Achieving Quality Gender Results in ADB's Projects and Programs

Measuring Gender Results and Impacts

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Session objectives

- What do we mean by impact evaluation (IE)?
- Measuring (gendered) impact of a project
- Strengthening gender indicators to measure impact
- Kinds of data needed

Introduction to impact evaluation

Role of evidence

Tells us

- What is working
- How well it is working
- Why it is working

Data can challenge

- Assumptions
- Intuition
- Anecdotes

Consequences of lack of evidence

- Bad ideas are scaled up
- Precious resources are wasted
- No replication of innovative (gender) interventions

Impact evaluation vs monitoring

- Monitoring
  - ✓Continuous
  - ✓Inputs, activities, outputs
  - ✓Routine data collection related to above (administrative data, # participants)
  - ✓Keep track of implementation – activities, targets
  - ✓Are we doing it right?

- Evaluation
  - ✓Pre project design – timing matters. Baseline & endline
  - ✓Causal impact
  - ✓ Did the project cause the change?
  - ✓Quantitative data & methods mostly; mixed-methods as well
  - ✓Scale up, replication, policy

What is impact evaluation?

- An empirical study that estimates the *causal effects* ("treatment effects") of interventions on outcomes.
  - ✓Separate out the effect of the project/intervention on an outcome from what would have happened anyway
- *What works, for whom, and under what conditions?*
- Examples of causal relations:
  - ✓Educational technology → learning & employment
  - ✓Microcredit → business activity & income & intrahousehold dynamics
  - ✓Electrification → study time & time use

Study design 1: before and after

- ADB finances agricultural extension program to 10 villages in Country X
  - ✓Hypothesis: boost household incomes by increasing farm productivity
  - ✓Before (baseline) project: Average income from farming: $1,500 per season
  - ✓After (endline) 2 years: Average income from farming: $1,800 per season
- We conclude that project has increased incomes by $300 per season, on average!
- Flawed conclusion
  - ✓Good rains increased yield
  - ✓Fertilizer subsidy
  - ✓Farm prices increased

Study design 2: with & without

- ADB finances agricultural extension program to 10 villages
- Farmers sign up voluntarily for the extension program
  - ✓Participating farmers:
    - Average income before ($1500/season) and income after ($2000/season)
  - ✓Non-participating farmers:
    - Average income before ($1200/season) and income after ($1400/season)
- Impact of extension program is $600 (2000-1400)?
- Flawed: selection bias; farmers who sign up are possibly more motivated, wealthier, better market access etc.
- Slightly better approach: compare differences in changes not levels
  - ✓$500 (participants) - $200 (non-participants) = $300

Gender focused examples

- Funding a scholarship for girls' education program
- Bicycle program to increase school enrollment
- Women entrepreneurship training to the first 1000 women who apply
- Free maternal health clinic and you compare the health of users and non-users

Key takeaway?

The core challenge: attribution

- **Central task:** Identify the **counterfactual** → what would have happened to the outcome of interest in the absence of the intervention

- Identifying a counterfactual is hard work!
  - ✓We can see what happens when there is a project
  - ✓But we cannot see what happens when there is no project
  - ✓Our estimate of program impact is only as good as a reliable counterfactual

- Much of IE data and methods are about identifying a counterfactual
  - ✓Crucial to do this thinking pre-project design

Identifying counterfactual

- **Randomization:** randomly assign the intervention to units
  - ✓Randomized controlled trials (RCTs)
  - ✓eliminates preexisting differences (statistically equivalent on average)

- **Other methods:** quasi-experimental approaches approximate random assignment
  - ✓Quasi-experimental (matching, diff-in-diff, IV, regression discontinuity)

Bridging gender and evaluation

Why gender matters in evaluation

- Gender is a **process**, not just a male/female category.
  - ✓There is a risk of **masking gender dynamics** if analysis only looks at overall impact
    - Reduction in GBV can be achieved in several ways – policing, law enforcement, shelters etc. Or it can also engage with power, norms, masculinity, community etc
- ***"Add women and stir"* is not enough** — participation ≠ impact
- Development interventions are **never gender neutral.**
  - ✓Inequalities are embedded in **norms, stereotypes, and power hierarchies**.
- Good evaluation requires identifying **critical inequalities** at design stage.

