

EVALUATION WITH GENDER AS A CROSS-CUTTING DIMENSION

This guidance is available at https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/evaluation-approach-and-methodology_en.

*It has been **jointly developed** by the Evaluation Services of **DG DEVCO, NEAR and FPI** with the support of the Unit 'Equality, Human Rights and Democratic Governance' of DEVCO and of the Focal Points of Gender and Rights-based approach in NEAR and FPI.*

The **purpose of this document is to provide guidance on the evaluation of gender as a cross-cutting dimension within the wider frame of reference of Rights Based Approach (RBA)**, targeting Evaluators as well as Operational Managers and Evaluation Correspondents / Focal Points of **DG DEVCO, DG NEAR and FPI**.

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls are fundamental human rights and are among the founding values of the [Treaty on European Union](#) and the [Charter of Fundamental Rights](#).

Gender equality is achieved when women and men, and girls and boys enjoy equal rights, life prospects and opportunities, and the power to shape their own lives and contribute to society. Gender equality is both a goal in itself as well as a prerequisite for long-term democratic, equitable and sustainable global development, which will not be achieved if half of the world's population is left behind. Furthermore, women's empowerment is a question of democracy and good governance. Strengthening women's voice and participation at all levels of society can have significant positive impacts. It can facilitate peace, reconstruction and state-building processes.

Despite the progress made, the level of **achievement of gender equality has been uneven** across regions and within countries. Worldwide, girls and women continue to be systematically left behind and discriminated against, and persistent violations of their rights occur on a daily basis.

The **European Union is firmly committed to enhance gender equality and empowerment of women worldwide**, working towards the removal of obstacles such as discriminatory legislation and policy, social norms, cultural attitudes, gender stereotypes and the distribution of power to ensure that women and girls can participate fully and have their voices heard and increase their action in social, economic, cultural, political and civil life.

In 2007, the European Commission adopted the [Communication on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment \(GEWE\) in Development Cooperation](#). The subsequent [Council Conclusions](#) called on the Commission Services, EEAS and the Member States to promote clear objectives and indicators on gender equality in all sectors. Since 2010, the EU has adopted two successive Action Plans on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in external actions ([GAP I](#) and [GAP II](#)), putting forward the EU's clear commitment towards Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) in all its external actions^{1, 2}.

In the [New European Consensus on Development](#) EU and its Member States commit to implementing a **rights-based approach** (RBA) to development cooperation, encompassing all human rights. This reinforces the EU's commitment to an RBA as outlined in the [2012 EU Strategic Framework on](#)

¹ **Note for the evaluation of FPI Actions:** FPI manages interventions in the area of foreign policy which go beyond the scope of development cooperation. For FPI, only GAP II is a relevant policy reference framework.

² **Note for the evaluation of DG NEAR Actions:** Gender Equality is included as an objective in policy documents that guide the EU agreements with the Eastern Partnership (EaP) and the IPA countries; see for instance the 2016's 20 key deliverables for 2020 for the Eastern Partnership https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/sites/near/files/near-eeas_joint_swd_2016467_0.pdf The Review of the European Neighbourhood Policy in 2015 includes a renewed focus on the importance of gender equality and the support to ENP partners in delivering achievements on gender equality and girls' and women's empowerment in line also with the universal 2030 Agenda.



Human Rights and Democracy. The tool-box '*A rights-based approach, encompassing all human rights for EU Development Cooperation*' adopted in 2014 established a framework to integrate this approach into all EU development instruments and activities, including evaluation.

The tool-box recognises that both **gender and RBA are complementary and mutually reinforcing and can be undertaken in parallel without duplication**. Gender equality and women's empowerment objectives are an integral part of RBA. The elimination of discrimination against women and women's rights has a central place in international human rights law. Understanding **gender equality as a human right** provides the highest level of normative authority, as human rights are the only values on which there is global consensus. While gender mainstreaming calls for the integration of a gender perspective into development activities, with the ultimate goal of achieving gender equality, the RBA integrates women's human rights standards and principles and the prohibition of sex discrimination into development activities.

The contribution of evaluation to these EU commitments is essential. The strategic intent of **gender-responsive evaluation** is to feed into management and decision-making processes, by providing information on the way in which EU external action interventions are impacting on women/girls and men/boys differently and contributing towards achievement of gender equality commitments. It is applicable to all types of EU external action and development cooperation interventions and programming, not just gender-specific actions.

