

Intersectional Gender-Based Analysis Toolkit



Public Service Alliance of Canada
Alliance de la Fonction publique du Canada

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What is an Intersectional Gender-Based Analysis?

An Intersectional Gender-Based Analysis or IGBA is a process that helps us consider the potential impacts – positive or negative – of initiatives, policies, budgets, procedures, and projects on diverse groups of people. IGBA can help us to identify risks, gaps, or power imbalances in our organization and to create strategies to address these issues.

How can I use this toolkit?

This toolkit isn't a complete how-to guide because our understanding of intersectionality, identity, equity, and systems of power is always expanding. Instead, this toolkit is an introduction to designing projects and initiatives in ways that consider the unique lived experiences of our members. This toolkit provides key concepts, questions, resources, and information to consider in our work and activism. Remember, IGBA isn't something to be tacked on after the fact. Instead, thinking about intersectional identities should be a part of each stage of your project, from start to finish.

Who is this toolkit for?

This toolkit is for everyone and anyone! As labour activists working towards a better future, it's our responsibility to think about how intersectionality, oppression, marginalization, and equity impacts our members and the work that we do. IGBA is designed to be used across every section and branch in our organization. Additionally, using an intersectional gender-based analysis is an important way to challenge oppressive and harmful practices and beliefs.

Why is an IGBA important?

IGBA can help us recognize the harmful impacts of overlapping forms of discrimination, because when policies and programs are developed without considering inequity, we risk reproducing barriers to participation, and further harming already marginalized groups and people.

IGBA isn't advocacy in and of itself. It's an analytic tool to help us ask questions and challenge the assumption that all people are affected by programs and policy in the same way. Even with policies or projects that don't appear to have any gendered component, an IGBA can reveal issues around race, gender, accessibility, and other social identities.

What is the goal of an IGBA?

The goal of an IGBA is to increase our members' access to rights and services in a way that is equitable, inclusive, and responsive to their needs, especially for those who have historically been marginalized and excluded. Using IGBA honours our commitment to the membership and to those who face multiple forms of discrimination. When we respect the diversity of our members, we strengthen our bonds and build a greater sense of solidarity.

Thinking about intersectionality

Intersectionality is a theory that recognizes that people have many overlapping identities and may face multiple forms of discrimination at the same time. Intersectionality considers the way that racism interacts with patriarchy, homophobia, transphobia, classism, ableism, and xenophobia to create overlapping vulnerabilities, challenges, and barriers for many groups of people.



Intersectionality is also concerned with how different systems, institutions, structures, and socioeconomic and political practices (historical and current) work together to create and reinforce inequities and disadvantages for certain groups of people. So, we also need to think about the impacts of systems and issues such as capitalism, colonization, climate change, and trauma, just to name a few!

Key concepts

Here are some other important concepts to keep in mind when applying an intersectional gender-based analysis to your work and activism.

Equity: Is about the inclusive, respectful, and fair treatment of all people. Equity is not about treating everyone the same because we are all different and have unique needs. Instead, equity considers the impacts of historical and ongoing systemic discrimination and the rights of individuals or groups to fair access to resources, influence, and societal power.

Power: Is dynamic and multidimensional. It often works in hidden ways, and it takes many forms. Power is often associated with control-over people and resources, but it also includes the ability to set or change rules, standards, or policies to serve the needs of certain groups or people.

Inclusion: Is when concrete and consistent steps are taken to ensure that people with different identities feel valued, respected, and welcomed within a given setting. Inclusionary practices bring historically and presently excluded people and groups into decision-making processes in ways that share power.

Identity: (Social identity) Is a socially and historically constructed concept. We learn about our own identity and the identity of others through interactions with family, peers, organizations, institutions, media, and other connections we make in our everyday life. Class, race, gender, and sexual orientation are all social identities. A person is usually a member of many diverse groups or communities at once. A person's sense of self is often defined by all the identities or groups to which they belong.

