

Leave No One, No Knowledge  
Behind:  
Indigenous Perspectives,  
Gender and Disability

Bagele Chilisa

Donna M Mertens

IFAD Evaluation Advisory Panel Annual Workshop

Rome, November 2023

# IFAD Commitment to Leave No One Behind

Access to the evaluation process and products by all relevant stakeholders: (IFAD Evaluation Manual 2022)

- Sex, gender, race, language, country of origin, **LGBTQ status**, age, background, religion, ethnicity and ability. P. 17
- IFAD's portfolio targets small scale producers, owners of small- and medium-sized rural enterprises and vulnerable rural groups, such as women, youth, **indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities** p. 12
- Achieving **disability inclusion** is a critical goal in the pursuit of IFAD's mission. (IFAD's Disability Inclusion Strategy 2022)

IFAD Evaluation Manual 2022 <https://ioe.ifad.org/documents/38714182/45756354/IFAD-2022-IFAD-EVALUATION-MANUAL-COMPLETE-def.pdf/05bd1a53-26ee-c493-b1a0-2fc3050deb80>

# Operational Pillars

- **Transformational country programmes** are needed to drive transformative results for poor rural people.
- To achieve meaningful impact, country programmes must:
  - (i) include **inclusive approaches aimed at leaving no one behind**;
  - (ii) deepen **partnerships** and enhance **government ownership** through a suite of adaptive products and tools suited to country needs; and
  - (iii) make significant **investment in innovation and risk**. P. 14

IFAD Evaluation Manual 2022 <https://ioe.ifad.org/documents/38714182/45756354/IFAD-2022-IFAD-EVALUATION-MANUAL-COMPLETE-def.pdf/05bd1a53-26ee-c493-b1a0-2fc3050deb80>

# IFAD Evaluation Approach

- Aims at closer interaction with clients, tailored solutions and adaptive programming to drive rural transformation
- Proximity and adaptability cross cutting principles of delivery of results
- Proximity means working with all partners
- Adaptability refers to ability to learn, reactively learn and respond to changes and evolve quickly
- IFAD adopted an Adaptive learning centered approach
- Approach ensures flexible of project design and implementation that constantly react to emerging results and learning as well as external changes and events
- Foster dialogue

# Benefits from Neuro-Science: How to Change Mindsets

- Importance of dialogue and allowing voice
- Compassion
- Avoiding Conflict
- Ensuring Autonomy
- Building social relations
- Ensuring Psychological Safety
- Creating Space for Heart Knowledge

# What IFAD Can Do

- Use Neuro-Science as a Stepping stone to promote Spirituality as a research tool and heart knowledge as legitimate
- In line with its aim to make significant **investment in innovation and risk**, Promote documentation, uptake and testing of innovative techniques from Indigenous Peoples, build new theories, frameworks and approaches based on Indigenous Peoples's experiences

# Where are we?

- Contextualize Evaluation
- Decolonization Wave: Decolonize the Evaluation Paradigms
- Integrate Indigenous Science and Western science
- Co-creation of evaluation research knowledge by Western and Non-Western societies and by evaluators with communities

