Chapter 5. Integrating HR & GE in Evaluation: Overview, Design and Scope

5.1. Considerations for HR & GE responsive evaluation approaches

99. Integrating HR & GE standards and principles in the evaluation process is “about what the evaluation examines and how it is undertaken.” It concerns how HRBA and GE mainstreaming inform and guide the intervention under evaluation but also the evaluation process itself. Evaluations should first assess the quality of the human rights and gender analysis undertaken ahead of the intervention – does it provide an adequate basis for subsequent mainstreaming of human rights and gender equality in programming? In terms of results, the evaluation needs to determine the extent to which and how interventions have challenged and changed inequalities and structural causes of the denial of rights and persistence of gender inequality; and whether these changes are likely to lead to the desired results of improved enjoyment of human rights and gender equality. In terms of implementation of the evaluation process, it needs in itself to be inclusive and ensure the participation of different stakeholders, particularly women and men who are most likely to have their rights violated. In addition, the evaluation design and conduct must be transparent and accountable, making the evaluation results public to all affected parties.

5.1.1. Fostering inclusive participation

100. Evaluations that address HR & GE foster inclusion and participation, and seek to address power relations. Fostering inclusion and participation requires including women and men marginalized and/or discriminated against in the evaluation process – this will likely provide significant information on how the intervention is seen from the perspective of those it is trying to support. Additionally, it requires paying attention to which groups benefit and which groups contribute to the intervention under review, in order to ensure balanced and complete evaluation evidence is generated.


101. In HR & GE responsive evaluation, the full range of stakeholder groups (including duty bearers and rights holders) should be carefully analysed, in order to avoid biases such as gender, distance (including the less accessible), class, power (supporting less powerful interviewees to be able to speak freely by addressing privacy and confidentiality concerns), etc. A method to begin fostering inclusion at an early stage is to establish user groups to discuss the evaluation purpose, focus and methodology during the design phase.

102. Particular attention must also be paid to the inclusion of women and individuals/groups who are marginalized and/or discriminated against. The appropriate methodology should allow identifying and including in the data-gathering and analysis process those most likely to have their rights violated. Exploring the participation barriers these groups may face is a critical step towards understanding constraints and challenges that may arise in the process and seeking alternative forms to ensure inclusion. It is important to think about practical issues that may enhance or undermine participation, including time, place, accessibility of the areas, or availability of communications means. For example, in certain circumstances, it might be necessary to examine how to reach persons that live in areas with no electricity, postal service or telephone access. In other contexts, security factors could affect the participation of these populations.

103. For more detailed information on developing an HR & GE responsive evaluative framework to assess levels of participation, inclusion and power relations within projects/programmes, please see sections 5.2 and 5.3.

5.1.2. Ensuring respect for cultural sensitivities

104. Culture has implications for all evaluations and cultural sensitivity is an important dimension in undertaking HR & GE responsive evaluation. Cultures may be viewed as contextual environments in the implementation of human rights policies and gender policies. As stated in the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: “the ideal of free human beings enjoying freedom from fear and want can only be achieved if conditions are created whereby everyone may enjoy his economic, social and cultural rights, as well as civil and political rights.”\(^{95}\) A clear understanding of beliefs and values facilitates the process of implementing HRBA.

105. Evaluators should review reservations to treaties and when possible, and where resources allow, evaluators could look at comparative jurisprudence in customary and religious traditions and law reform, in order to understand the evolving, changing nature of cultural norms and religious interpretations. Box 11 highlights good practice guidelines for ensuring cultural competence in evaluation.\(^{96}\)

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\(^{95}\) Preamble to the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, third paragraph.

Box 11. Cultural Competence in Evaluation

Cultural competence in evaluation theory and practice is critical for the profession. It is a stance taken towards culture, not a discrete status or simple mastery of particular knowledge and skills. A culturally competent evaluator is prepared to engage with diverse segments of communities to include cultural and contextual dimensions important to the evaluation. Culturally competent evaluators respect the cultures represented in the evaluation.