Colonization: In the Canadian context, colonization is the act or process of settling among and establishing control over Indigenous peoples and Indigenous land through violence, oppression, enslavement, and genocide. It is an ongoing process and Indigenous peoples continue to resist colonial violence, reclaim Indigenous knowledge, rebuild communities, and strive for freedom. Colonization has also had devastating impacts on racialized and immigrant communities both within Canada and on a global scale.

Decolonization: In the Canadian context, decolonization is an active and reflective process that recognizes the deeply harmful impacts of colonialism on Indigenous peoples and many racialized and immigrant communities. It is also a healing process that must include Truth and Reconciliation, the return of Indigenous lands, honouring Indigenous sovereignty as well as the rejection of colonial systems of violence and oppression.

Marginalization: Is when certain groups and communities are excluded or made to face discrimination (social, political, and economic) because of unequal power relationships across economic, political, social, and cultural dimensions.

Oppression: Is the use of power to disempower, marginalize, silence or otherwise subordinate groups of people or identities, often in order to further empower and/or privilege the dominant group or dominant identities. Oppression works at various levels (individual, cultural and institutional) and can be achieved through force and/or the control of social institutions and resources.

Disaggregated Data: Is data that has been broken down by detailed sub-categories, like gender, age, race, class, disability, sexual orientation, among others.

Trauma-Informed Approach: Is recognizing, with compassion, that oppressive systems create personal and collective trauma that impacts the ways we interact with each other. Adopting a Trauma-Informed approach means actively implementing strategies to avoid intensifying trauma and engaging in practices that promote empowerment and respect.

Guiding principles of an IGBA



Key actions in an IGBA



IGBA Key Actions

Here are some key actions to take when applying an intersectional gender-based analysis to your work or activism. Remember, there isn't one "right" way to apply an IGBA, there is no set order, and not all of these actions may be required.

Action	Description	Questions	Notes
<p>Identify the issue or problem</p>	<p>Clearly identify the issue(s) or problem(s) at hand. Remember, there may be several issues in any given scenario and some issues may be more obscure or complex than others.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What inequities shape this issue(s)? • Whose interests and/or priorities are reflected in defining the issue(s)? • How are marginalized people impacted differently by the issue(s)? • What are the current responses to the issue(s)? 	
<p>Challenge assumptions</p>	<p>Be aware of your biases and challenge the assumption that everyone is affected in the same way by policies, projects, and initiatives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is affected by the issue? Who benefits? How do you know? • Does the program or policy recognize the distinct experiences among, within and across groups of people? • Is it possible that your assumptions prevent you from asking questions and understanding answers? 	

Action	Description	Questions	Notes
<p>Gather information</p>	<p>Data should be evidence-based, disaggregated, and you should rely on reputable statistics and research.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is your data collected from a variety of sources? (Academic, community-based research, community consultation, anecdotal evidence?) • Does your research include diverse/dissenting views? • Does your research include non-Western and/or Indigenous knowledge? • Does your research consider the existence of bias in the data used or the resources consulted? 	
<p>Consult</p>	<p>Consult with people directly impacted by the issue or the initiative, those who are historically excluded and those who have expertise, training or lived experiences in your area of focus.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you considered different ways of consulting that respect their lived experiences? You can learn a lot from storytelling, interviews, focus groups, observation, surveys, and more. • Have you included the views of the people affected by the initiative? • Have you considered how accessibility, social conditions and economics can all affect someone's ability to participate in your consultation process? • Did you seek informed consent from all participants? 	

Action	Description	Questions	Notes
<p>Develop options & recommendations</p>	<p>Your consultation and research should shape the options you propose and respond to the specific issues or problems you identified.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will the distinct lived experiences among, within, and across marginalized groups be represented in the project? • How are you making sure this initiative will have equitable outcomes? • Is the initiative presented in a format that is accessible? • Is the initiative anti-oppressive and does it redistribute power equitably? 	
<p>Monitor & evaluate</p>	<p>Review who is/ was positively or negatively impacted by the initiative. Consider any gaps or unexpected outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there negative outcomes for marginalized communities? What strategies can you use to offset unintended impacts? • Is it easy and safe for those negatively impacted to report concerns? 	
<p>Communicate</p>	<p>Provide information about the initiative, project, or policy in ways that are inclusive and accessible.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the information provided or distributed about the initiative available in different languages? • Is it provided in a format that is accessible to everyone? • Are you using language that is clear, precise, and easy to understand? • Are the examples, language, symbols, and images used in your communication appropriate for the intended audience? 	



