FEMINIST APPROACHES TO MONITORING, EVALUATION & LEARNING

OVERVIEW OF CURRENT PRACTICES

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EQUALITY FUND

G:ENESIS
UNLOCKING VALUE

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ACRONYMS

AJWS	American Jewish World Service
APWLD	Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development
AWDF	African Women's Development Fund
AWID	Association for Women's Rights in Development
DOI	Digital Object Identifier
FE	Feminist Evaluation
FIAP	Feminist International Assistance Policy
FPAR	Feminist Participatory Action Research
GAC	Global Affairs Canada
GES	Gender Equity Scorecard
GIIN	Global Impact Investing Network
ICT	Information and communication technology
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IRIS+	Impact Reporting and Investing Standards +
MEL	Monitoring, evaluation and learning
NGO	Non-governmental organization
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OH	Outcome harvesting
PFE	Principles focused evaluation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SRA	Social Relations Approach
TOR	Terms of Reference
WIEGO	Women in informal employment: globalising and organising
WRGE	Women's Rights and Gender Equality

FORWARD

Measuring change is challenging. Measuring change in ways that are consistent with feminist values and approaches even more so.

The Equality Fund is a new experiment. With deep feminist roots, commitments and accountabilities we bring grantmaking, philanthropy and gender-lens investment programs under one roof.

As part of this experiment, we know that understanding how we are supporting change is crucial. Monitoring and evaluating is not just what we do. If, how, and why it is making a difference is also essential.

This will help us work smarter. It will also contribute to our broad objective of mobilizing more and better resources for feminist movements around the world.

At the Equality Fund, we are committed to evolving a monitoring and evaluation approach grounded in feminist principles. We are aiming to ensure both learning and accountability measures are woven throughout our work in this area.

Our approach and practice is still a work in progress. Here are our emerging principles:

We acknowledge power: We recognize that evaluation is a political activity, and that there are multiple ways of "knowing". We recognize and acknowledge diverse views and experiences with the goal of understanding the structural and systemic power relationships affecting diverse women, girls and non-binary people.

We focus on agency: We work with grantees and partners so that monitoring, learning and evaluation activities are useful to them, owned by them, and is not experienced only as an accountability exercise.

We understand that change is non-linear: In the struggle for women's rights and gender justice, especially when civil space is closing, we recognize that it is often one step forward and two steps back, or perhaps a step to the side. Stopping a regressive law from passing or stopping the repeal of a progressive law are also victories in the current geopolitical context.

We acknowledge that change is multifactorial: We understand that transformational gender equality change requires different change at multiple levels: individual and systemic, formal and informal. There are four dimensions of change that we explore to advance the rights of women, girls and non-binary people: changing internalized attitudes and beliefs about roles; dismantling social and cultural norms and practices that deny women, girls and non-binary people opportunities; eliminating gender biases in laws, policies and public budgets; and providing equal access to resources, rights and opportunities. Movement building is a fifth dimension that we also track and explore.

We look at ecosystems/broad communities: We recognize that we are part of movements. Movements for gender justice. Movements to change philanthropic practices. Movements to transform how capital is invested. Movements to decolonize how international assistance moves. We know we work better (and move effectively) when we work in concert with others. Thus the way we understand our impact is linked to broader systems change.

As we design and strengthen how we bring feminist perspectives to our monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) process, we were struck by how much of the documentation on feminist MEL focused on the principles and broad guidance and how little looked at 'what does this approach look like in practice.' In order to help us learn from what others are doing we partnered with Genesis Analytics do a scan of concrete experiences.

This document is the result. The process prompted significant interest and we're pleased to share the results of this research with the feminist MEL community.

We're grateful to the team at Genesis Analytics for their enthusiastic approach to this task. We also send out our heartfelt thanks to all those who took the time to talk with the consultants and shared their experiences. They are all listed and acknowledged at the end of the document.

We look forward to continue to explore how monitoring and evaluation practices can reveal and document change processes and contribute to the power shifts that are needed in global philanthropy, impact investments and international assistance.

We look forward to your feedback and to learning from the rich emerging practice in the global feminist MEL community.

~ The Equality Fund Team

1.   INTRODUCTION

The Equality Fund, currently in a 'design and build' phase, is establishing and scaling three main programs: grant making, philanthropy, and investment. As part of this phase, the Equality Fund is working to design an integrated approach to feminist monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL), which will be called the 'MetaMEL Strategy'. To inform their strategy, the Equality Fund aimed to learn from other organizations around the world and engaged Genesis Analytics to explore practical examples and lessons learnt from leading organizations and practitioners. Genesis Analytics spoke with approximately 30 such organizations and practitioners across the globe who work within, or for, feminist organisations or other social justice, philanthropic, and gender lens investment organizations.

The overview paper documents the practical examples and emergent lessons gathered through the series of discussions. As such, the paper aims to:

- Assist the Equality Fund to identify the starting point when thinking about how to approach feminist-led MEL;

- Suggest potential strategic actions and decisions which the Equality Fund can focus on during its build and design phase to facilitate feminist approaches to MEL;

- Provide practical examples; and,

- Serve as a knowledge base to further engage with key actors as the Equality Fund develops and refines its feminist approach to MEL strategy.

The document aims to support internal learning at the Equality Fund. While the document will be shared with the study's contributors to support collective learning, it is not intended to be circulated more widely.

Section 1 provides the introduction; Section 2 reviews the approach and Section 3 discusses the emerging themes arising from the stakeholder discussions. Section 4 describes eleven illustrative practical examples that highlight good practices, including tools and frameworks, across a range of strategic, operational, and human aspects. Hyperlinks are used in the Compendium, where possible, for ease of retrieving the available information in its full-text format.

Appendix A provides the list of experts interviewed in developing this document, who are named with their permission. Appendix B provides the semi-structured interview tool.

2. OUTLINE OF STUDY PROCESS

As presented in Figure 1 below, we used a feminist, qualitative, and collaborative approach in developing this Overview Paper. Our first steps included engaging with the Equality Fund to better understand their needs, reviewing documents sent by them, and then further identifying feminist approaches to MEL documents through our own focused search. Using this information to ground our approach, we then clarified the research questions and our sampling strategy, and developed and tested a semi-structured qualitative interview tool.