Evaluations cannot be culture-free. Those who engage in evaluation do so from perspectives that reflect their values, their ways of viewing the world, and their culture. Culture shapes the ways in which evaluation questions are conceptualized, which in turn influence what data are collected, how the data will be collected and analysed, and how data are interpreted. On the other hand, inaccurate or incomplete understandings of culture introduce systematic error that threatens validity. Culturally competent evaluators work to minimize error grounded in cultural biases, stereotypes, and lack of shared worldviews among stakeholders.

Culture has implications for all evaluations and all phases of evaluation — including staffing, development, and implementation of evaluation efforts as well as communicating and using evaluation results. A few practices, among others, can be employed to undertake a culturally sensitive evaluation:

- Acknowledging the complexity of cultural identities: cultural groupings are not static. People belong to multiple cultural groups. Navigating these groups typically requires reconciling multiple and sometimes clashing norms. Attempts to categorize people often collapse identity into cultural groupings that may not accurately represent the true diversity that exists.

- Recognizing the dynamics of power: cultural groupings are ascribed differential status and power, with some holding privilege that they may not be aware of and some being relegated to the status of ‘other’. Culturally competent evaluators work to avoid reinforcing cultural stereotypes and prejudice in their work, and are aware of marginalization.

- Recognizing and eliminating bias in language: thoughtful and deliberate use of language can reduce bias when conducting culturally competent evaluations.

- Employing culturally appropriate methods: culturally competent evaluators also are aware of the many ways data can be analysed and interpreted and the contexts in which findings can be disseminated. These evaluators seek to consult and engage with groups who are the focus of the data to determine alternative approaches to analyse and present findings, and to consider multiple audience perspectives in the process of interpretation.

5.2. **Scope of analysis of HR & GE responsive evaluations**

106. Designing an intervention implies anticipating how the situation will look once the intervention has been implemented successfully. In RBM-inspired projects/programmes, the intended result is the product of a chain of activities, outputs, and outcomes. If HR & GE responsive, the evaluation will analyse how HR & GE objectives and HRBA & GE mainstreaming principles were included in the intervention design and how and if HR & GE results have been achieved.

107. HR & GE responsive evaluation requires an assessment of the extent to which an intervention being evaluated has been guided by organizational and system-wide objectives on gender equality and human rights. Accordingly, evaluations should analyse whether women and men have equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities, and whether this in turn has led to results such as greater equality between women and men, thus contributing, for example, to the Millennium Declaration and related goals. Moreover, evaluations need to be inclusive of and consider different points of view from both women and men in the various stakeholder groups involved in the intervention.

108. Changing unequal, discriminatory and exploitative social structures is one of the most challenging aspects of development. For UN system’s interventions to address such issues successfully, internal changes of mentality are also needed. Evaluators should acknowledge that reorientation of programmes towards HRBA is a process that may require some time. It is also important for evaluations to distinguish between the genuine adoption of HRBA, and the rhetorical use of human rights terminology, or the adoption of approaches (e.g. poverty reduction, social welfare and/or social protection) that overlap with but are different from HRBA.

109. In most organizations, gender mainstreaming is a more familiar concept than human rights mainstreaming. Structures and processes set up to ensure gender mainstreaming could be emulated or adapted to facilitate the introduction of HRBA to programming more generally. But, equally, there is a need to learn from situations where failings in gender mainstreaming have been recognized. For example, if staff perceive mainstreaming gender (or human rights) as a bureaucratic or technical requirement without real implications for their own work, and if internal incentive structures are weak and lines of accountability unclear, the approach may have no impact.