IGBA Self-Assessment Sheet

IGBA requires that we, as activists, colleagues, and members, reflect on our biases and the assumptions we make in the work we do. Here are some things to consider:

Self-Reflection

- Have you considered what types of assumptions you may be making and have these assumptions prevented you from asking questions and understanding answers that are outside your experience?
- Are there areas in which you need additional training, education, or support?
- Are you open to new ways of thinking that challenge your current understanding of an issue?
- Are there ways in which you may be contributing to inequities or engaging in oppressive practices?
- Have you considered that you might be relying on stereotypes and over-generalizations instead of unbiased data?
- Have you reflected on and addressed power dynamics in your work with members and colleagues?
- Are you using a trauma-informed approach when working with members and colleagues?

Equity Review

- Is the program or policy gender-inclusive, recognizing that gender exists on a spectrum?
- Is the project inclusive of sexual and romantic orientations, recognizing that they both exist on a spectrum?
- Does the project include Indigenous peoples and Indigenous knowledge in all their diversity?
- Does the project include the diverse experiences of racialized people?
- Is the project or policy inclusive and accessible to people with disabilities?
- Is the project or policy inclusive and accessible to people who face economic marginalization?
- Does the project or initiative recognize that identities are intersectional, and that people belong to multiple social groups?

Plan

- Have you considered what you want to achieve with your intersectional gender-based analysis?
- Does the project account for intersecting identities as a part of the core of the project rather than as an add-on?
- Have the experiences of historically marginalized people, and groups been considered in defining what the issue(s) are?
- Does your initiative reflect the needs identified by the impacted communities or individuals?
- Are there competing needs/interests among, across and within various communities?
- Does the project respect PSAC's commitment to Truth and Reconciliation?
- Does the project respect PSAC'S commitment to decolonization?
- Are there power imbalances that need to be addressed?

Design, Implement and Evaluate

- Is the initiative accessible to various groups of people with different needs?
- Do you respect the knowledge and expertise of the impacted groups, and have you made an effort to work collaboratively with them?
- Are there barriers that may prevent people from providing feedback about the initiative?
- Are you receptive to feedback that you may have excluded marginalized people or failed to meet their needs?