# Contextualize Evaluation

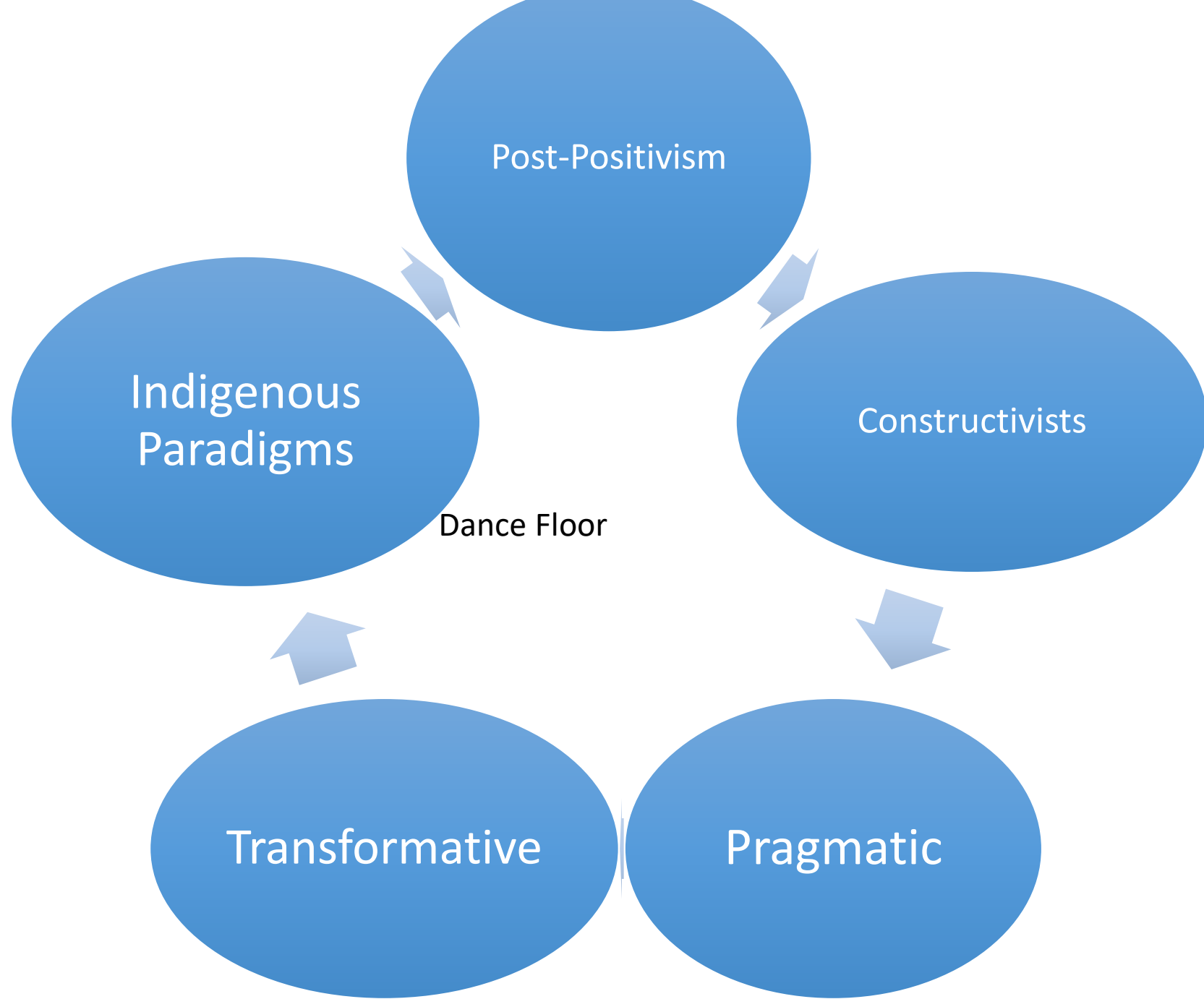
Evaluation takes place within a context dominated by power

- **Relational Power:** It is power that manifests between evaluation members for example, stakeholders who may be evaluation funders, community advisory board members, program managers, program participants or evaluators. It is power that is also influenced by gender, class, ethnicity, geographical location for example the north versus the south and the dominance of trial and tested methodologies from the North
- **Political Power:** Political agendas, for example, from Governments or funders and power structures within organization may also impact on the evaluation process and affect outcome. For example funder colonialism
- **Discursive Power:** Societal discourses may predetermine what counts as reality and truth. For example, certain evaluation tools and models dominate evaluation research in Low and Middle Income countries. For example the Log Framework
- **Historical Power:** The historical context of a community, a program, a nation or a continent is important in terms of understanding power dynamics that may cause tensions. For example, the marginalization of Indigenous peoples' ways of knowing and a narrow focus on what culturally competence entails may cause tensions in evaluation of programs.



