcomer Serving Organizations (MANSO), Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI), Atlantic Region Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (ARAISA), and Fédération des communautés francophones et acadienne (FCFA).

The purpose of this National Project is to support the settlement and integration sector in addressing the diverse needs and intersecting identities of newcomers by enhancing the capacity of settlement agencies to apply Gender-Based Analysis (GBA) Plus approaches to their policies and programs. By embedding these principles into their organizational structures, policies, and service delivery, this guide provides essential tools and resources for organizations to begin or refine their GBA Plus implementation in their daily operations.

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Content Warning

This guide was created to support your organization in deepening its understanding and application of GBA Plus, intersectionality, and equity-based practices. Engaging with these topics, especially when applied to real-world experiences, can be challenging. The tools provided may require reflection on complex and personal topics. It's important to acknowledge that who we are and what we bring to this work shapes how we contribute to building inclusive, accessible programs and services for the people we serve.

Some of the tools and materials in this guide explore sensitive topics such as personal and professional experiences of racism, homophobia, transphobia, gender-based violence, and other forms of discrimination. These discussions can evoke strong emotional responses or trigger past trauma. We encourage you to take care of yourself and others throughout this process and to approach these topics with caution and care.

Here are some suggestions for navigating this material:

- **Seek Support:** Reach out to a trusted person or professional who can help you process the material.
- **Take Breaks:** Pause and step away from the tool or activity if it becomes overwhelming.
- **Use Available Resources:** Should you need immediate assistance, we have provided links to online resources and tools (see below).

Additionally, if you're facilitating this work, it's recommended to have a trauma-informed counselor or mental health professional available during activities that touch on sensitive or triggering topics, particularly those related to gender-based violence.

Support Resources

- **Employee Assistance Programs (EAP):** If your organization provides an EAP, consider using it for additional support.
- [Free National Mental Health Support](#).
- **Indigenous Resources**
 - [First Nations Child and Family Caring Society: Knowledge Portal for Agencies across Canada](#)
 - [National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation](#)
- **Trauma-Informed Engagement Resources:**
 - [CMA Patient Voice Guide: Trauma-Informed Engagement & Resources](#)
 - [Canada.ca: Trauma- and Violence-Informed Approaches to Policy and Practice](#)

National Resource Guide

1. Foundational GBA Plus Knowledge

Overview of Tools

The courses and resources in this section are designed to help introduce and strengthen your understanding of Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) and intersectionality, and how to apply these concepts within the newcomer serving sector. GBA Plus helps you consider how various factors like gender, race, age, and disability intersect to shape people's experiences. Internally, management can use these insights to guide the direction and priorities of their organization, ensuring that policies and workplace culture support equity for all staff. Externally, organizations can apply an equity lens to their policies, programs, and services to ensure that newcomers, with their diverse and intersecting identities, are treated fairly and equitably.

- Analytical Frameworks for Building Equity: An Educational Resource for the Immigrant and Refugee Serving Sector
- Ask a Knowledge Keeper Video
- GBA Plus 101: Resource for Immigrant and Refugee Service Providers
- GBA Plus Equity Frameworks Workshop
- GBA Plus Mastery: Advancing Equity in Francophone Immigration Services
- GBA Plus: Self Learning and Group Activities for Inclusive Programming
- SEASONOVA GBA Plus Courses
 - Course #1: An Introduction to Gender-Based Analysis (GBA) Plus
 - Course #2: Organizational Capacity Building Through a GBA Plus Lens
- Tip sheets x4
 - Tip sheet for working with newcomers who are D/deaf or hard of hearing
 - Tip sheet for working with newcomers who are blind or partially sighted
 - Tip sheet for working with newcomers who have Alzheimer's disease
 - Tip sheet for drafting Indigenous engagement strategies and working with survivors
- We don't need feminism anymore, do we? – GBA Plus Interactive Activity

