

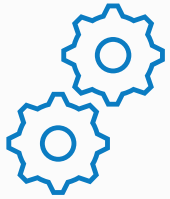
APPLYING A HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY LENS TO THE OECD EVALUATION CRITERIA

Mayanka Vij & Martin Bruder

1 June 2023



Rationale and scope



Revision of the OECD Evaluation Criteria in 2019 highlighted a need for more specific guidance on human rights and gender equality considerations in the criteria.



Increasing political prioritisation and systematic integration of human rights and gender equality standards and principles across policies and within institutions.



This publication focusses on the application of a human rights and gender equality lens to the evaluation criteria specifically – and therefore mainly addresses the aspect of **what** the evaluation examines.

Contents of the document



What does a "human rights/gender equality lens" include for each evaluation criterion? Which evaluations questions to ask?



What examples of good evaluation practice are there?



What are common challenges?



RELEVANCE

**Is the intervention doing
the right things?**

RELEVANCE

Key Considerations

- ❖ Identifying beneficiaries or rights-holders, and their respective rights, needs and priorities.
- ❖ Assessing the design of the intervention, accounting for drivers of marginalisation and power imbalances.
- ❖ Considering intersectionality when unpacking multiple forms of discrimination.

Challenges

- ❖ Who identifies such groups? How to manage competing priorities between rights-holders and duty-bearers, and between different rights-holders themselves?
- ❖ What if context/vulnerability analyses were not conducted at the outset of an intervention?
- ❖ How to best reconcile the limited data and limited resources issues?



United Nations Country Team's Common Country Analysis, *Leave No One Behind: A Perspective on Vulnerability and Structural Disadvantage in Palestine*. The analysis set a deliberate focus on vulnerability and asked why some groups were systematically more disadvantaged than others, setting a benchmark for future evaluations to assess the interventions' relevance against.

A woman in a white dress stands with her back to the camera, addressing a group of young girls. The girls are wearing headscarves and have their hands raised in the air. The room is decorated with stars, garlands, and posters. A banner with the word 'COHERENCE' is overlaid on the image.

COHERENCE

**How well does
the intervention fit?**

COHERENCE

Key Considerations

- ❖ Internal coherence – vertical and horizontal alignment across a country or agency’s policies and interventions.
- ❖ Internal coherence – alignment with policy commitments.
- ❖ External coherence – cooperation and coordination with external actors on shared human rights and gender equality priorities.

Challenges

- ❖ Identifying the most relevant policy or legal instrument against which coherence is assessed can be challenging.
- ❖ Different stakeholders involved in the intervention hold different views about human rights.



The Action Plan (2013-2017) for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities guided the efforts of German development co-operation on disability inclusion. The evaluation assessed each of its three objectives against its relevance and coherence with provisions of the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), essentially asking, *‘To what extent do the selected fields of action and measures correspond to the provisions of the CRPD?’*

The UNDP evaluated its disability-inclusive development plan over the period 2008-2016, essentially looking at the extent to which the principles and provisions of the CRPD were reflected in UNDP’s strategic plans.

A woman in a white dress stands with her back to the camera, addressing a group of women in a tent. The women are wearing headscarves and have their hands raised in the air. The tent is decorated with stars, garlands, and posters. A banner with the word 'EFFECTIVENESS' is overlaid on the image.

EFFECTIVENESS

**Is the intervention achieving
its objectives?**

EFFECTIVENESS

Key Considerations

- ◊ What was achieved, and how was it achieved, incorporating human rights principles in the analysis.
- ◊ Investigating (negative) unintended consequences.
- ◊ Unpacking differential effects of interventions.
- ◊ Gauging the level of participation and influence of rights-holders through the programme cycle.

Challenges

- ◊ Assessing whether all human rights principles were incorporated into the intervention design and implementation demands considerable resources.
- ◊ Identifying the degree to which the intervention contributes to the results is complex.
- ◊ Disaggregated data is challenging to access.



An evaluation of the World Bank's Support for Sustainable and Inclusive Natural Resource Management (2009–2019) found little attributable evidence on whether the Bank's support led to a reduction in natural resource degradation or in the vulnerability of resource users. A major reason for this was that projects did not adequately identify, assess, or address heterogeneous effects on different subgroups of vulnerable resource users. In Niger, while land was restored effectively, support parcels were sold into areas that lacked good land governance, outside the reach of the local community. Unintended effects included “predation by elites”, and “encroachment by non-traditional farmers”.



EFFICIENCY

How well are
resources used?

EFFICIENCY

Key Considerations

- ⬢ Economic efficiency – equitable distribution and inclusive results as key indicators.
- ⬢ Operational efficiency – with a view to rights-based processes. Budgeting processes, transparency and adaptability and subsequent cost implications.
- ⬢ Costs faced by partner organisations and rights-holders themselves – trade-offs associated with engaging in an intervention.

Challenges

- ⬢ Disaggregated data on the allocation of resources to the intervention's outputs and outcomes are not available.
- ⬢ Data on relative investments for each group of rights-holders have not been recorded.