# Decolonizing Research and Evaluation Paradigms

- Paradigms are world views that inform the entire research process
- A research methodology loses its meaning when separated from its overarching paradigm (Chilisa 2020, Held 2019, Kovach 2008, & Wilson 2008) posit
- Researchers are called to take the epistemological and ontological orientations seriously as they ground and limit us



Post-Positivism

Constructivists

Pragmatic

Transformative

Indigenous  
Paradigms

Dance Floor



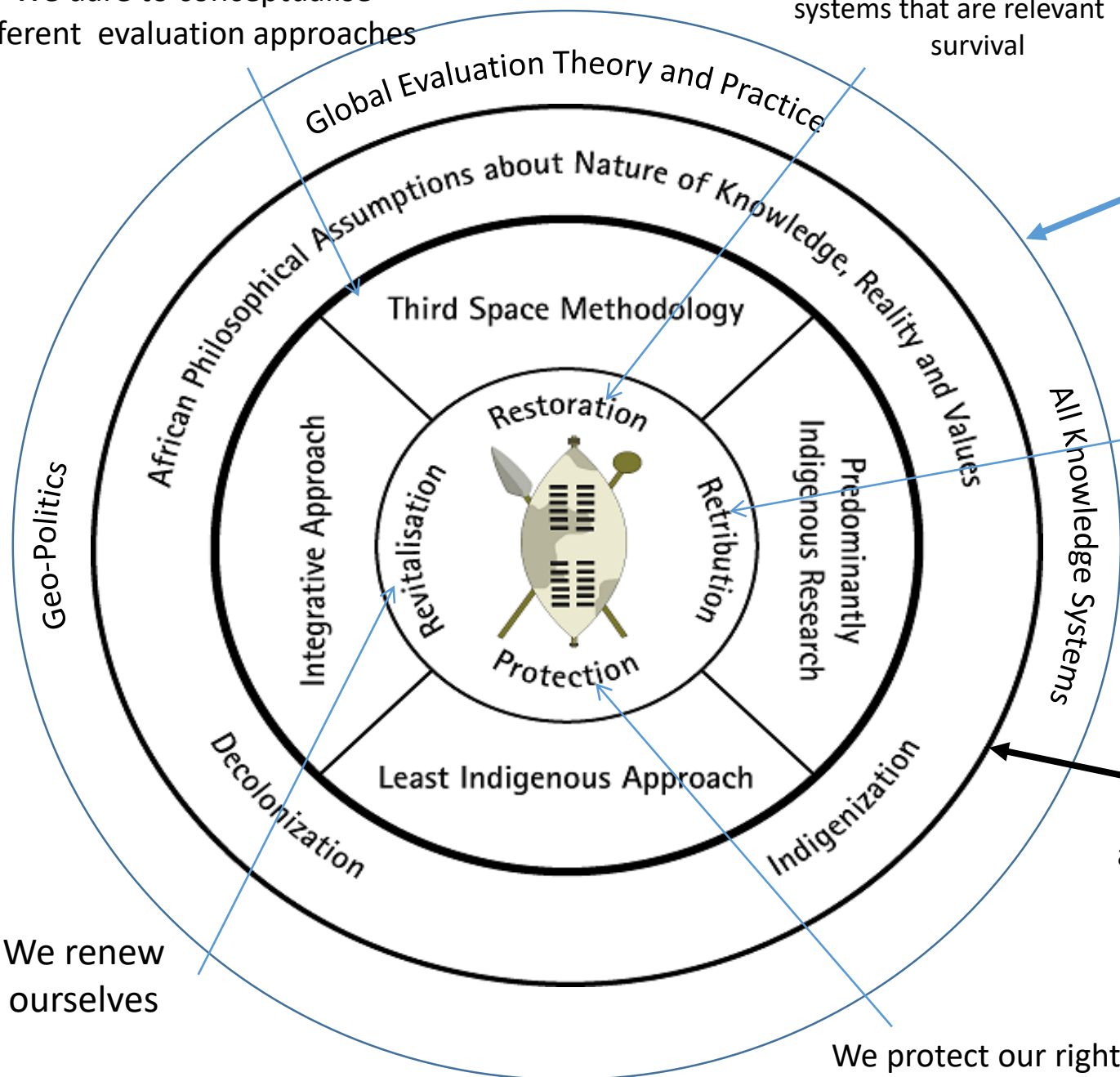


# Spirituality: A Research Tool

- Indigenous Science evaluation gives emphasis to context as the epistemology of a dynamic world that values the connection between the living and non-living and is alive
- Context is about the deep connection to spiritual practices and religious practices and how they influence how learning and knowing occurs
- Spirituality will influence how recipients interact with the project
- peoples who have connections, networks, relationships with each other, with all that exists including the living and the non- living. The culture, values, language, rituals, metaphors, international relations, animal and plants behavior and everyday experiences inform their ways of knowing.
- The connection that people have with the environment teach them how to behave

