

GUIDE FOR THE EVALUATION
OF PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS
WITH A GENDER, HUMAN RIGHTS
AND INTERCULTURAL PERSPECTIVE



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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, we have advanced progressively in the development of a conceptual and methodological basis for improving the processes of programme and project evaluation. Similarly, there is an important body of resources for the gender equality approach, and the same is true for the field of human rights.¹ With respect to the intercultural approach, progress has been slower and, in many cases, partial. It has been associated with the processes of consultation to Indigenous peoples when preparing or evaluating a project in a region or area where they live. All these approaches share certain characteristics: they emphasize human rights and social justice; analyse asymmetrical social relations; promote competent cultural relations between the evaluating team and the members of the community or social organizations; use mixed and culturally appropriate methods for social action; and apply feminist theory, critical race theory, post-colonialist theories, etc.²

This Guide has been elaborated with the intent of integrating these approaches into the UN Women evaluation cycle. It is a practical tool for those who undertake, manage and/or use evaluations. It was prepared by Inclusión y Equidad consultants Alejandra Faúndez and Marisa Weinstein, and it is aimed at professionals who implement or manage programmes and projects, especially those in which human rights, gender equality and interculturality are mainstreamed.

It is advisable for all interventions intended to improve the living conditions of a population to include an integrated approach (human rights/gender equality/interculturality). Generally, the tendency to elude the incorporation of this approach is either related to the idea that it would imply an additional workload for teams, or to not knowing how to apply it and what aspects should be observed when doing so. Otherwise, when an integrated approach is not used, the programmes/

¹ In keeping with the United Nations Charter, the States members committed to promote and protect human rights at a national level and to cooperate for this purpose at an international level. In fact, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action reiterate that “their promotion and protection is the primary responsibility of governments”. In the Report of the Second Inter-Agency Workshop on the implementation of a Human Rights Based Approach in the context of the UN reform, 5-7 May 2003, specific criteria and recommendations regarding the integration of this approach in evaluation were outlined. United Nations, *The Second Interagency Workshop on Implementing a Human Rights-based Approach in the Context of UN Reform*. Stamford, United Nations, 2003, http://www.undg.org/archive_docs/4128-Human_Rights_Workshop_Stamford_Final_Report.doc.

² Mertens, D., *Transformative Research and Evaluation*, New York, The Guilford Press, 2009.

projects can result, at the very least, in the following situations:

- a) A high degree of subjectivity and error with respect to the meaning attributed to the observable differences among the people affected by the project, whether at the moment of diagnosis, during the project's implementation or in the evaluation process.
- b) Its effects may be attributed to expressions characteristic of the differences between the sexes, or the cultural traits of the populations, instead of to the structural causes that threaten the exercise of human rights in a broader sense.
- c) Situations of social conflictiveness may increase when differentiated actors, their interests and their capacity to participate are not recognized.

The guide draws on three preceding reference materials of great importance. The first is the UN Women Guide for evaluation managers with a gender equality and human rights approach³ which is available on its website and deals with different instruments that operationally and precisely address the different stages of the evaluation. The Guide also includes 11 Guidance Notes on some specific aspects of an evaluation. Secondly, there is a document entitled "Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation – Towards UNEG Guidance"⁴ written by the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) in 2012, which

presents the main guidelines, criteria and methodological tools for including gender equality and human rights in evaluations. The third document is the Guide entitled "Expanding the View: The Integration of the Gender, Interculturality and Human Rights Approaches in Development Programming", elaborated by the Regional Offices for Latin America and the Caribbean of the UNFPA, UNICEF, UNDP and UN Women, which constitutes the first inter-agency effort to integrate these approaches at development programming level.

With this in mind, this Guide is a continuation of previous efforts, and it attempts to enhance the use of specific tools during the evaluation process, while at the same time contributing to the set of corporate Guidelines that UN Women has been developing in recent years. It particularly aims at helping to integrate gender equality, human rights and interculturality approaches, so that evaluations may increase the visibility of complex problems, especially highlighting the diversity of our societies.

From a methodological point of view, this Guide is not intended to be prescriptive, but rather to emphasize the key elements of considering the three approaches in the evaluation in an integrated manner, by identifying key elements of the three stages of evaluation, as defined by UN Women: preparation, conduct and use of the evaluation.

³ United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), *A Manager's Guide to Gender Equality & Human Rights Responsive Evaluation*, UN Women, http://unifem.org/evaluation_manual/index.html.

⁴ United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), *Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation – Towards UNEG Guidance*, New York, UNEG, 2011, http://www.unevaluation.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc_id=980.



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STAGE I

PREPARATION OF THE EVALUATION

PREPARATION OF THE EVALUATION

1.1

IDENTIFYING OF THE STAKEHOLDERS

The participation of those involved directly in the intervention or programme/project (either as executors, duty-bearers, beneficiaries, or rights-holders) at the beginning of an evaluation process is fundamental. Generally, the participation in the programme/project cycle, as specialized literature has pointed out, is one of the biggest contributing factors to their success, and is a key element of this integrated approach. This explains why, in recent years, there has been so much interest in incorporating specific methodologies to help with their inclusion from the initial stage of project design through to the evaluation.

It is particularly important for the evaluation management team to supervise the appropriate participation of the stakeholders throughout the entire evaluation. This means:

a. Distinguishing among the stakeholders:

- Duty-bearers who make decisions and develop public policies or programmes. In this case, it is important to include not only technical staff, but especially political decision makers who are involved
- Holders of rights established in the programme/project. These are the people, collectives, organizations or institutions which the project intervention is expected to impact in a programmed way in

areas inhabited by Indigenous populations and which are to be intervened with some programme –for example, in order to apply all the protective measures of compliance with any pertinent international law, such as the obligations deriving from ILO Convention 169.

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