



Becoming Feminist Evaluators: A Learning Journey at Global Affairs Canada



International Assistance Evaluation Division

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Feminist International Assistance Policy



“Canada’s Feminist International Assistance Policy is, I believe, the single most important innovation in Canadian international cooperation since the creation of Canada’s International Development Agency and the International Development Research Centre.

It forces us to tackle the root cause of poverty and instability: inequality. And it grounds our development programming in the fundamental belief that all people—regardless of gender or sexuality, race, religion or creed—have the same inalienable human rights. And that we cannot achieve the Sustainable Development Goals if we leave half the world’s population behind.”

The Honourable Karina Gould
Minister of International Development
January 2020

1) Do you have comfort and willingness to apply feminist principles in your work?





Becoming Feminist Evaluators: A Learning Journey at Global Affairs Canada

Integrating feminist principles in data collection



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June 1st, 2021



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Integrating Feminist Evaluation Principles in Data Collection – Evaluation of International Assistance Programming in Colombia

How this journey started?

Policy



Project

"Integrated Rural Economic Development for Micro-Regions in South Colombia"



How to apply feminist evaluation principles?



Integrating Feminist Evaluation Principles in Data Collection – Evaluation of International Assistance Programming in Colombia

Key feminist features of the data collection exercise

1. Engaged in a Global North and Global South collaboration
2. Applied participatory processes that empower and foster ownership
3. Prioritized women's voices
4. Used “Differential Gender Analysis Criteria”
5. Explored power relations



Integrating Feminist Evaluation Principles in Data Collection – Evaluation of International Assistance Programming in Colombia

Reflections on the pilot

What worked?

What were the key challenges?



Integrating Feminist Evaluation Principles in Data Collection – Evaluation of International Assistance Programming in Colombia

Reflections on the value of this approach

Provides a platform for women's voices and voices of other vulnerable groups

Promotes dialogue with participants rather than an inquiry-based type of discussion

Empowers and creates ownership by project participants

Creates knowledge

Values a reflective process

STRENGTHENING A FEMINIST APPROACH IN EVALUATING THE INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT FOR MICRO REGIONS PROJECT

Purpose of the Project
To improve the socio-economic conditions of small producers in three micro-regions of Cauca and Nariño by increasing income earnings and access to rural public goods.

Analysis Framework
Based on Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy
Eradicating poverty and building a more peaceful, inclusive and prosperous world by promoting gender equality and empowering women and girls as the most effective approach to achieving this goal.

Criteria for a gender differential analysis
To explore, with participating communities, how gender inequalities are being reduced because of the program:

- Equal opportunities in decision-making with respect to the productive activities at the family or individual level.
- Equitable participation in the distribution of economic resources generated by the project.
- Level of autonomy with respect to one's own generated resources.
- Distribution of unpaid care work in the home, domestic work and care for persons requiring special support.
- Most significant change or transformation towards achieving gender equality.

Main findings

- Progressive inclusion of a gender differential approach in the project, for example, issues of women's self-esteem and empowerment were introduced in the farmer field schools activities.
- Incorporation of gender-sensitive analysis in assessing the intervention areas in order to identify the inequalities of women producers at the outset.
- The technical assistance and training provided to the producers takes into consideration unpaid care work in the home, which increases women's technical and managerial skills and strengthens the associativity and leadership capacities that are determining factors for their empowerment.

Good practices

- Quotas for women in the "manager apprentice" mode for generational renewal planning.
- Improve the capacities of women producers through their direct participation and presence in decision-making bodies.
- Family production chains in which the products and personal income of women and men are differentiated, as in the case of handicrafts.
- Linking women project participants with Municipal Women's Panels or Councils to strengthen progress towards women's economic self-efficacy.
- Inclusion of gender indicators to measure women's personal income earnings.