Figure 1: Approach to the overview paper

01	02	03	04
A feminist, qualitative & collaborative approach	Identified experts & key documents	Conducted semi-structured interviews using Zoom/ Google meets. Read documents.	Identified thematic principles and practical examples of Feminist-led MEL + Compendium.
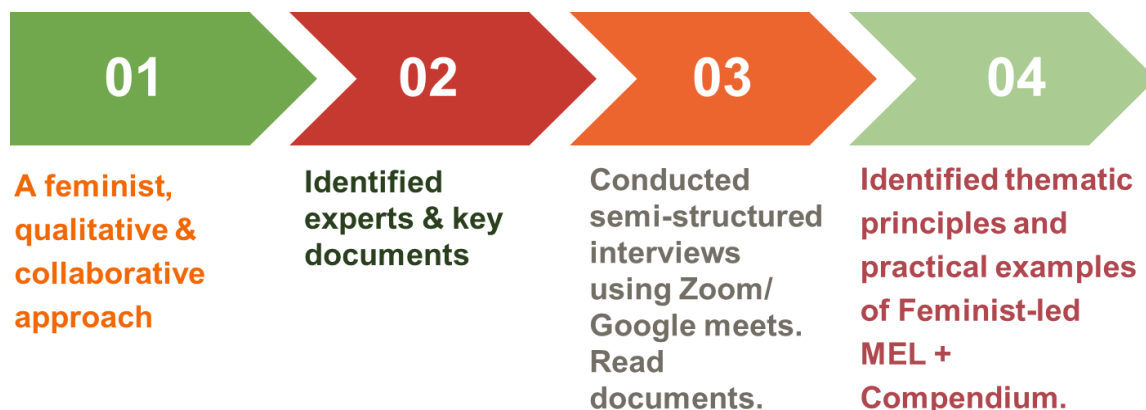
Drawing from both the principles of Feminist Evaluation[1] and the eight feminist tenets[2] we set out an investigative frame that ensured inclusivity of varying approaches, methods and tools, even if not labeled feminist but aligned with various elements. The investigative frame guided the selection of the stakeholders consulted, the framing of the questions in the interview guide, and the analysis and sense-making of data.

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[1] Refer to Feminist Evaluation on the Betterevaluation website as a summative resource.
[2] Podems, (forthcoming).

Figure 2: Applying the eight Feminist Tenets (Podems, 2020)

While the initial sampling framework included a mix of people identified by the Equality Fund and those that we identified through our own previous research, we later expanded the sample based on suggestions made by those interviewed (i.e., snowball sampling technique.) Our qualitative sampling approach (criterion sampling) used the following criteria to identify respondents: (1) people who worked explicitly as feminist MEL practitioners or organizations, and (2) those who do not identify as feminists however were known to engage in a feminist-context, women's movement, gender-lens investing, or another related field. We interviewed 38 people thorough Zoom and Google Meet.

The team analyzed interview notes, recordings and documents to identify patterns and themes, which then led to our key findings. We further developed a compendium that highlights some key examples of feminist approaches to MEL. Finally, we compiled a resource database that lists all identified documents.

As our sampling was limited by the timeframe and budget, we did not reach data saturation. Therefore, this document should be considered a "living document" that provides a starting point for further research.

3.   EMERGENT FINDINGS

This section details the shared perspectives of 'Feminist MEL' from the stakeholders, outlines the ways in which feminist approaches to MEL can be observed, and outlines some emergent findings with respect to how feminist approaches to MEL have been enabled.

3.1.   What is 'Feminist MEL'?

We asked respondents to describe their understanding of a feminist approach to MEL. While similar themes emerged, there was no consistent, decisive definition. The themes included intentionality, addressing power dynamics, capacity-building, elevating the voices of those more vulnerable, inclusivity and participation.

Below we provide several illustrative quotes to demonstrate these identified themes:

"There are no hard and fast principles, however a core principle in our work is not to speak for others. It is about who we work with and how we work with others, and trying to elevate the voices of communities we work with. It is about who is around the table and whose voices are being listened too"- Dr. Emma Fulu.

"Feminist MEL is not really about labels, it's about my internal commitment to practicing it." – Anonymous.

"Feminist MEL is applying and centring a gender lens on M&E learning processes/activities, looking at gender inequality as a systemic issue." – Anonymous.

"A key challenge to presenting 'State of the Art Feminist MEL', is that there are no clear agreements on what various feminist groups (and others) define as being feminist MEL, or how to implement feminist MEL." - Anonymous.

"Feminist investment is about transforming power, and feminist MEL is about transforming power." – Alyssa Ely.

"Unless you are talking about power / power structures / inequities and unless you are addressing them, you are not doing Feminist MEL." – Dr. Sonal Zaveri

""From my personal point of view, a highly activist, highly indigenised method of generating knowledge for the total transformation towards a more just and inclusive society." – Anonymous.

"Elements of participation, and thinking about participation is core to feminist MEL, who are you asking questions of, how are you actually thinking about the questions that you're asking? Who's at the table? How do you ask questions that invite participation? How do you also include the men that share their lives?" – Anonymous.

"We need to come to feminist MEL with openness and creativity." – Laura Haylock

The definition of feminist research is clearer; feminist research produces an empirical understanding of how and why inequalities exist and are reproduced, with the aim to reduce or eliminate that inequality, focusing on women

and patriarchy[3]. Feminist evaluation draws on the feminist research epistemology, which is about knowledge—and calls to attention who can create and produce knowledge and under what circumstances. Feminist researchers contend that for research findings to be credible, researchers need to provide, as and if needed, various types of capacity building, mentoring, and support to ensure that the creation and use of knowledge from women, of all backgrounds and experiences, are included. Feminist research is therefore collaborative, and research participants are co-collaborators in the creation of that knowledge. Feminist epistemology expects self-reflection, and questions how and if the research process affected participants, the researcher and others who were engaged or touched in the process.

Elements of feminist research inform, and have an underlying influence on feminist approaches to MEL, however; there are tensions in concretising and classifying "What is feminist MEL?" "What does feminist MEL look like in practice", "What are the tools used in feminist MEL"? Most literature asserts that there are no specific "feminist" methodologies, processes or tools; rather methodologies, processes and tools are chosen to obtain data and answer and the questions they seek to answer led by feminist-intent.

What we have gathered through our discussions with stakeholders is a series of methods, processes and tools that have been selected, within a feminist paradigm, or those that can be applied within a feminist paradigm. These include how data are collected or how a tool is implemented (e.g., a survey can be implemented so that it is feminist, but a survey is not inherently feminist), how the data findings are engaged with, and how one uses the findings, are what make it feminist.

Our data indicate that there three ways to identify feminist approaches to MEL in the current landscape. These are illustrated in Figure 3 and expanded on below.

Figure 3: Three ways feminist-approaches to MEL emerge

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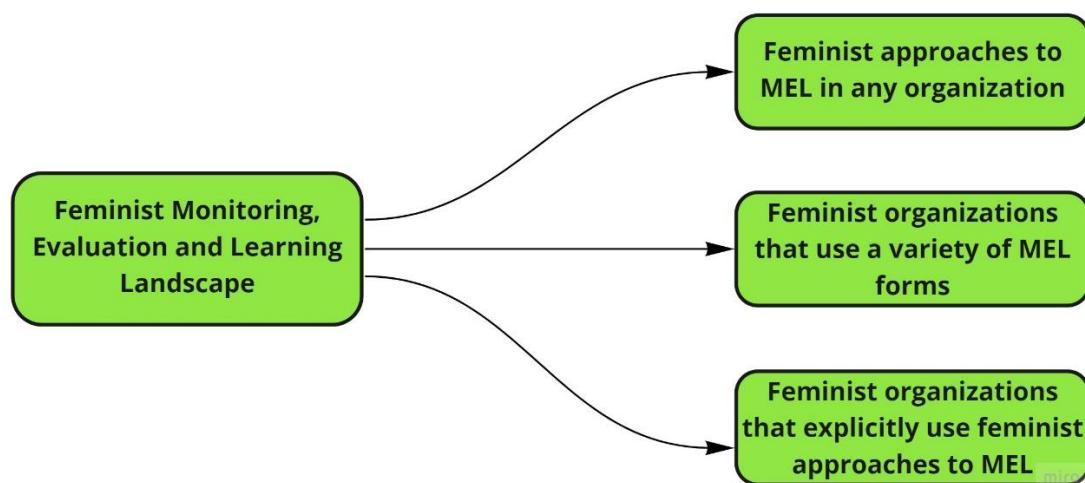
[3] Jennifer Brayton, Michelle Ollivier, and Wendy Robbins. https://www2.unb.ca/parl/research.htm

Feminist approaches to MEL in any organization

These are organizations that do not label themselves feminist, however apply feminist principles in their program design and in their MEL.

