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# **Mapping the Landscape of Sex, Gender & Health**

**There is often confusion about how various initiatives in advancing sex and gender in health relate to each other. To clarify, Drs. Lorraine Greaves and Stacey Ritz authored a popular paper in 2022 entitled "Sex, Gender and Health: Mapping the landscape of research and policy".**

**This resource offers graphical depictions of the approaches presented in the paper.**

# Mapping the Landscape of Sex, Gender & Health

## Sex and Gender Science

Building evidence derived from integrating sex (biological) and gender (sociocultural) related factors and interactions as variables for measurement, analysis, interpretation and reporting of research (sex as a biological variable (SABV) and gender as a sociocultural variable (GASV)).

### Sex and/or Gender Differences

Research that focuses on comparative studies of males and females/men and women.

### Sex and/or Gender Related Factors

Research that focuses on underlying mechanisms, processes and dynamics.

### Sex-Gender Interactions

Research that focuses on real world relationships and impacts of sex and gender.

### Sexual and Gender Minority

Research that focuses on experience and impact of sexual orientation and gender identity.

## Intersectional Analysis

The recognition and integration of the impact of multiple factors, characteristics, and structural processes that interact with sex and gender.

## Gender Transformative Approaches

Improving Outcomes

+

Improving Gender Equity

=

Gender Transformative

## Policy Approaches

### Sex- and Gender-Based Analysis Plus (SGBA+)

Assesses how diverse groups of women, men, girls, boys and gender-diverse people may be impacted by a program or policy.

### Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)

Processes to achieve wide engagement and representation in human resources, research designs, and audiences, by engaging respectfully with diverse groups.

Health & Gender Equity

# Sex and Gender Science

The Figure on the previous page offers a visual of the key topics covered in the paper and how they fit together. The four most common areas of sex and gender research reflect different approaches, research questions, and produce different kinds of knowledge.

While much research focuses on finding (or not finding) **sex/gender differences**, such approaches are often best seen as a starting point, to signal potential sex or gender issues, or as a basis for building a future research agenda. Even when sex/gender differences are not found, it doesn't mean that there are no sex/gender related issues to pursue on the topic.

In fact, that is what makes investigating **sex or gender related factors** so crucial, to identify and understand the many underlying mechanisms or biological or sociological processes that create sex or gender related health issues, diseases, conditions, or responses to treatment.

Ultimately, **sex and gender interactions** determine a person's health, as one's body and its parts and processes are often the subject of various assumptions, stereotypes, expectations, and social experiences. These experiences, in turn, iteratively affect health, by perpetuating research gaps, generating inappropriate diagnoses or treatments or suggesting risky health practices.

**Sexual and gender minority health research** is another key area of focus in sex and gender science. In order to provide better access to more comprehensive care, it is essential to understand and measure sex and gender related aspects of health for LGBTQIA2S+, along with understanding the impacts of sex and gender for the health of trans, non-binary, and gender diverse individuals.

All of these processes interact and intersect with a range of wider social processes such as systemic and structural sexism, racism, colonialism, ageism, ableism, and capitalism. Intricately interwoven are various discriminatory, marginalizing, and stigmatizing attitudes and practices that are often culturally and contextually manifested, such as homophobia, and transphobia, antisemitism, and islamophobia.

