

Evaluation and social justice



EVALUATION ADVISORY PANEL OF IOE

Seminar Series [\[video\]](#)

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21 October 2021

Evaluation



Transformation



Development



Justice

The issue



The UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals, all of which have relevance for a more equitable approach to agricultural development. IFAD's commitment to a more transformative approach to evaluation can contribute to the transformations needed to increase social, economic, and environmental justice by supporting culturally responsive solutions to seemingly intransigent challenges. The role of evaluation under this framework shifts from one of accountability to one of relationship building, co-creation of data, and development of sustainable coalitions to carry forward needed changes.



The status quo

Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary General in 2019, commented in the Future is Now that after four years of focusing on the SDGs, the world was not on track to achieve these goals by 2030 without a dramatic change in enacting the principles of inclusion and sustainability. The International Development Evaluation Association (2021) cited Indran A Naidoo, Director of the Office of Independent Evaluation of IFAD, saying that evaluation needs to support that transformational change on the global stage. Mertens' (2018; 2019) work on transformative evaluation provides a detailed framework for planning, implementing, and using evaluation to increase social, economic, and environmental justice.

The horizon

The transformative approach to evaluation provides a framework that begins by examining how to be inclusive of the full range of stakeholders, including those most marginalized and vulnerable, in ways that are culturally responsive and consciously addresses power inequities. The focus is on building coalitions that can inform evaluation work, as well as provide a mechanism for supporting sustainable transformative change. A phase of contextual analysis provides the opportunity to adjust evaluation strategies to more effectively frame the evaluation to the needs of specific communities. The potential yield is the support of more effective culturally responsive interventions.

Literature

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- Independent Group of Scientists appointed by the Secretary-General, *Global Sustainable Development Report 2019: The Future is Now – Science for Achieving Sustainable Development*, (United Nations, New York, 2019). [\[here\]](#)
- Mertens, D.M. (2018). *Mixed methods design in evaluation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.