2. Organizational Strategies for Implementing GBA Plus

Overview of Tools

This section provides upper management with templates and resources to help them strategically assess their organization's internal structures, policies, and staff diversity. These tools are designed to support leaders in identifying gaps and opportunities, equipping them with the knowledge and strategies needed to foster a more equitable and inclusive workplace. The section is divided into two key areas: one focused on evaluating internal readiness to implement equity initiatives within the workplace, and the other on developing practices for equitable data collection, ensuring that decision-making is informed by accurate, representative information. Together, these resources will guide an organization along its GBA Plus journey, ensuring more equitable access to opportunities, programs, and services.

i. Internal GBA Plus Readiness

- Case Studies in Action: Strengthening Programs and Policies with GBA Plus and Intersectionality
- GBA Plus Policy Assessment Tool
- GBA Plus Program Assessment Tool
- OCASI Anti-Racism Anti-Oppression Organizational Assessment
- Settlement Sector Focused Board Diversity Survey and Matrix Templates
- Staff Diversity and Inclusion Identity Survey
- Staff GBA Plus Readiness and Capacity Survey Template

ii. Equitable Data Collection and Management

- Data Narratives Workshop
- Guide to Equity-Driven Data Management

1. Foundational GBA Plus Knowledge

Analytical Frameworks for Building Equity: An Educational Resource for the Immigrant and Refugee Serving Sector

Audience: Executive Director, Upper- and Middle Management, Frontline Workers

Duration: 4 hours including time for the reflection questions.

This educational resource provides key information and considerations for comparing different analytical frameworks and theories to build and promote accessibility, equity, diversity, inclusion, and anti-racism. It supports organizations in assessing and strengthening their capacity to build equitable policies, programs, procedures, and practices within the immigrant and refugee serving sector.

The analytical frameworks and theories explored in this resource are not exhaustive.

Ask a Knowledge Keeper Video

Audience: Executive Director, Upper- and Middle- Management, Frontline Workers and Volunteers. In applicable situations, SPO staff may choose to show the video to clients.

Duration: 11 minutes (13 minutes for version in American Sign Language)

In recent years, IRCC has prioritized Truth and Reconciliation work, especially pertaining to Call to Action #93. Truth and Reconciliation is foundational to equity work in Canada. To reflect the centrality of Indigenous perspectives to anti-oppression work, three Knowledge Keepers were interviewed and asked how newcomers and Indigenous peoples can build relationships with one another. The Knowledge Keepers shared how newcomers can best learn about Indigenous peoples, what should be in an anti-racism policy, and how newcomers and Indigenous peoples can work together to fight discrimination. The Knowledge Keepers in the video have ancestral ties to Saskatchewan and Ontario, but the concepts explored are applicable across Canada.

Accessibility features for this video include English captions, French subtitles and a version in American Sign Language.

GBA Plus 101: Resource for Immigrant and Refugee Service Providers

Audience: Executive Director, Upper Management, Board Members.

Duration: Approx. 20 - 30 minutes.

This tool introduces the concept of Gender-Based Analysis Plus by outlining its core elements. It highlights the application of GBA plus in developing programming, such as the use of targeted or flexible approaches to service delivery. Lastly, it provides some high level “Do’s and Dont’s” with examples for integrating GBA plus at an organizational level.

GBA Plus Equity Frameworks Workshop

Audience: The content of this workshop is intended for staff at all levels.

Duration: 1-1.5 hours, depending on existing familiarity with the topics covered and the time set aside for discussion.

This workshop is designed to increase understanding of the relationship between GBA Plus and equity frameworks, using IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility) as the core example. It provides a conceptual grounding in GBA Plus and IDEA and lays out a model demonstrating their complementary nature. An example case study shows how these frameworks work together to further equitable program and policy solutions and then invites participants to apply the complementary frameworks model to their own work.

This workshop uses IDEA as the example equity framework. GBA Plus interacts in similar ways with other frameworks, such as ARAO, Liberatory Design, and decolonial approaches.

GBA Plus Mastery: Advancing Equity in Francophone Immigration Services

Audience: Executive directors, managers, frontline workers, volunteers, and policymakers in Francophone immigration services

Duration: Approx. 15 hours

*This course will only be offered in French.