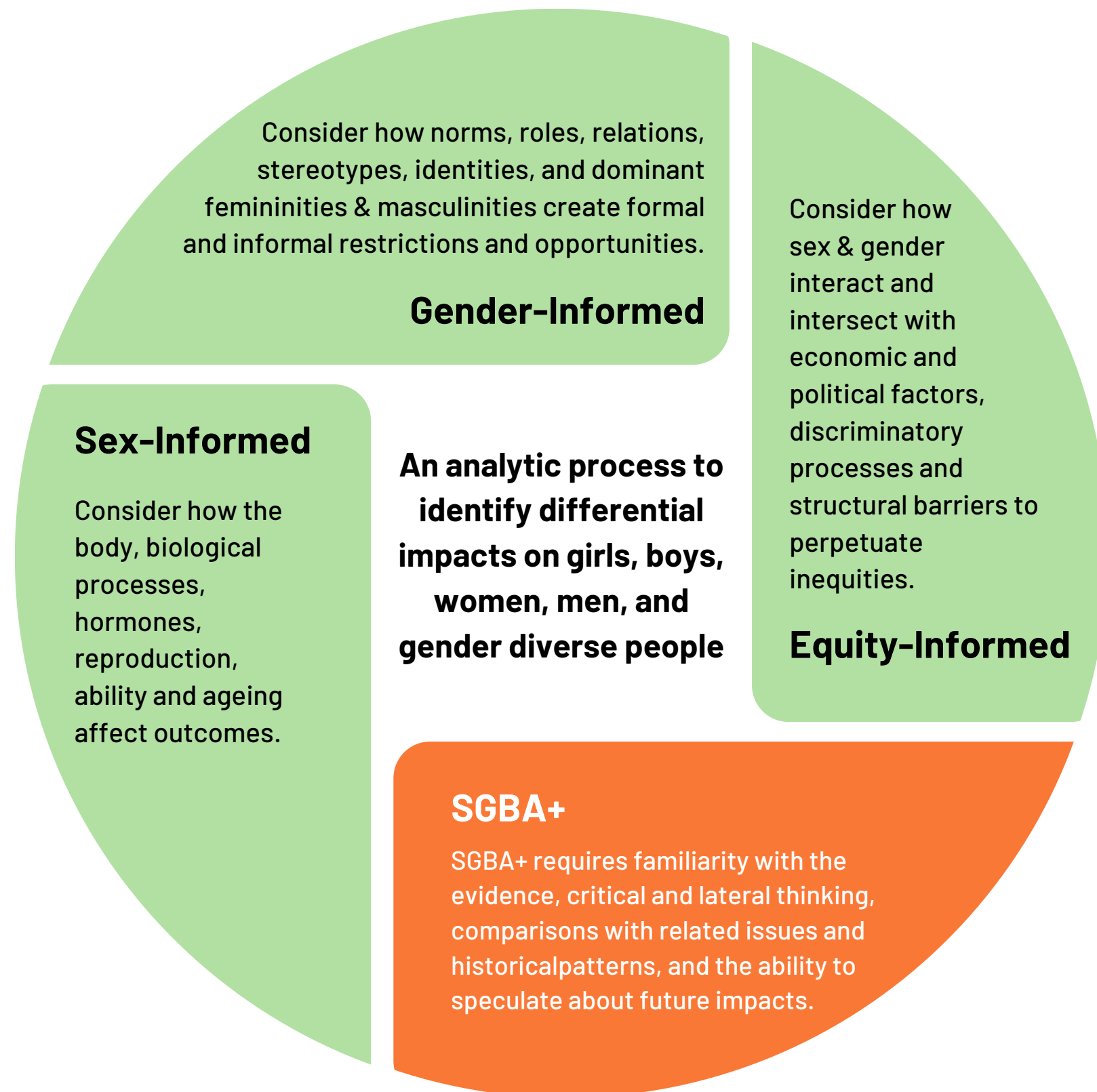
## Learn more

[Sex, Gender and Health: Mapping the landscape of research and policy](#) (2022, concept paper by Greaves & Ritz)

[More-nuanced approaches to exploring sex and gender are warranted](#) (2024, commentary by Greaves & Ritz)

[Sex and gender in science: How to navigate a challenging area of research to the benefit of all](#) (2024, special collection in Nature)