Some considerations for this type of initiative

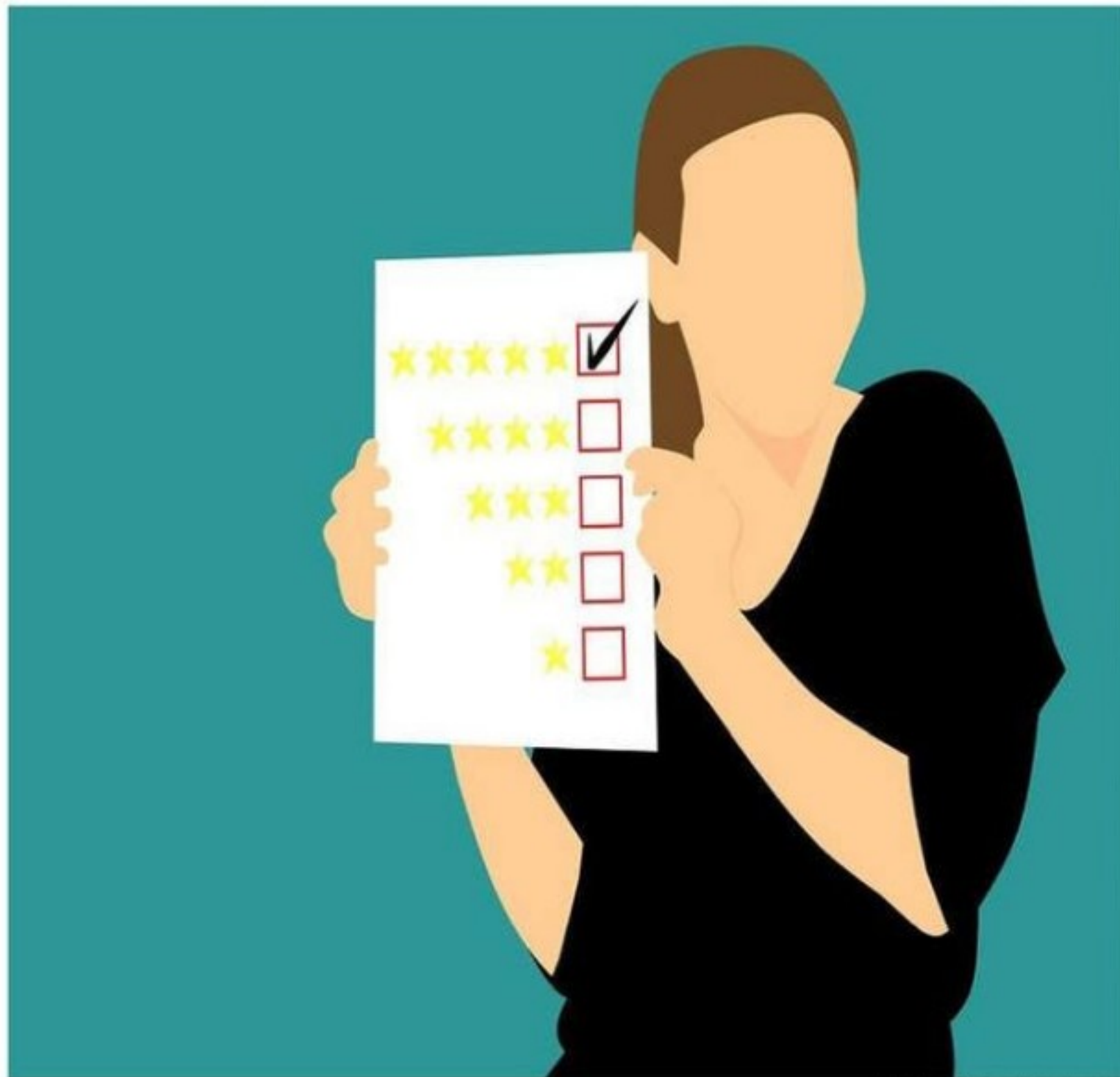
- The costs associated with gender equality and women's economic empowerment should be included in the budget for comprehensive rural development programs: "There is a cost to having a gender focus."
- The "junction" (united) learning together to produce, sell and learn is a strategy to overcome resistance to associativity between female producers and strengthen their economic self-efficacy.
- Having dedicated spaces for women to discuss progress and influence such as inter-regional meetings or farmer forums, helps to promote economic and political leadership as well as leadership in preventing violence against women.
- Strengthening the institutional, community and political willingness of women and men to address gender equality issues through project activities contributes to the sustainability of women's economic self-efficacy and the eradication of rural poverty.

"A transforming factor is 'togetherness', when women artisans get together to weave, socialize and recognize themselves as women. They become more independent."

Logos: Canada, República Colombiana para la Equidad Social, Gobernación de Cauca, Gobernación de Nariño.

Integrating Feminist Evaluation Principles in Data Collection – Evaluation of International Assistance Programming in Colombia

Recommendations for practitioners



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Engage local evaluators as “cultural brokers”



Tap into local evaluators’ knowledge of participatory process facilitation



Explore power relations



Factor extra time and resources



Treat process as important as findings

Integrating Feminist Evaluation Principles in Data Collection – Evaluation of International Assistance Programming in Colombia

Questions? Comments?



Thank you!