This comprehensive, multi-level online training program equips professionals with the knowledge and skills to implement Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) effectively in Francophone immigration and settlement services. Hosted on the FCFA's LMS Platform Le Labo, it consists of three interconnected courses:

1. "Demystifying GBA Plus: Foundations for Inclusive Settlement Services" (Beginner)
2. "ACS Plus: From Theory to Practice" (Intermediate)
3. "Operationalizing GBA Plus in Francophone Immigration Services" (Intermediate)

The program covers fundamental concepts, implementation challenges, and practical applications through interactive exercises, real-world scenarios, and case studies. Upon completion, participants will understand GBA Plus principles, recognize personal biases, apply GBA Plus in daily work, and develop strategies for organizational change.

Content Warning: Content warnings for sensitive topics related to gender, sexuality, and systemic discrimination are included.

GBA Plus: Self Learning and Group Activities for Inclusive Programming

Audience: Executive Director, Upper- and Middle- Management, Board Members and Frontline Workers

Duration: Approx. 3 hours

This tool is designed to improve understanding of intersectionality and how it can be applied to support groups with unique vulnerabilities. It helps organizational staff apply GBA Plus principles more effectively through individual or small group activities that foster practical learning. This document invites readers to watch a series of video clips, followed by thought-provoking reflection questions to help critically engage with the material and deepen their understanding.

These activities support a deeper understanding of intersectionality and its practical application in fostering inclusivity.

SEASONOVA GBA Plus Courses

Course #1: An Introduction to Gender-Based Analysis (GBA) Plus

Course #2: Organizational Capacity Building Through a GBA Plus Lens

Audience: Frontline workers, middle- and upper- management, and board directors of newcomer-serving agencies.

Duration: Approximately 2 hours each including worksheets and quizzes.

Course #1 is an introductory level course that provides a general overview of what GBA Plus is in the context of providing services and supports to newcomers, immigrants, and refugees in Canada.

Course #2 explores the benefits of implementing GBA Plus in organizational policies, procedures, and practices for both the workplace and its clients.

These courses were developed in partnership with SEASONOVA, a BIPOC-, female-, and immigrant-led social enterprise offering consulting services in facilitation, adult education, strategic planning, and intersectionality analysis.

**Please note this course will be offered by AAISA at minimum once a year and may be available at other times with enough interest. Questions about registration through AAISA can be sent to pd@aaisa.ca*

Four Tip Sheets

Many SPOs struggle to find the resources to adequately support newcomers with intersecting identities. These challenges are compounded by the fact that newcomers may have understandings of disability or Indigeneity that differ from those in Canada. Newcomers may not know that government-funded programs and services are available in Canada.

Tip sheet for working with newcomers who are D/deaf or hard of hearing

Audience: Frontline workers and volunteers.

Duration: 10-15 minutes to read the tip sheet.

Created in partnership with Saskatchewan Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services

This tip sheet features a list of best practices as well as resources and links to support settlement workers in assisting clients who are D/deaf or have hearing loss as well as their families.

Tip sheet for working with newcomers who are blind or partially sighted

Audience: Frontline workers and volunteers.

Duration: 5-10 minutes to read the tip sheet.

Created in partnership with CNIB and Vision Loss Rehabilitation Canada

This tip sheet features a list of best practices as well as resources and links to support settlement workers in assisting clients who are blind or partially sighted.

Tip sheet for working with newcomers who have Alzheimer's disease

Audience: Frontline workers and volunteers.

Duration: 10-15 minutes to read the tip sheet.

Created in partnership with the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan

This tip sheet features basic information on Alzheimer's disease as well as other forms of dementia and describes how they may impact newcomer clients. The sheet also includes a list of best practices and recommendations to use when working with clients who have dementia.

Tip sheet for drafting Indigenous engagement strategies and working with survivors

Audience: The target audience for this tool is frontline workers and volunteers.

Duration: 5-10 minutes to read the tip sheet.

This tip sheet features basic information on how to respect cultural protocols, support Elders, Knowledge Keepers and Survivors and foster mental wellness while drafting an Indigenous engagement and/or outreach strategy.

We don't need feminism anymore, do we? – GBA Plus Interactive Activity

Audience: Executive Directors, management, frontline workers and volunteers. Where applicable, SPOs may choose to lead the activity with clients.