# Policy Approaches: Sex- and Gender-Based Analysis Plus



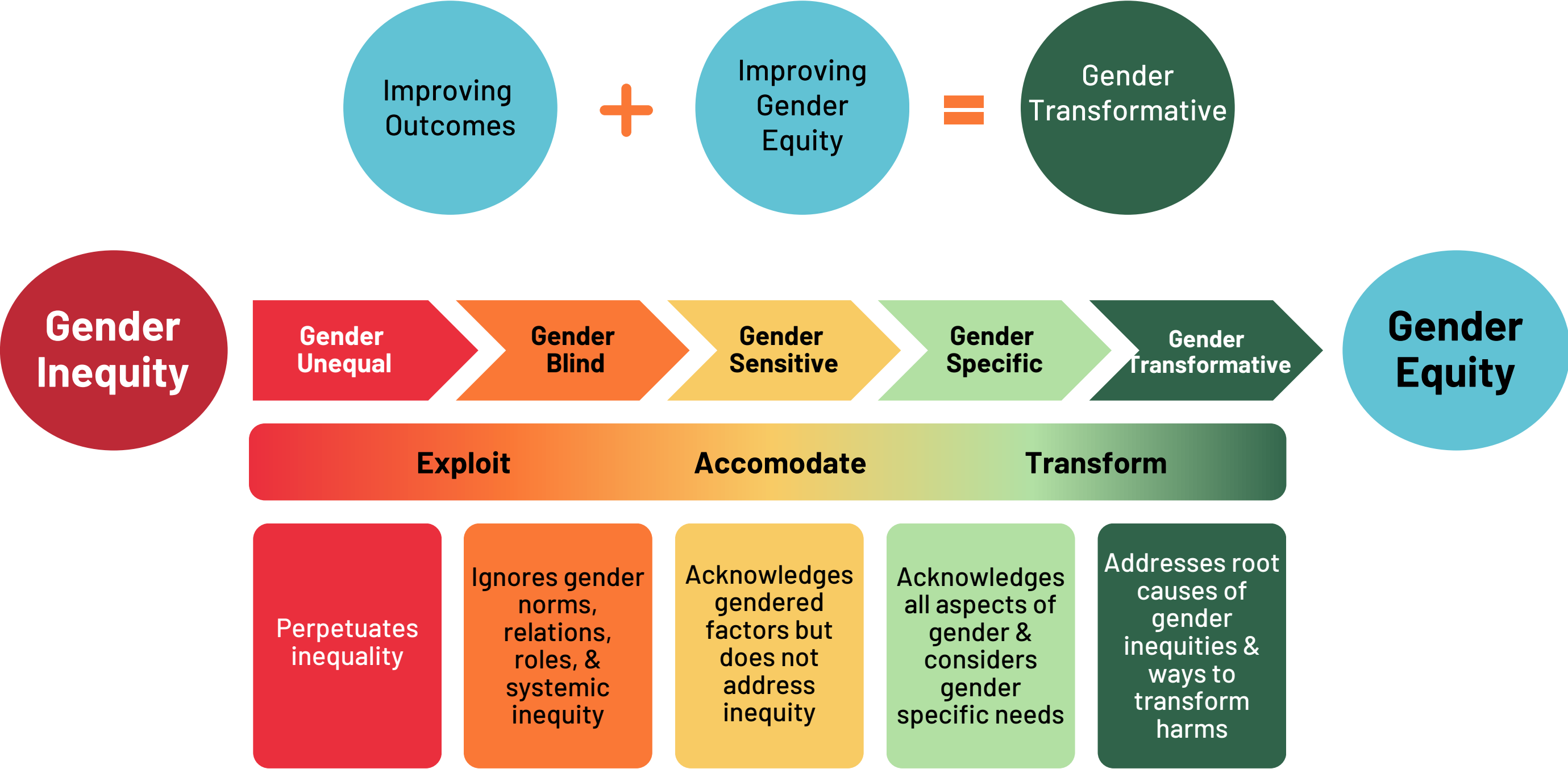
Sex- and gender-based analysis plus (SGBA+) is an analytic approach applied to literature, data, information, or guidelines that identifies differential effects on men, women or gender diverse individuals. It is an approach mandated by the Government of Canada and several other countries, as a way to create more equitable policies and practices in health, economic, and social areas. SGBA+ can be applied to existing evidence, research designs, survey data, or common analyses of information. Doing effective SGBA+ can point to changes in policies, programmes, treatment approaches, or funding to improve gender equity.

# Policy Approaches: Equity, Diversity & Inclusion



Equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is a policy approach that widens the range of voices and experiences in research teams, staff groups, participants or audiences. The goal of EDI initiatives is to increase the diversity of experiences, identities, social locations, and voices in endeavours such as research, education, or business, in order to represent potential audiences more fully. This is crucial in health research, where historically, men have been the norm in research samples or clinical trials, and women have been under-represented. Additionally, some racialized, economic, cultural, or geographical groups have been overlooked, leading to knowledge and treatment that does not suit all groups.

# Gender Transformative Approaches



Gender transformative approaches blend two goals at the same time: improving outcomes *and* achieving gender equity. These goals are both important in health promotion, treatments, and social and economic interventions. If an initiative achieves better outcomes (such as reduced smoking, or uptake of HIV prevention), but does so by exploiting gender stereotypes and traditional roles, it does not advance overall gender equity. Gender transformative approaches are simple ideas, that require creativity and courage to mount, but are of utmost importance to women, men and all gender groups.

## **More resources on sex, gender and health:**

[Integrating Sex and Gender Informed Evidence into Your Practices: 10 Key Questions on Sex, Gender & Substance Use](#)

[New Terrain: Tools to Integrate Trauma and Gender Informed Responses into Substance Use Practice and Policy](#)

[Making it Better: Gender-Transformative Health Promotion](#)

[Gender Transformative Health Promotion Course](#)

[Rising to the Challenge: Sex- and Gender-based Analysis for Health Planning, Policy, and Research in Canada](#)

[Sex, Gender and Equity Analyses info sheet](#)



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