We dare to conceptualise different evaluation approaches

We restore our identities and value systems that are relevant our survival



Global Evaluation Theory and Practice

Africa interacts with other cultures to know and to question in an I/We relationship

We legitimize what is relevant to us

Africa interacts within to honour the We-ness, Particularity, individuality, and historicity and embarks on a fearless aspiration for new paradigms

We renew ourselves

We protect our right to know, to name and to be heard

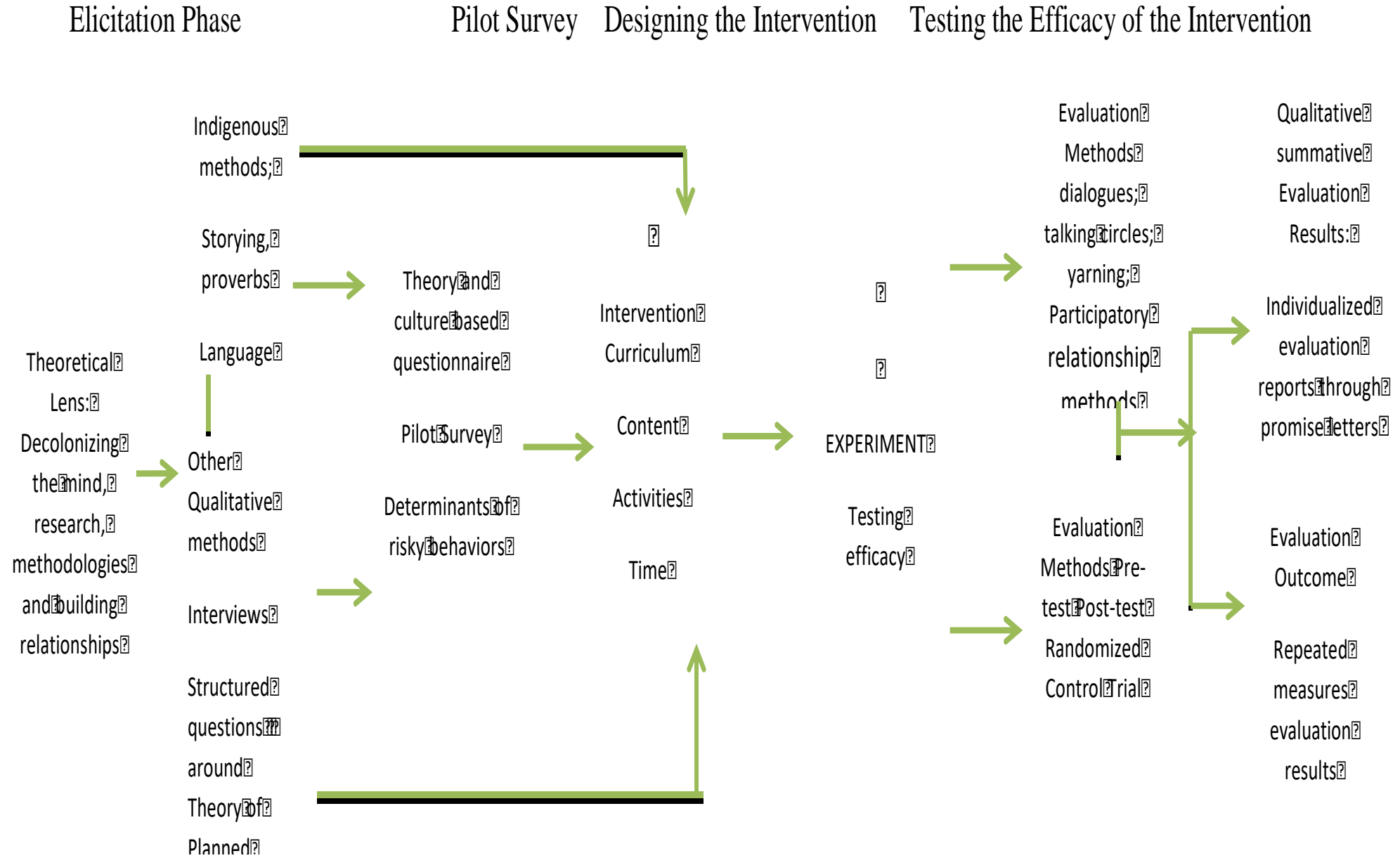
# Ethical Framework: Tool to Inform Practice