Gender- and power-neutrality in Development Cooperation and in external action **does not exist**: actions impact women and men differently, positively or negatively and their respective powers are key elements influencing this impact. Each evaluation shall adopt a gender-equality and rights-sensitive approach and evaluators are called to play a key role in understanding and informing to what extent the Actions they evaluate contribute to the EU commitment on GEWE and the RBA. The **guidance provided here** focuses on the principles of a **gender-sensitive evaluation**, but **does not preclude evaluators from integrating RBA requirements as well**. Further guidance on rights-sensitive evaluation will be issued later in 2018.

Gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment are long-term endeavours. Progress towards GEWE is rarely straightforward and often accompanied by set-backs and new constraints. GEWE comprises many dimensions – voice/participation/agency (distribution of power); access to/control over resources/opportunities; and shifts in formal (legislation, policy, etc.) and informal institutions (values and attitudes, etc.) and social protection systems. Advancement in these dimensions is inter-linked. Progress in one dimension may be hampered if efforts in another dimension are constrained. Important aspects of each of these dimensions are not easily countable. Evaluations seeking to measure progress towards GEWE need to adopt a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods and participative approaches appropriate to measuring and evaluating social change.

A gender-responsive evaluation should comprise two elements³:

1. an assessment of the contribution that an Action has made towards **the ultimate goal of gender equality (GE)**; and,
2. an assessment of the extent to which the Action has pursued **gender mainstreaming⁴ (GM)** to ensure that women's and men's, and girls' and boys' concerns, experiences, practical needs and strategic interests are equally addressed.

³ This framework is inspired by the strategic evaluation of EU support to Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Partner Countries (2015): https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/strategic-evaluation-eu-support-gender-equality-and-womens-empowerment-partner-countries-final_en

EVALUATION CRITERIA THROUGH A GENDER-SENSITIVE LENS

This document aims at providing evaluators with **ideas to reflect on the traditional 5 DAC evaluation criteria and the 2 EU specific evaluation criteria⁵ in a way that uses gender analysis⁶** when conducting their work. This is done by providing a series of **hints for questioning** per each evaluation criterion; they should support the evaluators during the process of fine-tuning of the evaluation questions (Inception Phase) and *mainly* in the design of their evaluation tools (Desk Phase).

Furthermore, they can be used by Evaluation Managers during the preparation of the Terms of Reference (ToR) as a way to support the definition of the issues to be studied (or evaluation questions); however, they **are not to be taken as ready-made evaluation questions**.

This method of questioning can be applied equally to any type of evaluation: of single Actions (Project/Programmes) as well as of thematic, policy, instrument or strategic evaluations.

Relevance

- How was gender analysis of the context, sector, problem, stakeholders considered during the formulation of the Action [*and / or reformulation in case of changes during implementation*]? Was any analysis done of how inequality on the grounds of gender intersect with different inequalities or discrimination on the basis (for instance) of ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, social groups etc.? How was gender equality integrated in the Action (Theory of Change / Logic of Intervention)?
- Was the process of consultation leading to the formulation of the Action inclusive of stakeholders and recipients of the Action, including relevant Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) working on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE)? Were women and men from a range of diverse social groups, age and abilities represented in the process? Were inter-sectional perspectives taken into account? What measures were taken to guarantee a meaningful participation of stakeholders (e.g. timely notification, language, location and timing?)
- Was gender equality taken into account and included throughout the Action (design, implementation and monitoring)? How was it done? If not, why not?
- Was the Action consistent with national policies or international instruments on gender equality and relevant international human rights obligations? How? If not, why not?
- To what extent did the planned activities address the causes of gender inequality and discrimination and reach the relevant beneficiaries, including those who are marginalised or disadvantaged?
- To what extent has the project/programme effectively contributed to the creation of favourable conditions for advancing gender equality?

Efficiency

- Were resources (financial, time, people, technical and gender expertise) sufficient to address the gender inequalities defined at the formulation of the Action? Were they spent or allocated as to target the

⁴ The UN Economic and Social Council has defined gender mainstreaming as "the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres, so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is gender equality". See report (1997) : <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/pdf/ECOSOCAC1997.2.PDF>

⁵ Respectively: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability; EU added value and coherence.

