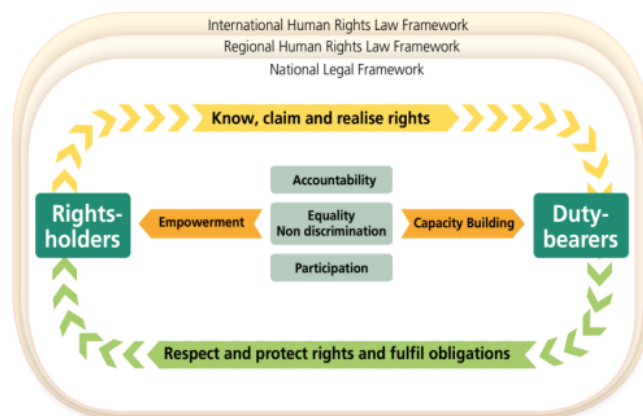


Working aid

HRBA to Project Cycle Management

This work tool complements and helps the implementation of the *SDC Guidance on Human Rights* (2019). It builds upon other SDC HRBA tools¹ and learning.² Human rights-based development programming recognizes and seeks to empower **all beneficiaries as rights-holders** and to **build capacity of states** and other duty-bearers **to respect, protect and fulfil human rights**. The central proposition of the HRBA is that human development is relevant and sustainable where it is based on human rights norms with equal focus on process and final impact. HRBA to PCM means that all stages are designed and undertaken with optimum coherence with the HRBA principles.




Applying HRBA principles to all PCM stages:

1. Context Analysis and planning

Context analysis means identifying the root causes of the development problem to be addressed, the power relationships involved, including factors that make some vulnerable to human rights violations (ie at risk of being 'left behind'). Vulnerability may vary by sector and can change over time, including during the life-time of a programme, which means context analysis is an ongoing process.³ For example, global root causes of discrimination in girls' access to education are often predictable and yet the features of each context can vary and barriers may be compounded by new events eg natural disasters, conflict, COVID19. In cases of violent conflict / insecurity, socio-cultural opposition to girls' education can be exacerbated by parents' fears of sexual violence, kidnappings.

Human rights-based context analysis requires consideration of applicable human rights law standards (relevant to the targeted sector or target group). This might be "the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health" as elaborated by the concepts of *availability, accessibility, acceptability, and quality*⁴, or the 'best interests of the child' as detailed in the Child Rights Convention. This starting point ensures legally accurate programme objectives. The applicable standards derive among others from human rights treaties, the recommendations of international and domestic human rights bodies. Applying a human rights lens helps determine the nature of core problems. For example, root causes may be weak 'demand' (eg



Core principles HRBA

- ❖ Identify the applicable human rights law norms & relevant Duty-Bearers & Rights-Holders & their rights and duties
- ❖ **Equality and non-discrimination:** All individuals are equal and are entitled to the same human rights, without discrimination of any kind, such as sex, race, colour, age, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, disability, property, birth or other status.
- ❖ **Participation and empowerment:** Every person and all peoples are entitled to active, free, and meaningful participation in development processes.
- ❖ **Accountability, Transparency and Rule of Law:** State authorities at different levels have the obligation to respect, protect and fulfil human rights. They are internationally accountable for complying with legal norms and standards enshrined in human rights instruments.
- ❖ **Universality and indivisibility:** Every person - man, woman, child, without discrimination – is entitled to human rights. Human rights cannot be voluntarily given up, or taken away by others. Whether civil, political, economic, social, or cultural, all rights are inherent to the dignity of every person. Human rights cannot be ranked, a priori, in a hierarchical order.

The principles of HRBA apply to **all levels of programming** and to **each stage of the management cycle**. Explicit, accurate use of relevant human rights language is key to empowerment. For example, goals should be explicitly based on international human rights norms and programming should ensure "active, free and meaningful" participation of rights-holders.

¹ SDC [Guidance on Human Rights](#) (2019), HRBA & Justice Sector Reform (2019), SDC, LNOB through An HRBA (2019), SDC Briefing Paper [A HRBA to Water & Sanitation](#) (2008).

² [HRBA Policy Brief based on the Capitalisation of Experiences: HRBA and Results Measuring](#).