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Workshops with women and men producers and IOM project Officers – Nariño, Colombia, May 2018



Becoming Feminist Evaluators: A Learning Journey at Global Affairs Canada

The Empowerment Measurement Tool



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June 1st, 2021



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The Empowerment Measurement Tool

How did the idea come about?

Context

- The evaluation of gender equality programming in the Middle East (2020)

Problem

Data collection

- Lack of women's empowerment and gender equality data
- Unexpected empowerment outcomes not reported

Solution

- **The Empowerment Measurement Tool**



<https://www.freepik.com/>

The Empowerment Measurement Tool

What is the tool?

It's a comprehensive set of guides/documents that:

- facilitates discussions to unpack experiences of project participants around empowerment categories: economic, knowledge, physical, psychological and social influence
- facilitates discussion to identify factors (legal, cultural, social and economic) that may have contributed to participant's feelings of empowerment in their society and in their own lives

**Gender Equality and Empowerment Measurement Tool
Facilitator's Guide**

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Our Gender Equality and Empowerment Journey

What Does Gender Equality and Empowerment Mean to You?

Gender impact rating scale

No gender impacts - ● Some gender impacts - ● Significant gender impacts - ●

Economic	Knowledge	Physical	Self-confidence	Social
I have an improved source of income and more power to decide how I spend my money.	I have more knowledge and skills that I am using to reach my goals.	I have more control over my body, including where I go and what happens to me. I have the resources and services I need to be safe and to make choices about my body.	I have increased confidence and trust in myself and in my ability to make decisions.	I have a greater ability to voice my concerns, to make decisions and to exercise my rights (in my family, in my community, in my country).

Addendum on the Supporting Environment and Engaging Men & Boys - Determining the Elements of a Supportive Environment for Change

Objective
This addendum to the Gender Empowerment Measurement Tool serves as a supplement for facilitating discussions with specific types of project audiences.

It serves two primary purposes:

- It provides additional questions regarding the supporting environment around gender empowerment.
- It provides questions to understand the impact or results of work to promote supportive environments for women's empowerment and gender equality.

This addendum will focus on discussing with project stakeholders who can speak to the structural environments that support gender empowerment but are not direct beneficiaries. It includes questions for a male audience, in order to collect the views of men on the gender equality and empowerment impacts of certain projects.

Using the Addendum
The questions posed in this addendum may replace **Steps 3-6** in the Gender Empowerment Measurement Tool for all focus groups that are not held with direct female beneficiaries. **Steps 1-2 and 7-9** should then be followed as planned.

Project Categorization
The field-level data collection for this evaluation involves projects with varying types of stakeholders and beneficiaries. Gathering data on gender equality and empowerment results should therefore consider these varying types of audiences. Projects that target macro-level stakeholders, such as institutions, government ministries, or other power-holding service providers will need to be asked slightly different questions. Similarly, if a focus group is held with men, the questions asked should first be modified to be relevant to the project. The following questions are modified and intended to be used with men.

Reporting Guidelines

To help you prepare your project report, we provide some guidance for summarizing and analyzing the data, as well as a report outline to help lay out your findings. Once you complete your data collection (i.e. focus group discussions (FGD) and semi-structured interviews (interviews) with project partners), you should have all the information you need to prepare your final report.