Feminist organizations that use MEL

These are organizations that are feminist, yet do not explicitly use feminist MEL. For example, the African Women's Development Fund (AWDF) is a feminist organization that believes in nurturing feminist principles and promoting feminist leadership. However, we did not identify explicit feminist approaches in their MEL. Rather, the organization appears to draw on mainstream approaches such as Outcome Harvesting and Most Significant Change to achieve their MEL and other organisational objectives. AWDF along with other identified organizations demonstrate how mainstream MEL can and is being used to assess (and in their own way promote) feminist outcomes.

Feminist organizations that explicitly use Feminist approaches to MEL

These are explicit feminist organisations that attempt to achieve feminist outcomes and use feminist approaches to MEL. One example is the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD). APWLD intentionally fosters feminist movements in the Asia Pacific to influence laws, policies and practices at the local, national, regional and international levels. APWLD use Feminist Participatory Action Research (FPAR) to intentionally achieve their mandate of feminist movement building.

3.2.   A suggested framework for enabling and implementing Feminist Approaches to MEL

To engage on a discussion around approaches to feminist MEL, we propose a three-category framework.

- Strategic enablers, such as organisational approaches and policies to support feminist-approaches to MEL,
- Enabling methods, processes and tools that emphasize a feminist intent, and;
- Institutional and human processes that support the strategic and practical aspects for a feminist approach to MEL.

3.2.1.   Strategic enablers that support Feminist-approaches to MEL

Lead with intent

The most open, adaptive and innovative examples of feminist approaches to MEL come from organizations where there is buy-in at a high-level within the organization or where external forces influence the organization (e.g., donors).

One example where internal and external leaders and/or people in a position of influence supported a feminist approach to MEL can be found in Girl Effect, an organization funded by the Nike Foundation and the UK Department for International Development.

The Nike Foundation brings a strong communication focus that emphasizes the importance of girls' stories and experiences over metrics as a means to understand their programs. The Girl Effect Research and Evaluation Team used the SenseMaker™ tool to gather data and share these stories (Example 7). The Nike Foundation's openness and encouragement to use data collected and analysis approaches that support hearing girls' and young women's knowledge and stories resulted in powerful, insightful narratives. Finally, the Nike Foundation intended to, and did, inform internal policy and those of the external stakeholders based on these data.

Despite identifying a few examples, such as the Girl Effect one described above, most interview data suggest that higher level buy-in to feminist approaches are not that prevalent in feminist organizations, and others. Rather, our data suggest that more mainstream approaches to accountability and MEL are used.

Set MEL objectives

The intended purpose of M, E, L and accountability activities should be clear. What is expected to be achieved through (1) monitoring, (2) evaluation, and (3) learning activities, either independently, or through mutually reinforcing and supportive processes.

Our analysis shows that even where feminist-objectives exist, if they are not supported through appropriate policies, practical implementation support and adequate resources (for example, the need for time to create co-ownership, or facilitate sufficient participatory processes), then the feminist MEL objectives are not realized.

While this may seem like an obvious conclusion, it was noted that far too often, decisions and processes are made that are not aligned to a feminist approach. Where the emphasis is placed on accountability as opposed to learning, there is a high priority placed on responsiveness to those who need what they consider to be credible data (e.g., donors, governments) rather than emphasizing feminist-approaches to MEL.

Some stakeholders noted, that there no doubt exists circumstances and relationships where balance and pragmatism may be most appropriate, and the best approach is to be clear which MEL activities will add the most value if done through feminist-approaches, recognizing that some MEL tasks can be done to ensure responsiveness to accountability and reporting requirements. Example 10shares the story of one organization's journey and growth related to its MEL objectives.

Use MEL outputs to address power inequities and the status quo

An inherent part of feminist approaches to MEL is to advocate with empirical evidence to address identified inequities at any level in the system. Our data suggest that if an organization intends to use the MEL findings to address power inequities, it is more likely to happen if those advocacy intentions are explicit and planned.

An example of planning for advocacy use can be found in the case of Feminist Participatory Action Research (FPAR) as described in Example 2. The case provides an example of how planned advocacy resulted in a push for change.

Work collaboratively and flexibly to support truly equal partnerships

Funding organizations can often be rigid in their grant or fund management processes. While many donors have fairly standard regulations that govern their work due to the nature of accountability over public fiscus, there are examples of how donors can engage with partner organizations collaboratively to design their MEL. These collaborative and mutually beneficial relationships can only be achieved through partnerships that acknowledge and engage with the ever-present and inherent power dynamics that exist in donor-grantee relationships.

Example 11 illustrates how donors can collaborate with evaluators in order to achieve particular outcomes. A donor commissioned an organization to conduct project-level MEL. At the beginning, the donor provided a set of broad indicators and a set of flexible guidelines. The broad thematic framework combined with the flexible guidelines enabled the organization to tailor their monitoring needs (i.e., specific indicators that were relevant to the organization's work) to their program, and not a donor's pre-determined requirements.

Gradual progress should not be underestimated

Too often, incremental changes are neglected because they are not viewed as achieving "enough." This is particularly true within the investment context. There have been significant efforts in recent years, as demonstrated by the 2X Challenge (Example 5), with the introduction of reporting metrics such as number of women on the board and women ownership in businesses.

These metrics demonstrate a clear intention (and progress) towards shifting the patriarchal economic system globally. The introduction and tracking of these kinds of shifts should not be underestimated. Although this progress is gradual, these metrics also succeed in holding companies accountable. This visibility is important component when it comes to changing power dynamics.

3.2.2. Enabling methods, processes and tools that emphasize a feminist intent

Actively engage partner institutions and beneficiaries to determine outcomes and how to value them

What is valued, measured, assessed and determined to be meaningful is often determined by donors or mainstream evaluators. A collaborative approach that continues throughout the relationship, from designing the intervention, to defining outcomes and deciding how to determine its success (what is valued), supports feminist approaches to MEL.

One example of this is Small Enterprise Assistance Funds' (SEAF) (Example 8) Gender Equality Scorecard© (GES). SEAF uses its GES throughout the investment cycle, during the due-diligence phase upfront, to determine how businesses can be supported throughout the investment period, and can also use the GES to determine what changes have taken place SEAF works directly with entrepreneurs to determine what is important to them and the resulting metrics that make up the GES. This MEL practice demonstrates a women entrepreneur-led approach to valuing results (by determining what gets measured), as opposed to a funder-dominated one.

Identify the appropriate unit of measure - organization versus project targets

The intent of a particular organization / program / project needs to be clear; does it aim to support change at the community, organization, state or global level – specifically, what is a donor expecting to see achieved? This specificity influences how progress and success can be measured and deemed successful in a funder's perspective. Very often, organizations are expected to report on 'number of women…', however; may organizations, in fact, support systemic changes, that may or may not affect women on an individual basis in the short term. Basic counting metrics do not account for much of this effort.