### 5.2.1. **HR & GE analysis**

110. Context and situation analyses are the basis of any intervention. HR & GE responsive evaluations should first be able to determine whether quality human rights and gender analyses were undertaken that determined the claims of rights holders and obligations of duty bearers. Secondly, the evaluation should establish whether the results of this analysis were properly integrated in the programme design. If HR & GE responsive, these analyses should be informed by a HR & GE perspectives, by focusing on identifying rights holders and duty bearers and on distinguishing factors related to gender. This information provides the evaluator/evaluation team with an understanding of where the intervention is starting from and a point of comparison.
111. HR analysis requires asking the following questions:97

- **What** is happening, where and who is more affected? (assessment) Which rights are at stake? Whose rights are at stake? For every development challenge, it is important to identify the interrelated human rights standards and those groups suffering from a greater denial of rights.

- **Why** are these problems occurring? (causal analysis): identify the underlying and root causes of exclusion, discrimination and inequality;

- **Who** has the obligation to do something about it? (role analysis) Who is the duty bearer? This analysis allows to identify individual and institutional duty bearers and their corresponding obligations;

- **What** capacities are needed for those affected, and those with a duty, to take action? (capacity analysis): it requires identifying the skills, abilities, resources, accessibility, responsibilities, authority and motivation which are needed by those affected to claim their rights and by those obliged to fulfil these rights.

112. Additionally, if an intervention is gender mainstreamed and aims at the promotion of GE, it should be based on a gender analysis. The term gender analysis is used to describe a systematic approach to examining factors related to gender. It is an essential element of socio-economic analysis, as gender is a factor in all social and economic relations.98 The 1997 ECOSOC Resolution on gender mainstreaming notes: “Gender analysis should be applied at all levels, including planning, programming, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation.”99 Gender analysis should be included within the HR analysis and directly linked to it. Box 12 provides information on some commonly used gender analysis frameworks.

113. In general, a good gender analysis should include:

- Identifying contextual constraints and opportunities in relation to gender equality, e.g. laws, attitudes.

- Reviewing the capacities of duty bearers to reach out equally to girls, boys, women and men, and to promote gender equality.

- Collecting and analysing sex-disaggregated data.

- Understanding that women and men are not homogenous groups and the different ways men and women experience problems.

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98 There have been a number of methodological approaches to gender analysis. Information on these frameworks can be found at <policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/a-guide-to-gender-analysis-frameworks-115397> and <www.gdrc.org/gender/framework/framework.html>.

• Understanding the ways in which gender intersects with other social dividing lines such as ethnicity, race, age and disability.

• Identifying gender roles and gender relations and differentials at work and in life, in terms of the division of labour, and access to and control over resources and benefits.

• Examining how power relations at the household level relate to those at the international, state, community and market levels.

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**Box 12. Feminist Evaluation and Gender Analysis Frameworks**

Feminist perspectives on evaluation draw their inspiration from feminist theories with a strong focus on participatory, empowering and social justice agenda. They usually have two major foci, the first on the well-being of women and girls, and second on the evaluation process, which should be collaborative and reciprocal. There is a strong focus on changing unequal power and social relations, and promoting gender equality, through the evaluation process.

Gender analysis frameworks are methods of research and planning for assessing and promoting gender equality issues in institutions. Gender analysis can be integral to feminist evaluation, as it can provide an analysis of the structures of political and social control that create gender equality. Gender analysis covers the middle ground between conventional development evaluation and feminist research. Gender analysis is becoming accepted as an operational tool that can be used by policy-makers, planners, development agencies, and non-government organizations to integrate gender concerns into national development strategies.

The most commonly used gender frameworks include:

• **The Harvard Analytical Framework**, which consists of a matrix for collecting data at the micro level through an activity profile, access and control profiles, analysis of influencing factors, and project cycle analysis.

• **Gender Planning Framework**, which focuses on strategic gender needs and inequalities.

• **Social Relations Framework**, which aims to analyse gender inequalities in the distribution of resources, and gender relations.

• **Women’s Empowerment Framework**, which conceptualizes five progressive levels of equality – welfare, access, conscientization, participation and control – with the last level representing equality.

More information on gender analysis frameworks can be found at: [policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/a-guide-to-gender-analysis-frameworks-115397].