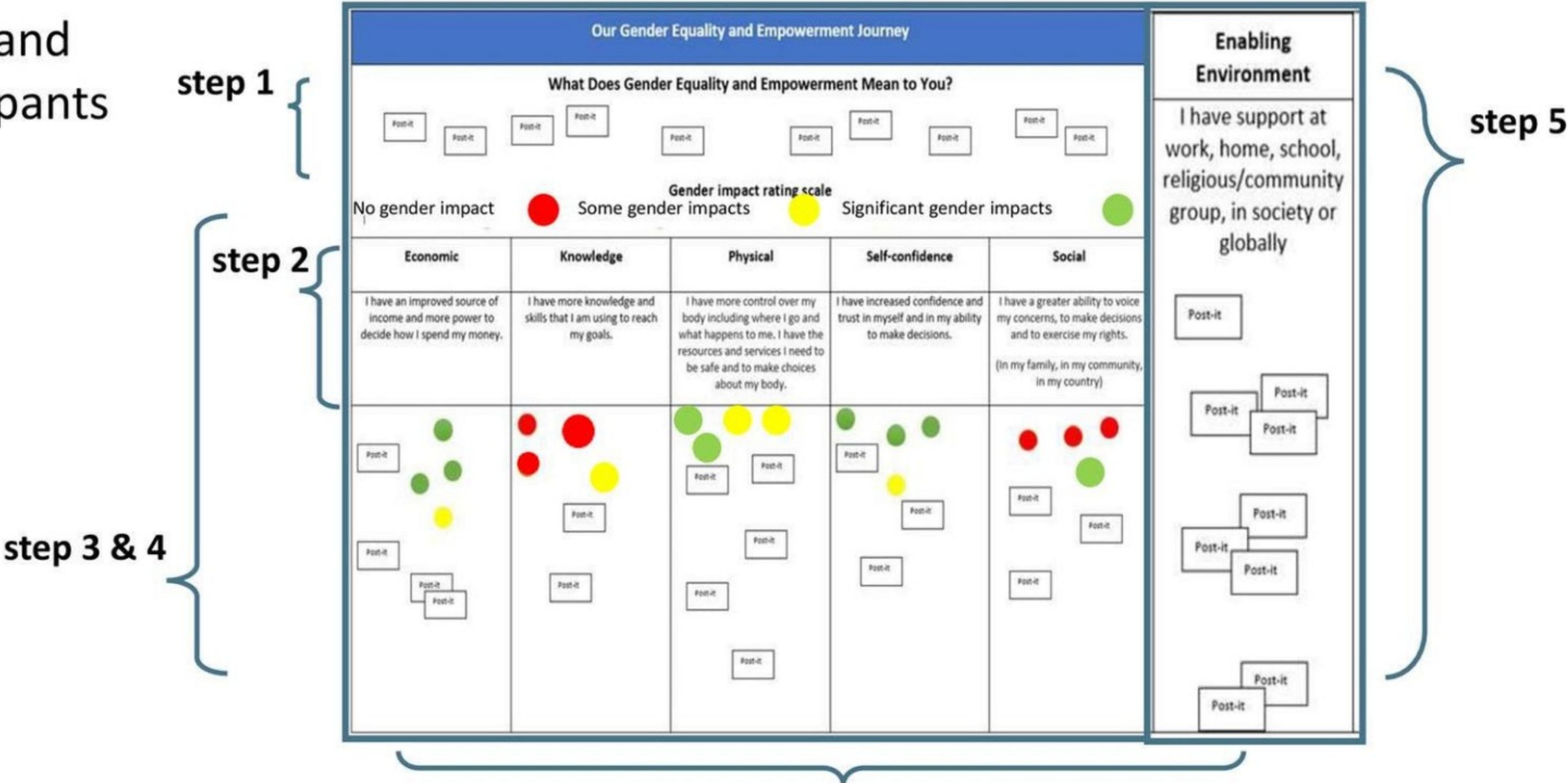
Guidelines for summarizing and analyzing the data:

- Review all written notes, photos of visual boards and sticky notes from the focus group and any partner interviews, keeping an eye out for good quotes and examples to use in preparing the project report.
- Complete your report as soon after the focus group discussions as possible so you can recall the information and do not confuse the participants' comments from other focus groups.
- Be thorough in your summary and be sure to provide a synthesis of findings for each of the different categories (i.e. economic, knowledge, physical, self-confidence and social)
- Reflect on the validation exercise to make sure your summary and analysis are in line with the priorities outlined by the participants.
- Consider what themes or ideas stand out and whether they reflect what you heard during the focus group.
- Your project report should include both raw data (quantitative and qualitative) and a summary of your observations and findings from the focus group discussion and any stakeholder interviews.
- Present only the key data and findings from the data collection pertinent to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.
- The report template (below) and suggested word counts are meant to serve as a guideline. While you have some flexibility regarding the exact length of each section, the ideal total length is between 750 and 1,000 words (or 3-4 pages plus appendices). Please stick closely to this length.

The Empowerment Measurement Tool

Completed Empowerment Measurement Tool

6 step process –
the facilitator and
project participants
build the
information
together



The Empowerment Measurement Tool

Elements that make this tool feminist

Attention to feminist principles: participatory, inclusive, and intersectional

Prioritizes the voices of project participants

Prioritizes gender relations as a category of analysis

Promotes open dialogue, discussion and reflection on participants feelings of empowerment

Includes training resources for locally-based researchers



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The Empowerment Measurement Tool

Reflections on piloting the tool in the field

Testimonies
from women
participants

"A successful woman is the one who can create opportunities to succeed, to be financially independent and generate income, help others, and contribute to her community. Never say I cannot"

"Empowerment in our society is largely connected and related to economic empowerment"

"Men have more chances and fewer challenges compared to women."