Mitigate power dynamics in governance and reporting

The power dynamics inherent in the funder/recipient relationship is counterintuitive to feminist principles, and need to be addressed. Intentionally shaping the funder/recipient relationship can facilitate a supportive context for feminist-led MEL practices. In the grant-making space, some organizations have done this by facilitating a space where grant recipients have provided feedback on reporting requirements. Example 4 details how Comic Relief's "Power Up" Initiative engaged its recipients in a process that aimed to mitigate power dynamics.

Within the investment context, the Criterion Institute in collaboration with their partners established process metrics for power-equitable investment. These process metrics are of particular importance as they measure and account for how power dynamics influence all investment processes, and shift measurement from counting to valuing.

Respect stakeholders' time

Participatory processes need to be mindfully managed in order to mitigate power dynamics effectively. Engaging with a participatory process that engages beneficiaries' voices can lead to exploitative engagement and therefore need to be directed by ethical principles. For example, the external lead evaluator is being paid to hold a focus group, yet the participating people are giving their time freely. Thus, consideration needs to be given to participants regarding their time and the cost of their participation.

When participants engage in reviewing, analyzing and making sense of data, explicit consideration is needed. Many organizations operate on a shoestring budget and asking participants to freely give their time be involved in the evaluation can be costly (i.e., it comes at the expense of something else not happening or being performed outside of paid working hours). A participatory evaluation often requires significant time commitments yet does not always ensure that the process is of value to the organization and its members / beneficiaries (either through monetary compensation or through benefiting their organization).

Value local and contextual knowledge

The valuing of different kinds of knowledge and knowledge production needs to be made explicit within the feminist-approaches to MEL context. Some data suggest that an external evaluator's knowledge is often privileged above participants and local communities, even in the context of feminist organizations and feminist programs.

Engaging with local MEL practitioners could support various elements of feminist MEL such as valuing local knowledge and capacity building, as needed.

Example 6 shares an experience of using knowledge brokers and valuing qualitative data that value local, contextual knowledge.

Clarify data ownership

Issues of data ownership need to be clarified at the beginning of any feminist MEL process. Some Organizations have challenged data ownership, advocating that data collected through MEL activities should reside within communities and empower these communities to have a final say on how data are used. One stakeholder provided an example using a non-extractive approach to evaluation, by ensuring that communities are involved in the design, collection, analysis and authorship. Further, the stakeholder explained how the organization works to develop products which are accessible and useful to the communities.

Explore appropriate changes to traditional data collection tools

Traditional, mainstream data collections tools can be tweaked to be increasingly feminist with a few changes, such as a change in pronouns. Consider the term "Other", when asking for a person's gender. Although the intention of this "Other" category is intended to be inclusive, it only succeeds in "othering" people. Rather, a category to "self-identify" would provide a more appropriate choice. Thus, shifting how questions are phrased, can make it more feminist. For example, Most Significant Change may restrict a person to telling their story in "300 words or less." What if a person needs 350? Or 500 words? Consider how women tell stories, and how the story needs to be told to gather data that reflect a woman's reality, before designing a structured or semi-structured tool.

Local contexts also influence whether using certain tools are feasible. For example, evaluators struggled to use the collaborative SenseMaker™ tool (Example 7) in Yemen due to its poor ICT infrastructure. Another organization that specialises in mobile-data collection highlighted the difficulty collecting data from women due to contexts where women do not have access to phones or males in a household prevent women from responding to telephonic surveys.

With some thought, and often small changes, challenges like these can be mitigated. The problem with Yemen's ICT infrastructure was mitigated by having beneficiaries write their stories on a piece of paper, which were later digitized.

Engage participants in data analysis and sensemaking

Collaborative knowledge creation is critical to countering power imbalances or misinterpretations. Example 7 details how story telling encourages participants to share their stories in the way they wish to, as well as the sensemaking process. Collaborative knowledge creation can also be achieved through engaging Outcome Harvesting as outlined in Example 1.

3.2.3.   Operational, Institutional and Human Enablers

Operational enablers consist of the mechanisms that facilitate the workings of an organization and determine how things "get done" within an organization.

Value feminist approach to MEL criteria when selecting evaluators (Evaluator)

Donors need to engage with feminist evaluation and learning partners, such as those who espouse the same or similar values as a feminist approach to MEL (e.g., indigenous, human rights). Further, donors need to emphasize the need and allow for the inclusion of local evaluators who bring the appropriate skills, knowledge and values. The discussions held for this research suggest that governments and donors do not often use criteria that reflect feminist MEL competencies, or when they do, do not score these kinds of factors highly when selecting evaluators or evaluation teams.

Design terms of references (TORs) to support Feminist MEL (Procurement)

Donors need to examine how their TORs and procurement processes may undermine feminist approaches to MEL. Our data shared various scenarios that often occur during procurement that prevent feminist approaches to MEL. First, TORs are often established by the 'M&E Officer' in the funders' headquarters who are not often familiar with what grantees want to learn, what questions they have, or what they consider to be a credible approach to evaluation. Therefore, the TOR reflects the donor's agenda, not the beneficiaries.

A second example is how a TOR can negatively influence a feminist-approach MEL process during implementation. Engaging partner organizations and beneficiary communities in the evaluative process is important. However, our data show that exclusively using evaluators from outside the country who are then also constrained by contractual arrangements can often pose difficulties to implementing a feminist MEL approach (e.g., time and budget limitations).

Some examples even point to organizations' procurement regulations, not the TOR. For example, there are examples of requiring an evaluator to be an external assessor, preferring donor-country nationals as the lead evaluators, and/or hiring local evaluators to support the lead evaluator but at a much-reduced rate.

4.   COMPENDIUM OF PRACTICAL EXAMPLES

The following series of examples provides a brief insight into examples of feminist-approaches to MEL shared by the stakeholders who contributed to this research. We have tried to outline the approach / method / process or specific experience by sharing the organization and / or program, the link to feminist approaches to MEL, advantages and disadvantages, a brief description, practical application and relevant resources. These present a high-level synopsis, and anyone interested in engaging further with each example should reach out directly to the organization(s) identified.