⁶ In line with the requirements of the GAP II

⁷ 'Disadvantaged groups are groups of persons that experience a higher risk of poverty, social exclusion, discrimination and violence than the general population. Disadvantaged groups include, but are not limited to, ethnic minorities, migrants, people with disabilities, isolated elderly people and children. Their vulnerability to discrimination and marginalisation is a consequence of social, cultural, economic and political conditions and not a quality inherent to certain groups of persons. Women and girls belonging to these groups are often subjected to multiple discrimination and gender-based violence. However, they have limited access to protection, support and redress when their rights are violated.' Cfr EIGE, the European Institute for Gender Equality, <http://eige.europa.eu/rdc/thesaurus/terms/1083>

structural causes of inequality? Were these resources easily and unambiguously identifiable? Were these resources consistently allocated throughout the Action and over time? [*In case of no consistent resources allocated*] What are / will be the costs of not addressing this since the formulation phase?

- Were gender and age-specific constraints taken into consideration when implementing activities?
- Did the internal monitoring system integrate and use gender analysis and -if so- in which ways?
- What services, infrastructures or/and goods have been received respectively by men and women, boys and girls as a result of the Action?

Effectiveness

- To what extent did the Action outputs contribute to achieving its expected results, respectively for men/boys and for women/girls, and for those marginalised or in a vulnerable situation? What expected and unexpected results were achieved for women and girls, and for men and boys, also taking into account an intersectional perspective, where relevant? Who benefitted most, how and why? What factors played in favour or against the achievement of the expected results, respectively for men/boys and for women/girls?
- Has the governance of the Action taken care of its Gender Mainstreaming (GM) and Gender Equality (GE) objectives within the wider context of a Rights-Based Approach and translated those objectives into specific actions? How has this been done?
- Were specific risks and challenges inherent to the achievement of GM/GE adequately taken into consideration and mitigated? How? What assumptions were made with regard to gender division of rights, labour, responsibilities, etc.? Were these assumptions accurate and relevant?
- Do the results validate the Theory of Change / Logic of Intervention of the Action in the area of GM/GE? How so?

(Perspectives of) impact

- What specific contributions of the Action at impact level did the Theory of Change / Logic of Intervention foresee in the area of Gender Mainstreaming (GM) and Gender Equality (GE)?
- What is the likelihood that the Action will have expected/unexpected impact on human rights & GM/GE? Are they expected to be positive or negative⁸ and in which ways will they affect the different stakeholders?

Sustainability

- Did the Action promote sustainable changes in the area of Gender Mainstreaming (GM) and Gender Equality (GE)? How? What more could have been done to promote greater sustainability with regard to GM/GE and changes in gender power relations? If so, how?
- Was an appropriate exit strategy planned for and implemented? How did this strategy address elements of GM/GE? To what extent and how were the local partners and different beneficiaries (including rights holders and duty bearers) involved in defining and implementing the exit strategy?
- To what extent do the partners of the Action own its results in the area of GM/GE and are committed to their sustainability after the end of the intervention?

EU added value

- To what extent does the Action add benefits to or link to Member States' (MS) interventions in the area of Gender Mainstreaming (GM) and Gender Equality (GE)?
- To what extent can the results of the Action in the area of GM/GE trigger further bi-lateral interventions of the EU MSs?

Coherence⁹

- To what extent have the results of the Action complemented/been supported by the human rights

⁸ E.g. disadvantaging certain groups, interfering with participation rights and labour rights or contributing to forced displacement

⁹ Some of the hints for questioning contained in this box touch upon issues of complementarity and coordination, as well.

components / programmes of individual EU MSs?

- To what extent have the results of the Action complemented/been supported by other EU interventions in the area of external action and foreign policy?
- To what extent was the Action coherent with the EU commitments¹⁰ and strategies in the areas of GM/GE and with EU MS action throughout its life? To what extent did it contribute to the implementation of GAP II and other regional policy documents that include reference to gender equality?
- To what extent was the Action coherent with those of other donors throughout the programming period in the areas of GM/GE?
- How and to what extent did the Action promote and enhance donor coordination by addressing GM/GE issues?