- **RELATIONALITY:** The emphasis is on belongingness, togetherness, interdependence, relationships, collectiveness, love, and harmony. There is emphasis on valuing community strength and building community relationships to inform research or evaluation intent, motive, and methodology.
- **RESPONSIBILITY:** It is about the role of a researcher or evaluator in pursuing social, economic, and environmental justice, resisting dominant ideologies that silence local communities, and contributing to the worth, health, unity and harmony within the community and with all stakeholders.
- **REVERENCE:** Indigenous research recognizes the critical nature of spirituality and values as an important contribution to ways of knowing. Many Indigenous people place value on sacred sites and spiritual practices. The researcher with a decolonization lens needs to figure out what is revered and how they will participate in it.

- **RECIPROCITY:** Whose research is it? Who will benefit from it and how will they benefit? These are fundamental questions that address the pitfall of colonial research that serve the interests of the researchers.
- **RESPECTFUL representation:** Respect requires that the process from the initiation of the research, the questions asked, the methodology, the data collection procedures, and reporting and dissemination of the report is guided by the community and that the community has ownership and access to the data collected.
- **REFLEXIVITY:** The principle of reflexivity requires researchers to continuously reflect on their position within existing powers and ensuring the research addresses the priority needs of communities.
- **RESPONSIVITY:** Responsiveness is the ability of researcher or evaluators to learn from the process, recognize the evolving changes and adapt their approaches and methodologies to become change, context, and culturally sensitive and appropriate.
- **RIGHTS AND REGULATIONS:** This calls for ethical protocols that accord communities the rights and opportunities to prioritize their needs and participate in the research design.
- **DECOLONIZATION:** Calls for resistance to blindly borrowing western theories, conceptual frameworks and methodologies and to adapting these methodologies and theories where necessary to make them contextually and culturally relevant and where possible, coming with new method theories from the data.



Figure 1: An Indigenous Mixed Methods Approach



# Gender Transformative Evaluation

2022 IFAD Evaluation Manual is stellar: Gender is everywhere

- Social justice and intersectionality
- Contextual analysis: History and discrimination
- Address root causes; act upon gender roles, norms and power relations
- Promote social change
- Participatory methods: Power inequities, inclusive
- Culturally responsive

# IFAD 2022 Disability Inclusion

- Carry-out a disability-focused poverty and livelihood analysis
- Develop a strategy for disability inclusion
- Build partnerships with PWD organizations; consult with PWD (Global Action on Disability Network; International Disability Alliance; ILO)
- Address accessibility (Universal design); accommodation
- Allocate financial resources
- Collect and use disability-disaggregated data; Washington Group Tools
- Follow principles of engagement: dignity and respect, equal opportunities, nondiscrimination, effective participation, accessibility, intersectionality (gender equality)

# Challenges in Gender and Disability Transformative Evaluation

- Gender as a binary concept
- Disability is not present as much as gender
- Root causes of gender inequality: gender roles, norms, & power relations (IFAD Evaluation Manual)
- Root causes of disability inequality:
  - Negative attitudes and social norms
  - Lack of resources and capacity
  - Lack of accessibility
  - Lack of institutional commitment and political will
  - Lack of data and evidence (IFAD Disability Guidance)