³ Poverty, living conditions and societal gender roles can mean that rural women are disadvantaged and vulnerable in human rights terms. During and after conflict many such women are additionally vulnerable due to internal displacement, with girls, young, older, disabled women all facing specific additional risks.

⁴ A range of secondary human rights instruments provide more detailed programming assistance, eg [UN General Comments](#), WHO, [Ensuring Human Rights in the Provision of Contraceptive Information and Services: Guidance and Recommendations \(2014\)](#), OHCHR, [Technical Guidance on the Application of a Human Rights-Based Approach to the Implementation of Policies and Programmes to Reduce Preventable Maternal Mortality and Morbidity \(2012\)](#)

CSOs impeded by legal constraints on their activities, politically aligned or government controlled) or deficiencies in 'supply' (eg. lack of capacity of duty-bearers, such as justice, health or education public servants inadequately aware of or trained on human rights standards).

Development gaps may impact differently on different groups, and invariably have specific gender dimensions. Context analysis determines the optimum entry points and levels, intervention type (direct support to rights-holders or capacity-building of duty-bearers etc.), partners (CSOs, state institutions or some combination of both).

Human rights based planning requires focus on the 'Do No Harm' principle, consideration of positive/negative human rights results from different intervention options (methods, programme partners etc).

Development programming should reinforce, not replace, the State as primary duty-bearer. Unconditional donor support to health and education sectors can risk freeing up domestic budget for military/security sectors, which can entail negative human rights consequences, where adherence to Rule of Law principles is lacking.

Capacity-building of duty-bearers (judges, police, social workers, medics etc.) should be integrated into relevant training institutions, for sustainability and reflecting the State's obligation to ensure public servants are technically skilled *and* human rights aware.

2. Implementation

HRBA means ensuring that implementation takes continuous account of the HRBA principles, particularly where new personnel or changed circumstances require adjustment of methodologies, priorities etc. Key at this stage is ensuring appropriate HRBA skills/knowledge of programme personnel and partners.

Programme implementation that maximises the likelihood of post-programme human rights based sustainability means not just laying a foundation for longer term financial viability, but also building capacity / will of duty-bearers to take responsibility as well as capacity/opportunity for rights-holders to sustain effective demand for their rights.

Enhancing the human rights impact of programming also means **complementing and influencing other development actors**. For example through our engagement in donor-coordination groups, ensuring HRBA principles feature in jointly funded programmes or joint programming.

3. Monitoring and Evaluation

M&E is central to ensuring accountability in development interventions. HRBA provides a lens for the application of 'traditional' development M&E criteria (eg OECD DAC criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and impact). Thus, for example, 'relevant' in human rights terms means that the intervention address an identified human rights gap. 'Impact' means the positive change to the human rights situation in the sector, institution or target group that the intervention is expected to deliver.

Human rights-based M&E ensures that benchmarks and indicators reflect HRBA principles (eg measuring the quality of the 'process' as well as 'results') and seeks to be empowering and participatory, e.g. including rights-holders in choice of benchmarks/indicators, drafting of evaluation terms of reference and participation on evaluation steering committees etc. M&E that 'leaves no-one behind' requires consideration of timing, venues, gender aspects etc of evaluation activities, as well as adequate time and resources for M&E processes and results to be communicated to the disempowered. M&E and programme communication also needs to plan to input development lessons and results into policy dialogue, treaty reporting, UPR etc for coherence between law, policy and practice.

While programmes are commonly followed up with other interventions, where a programme ends with SDC exit from a sector or country, a particular priority is to ensure that HRBA lessons learning are transmitted to actors (domestic institutions, other donors and programme managers etc) that remain active in the sector or on the thematic issue.

The importance of accurately framing programme objectives in human rights terms

A human rights-based education programme means going beyond enhancing school attendance, or literacy & numeracy. It requires programme objectives that help the State meet its obligation to provide education for all that is "available, accessible, acceptable and adaptable".