Duration: Assembling the materials takes 30-40 minutes. The activity itself takes between 60-75 minutes to complete.

This tool requires a facilitator.

This tool is an interactive role-playing activity that can accommodate up to 20 participants.

The tool is designed for social service workers wishing to expand their understanding of GBA Plus, intersectionality, and feminism. Participants will explore the difference between “equality” and “equity” through the experiences of women in the 21st century workforce, including newcomers to Canada. Participants will discover how intersecting identity points shape a person’s understanding of the world. The activity is followed by discussion questions and a debrief session.

Content Warning: This activity shares statistics and true-to-life scenarios on gender-based sexual assault and violence that may be triggering for some. It is recommended that a counselor or other mental health resource(s) is/are available to participants during and following the activity.

The Government of Canada offers 24-hour, toll-free crisis support for those impacted by the issue of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two Spirit People. This service can be accessed by calling 1-844-413-6649.

2. Organizational Strategies for Implementing GBA Plus

The courses and resources in this section are designed to help introduce and strengthen your understanding of Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA Plus) and intersectionality, and how to apply these concepts within the newcomer serving sector. GBA Plus helps you consider how various factors like gender, race, age, and disability intersect to shape people's experiences. Internally, management can use these insights to guide the direction and priorities of their organization, ensuring that policies and workplace culture support equity for all staff. Externally, organizations can apply an equity lens to their policies, programs, and services to ensure that newcomers, with their diverse and intersecting identities, are treated fairly and equitably.

i. Internal GBA Plus Readiness

Case Studies in Action: Strengthening Programs and Policies with GBA Plus and Intersectionality

Audience: Executive Director, Upper- and Middle- Management, Board Members

Duration: Approx. 1 hour

This resource presents real-life case studies of settlement workers who used a GBA Plus lens to address challenges or gaps in their programs and policies. By applying GBA Plus, they found solutions that made their services more inclusive and equitable, addressing the diverse needs of clients.

After reviewing these case scenarios, readers are provided a template to reflect on challenges encountered in program design, delivery, evaluation, and organizational policies. The focus is on enhancing the use of GBA Plus within their organizations.

The resource is designed for small group discussions, sparking dialogue about organizational structures and how GBA Plus can enhance program effectiveness and inclusivity.

GBA Plus Policy Assessment Tool

Audience: Executive Director, Upper- and Middle- Management, Board Members

Duration: Approx. 1-2 hours

This tool helps organizations integrate a GBA Plus perspective into their policies and initiatives by evaluating whether gender and intersecting identity factors are adequately addressed. It provides a structured process for identifying strengths and areas for improvement.

Adapted from guidelines by the Canadian Department of Women and Gender Equality for the Immigrant and Refugee Serving Sector, this tool supports a comprehensive review of new and existing policies. It guides users through key areas such as Relevance and Design, Delivery and Implementation, and Effectiveness. Organizations can use this tool to complete sections on policy details, review summaries, and suggest mitigation strategies, ultimately enhancing inclusivity and equity in their policies.

GBA Plus Program Assessment Tool

Audience: Executive Director, Upper- and Middle- Management, Programming and Front-Line Staff

Duration: Approx. 1-2 hours

This tool helps organizations evaluate their programs, workshops, or services using a GBA Plus approach. It identifies gaps in how intersecting identity factors are considered within organizational initiatives. The tool features specific assessment questions adapted from the Canadian Department of Women and Gender Equality's GBA Plus training and tailored for the Immigrant and Refugee-Serving Sector.

This tool will help organizations improve how GBA Plus principles are applied during program design and implementation, ensuring inclusivity and identifying areas for improvement. To use the tool, organizations complete sections covering key areas such as program details, relevance, design, delivery, effectiveness, and an overall review summary.

OCASI Anti-Racism Anti-Oppression Organizational Assessment

Audience: Any level of involvement at the organization: Staff, management, board members and volunteers.

Duration: Approx. 2 hours with room for discussion.

This tool is designed to evaluate the current application of anti-racism anti-oppression principles and practices at immigrant and refugee serving organizations across three areas: (1) Organizational Accountability; (2) Implementation and Application; and (3) Principles and Culture. It provides a starting point for the identification of strengths, weaknesses, and gaps across the three key areas. After completing the assessment, users should consider how the information collected will inform further strategic action to create and sustain anti-racist and anti-oppressive organizational change and development.