"I became empowered in many ways, I am fully aware and know how to protect myself from any sexual harassment that I may face during my work"

"Our Jordanian society is male dominated, so men can take advantage of any situation whether they make an effort or not"

The Empowerment Measurement Tool

Reflections and next steps

The tool was adapted to a virtual environment, applied safety protocols based on the "do no harm" principles, engaged project participants in conversations on empowerment based on their own understanding of the term, and captured their stories and testimonies.

However, is the tool really feminist?

A tool in and of itself cannot be feminist as long as it's not applied in a truly feminist process. Any tool runs the risk of becoming a reporting and merely extractive tool.



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- **Fine-tune the tool based on the learning from the pilot**
- **Peer – review it with other organizations who developed similar tools**
- **Incorporate visual features – digital format**
- **Socialize the tool internally in the Department (end of the summer)**
- **Socialize the tool externally with partners and international evaluation colleagues (in the fall)**

The Empowerment Measurement Tool

Questions? Comments?

Thank you!

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Becoming Feminist Evaluators: A Learning Journey at Global Affairs Canada

Integrating feminist principles in evaluation design



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Global Affairs Canada

June 1, 2021



A unique opportunity ...



A feminist program...



Participation

Inclusion

Empowerment

...needs a feminist evaluation.

Our starting point: 8 feminist evaluation principles



1. Acknowledge and take into account that **evaluation is a political activity**; evaluator's personal experiences, perspectives, and characteristics come from and lead to a particular political stance.
2. Frame **gender inequities** as one **manifestation of social injustice**. Discrimination cuts across race, class, and culture and is inextricably linked to all three.
3. Examine how **discrimination** based on gender is **systematic** and **structural**.
4. Act on **opportunities to create, advocate and support change**, which are considered to be morally and ethically appropriate responses of an engaged feminist evaluator.
5. Be cognizant that **research methods, institutions and practices are social constructs**.
6. **Contextualize evaluation** because knowledge is culturally, socially and temporally contingent. Knowledge should be a resource of and for the people who create, hold, and share it.
7. Generate and use **knowledge as a powerful resource** that serves an explicit or implicit purpose.
8. Respect **multiple ways of knowing**. Some ways are privileged over others.

A feminist evaluation framework

Feminist Evaluation principles (Podems, 2018)	How does this look like in practice? HOW / WHAT WE DO?	How does this look like in practice? WHY / FOR WHOM?	How doable/ applicable is this?
1. Acknowledge and take into account that evaluation is a political activity (...).			
2. Frame gender inequities as one manifestation of social injustice (...).			
3. Examine how discrimination based on gender is systematic and structural.			
4. Act on opportunities to create, advocate and support change (...).			
5. Be cognizant that research methods, institutions and practices are social constructs.			
6. Contextualize evaluation because knowledge is culturally, socially and temporally contingent (...).			
7. Generate and use knowledge as a powerful resource that serves an explicit or implicit purpose.			
8. Respect multiple ways of knowing. Some ways are privileged over others.			

Brainstorming phase

A feminist evaluation framework

Feminist Evaluation principles (Podems, 2018)	How does this look like in practice? HOW / WHAT WE DO?	How does this look like in practice? WHY / FOR WHOM?	How doable/ applicable is this?
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5. Be cognizant that research methods, institutions and practices are social constructs.			
6. Contextualize evaluation because knowledge is culturally, socially and temporally contingent (...).			
7. Generate and use knowledge as a powerful resource through explicit or implicit purpose.			
8. Respect multiple ways of knowing. Some ways are privileged over others.			

Brainstorming phase

Application phase

Evaluation phases/ components	What are we doing to integrate feminist evaluation principles in WVL formative evaluation?	Relevant feminist principles	Existing opportunities/ resources	Potential limitations/ challenges
1. Team set-up, evaluation management and governance				
2. Planning phase (scoping and design)				
3. Data collection				
4. and analysis phase				
5. Interpretation phase				
6. Report writing phase				
7. Knowledge sharing and use phase				

Key feminist features of the WVL formative evaluation



Expanded scoping and design consultations



Diverse data



Self-reflexive diary



Participatory sense-making



Inclusive governance



User-driven evaluation products



Deep dives: locally-led feminist case studies



What have we learned so far?

What worked well

- An enabling environment
- Guidance from external feminist evaluation adviser
- Diverse voices reflected in the evaluation design
- Active stakeholders' participation in evaluation governance
- Reaching different audiences with targeted documents



Challenges

- Time-consuming
- Too much participation?
- Inclusivity, power & WROs
- Some old habits are difficult to change (at GAC)
- Maintaining self-reflexive discipline

Questions? Comments?

Thank you!

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