Example 1: Outcome Harvesting

What do we think is of interest?	Organization (as relevant)	Link with feminist approaches to MEL	Advantages	Challenges
Outcome Harvesting	Women in informal employment: globalising and organizing (WIEGO)	The importance of "participation". Recognizes the need to identify and name collaboration. The importance of "the process". Emphasizes different sources of knowledge. Reflects the values prioritized by the group / stakeholders.	Makes it possible to systematically name the role of others in the contribution. Builds a sense of power for those participating in the initiative. Makes meaning of the relationship between outcomes and strategies in order to strengthen strategic thinking and planning going forward. Enables emergent learning as those involved build their understanding of the dynamics of change.	It focuses on outcomes rather than other evaluation questions such as the quality of outputs or of relationships; as a result, it must often be used alongside other methods. Can be applied to any form of evaluation alone; not necessarily a feminist tool specifically. Time consuming for all stakeholders Not aligned to a traditional results-based management approach that may be expected by some donors / more rigid metrics and indicators, although funders increasingly recognize use of Outcome Harvesting (OH) data and analysis.
Description	Outcome harvesting gathers ("harvests") evidence of what has changed ("outcomes"). OH consists of six steps: 1) Designing the "outcome harvest"; 2) Reviewing documentation, draft outcome descriptions; 3) Engaging with informants to formulate outcome descriptions;			

	4) Substantiating the outcomes with external sources; 5) Analyzing, interpreting the outcomes; and 6) Determining how to make use of the findings, often through the facilitation of discussions with users. In every outcome harvest, the evaluation participants identify how to categorise and make sense of outcomes.
Case examples and practical use	Outcome harvesting was used for the first time by WIEGO – Women in informal employment: globalising and organizing, by an external evaluator. The experience was shocking in terms of how much it required the participation of staff, and then exhilarating as they worked with the data to deepen their own and colleagues understanding of their achievements, and of the mix of planned and adapted/ emergent strategies they'd used to successfully influence others. The evaluator harvested the data on outcomes, WIEGO's contribution towards them, and the contributions made by the membership-based organizations of informal workers who partner with WIEGO. She then identified 'outcome chains' from each programme – a flow of actions and outcomes all focused on influencing one global institution's policies – and invited programme teams to organize the activities and outcomes against a time-line. They then used that to explain to staff across programmes, what changes they had influenced, and what strategies they had developed and adapted along the way to enable this. This process served to build a shared understanding of WIEGO's strategic perspective – its ways of working, and of how it positions itself in relation to workers' organizations, and in deciding on when to work locally, nationally and internationally. This strengthened the organization's internal coherence, and empowered participants through the naming and acknowledgement of their roles and effectiveness. From this experience, WIEGO decided to institutionalise the use of Outcomes Harvesting for monitoring, evaluating and learning as it goes along. Hence team members are harvesting, analyzing, learning and adapting as they go. WIEGO draws on internal and external evaluators for support in categorising the outcomes and strategies that influenced them, to facilitate team members in identifying patterns and trends, and in considering their implications for action going forward. This seeks to dismantle the power dynamics that usually exist in the monitoring and evaluation process, a process that can often be disempowering for those who form part of an initiative. Using Outcome Harvesting in the WIEGO example is undoubtedly feminist as it builds on views and experiences of those who are actually involved. Since the tenets of outcome harvesting, namely participation and collaboration, align with feminist principles so strongly, using outcome harvesting as a MEL technique succeeds in elevating feminist principles.
Resources	• Klugman,B.,Britt,H. & Schaeffer,H. (2019) Outcome Harvesting Week: What Is Outcome Harvesting? American Evaluation Association. Available: https://st12.ning.com/topology/rest/1.0/file/get/2030056643?profile=original • Klugman, B. (2014) Report on WIEGO Outcomes Evaluation 2011-2014. Available: https://outcomeharvesting.net/wiego-report/ • Klugman,B. (2019) What is feminist about outcome harvesting?, Gender and Evaluation, Available: https://gendereval.ning.com/profiles/blogs/what-is-feminist-about-outcome-harvesting • Wilson-Grau, R. (2015) Outcome Harvesting. BetterEvaluation. Available: http://betterevaluation.org/plan/approach/outcome_harvesting

Example 2: Feminist Participatory Action Research

What do we think is of interest?	Organisation (as relevant)	Link with feminist approaches to MEL	Advantages	Challenges
Feminist Participatory Action Research (FPAR)	Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD).	A main tenet of this approach is feminism and centering gender and women's experiences/voices theoretically and practically. This is done by including communities in determining what methodologies are used. Acknowledges and shifts power dynamics with the intended outcome of structural change. Empowers those involved in the process. Takes an intersectional approach. Acknowledges that participants are part of the creation of knowledge. This knowledge is used to empower participants for the purposes of structural change.	Communities develop a deeper understanding about the problems analyzed, develop documentation skills, advocacy/campaigning skills and leadership and movement building capacities. Power dynamics are partially mitigated as the methods centre around community decisions. For example, a community that may have a low literacy rate, may prioritize images or oral histories. Local knowledge is valued and prioritized.	More of a research framework opposed to a MEL framework specifically. There is no specific methodology for FPAR. Its' knowledge production is dependent on each project. May not use the most effective method as the method is chosen by the community. This may be disconcerting to funders. Time consuming as the community is involved throughout the process.
Description	FPAR is a research method that stems from Participatory Action Research but integrates feminist perspectives and processes. FPAR starts with the belief that knowledge, data and expertise are gendered and constructed to create privileged authorities, while women have a certain expertise that should be used to frame policies and make decisions. It is a participatory and action-orientated approach to research that centres gender and women's experiences both theoretically and practically. It is based on the following principles: • Main purpose is structural change; • Amplifies women's voices; • Research decisions are made by the community; • Takes an intersectional approach; • Aims to shift power imbalances between researcher and subject; • Fosters collective action; • Builds capacity for all players involved; • Free prior informed consent of all participants is prioritized; and			

	• Safety, care and solidarity with participants is essential. There are no specific methods in the FPAR process as methods are chosen by the community. What all FPAR methods have in common is that they are specifically intended to give priority to the voice of the community in order to expose the structural barriers that they experience. As a result, methods vary and may include focus group discussions, narration of personal histories, cognitive mapping of problems, power mapping or community mapping. The knowledge that is garnered from this process is intended to be used to empower action for structural change. FPAR is largely used within Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development's theory of change.
Case examples and practical use	FPAR encapsulates a specific research framework, which has the potential to be applied to MEL specifically. The following are examples of where FPAR has succeeded: The FPAR was used in the case of the indigenous Mugal women in Nepal, who were struggling to sustain their livelihoods due to the sporadic availability of Himalayan herbs affected by climate change. In previous years, the indigenous herb has been a reliable source of yearly income for the women living in the region. However, the effects of climate change have contributed towards the threats of landslides in summer while also contributing to the scarcity of the Himalayan herbs. If this continues without any form of intervention, local Mugal women will either starve or be forced to migrate to other areas. The FPAR process encouraged these women to organize, discuss indigenous women's rights and climate change, and helped them voice their concerns to local government and authorities. These critical discussions exposed the structural oppression at play – Mugal women are the most vulnerable group in Nepalese society and despite contributing the least to greenhouse gas emissions, they are the group that are the most burdened by the effects of climate change – and empowered participants to be more involved in local policies and budgets being implemented in their community. In response, local government bodies (the district development office, women's development office and the agriculture and forest office) have now endeavoured to include the Mugal women in their programs while also prioritizing their concerns. In addition, researchers involved in the process have also learned from the community. One of the researchers involved in the programme was relatively unaware of the dynamics of gender and climate change when they started. FPAR and regional training provided them with the knowledge and skills to speak publicly on the subject at international forums. The International Women's Development Agency (IWDA) used a combination of FPAR and "talanoa" (Oceanic indigenous methodology) to conduct a case study to determine the experiences 35 women from the Global South had with Global North organisations. The research also succeeded in identifying the key components of effective engagement between Global South Pacific Women's Rights movements and Global North organisations in the future. Interviews were held online due to COVID-19 while used in conjunction with "talanoa", which was determined by the community. Power dynamics were managed throughout the process. As the organization that commissioned the research was from the Global North, an indigenous field-worker undertook the fieldwork and the write up of the report. Before this research was conducted, a number of participants were wary of sharing their thoughts for fear of losing funding from organisations in the Global North. FPAR established a nonpunitive space for participants and the researchers, where this knowledge could be shared and reclaimed. Largely, FPAR provides citizens with a space to engage in critical dialogue to understand systemic injustice, with the intention that this will result in some form of community activism. FPAR aligns with feminist principles as its entire foundation acknowledges that knowledge and expertise are gendered and that there are power dynamics that exist as a result of this. It further propagates feminist principles by democratizing the research process by consulting with participants regarding what methodologies are to be used, while also succeeding in exposing gendered structural inequalities. In addition, collective action is encouraged in order to change these structural imbalances. This is largely done through leveraging indigenous', women's and intersectional voices.