Gender-aware vs. gender-blind approaches

- **Gender-blind**: ignores gender norms, risks harmful unintended impacts
  - ✓Can unintentionally reinforce inequalities by failing to “see” gender
- **Gender-accommodating**: adjusts for differences but does not challenge inequities
- **Gender-transformative**: explicitly engages men/women to question and change norms
  - ✓Encourages shifts in stereotypes, norms, and institutional practices.
- **Continuum helps set realistic expectations** of what kind of gender impact is possible.

Key evaluation questions (gender lens)

- What changes occurred (positive/negative) in participation and outcomes across groups?
  - ✓Pay attention to intersections of gender with class, ethnicity, age, sexuality
- Do participants link these changes to the intervention?
- How did stereotypes and decision-making norms shift?
- Which changes are most valued by disadvantaged groups (women, minorities)?

Data

Principles for gender-sensitive data collection

- **Collect sex-disaggregated data as a <u>minimum</u>**
  - ✓Gender is not only men vs. women – must capture norms and roles.
- **Assess lived experience, not just participation numbers**
- **Include diverse participants** (not only “dominant” women/men)
  - ✓Consider intersecting disadvantage (SES, ethnicity, disability)
- **Ethical considerations**: enumerators’ gender, confidentiality, power dynamics

Methods to capture gendered change

- **Participatory statistics**: listing, ranking, mapping
  - ✓Useful for identifying inequalities within communities
- **Quantitative surveys**: causal effect, attribution
  - ✓structured decision-making, time-use, mobility
- **Qualitative tools**: mechanisms, context, lived experiences
  - ✓community mapping, most significant change stories, focus group discussions, life histories

Mixed methods allow triangulation and reduce reporting bias, richer understanding of the world

Practical example and application

Tonga Renewable Energy Project

- **Context**
  - ✓Tonga: heavy dependence on imported fossil fuels (≈90% of generation pre-project).
  - ✓REP supports transition to renewable energy, reducing costs and increasing energy access in outer islands.
- **Gender dimension**
  - ✓Classified as **effective gender mainstreaming**.
  - ✓Recognizes that energy access and affordability **affect women differently** (e.g., safety, mobility, time use, income).

Output 4: Capacity Building and Project Management Support

- **Output elements**
  - ✓ Capacity building for government, utilities, and communities.
  - ✓ Includes **training on gender inequality, sexual harassment, and women's leadership**.
  - ✓ Promotes women's inclusion in **electric societies and decision-making committees**.
- **Indicator examples**
  - ✓ % of women in key decision-making committees (target: 30%).
  - ✓ % women in O&M training, business skills, and asset management workshops.
- **Good practices**
  - ✓ Clear, numeric targets allow **easy measurement of participation gaps**.
  - ✓ **Goes beyond "number of women trained"** by tracking roles and leadership positions.
  - ✓ M&E framework includes **perception studies** before, during, and after interventions.

Lessons for developing good indicators

- **Integrating gender into sector projects**
  - ✓ Renewable energy projects may seem “technical,” but this shows gender can be mainstreamed
- **Multi-level indicators**
  - ✓ Individual (skills, confidence), household (decision-making, labor sharing), community (leadership roles), institutional (policies, data systems)
- **Balance of quantitative and qualitative**
  - ✓ Participation targets + perception studies = richer understanding of change
- **Why this is a strong example**
  - ✓ Indicators are **specific, measurable, time-bound** (e.g., 30%, 50%, 90%)
  - ✓ Cover both **outcomes (empowerment, decision-making)** and **processes (training, committee inclusion)**
  - ✓ Demonstrates how to **embed gender-sensitive indicators into energy sector projects**

Considerations…

- What was the impact of the sexual harassment sessions?

- Women in key decision-making committees
  - ✓Movement from symbolic to active to leadership?
  - ✓ indicators to move from headcount to agency?

- How was women's time use shifted?
  - ✓Substituting care work with employment?
  - ✓Time poverty

Open discussion

THANK YOU
VINAKA
MALO ‘AUPITO
KO RABWA
FAKAFETAI LASI
FA’AFETAI