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Tool 10.

Tips for employing gender-responsive evaluation methods

- **Identify rigorous methods that are appropriate and relevant to ensure a high-quality and credible evaluation.** Evaluation findings can often be contentious, particularly within some contexts where gender equality and human rights are sensitive issues.
- **Employ gender-responsive methods that facilitate participation and inclusion.** Participatory methodologies are those that allow all the defined users and stakeholders to not only submit data and information but also actively participate in the definition of what data should be collected. For example, **appreciative inquiry** highlights good practices in association with the evaluand and promotes a high level of stakeholder participation.¹¹ **Most significant change** entails the sharing of lived experiences and selecting those most representative of the type of change being sought. Project stakeholders are involved both in deciding the sorts of change to be recorded and in analysing the data.¹²
- **Ensure collection of sex disaggregated data.** This is basic to any gender or human rights evaluation. All data gathered should identify the sex of the respondent and other basic data about the respondents that may prove relevant to the evaluation, including age, ethnicity, nationality, marital status, occupation.
- **Employ a flexible methodological approach that understands the constraints and challenges of the informants and context.** Some methods of data collection may be appropriate for certain groups of beneficiaries but may actually place others at a disadvantage. Thus, the methods identified need to be carefully targeted and weighed against the potential risks.
- **Identify how vulnerable populations will be included in the data gathering process and the constraints and challenges of stakeholder participation.** The evaluation manager should be cognizant of potential biases that may arise in the selection of methods and avoid this through the inclusion of the full range of stakeholder groups. Biases may involve gender, power (sources able

¹¹ For more information, see the Appreciate Inquiry Commons available online at: <http://appreciativeinquiry.case.edu/>.

¹² Davies R, Dart J, 'The most significant change (MSC) technique: A guide to its use', United Kingdom and Australia, April 2005, available online at www.mande.co.uk/docs/MSCGuide.pdf.



to contribute freely because privacy and confidentiality issues are addressed), class or caste, and distance (favouring the more accessible). Also the choice of location, timing and language used of the evaluator may all have a bearing on the capacity of particular respondents to participate. Some groups may not be able to express themselves freely because of social pressure or they may not be allowed to speak or be represented in public meetings or community consultations.

- **Interrogate gender roles.** The data collection tools should address the gender issues of the initiative or project, and must probe into broader gender issues. For example, in assessing the impact of an information and communication technology training initiative, it is not only important to look into what the trainees have learned but also how they have applied their knowledge in their work or organization. In order to assess this, it is essential to probe into the gender roles within the trainees' organizations and look at how they are able (or unable) to practice their newly-acquired skills.
- **Evaluations need to be undertaken in a culturally sensitive fashion in order for there to be a full understanding of human rights and gender equality implications.** Group dynamics, subject matter, gender, class, caste, age, race, language, culture, rural and urban issues, etc. greatly influence how effectively and inclusively information is gathered. Cultures may be viewed as contextual environments for the implementation of human rights policies. Nevertheless, a human rights perspective affirms that the rights of women and girls to freedom from discrimination and to the highest standard of living are universal. Cultural claims cannot be invoked to justify their violation.
- **Use mixed qualitative and quantitative methods.** A mixed methods approach increases the reliability¹³ and validity¹⁴ of the evaluation findings, and helps to explore whether or not different stakeholder groups benefited differently and why.

➡ See UNEG guidance document: [Integrating human rights and gender equality in evaluations](#) for a detailed discussion on methods.

¹³ **Reliability** is consistency in results using the same method (i.e. if the same survey is instituted several times it should give you similar results each time).

¹⁴ **Validity** refers to the accuracy of data collection tools; in other words whether the tools are collecting the information they are intended to collect or measuring the right construct.