# Disability Inclusion Strategies

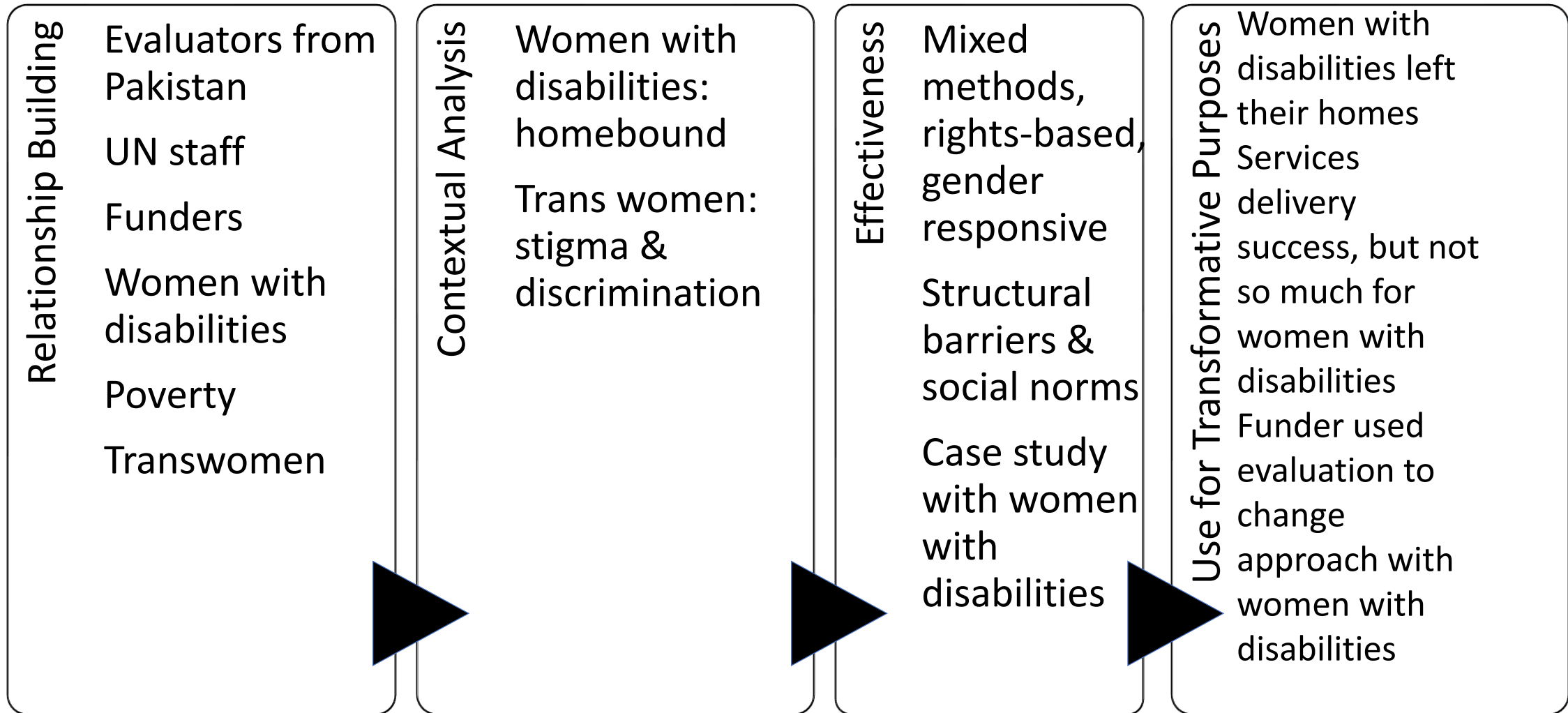
- Consultation with persons with disabilities and advocacy organizations
- Participation: Persons with disabilities influence evaluation
- Accessibility
- Reasonable accommodations: Necessary support and resources (sign language, Braille, assistive technology)
- Evaluation guidelines include disability; disability is mainstreamed
- Universal design: Disability sensitive measures into design, implementation and evaluation

# Participatory Data Collection Strategies: PWD

- Gather prior knowledge about communication capacities
- Provide for multiple means of engagement and responses, extra time, comfortable environment, avoid distractions
- Provide sensory aids, personal assistants, assistance animal, assistive technologies and communication methods (e.g., interpreters, audio, visual, augmented, verbal, written)
- Use technology to provide images or videos for less literate, adapted content to needs of user
- Expression modes: activity-based interviews, photo elicitation, drawings, collages, walking interviews (Kenny et al., 2023, p. 9)

# Strategies to Increase Impact

- *build culturally responsive relationships (address discrimination and stereotypes)*
- *develop coalitions*
- *integrate social activist strategies (sustainability)*
- *address root causes (social norms, practices, attitudes, beliefs and values) (structural barriers)*
- *address power inequities, (economic, ethnicity/Indigeneity, social status (castes), gender, political groups/factions, religion, health and disability)*
- *recognize heterogeneity in targeted groups*



Stocker et al. (2020). Economic empowerment of women home based workers and excluded groups in Pakistan. UN Women. <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2021/06/economic-empowerment-of-women-home-based-workers>



Women with disabilities who participated in the vocational trainings and for two months daily came out of their house, for most first ever time in their lives, they felt liberated from a prison.

