



DISCUSSANT SESSION

FRANCES TIRADO, SENIOR STATISTICIAN

U.S. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE

FCSM 2022





WHY IS EQUITY IMPORTANT?



Government Auditing Standards

2018 Revision Technical Update April 2021
(Supersedes GAO-18-568G)

GAO-21-368G | April 2021

GAO, *Government Auditing Standards: 2018 Revision*, GAO-21-368G (Washington, D.C.:April 2021)

Source: [timur84/stock.adobe.com](https://www.adobe.com/stock/timur84).

GAGAS PERFORMANCE AUDITS: CONCEPTS TO CONSIDER WHEN AUDITING PUBLIC FUNCTIONS AND SERVICES

GAGAS Paragraphs

Paragraph 1.02:

The concept of accountability for use of public resources and government authority is key to our nation's governing processes. Management and officials entrusted with public resources are responsible for carrying out public functions

and providing service to the public **effectively, efficiently, economically, ethically, and equitably** within the context

of the statutory boundaries of the specific government program. *[Emphasis added.]*

GAGAS PERFORMANCE AUDITS: CONCEPTS TO CONSIDER WHEN AUDITING PUBLIC FUNCTIONS AND SERVICES

Paragraph 1.03:

As reflected in applicable laws, regulations, agreements, and standards, management and officials of government programs are responsible for providing reliable, useful, and timely information for transparency and accountability of these programs and their operations. Legislators, oversight bodies, those charged with governance, and the public

need to know whether (1) management and officials manage government resources and use their authority properly and in compliance with laws and regulations; (2) government programs are achieving their objectives and desired outcomes; and (3) government services are provided **effectively, efficiently, economically, ethically, and equitably**. *[Emphasis added.]*

THE 5 E'S

- Effectiveness
- Efficiency
- Economy
- Ethical
- Equitable

EQUITY

- **Equality** of access to and provision of services
- **Procedural fairness and equal treatment** of individuals in government programs and policies
- **Causes** of disparate outcomes
- **Distributional impacts** of public policies, programs, resources, and services

EXAMPLE ISSUE AREAS

Technology:

- Bias in machine learning algorithms
- Minority technology fields
- Facial recognition accuracy

Accessibility and Outreach:

- Access to voting places by disabled persons
- Outreach to Socially Disadvantaged Groups

Gender Issues:

- Maternal mortality in childbirth
- Detention of pregnant women
- Product cost differences by gender

Funding and Grant making

- Disaster relief funding to High Poverty Areas
- Equitable grant making in transportation funding

Retirement and Aging:

- Elderly caregiver resources
- Nutritional needs of elderly

Diversity:

- Bank Board Diversity
- Financial Services Management Diversity
- NIH Biomedical research diversity
- Promotion Outcomes by Race, Gender

Discipline and Justice:

- Discipline in K-12 schools by Race, disability status
- Military Justice
- Native American Delinquency
- School Shooting Victims

EVOLUTION OF GAO EQUITY WORK

- Ensure the **right people** are at the table
- Competence is more than technical and subject matter proficiency, we need the **right understanding and methods**
- Scanning for missed opportunities
- Seizing opportunities to enhance conclusion and external validity
- Make sure we are asking the **right questions**

NOTABLE OBSERVATIONS

- Data challenges
- Political sensitivity
- Technical expertise
- Diverse teams
- Different forms of diversity
- Coordination

DATA EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

Considerations for how data are:

- Collected
- Analyzed
- Interpreted
- Reported

DATA EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

- Requires data at granular levels of detail to analyze experiences of interest
- Highlight importance of data
- Equitable data access
- Data infrastructure, internally and across government
- Leveraging administration data through matching
- Collecting missing data

CONSIDERATIONS FOR ANALYSIS

- Objectivity
- Leverage appropriate methods for sparse data
- Robust, rigorous, methodologically sound methods
- Capacity building
- Balancing rigor of method with interpretability

CONSIDERATIONS FOR REPORTING

- Clear and concise findings
- Transparency and reproducibility
- Measures of error as appropriate
- Highlight caveats to findings or conclusions
- Be upfront about interpretation and limitations of quantitative analysis



Jared Smith
Chief Statistician
*Center Statistics and Data
Analysis*
SmithJB@gao.gov



Lijia Guo
Senior Actuary
*Center for Actuarial
Science*
GuoL@gao.gov



Jeff Tessin
Assistant Director
(Statistics)
*Center for Statistics and
Data Analysis*
TessinJ@gao.gov



Sonya Vartivarian
Assistant Director
(Statistics)
*Center for Statistics and Data
Analysis*
VartivarianS@gao.gov



Moon Parks
Assistant Director
(Economics)
Center for Economics
ParksM@gao.gov



Frances Tirado
Senior Statistician
*Center for Statistics and
Data Analysis*
TiradoF@gao.gov

CONTACT INFO

Thank you!



Q&A

WE WILL BEGIN THE Q&A, PLEASE RAISE YOUR HAND FOR ANY QUESTIONS.