Select resources	- International Women's Development Agency (2020) Creating equitable South-North partnerships : Nurturing the VA and voyaging the audacious ocean together', Available at: https://iwda.org.au/resource/creating-equitable-south-north-partnerships/ - Trimita C. (2016) Feminist Participatory Action Research (FPAR): An effective framework for empowering grassroots women & strengthening feminist movements in Asia Pacific, Asian Journal of Women's Studies, 22:2, 165-173, DOI: 10.1080/12259276.2016.1168153 - Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (n.d.) Feminist Participatory Action Research (FPAR) - Gatenby,B. & Humphries,M. (2000) Feminist participatory action research: Methodological and ethical issues. Women's Studies International Forum. 89-105. - Joy Godden,N. , Macnish,P. , Chakma,T. & Naidu,K. (2020) Feminist Participatory Action Research as a tool for climate justice, Gender & Development, 28:3, 593-615, DOI: 10.1080/13552074.2020.1842040 - Asia Pacific Forum on Women,Law and Development (n.d.) Climate change destroying livelihoods and traditions of Mugal women in Nepal. Available at: https://apwld.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/flyer-mwui.pdf

Example 3: Social Relations Approach

What do we think is of interest?	Organisation (as relevant)	Link with feminist approaches to MEL	Advantages	Challenges
Social Relations Approach (SRA)	N/A	Centres gender in development theory and practice. Acknowledges complexity and socio-economic networks that produce gendered power imbalances. Acknowledges individuals' contexts through analysis of the community, the market and the state and the family. Focuses on power relations opposed to the roles and responsibilities of women alone. Involves listening to participants concerning what they consider to be empowering and what signifies change. Allows women to be agents of their own development. Acknowledges the source of structural imbalances.	Presents practical, methodological and political choices for the organization. Requires skillful probing, which captures the meanings and subtleties of bargaining strategies. Not time-consuming due to the lack of participatory approach. By establishing four main institutions as a source of reproducing inequality, a productive framework is provided as to how gender inequality can be reversed. Helps recognise what milestones were made, while also reflecting on what can be improved.	Emphasis on structure ignores agency (the individual and collective choices and actions women take) and opportunities for women's empowerment. Methodological challenges- Complex analysis, for example political economy, so may present difficulties in participatory approaches. Time-consuming.
Description	The Social Relations Approach (SRA) understands gender relations to form part of social relations. It is a gender-analysis framework and tool that can be used for the purposes of monitoring, evaluation and learning and other approaches. It locates the individual in a network of four main institutions, namely the community, the market, the state and the family. It emphasizes that the core values of the aforementioned institutions reproduce gender inequality through: **Rules** – how things get done.			

	Activities – what is done. **Resources** – what is used and/or produced. **People** – responsibilities, other inequalities, who is in/out. **Power** – who decides, whose interests. It emphasizes that institutions are not ideologically neutral and that a change in one institution results in change in another. In summary, it attempts to understand the challenges women face as a result of institutions and emphasizes that female disempowerment cannot be understood without clearly understanding how institutions reproduce inequality. In turn, SRA emphasizes that gender inequalities can be reversed by establishing strategies that are adopted by the state, the market, the community and the family. The final goal of SRA is to help establish programmes and policies that enable women to be agents of their own development.
Case examples and practical use	This was used in the "Fish on Farms" (FoF) project in Cambodia. The project was originally designed to provide evidence on the impact of homestead food production, which included indicators such as fishponds, nutritional status, food security, food intake, and livelihoods. An integral objective of the research was to assess the impact the FoF project had on women's empowerment as well as to gain a greater awareness of gender relations in the Cambodian context. The analysis placed greater emphasis on relationships and negotiations at the family/household level, as well as their engagement in the livelihood strategy, which includes caregiving. This exposed certain gender rules, namely chbab srey and chbab ppro and how they affect the ways in which women engage, as well as determine what resources they possess and what decisions they made. The analysis then looked at how these gender rules were established, as well as how they were re-enforced in the community & the market, and how this shaped men and women's production, livelihood, caregiving choices and aspirations. One particular phenomenon centred around male drinking. Women noted that they had limited control if men asked for money to spend on alcohol. By understanding this interaction from the SRA perspective, it acknowledges that women have limited control because of gendered norms re-enforced by the institution of the family and the community at large, namely that women were obliged to give their husbands money if they asked. In addition, using the SRA approach prioritized the needs of women in the project. Largely, women identified that there was a need to reduce gender-based violence that was exacerbated by men's excessive alcohol use. In this way, the SRA succeeded in aligning the FoF project with feminist principles in two ways. Firstly, it provided a sense of gender complexity by acknowledging the specific structures that were contributing towards gender rules that forced women to oblige to the needs of their husbands. Secondly, it asked women to determine what would be most productive for their own development. It also succeeded in contextualizing gender inequality in Cambodia. In another context, gender norms may be more readily enforced by other institutions in different ways.
Select resources	- Miles L. (2016)The Social Relations Approach, empowerment and women factory workers in Malaysia. Economic and Industrial Democracy.37(1):3-22. doi:10.1177/0143831X14533734 - Kimberly Bowman & Caroline Sweetman (2014) Introduction to Gender, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning, Gender & Development, 22:2, 201-212, DOI: 10.1080/13552074.2014.934525 - Emily Hillenbrand, Pardis Lakzadeh, Ly Sokhoin, Zaman Talukder, Timothy Green & Judy McLean (2014) Using the Social Relations Approach to capture complexity in women's empowerment: using gender analysis in the Fish on Farms project in Cambodia, Gender & Development, 22:2, 351-368, DOI: 10.1080/13552074.2014.920992 - National Democratic Institute (2012) Integrating Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment into an Activity, Programme or Policy :Gender Analysis Outline, Available at: https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/Gender%20Analysis%20Guideline.pdf - Kabeer, Naila (1994) Reversed Realities: Gender Hierarchies in Development Thought, London: Verso.