Settlement Sector Focused Board Diversity Survey and Matrix Templates

Audience: Executive Director, Board Members

Duration: Approx. 30 - 60 minutes to complete survey; 60 - 90 minutes to complete the matrix; 60 - 90 minutes to reflect on the findings

This tool offers a brief overview of the importance of board diversity and leadership commitment to equity work. It provides a settlement-sector-focused board diversity survey and matrix template that organizations can adapt to their context to assess board representation. Data is first collected anonymously from all board members through the diversity survey then aggregated and entered into the board diversity matrix. Once the matrix has been completed the Board Chair and other board members can reflect on the representativeness of their board—across categories—and use this as a starting point for addressing any demographic, skillset, or experience gaps that may have been identified moving forward.

Staff Diversity and Inclusion Identity Survey

Audience: Executive Director, Upper- and Middle- Management, Board Members

Duration: Survey design and planning up to 4 weeks, filling out the survey approximately 30 min max.

The **Staff Diversity and Inclusion Identity Survey** is a three-part tool designed to help organizations assess and improve diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging within their workforce. The tool consists of three separate documents:

1. **Survey Guidelines:** This provides a framework for organizations to evaluate their diversity practices. It outlines assessing intersectional identities, reviewing staff and leadership representation, and aligning policies with staff diversity. It also includes tips on launching the survey, promoting staff participation, and offering mental health support, if needed.
2. **Sample Survey:** This customizable survey is designed to collect a comprehensive snapshot of the workforce's diversity. It helps organizations identify gaps in representation, inclusivity, and potential barriers while also serving as a tool for tracking progress over time.
3. **Working with Staff Data Document:** This document offers instructions for handling confidential survey data, ensuring it is used responsibly to guide policy and recruitment efforts and improve organizational practices.

These three components are interconnected and designed to support an organization's efforts to foster a more inclusive work environment.

Staff GBA Plus Readiness and Capacity Survey Template

Audience: Executive Director & Upper-Management (to administer), Frontline workers (to complete)

Duration: Approx. 15-20 minutes to complete

This tool provides a brief overview of the importance of establishing a baseline understanding of staff readiness and capacity to implement GBA Plus in their work. It includes a staff GBA Plus readiness and capacity survey template that organizations can use to obtain an understanding of where they are starting in terms of knowledge, skills, and resources, which in turn, can assist them in planning how to integrate, or strengthen, their GBA plus capacity moving forward. This survey can also be readministered over time to track progress.

ii. Equitable Data Collection and Management

Data Narratives Workshop

Audience: Executive Director, Upper- and Middle- Management, Frontline Workers

Duration: 1-1.5 hours

Data narratives are a framing device useful for conceptualizing the ways an agency uses data. This workshop is designed to increase understanding of the role data plays in GBA Plus and equity work through data narratives. It is intended to build both knowledge and confidence around employing data in the pursuit of equity while incorporating key equity principles into data. It begins with an overview of the importance of data, the concepts of GBA Plus and data equity, and their role in driving equity-focused work. Following a case study example for constructing a data narrative, it opens space for participants to explore data narratives in their work.

Guide to Equity-Driven Data Management

Audience: Executive Director, Upper- and Middle- Management.

Duration: Completion of the data practices evaluation and drafting of a data management strategy through the guide's workbook sections may be expected to take two to six months.

This timeframe will vary greatly depending on internal structures and resources.

This guide provides agencies a grounding in the foundations of data management and equity through key terms, GBA Plus, and key data equity principles. It then explores five phases of developing a comprehensive data management strategy: identifying data needs, evaluating current practices, designing a strategy, implementing the strategy, and ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

Each section includes explanatory text, supporting worksheets and illustrative case studies for both larger and smaller organizations. The guide culminates in a sample template to produce a complete draft of a data management strategy. Appendices provide expanded explanations of six core data practices: standards, collection, quality, curation, analysis and use, and monitoring and evaluation, as well as worksheets for assessing each practice.