'Acceptable' means, among other things, that education "be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights." ICESCR Art 26

Key Questions

The questions below distil the core messages above. While specific contexts (eg prevalence of violent conflict, humanitarian crisis etc.) and different sectors may require some reframing or additional questions, those below offer a solid foundation for human rights-based programming by development practitioners. The questions follow the PCM sequence. The questions are relevant to all types and levels of programming (country strategies, sector programmes, and individual projects etc). Answers to some questions will be found in ongoing reviews of the relevant jurisdiction/sector and so will not necessitate new processes. In other cases, specialised agencies (eg. UN country teams) will be positioned to contribute key information. Context, stakeholders, and priorities change so the key questions at planning/design are also part of ongoing programme management and monitoring. In combination, the answers to the questions below will help identify development gaps, choose priorities and formulate human rights based inputs to address key problems in a particular sector or of a particular group.

Context Analysis

1) What are the key development problem(s) from a human rights perspective? What are the root causes and consequences?⁵

For example, the right of everyone, without discrimination:

- to life, liberty & security of person, fair trial, freedom of movement, bodily integrity,
- to an adequate standard of living, food, health, water, housing,
- to decent work, social security and protection from economic exploitation,
- to freedom of expression, thought, conscience and religion, to marry and to a family life,
- to education, information, to participate in public affairs, in political and cultural life

▪ What are the interconnected human rights issues that deny or impede universal access to public services?

Eg. Obstacles to education or work opportunities etc. may result in poverty curtailing access to health care, housing etc, while lack of such access in turn leads to a cycle of ongoing poverty. Human rights based context analysis means identifying root causes, symptoms, consequences of each development gap. Analysis of budgets, loans, austerity measures is a key focus. A range of tools combine economic and human rights analysis to determine whether the State is “taking steps”, allocating the “maximum of available resources” to address the problem etc.⁶

▪ In cases of violent conflict / insecurity, what historical and current factors underlie development gaps or present challenges to effectively addressing those gaps?

Past violent conflict or other forms of violence (political, social, economic or gender-specific etc), may have degraded the health, education, or justice infrastructure or denied some access to those services etc, leading to resort to informal, less-rights based, alternatives. Ongoing violent conflict may mean rights-holders, medics/teachers are unable to travel safely to avail of, or provide, services. In time of violent conflict resources may be allocated to military/security over other sectors, the necessity, appropriateness and consequences of such allocation is a key element of context analysis.

▪ What is the optimum entry point for SDC to address the identified gaps?

Supporting awareness of rights to enhance demand by rights-holders can be critical if political will is lacking. Where duty-bearers’ political will is present, building capacity of key institutions and personnel may be optimum. Choice of focus is not necessarily exclusive. Whether the primary focus is on rights-holders or duty-bearers, a priority is to contribute to dialogue between rights-holder and duty-bearers, fostering mutual recognition of rights and duties, reducing conflict. This may include joint steering committees, events, shared training etc.

2) What are the applicable human rights norms (civil, cultural, economic political & social)?

▪ What are the applicable international, regional, constitutional rights?

⁵E.g. gaps in State’s obligation *to respect* (e.g. persecution); *to protect* (e.g. failure to protect from domestic violence, armed conflict, or ensure proper regulation of third parties that can impact on rights, armed groups, IFIs, development actors), or *to fulfil* (e.g. putting in place institutions, procedures, resources necessary for proper enjoyment of rights).

⁶ See for example, OHCHR, *Human Rights in Budget Monitoring, Analysis and Advocacy Training Guide* (2010) & Center for Economic and Social Rights, *FISCAL JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS: AN ADVOCACY TOOLKIT* (2020).

*In addition to UN Treaties and Treaty Body General Comments, are there recommendations from UN and regional treaty-bodies & special procedure mechanisms, from the country's UPR etc, that can guide the programme in terms of identifying gaps, legally accurate solutions and benchmarks of progress?*⁷

For example, addressing a development gap concerning children in an African partner country should draw on UN CRC standards, but also recommendations by the African Committee of Experts on Children's Rights. Similarly, where identified gaps concern evictions, housing etc, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Housing has elaborated checklists (on the design, monitoring, financing and implementation of human rights-based housing strategies, on Covid & housing). The work of others, UN agencies, development partners can be drawn upon for guidance, to avoid having to 're-invent the wheel' when mapping the applicable human rights norms.