Example 4: Facilitating engagement around reporting requirements

What do we think is of interest?	Organisation (as relevant)	Link with feminist approaches to MEL	Advantages	Challenges
Inviting grantee critiques on funder's reporting forms by resourcing a (voluntary) space for grantee learning.	Comic Relief's Power Up Initiative.	Acknowledge and take into account that evaluation is a political activity. Contextualise evaluation. Ensures participant output. Respects multiple ways of knowing.	Transparency and co-development of a shared understanding of what kind of information is relevant to understanding women's movements.	Possibility that other of each grantees' funders also invite them to attend meetings when they're pressed for time.
Description	As part of their Power Up (women's movements) initiative, they invited all grantees to a meeting and asked for feedback on their reporting form in a structured way (small group discussions & reports) and committed to make the changes and obtain feedback on whether the from was improved.			
Case examples and practical use	Comic Relief Power Up creates space for groups to explore the issues they consider a priority even though Comic Relief's own question is about strengthening capacity for strategic learning and reflection. Another dimension of their approach was to establish a learning forum for the grantees (participation was voluntary and the agenda is determined by grantees). They asked grantees for ideas of who could facilitate and sent the ToR for facilitating the forum to those mentioned.			

Example 5: 2X Challenge and Impact Reporting and Investing Standards + (IRIS+) metrics

What do we think is of interest?	Organisation (as relevant)	Link with feminist approaches to MEL	Advantages	Challenges
Using the 2X Challenge in alignment with Impact Reporting and Investing Standards + (IRIS +) metrics	CDC group (CDC) and the Global Impact Investing Network (GIIN), as well as multiple other development finance institutions	It focuses on establishing opportunities that highlight or enhance women's values opposed to just focusing on counting women.	Uses tangible metrics, in order to indicate the progress of an initiative e.g., % of women leaders in an organization. Tangible metrics forces grantees to set specific actionable goals. Used by the GIIN, as well as 15 development finance institutions. As a result, it aligns with IRIS+ indicators, which is the accepted system for impact investing. Enables investors to carry out gender analysis at a portfolio level. Robust and relatively simple to apply – thus appeals to donors and funders. This in turn may encourage capital towards gender lens investing. Provides holistic understanding of where gender gaps and opportunities may exist.	It applies specifically to gender-lens investing and cannot be used to evaluate other projects. It is not aligned to many other feminist principles, very much follows the existing power dynamics within the system. Overemphasis on the quantitative aspect opposed to assessment based on participatory inputs. Data needs to be collected on an ongoing basis. This may be onerous and time-consuming.
Description	A suite of indicators that are mapped to the 2X challenge and the IRIS+ indicators. The 2X challenge consists of a practical framework to help development finance institutions assess and recognize what gender smart investing is. IRIS + is the most commonly accepted system that impact investors use to measure, manage and optimize their impact.			
Case examples and practical use	The CDC and the GIIN have established a suite of indicators that combines the 2X challenge indicators and the IRIS+ aligned metrics in order to measure the effectiveness of a gender lens investment. The CDC recommends that the 2X Challenge indicators should be collected from a company during the due diligence stage of the investment. This establishes the baseline metrics for the company. Once the investment is concluded, the recommended data is collected on an annual basis and compared to the previous year. As a result, progress is easily measured and significantly more tangible compared to other approaches. Measuring impact in this matter is inherently feminist as the metric itself emphasizes the value of women opposed to simply existing as a "box-ticking" exercise. It also succeeds in acting as a robust mechanism that can encourage funders to continue supporting gender lens investments.			
Select resources	- CDC (2020) How to Measure the Gender Impact of Investments: Using the 2X Challenge Indicators in Alignment with IRIS+, Available at: https:https://assets.cdcgroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/16111901/How-to-measure-the-gender-impact-of-investments.pdf 2X Challenge Financing for Women (2020) Guide to the 2X criteria, Available at:			

	https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b180402c3c16a6fe0001e45/t/5ef8d17caa257013944d83bc/1593364865863/2XReferenceGuide_Designed_June+25_FINAL.pdf ● 2X Challenge Financing for Women (2018) 2X Challenge: Criteria, Available at: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b180402c3c16a6fe0001e45/t/5bdc3ef321c67c31502108f4/1541160694250/2X+Challenge+Criteria+%2818+October+2018%29.pdf

Example 6: Feminist Evaluation – Applying Canada' Feminist International Assistance Policy

What do we think is of interest?	Organisation (as relevant)	Link with feminist approaches to MEL	Advantages	Challenges
Feminist Evaluation aligned to Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy (FIAP) principles, while using the participatory reflective process and gender differential analysis.	Commissioned by Global Affairs Canada (GAC) for the Progresa-Dret Project implemented by International Organisation for Migration (IOM). Evaluation was conducted by GAC Evaluation Division (with external consultants).	Focuses on gender inequalities. Takes an activist approach to empowering participants and seeking social change. Prioritizes women's voices, which is largely influenced by context. Analysis is informed by men and women in the local context. The Global North and Global South form part of a mutual learning process. Uses participatory processes for reflection and learning by all actors. Emphasizes that knowledge created and used by participants can be a powerful tool for change. Explores power relations.	By exploring power relations, actors are included that would otherwise be overlooked. Women's voices are prioritized. Used a mixed team of evaluators including indigenous and feminist evaluators. This led to a democratization of knowledge. This was especially true by using "cultural brokers" that helped engage with non-traditional groups. Using gender differential analysis criteria helped nuance various aspects of gender inequalities. i.e., looking at unpaid care work for example. Collaborative process when it comes to creating knowledge.	Potential for limited inclusivity as not all local people have access to participation sessions. Lack of definitive tools. Any tool can be used as long as it aligns with feminist approach. Time consuming and expensive for the donor/ commissioner. The "rapid" nature of a feminist pilot also means that there is a limited commitment to longer-term social change. Balancing accountability and learning.
Description	The evaluation used FIAP as an analysis framework throughout the process. Specifically, a combination of a participatory reflexive process and gender differential analysis criteria was used. Gender differential analysis explores how gender inequalities are being reduced based on the following criteria: • Equal opportunities in decision making at the family level and individual level. • Equitable participation in the distribution of economic resources. • Level of autonomy with respect to one's own resources. • Distribution of unpaid, care work in the home. • The most significant change with regards to combating gender inequality.			

Case examples and practical use	The Progresa-Dret Project is a rural development project in Narino and Cauca, commissioned by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). The aim of the project was to improve socio-economic conditions of small producers in three micro-regions of Cauca and Narino by increasing income earnings and access to rural public goods. The project used FIAP as an analysis framework throughout the programme. Specifically, a combination of a participatory reflexive process and gender differential analysis criteria was used. Participatory tools were used for data collection, namely "most significant change", "outcome mapping" and "appreciative inquiry". There were collaborative workshops, reflexive discussions and sense-making of findings. Workshops with participants consisted of small groups that were separated between men and women. These groups then came together again to have extensive discussions. GAC also used "cultural brokers" and "feminist evaluators" in the team, which helped provide inputs from people who were from non-traditional groups. Using "Differential Gender Analysis Criteria" prompted the following considerations: • Are there equal opportunities for men and women in making decisions about the productive project? • Is there an equitable participation in the distribution of the economic resources generated by the economic unit? • What is the level of autonomy of women on the resources generated? • Distribution of unpaid care work at home, and domestic care for people who require special support • Most significant change and best practices. Participants were also included in the production of learning products, namely the infographic and booklet. Using tools that promoted a FIAP approach meant that certain gendered aspects of the evaluation were acknowledged when previously, they were not necessarily recognized explicitly. . For example, the technical assistance and training given to female producers also consisted of unpaid caregiving work in the household. Using the gender differential framework also helped to introduce issues of women's self-esteem and empowerment in the farmer field school activities. Overall, this approach was undoubtedly feminist as it sought to mitigate power dynamics through the use of cultural brokers, it sought to nuance knowledge production through the criteria of the differential gender analysis process, knowledge production was also a collaborative process and learning from the process was shared and validated with project participants.