CHECKLIST FOR A GENDER-SENSITIVE EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The following checklist is prepared to help evaluators and Operational Managers¹¹ / Evaluation Focal Points¹² verify whether the methodology proposed for the evaluation integrates gender analysis. Ideally, all questions should be answered positively.

Checklist for gender-sensitive evaluations	Yes / No
Is the evaluation process participatory, does it provide for an equitable participation of women/girls and men/boys and of their respective organisations, including those who are marginalised or disadvantaged ¹³ and persons with disabilities?	
Have gender-sensitive indicators been developed to measure both qualitative and quantitative results, at all the levels of the Results Chain? Will gender-sensitive indicators be used in this evaluation?	
Was an initial assessment done to define which mix of data collection and analysis methods will be used to address data gaps and weaknesses with respect to gender equality?	
Do sex and age-disaggregated baseline data exist?	
Are data gathering and analysis tools (both qualitative and quantitative) designed to disaggregate and measure the results of the Action for both women/girls and men/boys?	
Is gender (and age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability etc., if relevant) included among the criteria used to build-up the consultation sample?	
Is the methodological approach flexible enough and is sufficient time allowed to respond to constraints and challenges of the informants, taking into consideration their gender and age?	
Does the methodology take into account the ethical and safety measures necessary to protect the informants?	

¹⁰ See the chapter 'Evaluation with gender as a cross-cutting dimension'

¹¹ DGs DEVCO and NEAR

¹² FPI

¹³ 'Disadvantaged groups are groups of persons that experience a higher risk of poverty, social exclusion, discrimination and violence than the general population. Disadvantaged groups include, but are not limited to, ethnic minorities, migrants, people with disabilities, isolated elderly people and children. Their vulnerability to discrimination and marginalisation is a consequence of social, cultural, economic and political conditions and not a quality inherent to certain groups of persons. Women and girls belonging to these groups are often subjected to multiple discrimination and gender-based violence. However, they have limited access to protection, support and redress when their rights are violated.' Cfr EIGE, the European Institute for Gender Equality, <http://eige.europa.eu/rdc/thesaurus/terms/1083>



LINKS, BIBLIOGRAPHY

There is a huge wealth of relevant bibliography on Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Equality that can provide useful elements and food for thought in helping evaluators to build-up a gender-sensitive evaluation methodology. This section lists few key resources and is therefore not exhaustive.

The Joint Staff Working Document '[*Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016-2020*](#)' (GAP II)

[The Resource Package](#) on Gender Mainstreaming in EU Development Cooperation, developed by the Unit B1 – Gender Equality, Human Rights and Democratic Governance of DG DEVCO, contains online and offline guidance on criteria and questions that help including the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment consideration in the methodology of evaluation in different sectors.

The Commission Staff Working Document: [Tool-box - A Rights-Based Approach, encompassing all human rights for EU development cooperation](#) (2014) aims at integrating human rights principles into EU operational activities for development, covering arrangements both at HQ and in the field for the synchronisation of human rights and development cooperation activities.

[The DAC gender equality policy marker](#) is a qualitative statistical tool to record aid activities that target gender equality as a policy objective. It is used by DAC members as part of the annual reporting of their aid activities to the DAC.

[The EU International Cooperation and Development Results Framework \(EURF\)](#) has been developed following the commitment to strengthen the capacity of DG DEVCO to monitor and report results, enhancing accountability, transparency and visibility of EU aid, as articulated in the 'Agenda for Change' and contributes to assessing results towards gender equality.

The website of the [European Institute for Gender Equality \(EIGE\)](#) contains practical advice, tools, further documentation and a useful glossary.

[How to Manage Gender-Responsive Evaluations](#), UN Women (2015)

[How to Perform Evaluations – Gender Equality](#), CIDA (2001)

[Guidance on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation](#), UNEG

[DG NEAR Guidelines on linking planning / programming, monitoring and evaluation](#) (2016) provides advice on how to address gender as a cross-cutting issue during programming, monitoring and evaluation.

[Measuring Empowerment? Ask them](#), SIDA (2010) makes the case that the measurement of empowerment is agenda-driven and shaped by beliefs and value systems. This has an impact on how much importance different specialists attach to it.