Hivos implemented the “Open Up Contracting Programme – Engagement with Marginalised Groups” with the objective of ensuring that citizens across seven countries had equal and inclusive access to public goods and services and could meaningfully engage in public resource allocation and policy decisions. Its evaluation found that it took longer for marginalised groups to access and use information and data for advocacy. The costs of properly reaching out and engaging marginalised groups were often underestimated – for example mobility for meetings, payments to radio stations broadcasting to remote areas, translation, and in certain contexts, the creation of women-only or physically accessible spaces.

A woman in a white headscarf stands with her back to the camera, addressing a group of young girls. The girls are sitting on the floor, many with their hands raised in excitement. The room is decorated with star-shaped garlands, a banner with Urdu text, and various posters and drawings on the walls. One poster features a cartoon character, and another says "I am a girl". The overall atmosphere is one of a community or educational gathering.

IMPACT

**What difference
is the intervention making?**

IMPACT

Key Considerations

- ❖ Capturing transformative, higher-level change at individual, institutional and societal levels. Assessing whether drivers of marginalisation have shifted.
- ❖ Long-term differential and unintended impacts across different groups of people.

Challenges

- ❖ Non-linearity, complexity and long time horizons associated with higher-level impacts make them challenging to identify and uncover.



Finland's Education Strategy for Development Co-operation (2006) highlighted a need to take specific measures to further the education of young persons with disabilities and indigenous youth. An evaluation of the strategy revealed that in one country, the numbers of indigenous children enrolled in school improved in the communities supported by Finland's aid, though girls' enrolment was lower than that of boys. These findings show that whilst one marginalised group (indigenous children) may benefit from a project, others (children with disabilities or girls) may still be left behind.

A group of young women are gathered in a tent-like structure, decorated with stars and banners. Some women are holding signs, one of which says "I am a girl". A woman in a white garment is seen from the back, addressing the group. The scene is lit with warm, golden light.

SUSTAINABILITY

**Will the
benefits last?**

SUSTAINABILITY

Key Considerations

- ✿ Building an enabling environment, assessing sustainability along the different dimensions in which change manifests.
- ✿ Mutually reinforcing changes at different levels.
- ✿ Actual and prospective sustainability – measures undertaken to ascertain continued positive effects and measures in place to potentially sustain these effects in the future.

Challenges

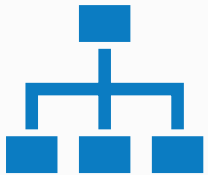
- ✿ The complexity of contextual factors mean that interview partners and evaluators can find it difficult to envisage the future.
- ✿ Complex dynamics (with many contextual factors and stakeholders) in the evolution of norms and practices

The same Finnish evaluation considered education programmes to be sustainable if they contributed to lasting change in processes, belief systems, service delivery or learning outcomes. The evaluation found indications of sustainability evidenced by partner country NGOs and organisations led by people with disabilities taking stronger positions and more active roles in mainstreaming inclusive education and in influencing national policies and plans.

This was supported by Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs grants for strategic advocacy by people with disabilities, together with work by local NGOs on inclusive education in remote regions beyond the reach of government programmes



Institutional Enablers



Policies can create enabling environments for mainstreaming human rights and gender equality across all stages of the programme cycle, including in evaluation – affecting both what questions are asked and how they are answered.



OECD/DAC CRS Gender Equality and Disability Policy Markers also support mainstreaming a human rights/gender equality lens at the outset.

Evaluating in Different Contexts



Evaluations of development and humanitarian interventions often take place in socio-cultural and political contexts where **human rights and gender equality norms and values differ across parties**, posing challenges and in some cases, severe risks for people involved in evaluations.



While no blueprint guides engagement in such settings, it is useful to design evaluation processes along human rights principles. This includes – beyond following the do-no-harm principle:



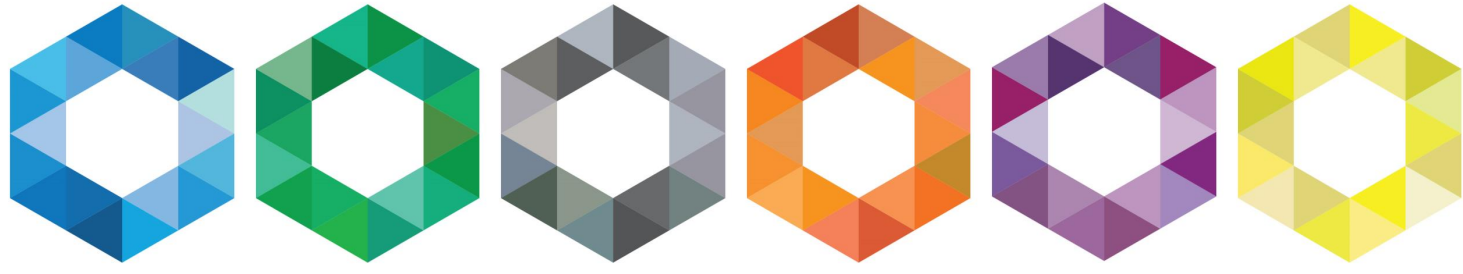
Involving rights-holders in a **non-discriminatory manner** taking account of intersectionality



Meaningful participation of rights-holders in process steps of the evaluation



Transparency towards stakeholders (especially rights-holders) in process steps of the evaluation



Thank you!

oe.cd/criteria

[@OECD_EVALNET](https://twitter.com/OECD_EVALNET) [#EvalCriteria](https://twitter.com/OECD_EVALNET)