Integrating Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) in the Development of Inclusive Programming for Newcomers in Canada

Introduction

The 2023–2024 IRCC Call for Proposals is placing greater emphasis on the inclusion of Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) in program development and service delivery. IRCC will assess proposed projects based on organizations' integration of GBA+. This learning note is intended to provide a brief overview of what GBA+ is and how it can be harnessed to create inclusive and effective programming for newcomers in Canada.

1. What is GBA+?

GBA+ is grounded in the idea that all individuals— no matter where they come from, what they look like, or how they identify – should have **equal access** to quality program services, facilities, places, and spaces that improve their lives and communities.[1] While sex and gender are the starting points for GBA+, it is an **intersectional approach** that is designed to assess how multiple factors, such as race, ethnicity, age, (dis)ability, education, economic status, geography, language, religion, sexual orientation, and immigration status interact to shape lived experiences.

> **Sex:** A set of biological attributes and is associated with physical and psychological features.
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> **Gender:** The socially constructed roles, behaviours, expressions, and identities of individuals.
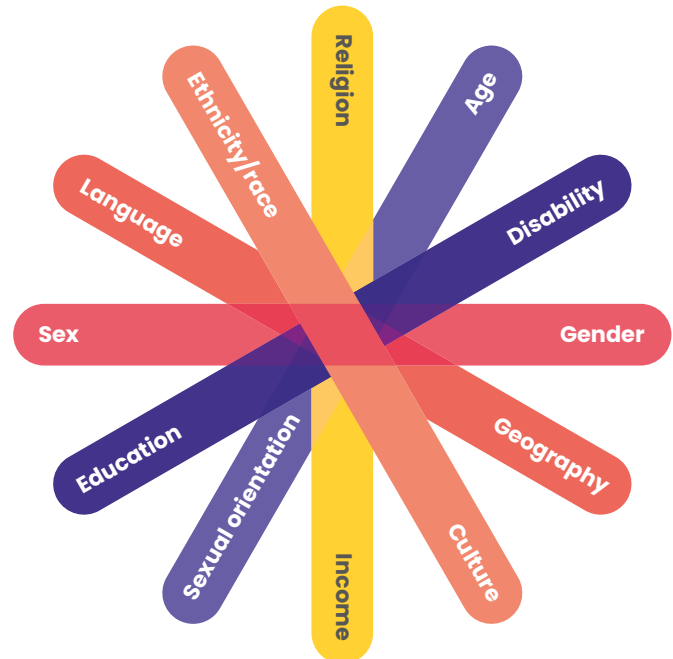

Figure 1: Factors that can intersect with sex and gender, impacting lived experiences.[2]

2. Unconscious Bias

Different groups of people may experience the same situation in different ways, such as access to services and employment, as well as experiences of violence.

Barriers to equal access can be formal or informal, intentional, or unintentional. Unintentional bias, or unconscious bias refers to negative prejudices, stereotypes or beliefs held by a person that they may be unaware of having. These unconscious biases can often unintentionally taint our program development and service delivery. As an analytical tool, GBA+ is designed to help us challenge our unconscious bias and assumptions.

3. The ABCs of GBA+

In order to better serve a diverse range of newcomers, GBA+ can be used to help ask questions, challenge assumptions, and identify potential impacts of intersecting identities. Some key questions to consider for inclusive programming are:[3]

A. What Assumptions are you making?

- What stereotypes, cultural/social norms are informing your assumptions?

B. Who could be left Behind?

- Are there generalizations being made about the clients you are serving leading to specific groups being underrepresented/underserved?

C. Who did you Consult?

- Is consultation happening with clinets to offer tailored programming and services?
- Are those most often underrepresented being consulted with?

D&E: Are you engaging in Data Equity practices?

- Is your data disaggregated by various intersections such as gender, race, ethnicity, immigration status, sexual orientation, age, etc.?
- Are demographic responses co-developed with the people whom they are meant to represent?
- Are you using data to assess representation, assess outcomes, and hold yourself accountable?
- Are equity measures being used?
- Are those measures taking intersectionality into account?

Works Cited

1. Government of Canada. Gender-Based Analysis (GBA) Plus. https://women-gender-equality.canada.ca/en/gender-based-analysis-plus.html

2. Women and Gender Equality Canada. https://women-gender-equality.canada.ca/en/gender-based-analysis-plus.html

3. Government of British Columbia: Gender-Based Analysis Factsheet. https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/british-columbians-our-governments/services-policies-for-government/gender-equity/factsheet-gba.pdf