▪ **Does our programming address all elements of the relevant human rights?**

For example, the principal obligation with respect to social and economic rights (to decent work, education, health etc) requires States to ensure progressive realization of rights. This means adopting, as quickly as possible, measures aiming at achieving the right and allocating the "maximum of available resources" to that end. Other obligations are immediate, eg the obligation to "guarantee" that the right will be exercised "without discrimination of any kind", the obligation "to take steps" towards the full realization of the right, deliberate, concrete and targeted- and a specific, continuing obligation "to move as expeditiously and effectively as possible" towards the full realization of the right.

▪ **What analysis / recommendations from reports of credible domestic and international NGOs, any National Human Rights Institution can inform our programming?**

For example, 'shadow' reports by CSOs to UN treaty bodies can offer an alternative perspective to State's analysis of development gaps. Key INGOs produce annual reports on all countries, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International increasingly address ESC, as well as civil and political rights in their country reports, while others monitor and report on specific groups, sectors or themes.

3) Who are the relevant rights-holders & duty-bearers? Who is denying/holding/denied power?

▪ **The key rights-holder and duty-bearers will be often readily identifiable.**

The right-holders affected by the identified problem are often readily identified and the duty-bearers invariably include the state, its institutions and respective representatives. In the education sector, for example, rights-holders include pupils and parents, while the key duty-bearers include the State / the Education Ministry. Teachers are both rights-holders and as representatives of the state duty-bearers. Each context may require identifying a wider network of actors (eg those excluded from education due to conflict, or cost of privatized education, or those educated in non-state settings, such as at home or in religious schools). In some jurisdictions, International Financial Institutions may be key duty-bearers to be factored into this mapping. Who might be engaged in the intervention as possible agents of change, community, religious cultural leaders, etc.?

A map of relevant decision-making processes (formal, eg elections, but also informal ones such as political lobbying) may identify individuals and groups that are excluded or impeded in participation in key processes. Corruption, by definition, excludes the economically disadvantaged from decision-making. Political expediency may mean that combatants are prioritised over victims in conflict resolution and peace processes.

▪ **What are the legal, social, economic, gender and other aspects of the identified power dynamics that cause exclusion and inequality in participation in decision-making or access to public services and resources?**

States may distribute power formally (federal structures, decentralization) but this may not be accompanied with appropriate resources. Formal legal equality (e.g. laws prohibiting discrimination) may be in place, but these can be undermined by embedded, perhaps less visible social or cultural stereotypes. Gender, disability, caste, ethnicity can mean some face barriers to participate in decision-making that affects their lives, or access services, education, healthcare, work etc.

4) Who is particularly affected by the identified challenges, disempowered, vulnerable, at risk of being left behind? For what reasons?

▪ **What stakeholders face particular challenges to their participation (rural / remote dwellers, those displaced, in detention or of illegal migration status)?**

How can their inputs and involvement be secured, through appropriate consultation, reaching people through the market place, social gathering locations etc, or indirectly via CSOs. In cases of groups not readily or safely consulted

⁷ [UN human rights treaties](#), [UN Special Procedures](#), [UPR](#) etc, & regional Human Rights treaties and mechanisms, eg [African Union](#), [Organisation of American States](#).

directly engagement options may include cooperation/consultation with others delivering services to such groups, eg lawyers or others with regular prison access, aid organisations working in IDP camps etc.

- **Who faces multiple layers of discrimination?**

eg barriers faced by all women and girls may be more pronounced for rural, displaced or migrant women & girls, or those with disability from minority religions or ethnicities etc.

Engagement with some actors may present specific challenges due to their status or activities, eg those involved illegal economic or political activity, sex workers, human rights defenders, dissidents etc. How can engagement with such groups be undertaken? What advocacy aimed at the State or the public at large is needed to secure recognition of the legitimacy of donor engagement with such groups?

- **What are the factors underlying exclusion? Racism / sexism / poverty / youth or older age? Is the exclusion conscious and intentional, rooted in social stereotype?**

In many cases, a combination of factors may underlie a particular problem. Barriers to girls' education or to sexual and reproductive health, for example, can be rooted in poverty, child marriage and labour, lack of female role models, rural inaccessibility. Hence, identifying the specific causes is key to choosing tailored programme priorities and inputs.