Stocker, et al., 2020, p. 30

# Coalition Building

- Community members and organizations unite towards a common goal
- Facilitate community ownership of the solution and further action
- Jointly develop vision, mission and goals
- Develop organizational structure, build capacity, plan of action
- Implement strategies: formative and flexible
- Investigate community impact; refine program; maintain action

(Wolfe & Price, 2023; Community Tool Box; Treacy, Rynearson & Harder, 2018)

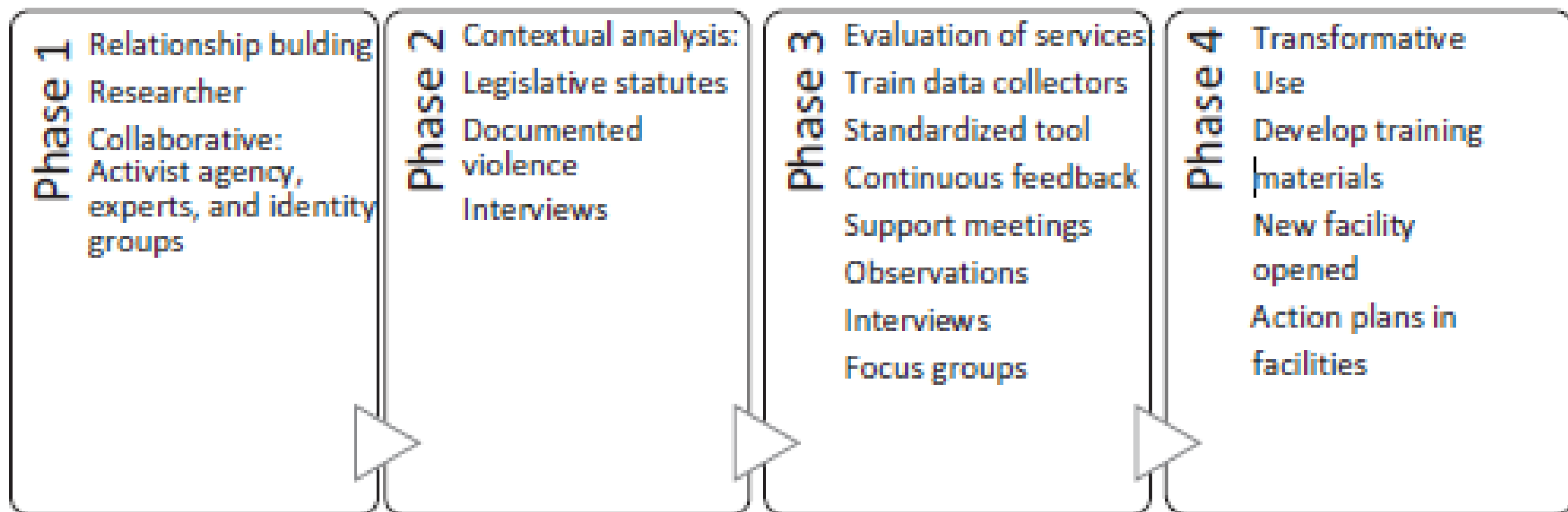
# Transformative Qualitatively Driven Mixed Methods: Gender as Non-Binary



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA](#)

- Coalition built
- Power issues
- Context
- Data collection
- Action-oriented
- Attention to persons

Miller, R.L., Rutledge, J. & Ayala, G. (2021). Breaking down barriers to HIV care for gay and bisexual men and transgender women: The Advocacy and Other Community Tactics (ACT) Project. *AIDS and Behavior*, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10461-021-03216-w>



**FIGURE 2.4** *Transformative Mixed Methods Design to Improve Health Services for Gay/Bi-Sexual Men and Trans-Women (Adapted from Miller 2020).*

# Questions: Coalitions

- Some projects include the use of a coalition/community advisory group/reference groups
- Are members of this group engaged in the evaluation of your project?
- If so, how?
- If not, what needs to change so they could be?
- What strategies would be useful in bringing a transformative lens into coalition building in service to evaluation?