114. There is a strong emphasis in HRBA and gender mainstreaming on identifying and supporting the capacity of women and men whose rights are most likely to be violated. Because women and individuals/groups who are marginalized and/or discriminated against are a particular focus of the HRBA and gender mainstreaming, evaluations need to pay close attention to whether these groups are receiving the support they require.

5.2.2. Acknowledging the aim for the progressive realization of all HR & GE

115. HRBA recognizes that the capacities and resources to fulfil rights are often limited and that some rights may take more time to be realized than others. The idea of ‘progressive realization’ takes this into account and allows countries to make progress towards realizing certain rights based on their resources. However, the distinctiveness of HRBA is that “it imposes certain conditions on the behaviour of the State so that it cannot use progressive realization as an excuse for deferring or relaxing its efforts. First, the State must take immediate action to fulfil any rights that are not seriously dependent on resource availability. Second, it must prioritize its fiscal operations so that resources can be diverted from relatively non-essential uses to those that are essential for the fulfilment of rights that are important for poverty reduction. Third, to the extent that fulfilment of certain rights will have to be deferred, the State must develop, in a participatory manner, a time-bound plan of action for their progressive realization. (…) Finally, the State will be called to account if the monitoring process reveals less than full commitment on its part to realize the targets.”

116. This has implications for all evaluations, as they will need to examine how far HR & GE are explicitly discussed in planning documents and policies, to what extent duty bearers have the capacity and commitments to meet their obligations, and whether the realization of rights has been improved through the implementation of the intervention, along a spectrum from nought to full realization.

5.2.3. Giving equal weight to the outcomes and the process

117. HRBA gives the same importance to process as it does to results. This means that the commitment to achieving those rights, as well as the processes through which a society moves towards realizing them, are crucial. Participation is a key principle in HRBA, and a human right enshrined in many conventions and declarations, including the ICCPR, the UN Declaration on the Right to Development, the Convention on the Rights of Disabled People, and the CEDAW. A human rights analysis will therefore determine the quality of the mechanisms available for partic-

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100 There is no agreement in the UN yet as to terminology to describe the main target group of HRBA. This Guidance uses the term “groups most likely to have their rights violated” to include all those rights holders that are generally subject to discrimination in society, including women, indigenous peoples, the disabled, minorities, displaced people, migrants, refugees, people living with HIV/AIDS, etc.


participatory processes and level of participation that has occurred as a result. Non-discrimination, local ownership, capacity development and accountability are essential characteristics of a high-quality participatory process.

118. OHCHR has identified a series of measures that may be required to realize the right to participation:

- Building the capacity of civil society organizations to engage with duty bearers;
- Increasing transparency of policies and processes;
- Creating new channels and mechanisms for participation of women and individuals/groups who are marginalized and/or discriminated against;
- Civic education and human rights awareness-raising;
- Media and communication campaigns;
- Advocacy for and capacity-building of networks; and
- Broadening alliances across civil society organizations.\(^\text{103}\)

119. The challenge for evaluations is to determine whether interventions and development processes are participatory, and include all relevant rights holders. The implementation of the evaluation also needs to be in itself an active, free and meaningful participatory process.

### 5.2.4. Identifying relevant rights-based and gender-sensitive indicators

120. Rights-based and gender-sensitive indicators are critical to HR & GE responsive evaluation work, as they set the stage for what will be measured.\(^\text{104}\) They are the means to measure changes, to hold institutions accountable for their commitments, to evaluate the results of policies, programmes or projects, and to orientate decision-making processes. Measuring HR & GE changes is a political process, as underlined by A. Moser regarding gender equality: “Many assume that measuring change is a technical exercise; yet the decision to measure progress towards gender equality is political. So too are the decisions about which aspects of gender equality to measure. Who should decide? Funders, programme staff, or […] the women and men who are intended to benefit?”\(^\text{105}\) A combination of

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qualitative and quantitative methods, with participatory techniques, better captures the multifaceted dimensions of HR & GE changes.