- **Are there shifting power dynamics due to changing circumstances?**

Conflict / insecurity / violence, environmental or humanitarian crisis can mean those living in affected areas face additional disempowerment by their need to focus on mere survival. Those with education or economic advantages can suddenly be disempowered by their forced displacement. Traders/shopkeepers of a particular ethnicity or descent may see their identity a factor in their being targeted in an economic downturn etc. Construction of dams, roads, slum clearances etc.

5) Are the necessary laws, policies, institutions in place, functioning & resourced to prevent human rights violations & provide redress where they occur? (ie a Rule of Law State)?

- **Has the State signed/ratified relevant international/regional treaties?**

For example, programs concerning employment and work can draw on the core UN human rights treaties, but also the detailed standards in some Conventions of the International Labour Organization which address full spectrum of the right to 'decent work', ie not just a 'job', but one which is safe, based on equality and dignity, with adequate remuneration and representation in the workplace, social security etc.

- **Do the relevant domestic laws meet international human rights standards?**

The state must not only have a legal prohibition of discrimination, but one that covers all grounds of discrimination prohibited by international human rights law, and which is enforced. Root causes of gaps in this regard can include out-of-date laws, lack of legislative capacity/expertise, political will or resources to ensure laws are enforced etc. Laws may prohibit GBV, but yet fail to protect where there is sexism within justice institutions or societal support for a husband's entitlement to 'discipline' his wife etc.

- **Are necessary institutions and personnel in place to ensure effective, non-discriminatory application of the law?**

The UN Torture Convention, for example, requires States to designate and fund an effective National Preventive Mechanism to address torture, inhuman and degrading treatment and punishment.⁸ Where informal/traditional justice systems exist, what are their strengths and weaknesses to deliver human rights based justice? Informal justice can be more accessible in terms of cost, local presence, culture appropriateness etc, but can also be discriminatory, patriarchal or otherwise fall short of 'fair' trial criteria or involve punishments contrary to current human rights standards, etc.

6) What are the capacities/gaps (eg. awareness, political will, legal or moral authority, accountability, resources etc) of relevant duty-bearers?

⁸ Human Rights standards provide a checklist for such institutions, ie independent, free from government influence, with sufficient resources to carry out their work effectively, power to access all places of detention, without restriction, to access all information and able to talk with detained persons in private.

- **Are necessary institutions in place to deliver human rights based public services** (schools, hospitals/clinics, land registry, courts etc) and oversight institutions (courts, ombudsman offices/national human rights institution, inspectorates etc)? Are there gaps in the functioning or coverage of these institutions, in terms of coverage in remote regions, and adequate human and other resources, etc?
 - **Are the necessary training institutions in place, adequately resourced** etc, to effectively train civil servants, formal and informal justice officials, health or education sector personnel, regarding professional best practice but also human rights standards relevant to their sector and role?
 - **Do conditions of public employment (salaries, promotion, accountability, gender focus etc) provide appropriate terms and conditions**, to meet the definition of 'decent' work, to safeguard against corruption, to help retain staff that the state has invested in training, to ensure security of employment when governments change?
- 7) What are the relevant capacities/gaps of rights-holders and civil society organisations (NGOs, Trade Unions, etc)? Are they human rights based, representative of all?**
- **What is the level of human rights awareness among the population at large?** Are human rights included in education curricula, as required by the Child Rights Convention? Does the State proactively raise awareness of its human rights treaty obligations among the population, in accessible, appropriate form? Does the media cover human rights issues openly, accurately and positively?
 - **What are the strengths and weaknesses of relevant NGOs/CSOs, Trade Unions, Media outlets etc**, that can be drawn upon or enhanced by the programme, eg human rights awareness, leadership, resources, co-operation/rivalry/credibility etc? Do national laws & other regulations safeguard the civic space, give relevant organisations opportunity to function & effectively represent rights-holders. Key factors include freedom of association/expression, freedom from undue political pressure and to participate in decision-making and political bargaining etc. Fundamentally, the question is whether it is safe to openly and actively be, and call oneself, a 'human rights defender'? If not, this should be prioritized by the development programme.
 - **Are CSOs/NGOs representative of all rights-holders**, including vulnerable/unpopular groups, those historically under-represented in social and political processes? Organisations based in capital cities may not be as representative of remote rural rights-holders or socially ostracized groups may not be prioritised.