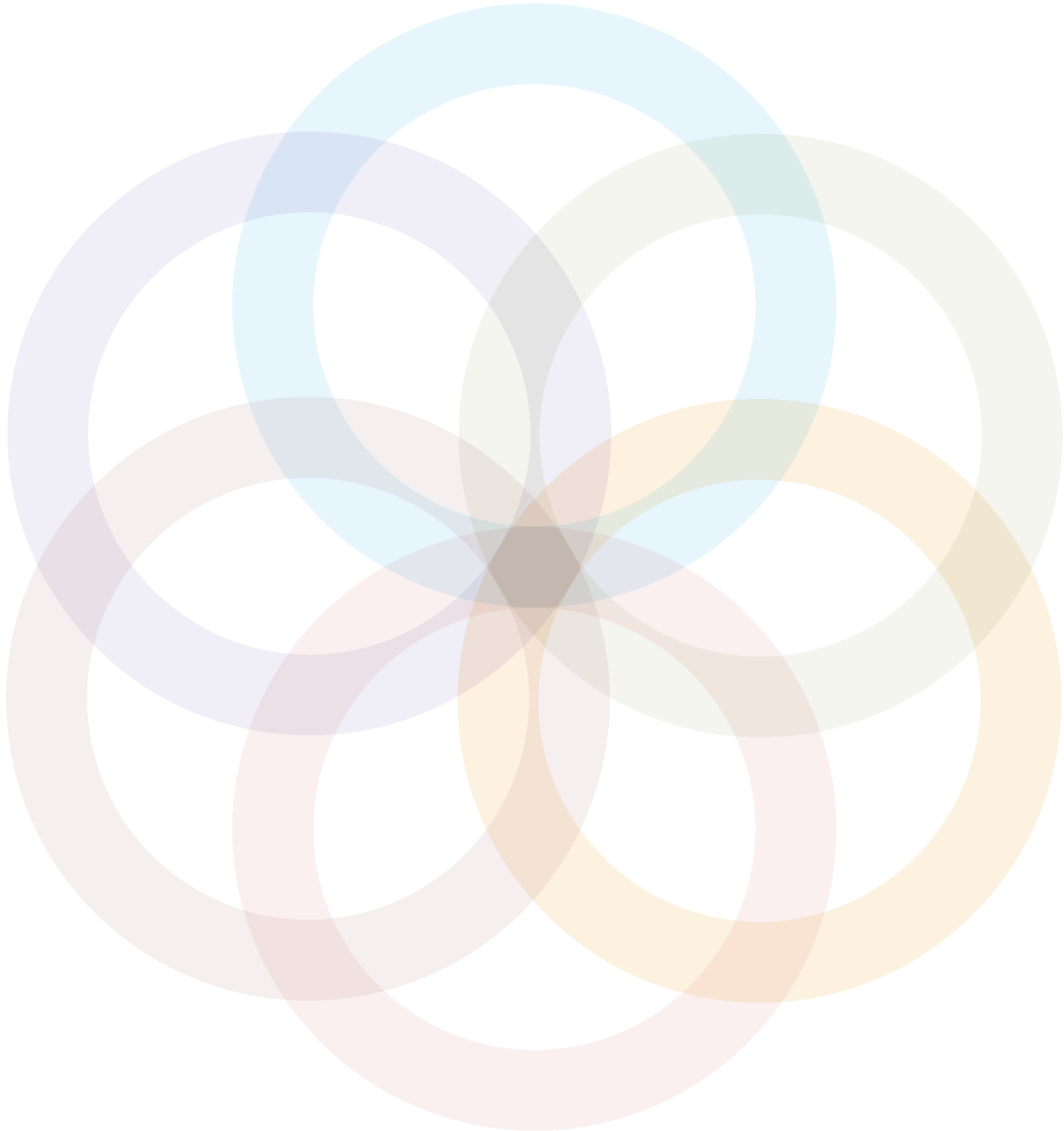
Impact Assessment Sheet

<p>Who is the intended audience of the initiative? What communities are they from? (Consider intersectional identities)</p>	<p>Are there any potential barriers to participation in either the initiative or the consultation process?</p>	<p>What are the potential short and long-term impacts of the initiative? Have the needs of PSAC members been addressed?</p>	<p>Are there any potential barriers to participants providing feedback on the initiative?</p>

How to apply an IGBA

Here are some examples of activities or projects where you can use an intersectional gender-based analysis. Remember to be creative and responsive to the needs of our members!

Context	Key Action(s)	Self-Reflection
<p>A young Two-Spirit Indigenous woman approached the local steward regarding harassment at work.</p>	<p>Identify the Issue</p> <p>Challenge Assumptions</p> <p>Gather Information</p>	<p>Are you using a trauma-informed approach?</p> <p>Are you making any assumptions?</p> <p>Do the options proposed consider PSAC’s commitment to Truth and Reconciliation?</p>
<p>A local is organizing a rally for Phoenix Pay Issues.</p>	<p>Consult</p> <p>Develop Options</p> <p>Monitor and Evaluate</p> <p>Communicate</p>	<p>Are there barriers that might affect people’s ability to participate in the rally such as accessibility, transportation, and caregiving responsibilities?</p> <p>Is your communication about the rally in a format that is accessible to everyone?</p>



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