121. **Indicators** describe how the intended results are measured and illustrate the changes that an intervention contributes to. In terms of measuring HR & GE dimensions, they help evaluators assess, for example, whether the intervention has been successful in promoting empowerment at legal, political, economic and social levels. They also help address stakeholder diversity since, through measuring disaggregated indicators, an intervention can obtain information on whether it is affecting different groups of people in the most effective way. By comparing the progress on the indicators with baseline information (the situation at the beginning of the project), it is possible to establish quantitative and qualitative changes over a period of time.

122. Ideally, an intervention should have a set of quantitative and qualitative indicators from the beginning of its implementation, with information regularly collected through monitoring processes. Mixed indicators are important because they provide more complete and diverse information, enhance credibility by offering different perspectives, and improve design by making objectives and results more specific and measurable. As promoting HR & GE is a mandate of all UN agencies, the indicators should always address these areas. However, the reality is that, very often, even if interventions have a set of indicators, it may be that they are not of good quality, are not measured frequently enough, or do not address HR & GE issues at all.

123. An **evaluability assessment** will help the evaluation manager identify whether the intervention has an adequate set of indicators (and information on their progress) to support the assessment of HR & GE during the evaluation process. If the existing indicators are not sufficient to allow for an accurate appraisal, specific indicators could be created during the evaluation planning stage (preparing and revising the ToR) and assessed during the evaluation process.

124. **Formulating HR & GE indicators** requires attention to general issues, such as whether the indicators are SMART (specific, measurable, accurate, relevant and time-bound). However, it also requires special attention to specific issues, such as being able to measure whether rights and equality are being promoted in a disaggregated manner. Prioritizing which indicators to use depends on several factors, such as the type of information needed, comprehensiveness of the picture provided, costs and efforts to produce the information required and the problem to be addressed. It may seem like a difficult task but the tips in the Box 13 can be helpful in the process.

125. A meaningful indicator framework to promote and monitor human rights issues should also be anchored in the normative content of rights, as notably enumerated in the relevant articles of international human rights instruments, as interpreted, inter alia, by the relevant committees in their general comments (for example, the two general comments on gender equality)\(^\text{106}\). It is important to remember that the primary objective of a human rights assessment is to assess how duty bearers are meeting their obligations – irrespective of whether they are promoting a right or protecting

and fulfilling it. Consequently, the adopted framework should be able to reflect the obligation of the duty-holder to respect, protect and fulfil human rights. Finally, it is necessary to recognize and reflect cross-cutting human rights norms and principles (such as non-discrimination and equality, indivisibility, accountability, participation and empowerment) in the choice of indicators, as well as in the process of undertaking an assessment\(^\text{107}\).

126. Several external sources provide guidance on how to formulate HR & GE indicators, as a result of the progress made in the last twenty years in international and national statistics, such as

gender statistics.\textsuperscript{108} There is also a reference document on structural, process and outcome indicators for human rights.\textsuperscript{109} They are worth consulting for more detailed guidance and ideas.

127. To illustrate how to address HR & GE issues, Boxes 14 and 15 provide some examples of empowerment indicators. However, indicators are only effective if they are context-specific, and closely related to the issues addressed by the intervention they are intended to serve. So these should not be copied as a blueprint. Annex 2 offers further examples with some illustrative categories of empowerment.

\textbf{Box 14. Examples of Quantitative Empowerment Indicators Related to HR & GE}

- Number of cases related to HR & GE heard in local/national/subnational courts, and their results.
- Proportion of women and men in different stakeholder groups in decision-making positions in local/national/subnational government.
- Employment/unemployment rates of women and men in different stakeholder groups.

\textbf{Box 15. Examples of Qualitative Empowerment Indicators Related to HR & GE}

- Extent to which legal services are available to women and men of different stakeholder groups.
- Changes in access to information about claims and decisions related to human rights violations.
- Extent to which women and men in different stakeholder groups have greater economic autonomy, both in private and public.