Planning and Design of Projects

A) Identifying Goals and Objectives

1. **Are goals and objectives optimal to address root causes, generate sustainable change and accurately expressed in terms of the applicable human rights?**
 - (a) **In the case of health-sector programmes**, for example, are all aspects of the right to the 'highest attainable standard of health' addressed, ie Availability (sufficient quantity of functioning public health care facilities); Accessibility (non-discrimination, physical accessibility, affordability, information accessibility); Acceptability (culturally appropriate, and sensitivity to gender etc) and Quality (scientifically and medically appropriate).
 - (b) **In the case of child related programmes**, for example, do programme goals give primacy to the 'best interests of the child', as required by the UN Child Rights Convention and regional human rights instruments and elaborated by the CRC Committee? Eg How can direct participation in programming by various categories of children be facilitated?
 - (c) **Do the goals and objectives** specifically address the experiences and attributes of men and women, and **circumstances of those at risk of being left behind/vulnerable**? Eg To address development gaps of women and girls, may require not just legal change or enhanced capacity, but also change to mindsets, stereotypes etc. Where the target group include displaced people, migrants etc assistance should address their immediate needs, without prejudicing their right to return.
2. **Are goals and objectives chosen and validated through active, free and meaningful participation of duty-bearers and rights-holders, including marginalised and vulnerable groups?**
 - Has programme design included dissemination of information, outreach, etc optimal participation of all stakeholders, eg taking account of illiteracy, translation/interpretation needs, gender, culture & child-sensitive consultation etc?

This may require planned interaction at sometimes informal, locations, where people, gather, to trade, to engage in social or cultural activities. It may be aided by engaging respected intermediaries, community leaders, sporting or cultural icons etc, who command popular trust and influence.

- What can be done at the design stage to empower stakeholders, to raise expectations, so that programme objectives are understood to be a matter of rights, not charity?

Where the development gap is rooted in disempowerment, what specific activities/channels of communication are best suited to enhance participation by the target audience (incorporation into education curricula, social media, rural radio, images/posters, story-telling, awareness or open days, children's parliaments etc?)

- How can legitimate development objectives that may conflict with a particular group's preferences or cultural rights be reconciled?

Providing housing, roads, access to formal education etc needs to be balanced with other rights of indigenous peoples or minorities, nomadic lifestyle rights etc. Key to this balancing is meaningful participatory decision-making processes, minimizing the negative impacts and providing adequate compensation for those whose rights are curtailed for legitimate greater public benefit.

B) Selecting areas of Intervention, Partners, Inputs/Methods

Which sector or area of intervention, partners and methods are optimum to best address the development gap? Relevant selection criteria include:

- Gaps between relevant human rights standards & law/practice;
- Potential for SDC's intervention to pre-empt other human rights violations, such as where social and economic inequalities are potential drivers of conflict;
- Potential to deliver the most sustainable change, e.g. addressing root causes, or imbalances in power, building enduring capacity etc;
- Risk of particular interventions or methods doing harm and possibilities for mitigating those risks;
- Attributes of potential partners (mandate, capacity, credibility, commitment etc);
- Timeliness, such as an opportunity to pre-empt violent conflict or to contribute to a human rights based peace process or add support to a new development strategy, planned treaty ratification or UPR etc;
- Methods/inputs optimum to address the gaps identified e.g. capacity support where lack of capacity is verified as a key problem, advocacy support etc where accountability or political will is deficient;
- SDC's comparative advantage and opportunities to collaborate with, or address gaps left by, other donors or to provide quick response.

Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation

Implementation

Key Questions:

1. Does programme management (methodologies, ongoing monitoring etc) maintain focus on the HRBA principles?
 - a. Our long-term engagement in partner countries and multi-year programmes may mean changes to personnel within SDC or partners, so how can day-to-day management ensure HRBA knowledge and commitment is maintained? Do employment contracts, advancement, workplace training, partnership terms of reference etc reinforce SDC's commitment to HRBA?
 - b. Key to programme implementation is effective, conflict sensitive communication of programme activities, objectives and results to all stakeholders. Is reporting to donors, SDC HQ, international mechanisms etc matched by communication of results, future activities to all stakeholders? (Particularly where progress may be incremental and slow, and expectations need to be managed).
 - c. How can programme management plan feed interim results, achievements, analysis and challenges into relevant political and policy processes, policy dialogue, (by Switzerland and the host State), domestically and internationally? Do programming lessons-learned and results inform treaty reporting, UPR, country fact-finding visits by UN Special Procedures, etc.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is central to ensuring accountability in development interventions. HRBA provides a lens for the application of 'traditional' development M&E criteria (eg OECD DAC criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, sustainability and impact)⁹. Thus, 'relevant' in human rights terms means that the intervention addresses an identified human rights gap.¹⁰ 'Impact' means the positive change to the human rights situation in the sector, institution or target group that the intervention is expected to deliver.

Human rights-based M&E means that benchmarks and indicators reflect the HRBA principles (eg measuring the quality of the 'process' as well as the 'results'), seeks to be empowering and participatory, e.g. including rights-holders in choice of benchmarks/indicators, drafting of evaluation terms of reference and participation on evaluation steering committees. Human rights-based M&E processes are non-discriminatory, sensitive to gender and vulnerability and measure those elements as key to results.

M&E that 'leaves no-one behind' requires consideration of timing, venues, gender aspects of evaluation activities, as well as adequate time and resources for M&E processes and results to be communicated to the disempowered. Ideally, M&E and programme communication also needs to plan to input development lessons and results into policy dialogue, treaty reporting, UPR etc. for coherence between law, policy and practice. Where a programme ends with SDC exit from a sector or country, a particular priority is to ensure that HRBA lessons learning are transmitted to actors (domestic institutions, other donors, programme managers, etc) that remain active in the sector or on the thematic issue.

Key Questions:

1. Is there a clear concept of programme accountability, agreed objectives, baselines, indicators, sources, means of verification?
2. Are chosen indicators SMART, and accurately based on human rights standards to:
 - a. accurately & comprehensively capture progress on the relevant rights¹¹;
 - b. measure changes in capacity¹² including capacity to demand/deliver human rights;
 - c. measure changes in perception, eg trials/elections etc are not only required to be fair, but also need to be seen to be fair;
 - d. disaggregate data (qualitative and quantitative) by gender and relevant human rights vulnerabilities, age, disability, ethnicity, migration and other legal/social status.
3. Is there 'buy-in' from all stakeholders (duty-bearers and rights-holders) on the definition of programme success and how the quality of process and results of the programme will be measured? For example, is 'quality' education properly understood by all as requiring not just literacy and numeracy, but curricula and teaching that includes positive human rights messages (as the right to education requires)? Do teachers, children etc input into in evaluation of education programmes?
4. Will the M&E methodologies maximise participation and raise awareness of the target group? Especially those commonly left behind, whether through illiteracy or other disempowerment.

[Last updated by FCHR - 13.03.22]

⁹ SDC [Guidelines on the Use of Aggregated Reference Indicators for reporting and monitoring the Dispatch 2017-2020](#) & Thematic Networks and Thematic Reference Indicators, [ARI/TRI field handbook](#).

¹⁰ Such gaps may be identified by a UN Treaty Body or Special Procedure or in decisions of domestic or regional human rights tribunals eg a finding that a law or practice violates human rights. Gaps are also often identified domestically by monitoring by CSOs or other human rights actors such as national human right institutions.

¹¹ See also SDC Aggregated Reference Indicators, Thematic Reference Indicators etc.

¹² See, for example, on combining indicators in *Indicators for Human Rights Based Approaches to Development in UNDP Programming: A Users' Guide*, March 2006 [HRBA indicators guide.pdf](#) with illustrative indicators for programmes concerning clean water & prevention of torture, Eg indicators in Table 7 of the Guide (assessing capacities of rights holders & duty bearers); and Table 8 (assessing the impact of human rights based programmes).