# Resources: Examples

- Kenny, N., Doyle, A. & Horgan, F. (2023). Transformative inclusion: Differentiating qualitative research methods to support participation for individuals with complex communication or cognitive profiles. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 22, 1-17. DOI: 10.1177/16094069221146992
- UN Women. (2020). Economic empowerment of women home based workers and excluded groups in Pakistan. [https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Field%20Office%20ESE Asia/Docs/Publications/2021/06/pk-Economic-Empowerment-of-Women-Home-Based-Worker-V5.pdf](https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/sites/default/files/Field%20Office%20ESE%20Asia/Docs/Publications/2021/06/pk-Economic-Empowerment-of-Women-Home-Based-Worker-V5.pdf)
- Miller, R.L., Rutledge, J. & Ayala, G. (2021). Breaking down barriers to HIV care for gay and bisexual men and transgender women: The Advocacy and Other Community Tactics (ACT) Project. *AIDS and Behavior*, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10461-021-03216-w>

# Resources

- Community Tool Box Table of Contents <https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/promotion-strategies/start-a-coalition/main>  
(Sections on Coalition Building and Evaluation)
- Wolfe, S.M. & Price, A.W. (2023). *Guidebook to community consulting*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Mertens, D.M. (2023). *Mixed methods research*. London: Bloomsbury Academic. <https://www.bloomsbury.com/us/mixed-methods-research-9781350273184/>
- Treacy, Rynearson & Harder, 2018. Coalition building and community mobilization. [https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1006&context=step\\_reports](https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1006&context=step_reports)
- Washington Group on Disability Statistics. <https://www.washingtongroup-disability.com/>

## UN Resources

- IFAD (2022) IFAD's Disability Inclusion Strategy 2022-2027. <https://www.ifad.org/en/-/ifad-disability-inclusion-strategy-2022-2027#:~:text=The%20objective%20of%20the%20strategy,all%20pillars%20of%20IFAD's%20work>
- IFAD Evaluation Manual 2022 <https://ioe.ifad.org/documents/38714182/45756354/IFAD-2022-IFAD-EVALUATION-MANUAL-COMPLETE-def.pdf/05bd1a53-26ee-c493-b1a0-2fc3050deb80>
- United Nations (2021). United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy – Guidelines: Consulting Persons with Disabilities. [https://www.un.org/en/content/disabilitystrategy/assets/documentation/UN\\_Disability\\_Inclusion\\_Strategy\\_english.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/content/disabilitystrategy/assets/documentation/UN_Disability_Inclusion_Strategy_english.pdf)
- UNEG. (2022). Guidance on Integrating Disability Inclusion in Evaluations. [https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2022/06/uneg\\_guidance\\_on\\_integrating\\_disability\\_inclusion\\_in\\_evaluation\\_0.pdf](https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/2022/06/uneg_guidance_on_integrating_disability_inclusion_in_evaluation_0.pdf)
- United Nations (2021). United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy – Guidelines: Consulting Persons with Disabilities. [https://www.un.org/en/content/disabilitystrategy/assets/documentation/UN\\_Disability\\_Inclusion\\_Strategy\\_english.pdf](https://www.un.org/en/content/disabilitystrategy/assets/documentation/UN_Disability_Inclusion_Strategy_english.pdf)



# Resources on Culturally Responsive and Transformative Evaluation

- There is an excellent resource that includes these evaluation approaches:
- **Culturally Competent Evaluation:** Leading with self-reflection and cultural competence
- **Culturally Responsive Evaluation:** Centering culture in evaluations by including community members and evaluators with direct lived experience
- **Culturally Responsive and Equitable Evaluation:** Aiming for equity through culturally responsive approaches
- **Culturally Responsive Indigenous Evaluation:** Striving for sovereignty and self-determination
- **Empowerment Evaluation:** Empowering communities with tools used for self-determination
- **Equity-focused Evaluations:** Conceptualizing, conducting, and using evaluation in service of equity
- **Transformative Evaluation:** Fighting for human rights and social justice using mixed methods

Here is the link: <https://slp4i.com/the-eval-matrix/>