Example 7: SenseMaker™ - Using narrative techniques to deal with intractable problems

What do we think is of interest?	Organisation (as relevant)	Link with feminist approaches to MEL	Advantages	Challenges
SenseMaker™	Experiences shared by stakeholders who have used the method	Participants are integral to the knowledge creation process. Participants' voices are prioritized. Initiatives are contextualized.	Prioritizes the voice of the participant ("the storyteller"). Sets intentions and boundaries. Communicates complex messages and helps people make better decisions. Facilitates collaborative knowledge creation and knowledge sharing. Robust form of analysis. This may be more productive for donors. Eliminates biases of enumerators as respondents code their stories in their own cultural context.	Software is expensive. Process is time-consuming. Doesn't contribute towards breaking down the systems that contribute towards power dynamics even if the process may mitigate power dynamics. Often requires certain infrastructure to be used such as the internet. As a result, there are concerns regarding the level of access respondents have to the tool.
Description	SenseMaker™ is a software that's used to conduct narrative research. People are prompted to share their experiences or "stories" and signify the meaning and interpretation of the experiences. This software tool then analyses the patterns of signification data in the stories provided and establishes the patterns emerging from them. SenseMaker™ prioritizes the voice of the participant thus mitigating decision maker's confirmation bias. SenseMaker™ assists in: • Gathering high volumes of perspectives of multiple respondents; • Finding innovative responses to intractable problems; • Ensuring that the real issues are identified before resources are committed; • Understanding the possibilities for change in a complex system; • Building a more coherent community/team; • Detecting emergent trends early; and • Highlighting sensitive issues that are hardly ever acknowledged. • Visualising shifts over time in underlying elements such as attitudes, social norms and perspectives. It consists of three core elements:			

	• A study prompt to trigger participants to recall examples and experiences relevant to the project; • A set of visual tools (triads, dyads) multiple-choice questions) that allow respondents to attach meaning to ("signify") their stories that covers the core concepts and topics relevant for the research; and • A multiple-choice section which provides the facility to filter results to see different population groups' perceptions.
Case examples and practical use	SenseMaker™ was used in the Rwanda GirlHub project, which was conducted with the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) and Narrate. The intention of the project was to expose and examine patterns of attitudes and behaviours held by respondents with respect to adolescent girls. A large quantity of narrative examples – approximately 4,000 – were captured and meanings that respondents assigned experiences were analyzed by SenseMaker™ technology. The meaning that participants attribute to experiences are indicative of the social norms of the environment in which participants are situated. In this manner, this qualitative data can identify trends in attitudes, behaviours and relationships. The participants then analyzed their own narratives, thus succeeding in contextualizing the initiative on the participants' terms. Participants assigned meaning to their stories through a semi-structured framework that was designed at the beginning of the project. This framework was a combination of Girl Hub Rwanda's framework and the ODI's capability framework. This framework suggested the most prominent structures through which adolescent girls' capabilities are promoted or constrained. The outputs were presented in a number of visualisations such as by means of triangles or dryads. These triangles/dryads exist with the intention to provide a more nuanced view opposed to a simple binary outcome. The diagram below provides an example of how this nuance takes place in reality: While being developed alongside a quantitative survey, this SenseMaker™ framework then went through a series of iterations and field-testing. The SenseMaker™ results are indicators of people's attitudes towards phenomena opposed to actual statistical results of phenomena. SenseMaker™ showed that the main themes that occurred from all the stories collected were Social Relations, Education, Economic Empowerment, Violence and Sexual Reproductive Health. Although not intentionally feminist, this process achieves feminist outcomes as the respondents analyse their own stories at point of data collection. This results in accurately contextualizing said stories in the respondent's cultural context. This succeeds in contributing towards mitigating the power dynamics in the evaluation.
Select resources	• Narrate, About SenseMaker™, Available at: https://narrate.co.uk/sensemaker-about/ • ODI (2014) GirlHub Rwanda: 4,000 stories of Rwandan girls' adolescence – A nationally representative survey, Available: https://4det8y3z1n391t76me8rfynx-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/4000-voices.pdf

Example 8: SEAF's Gender Equality Scorecard (GES)©

What do we think is of interest?	Organisation (as relevant)	Link with feminist approaches to MEL	Advantages	Challenges
Gender Equality Scorecard (GES) for women's economic empowerment investment strategy.	SEAF	Focuses on gender inequalities and female empowerment.	Provides a visual and easily interpretable index. Contains both qualitative and quantitative elements. Measures structural changes over time. Supported awareness raising of gender-smart investing. Contextualize the results to specific sectors and geographic areas.	Difficulty in obtaining buy-in from other colleagues in SEAF to implement the approach. Uncertainty amongst investors regarding what is meant by women's economic empowerment strategy. Power dynamics in data collection not considered Resource constraints in using and implementing the GES (time and financial resources)
Description	SEAF is an investment management group that provides growth capital and business assistance to small and medium enterprises in emerging and transition markets. The GES assesses women's economic empowerment and gender equality within investment opportunities and portfolio companies. The scorecard is used by SEAF in multiple ways: • As a screening tool to identify those companies already demonstrating a commitment to gender equity. • As a tool to assess the level of gender equality as a baseline from which equality can improve over the investment period as a value creation activity. • As a guideline to develop best practices in the implementation of gender improvement plans. • Use of the data derived from the scorecard to support the analysis of the impact for improving gender equality on increasing investment returns for investors, and thus validating SEAF's investment thesis.			
Case examples and practical use	SEAF Found the 2X Challenges criteria of women-led too restrictive. They identified other business models which supported women's economic empowerment; however, these were companies which were not led by women, but were important for SEAF to invest in. SEAF developed a strategy with four pillars: 1) Invest not only in female entrepreneurs but also other companies which would lead to reducing the gap in women's economic empowerment. 2) Identify sectors where women are prevalent in the workforce while also supporting the development of quality jobs for women in those sectors. The focus here is on aspects such as pay equity and on the job training in sectors such as healthcare and education. 3) Unmet needs amongst women and girls, looking at business models to address gaps, such as balancing work and care responsibilities.			

	4) Building of role models, where role models refer to entrepreneurs who were successful and others in the business community wanted to learn from. The focus was on entrepreneurs who thought holistically about where gender and diversity and how its features in their business and its performance. The Gender Equality Scorecard was developed for this pillar. The gender equality scorecard (GES) is made up of 6 gender equality performance vectors which determine the company's overall rating. These are pay equity, workforce participation, leadership and governance, benefits and professional development, workplace environment, and women-power value chains. In addition, each gender vector would have 4 factors that contribute to the vector rating. An example of the application of the GES is a project with the Dream Viet Education ("Kyna"), a leading provider of online education in Vietnam. The organization scored well on vectors of Leadership and Governance and Women powered value chains, with 78% of employees and 58% of consumers women and girls. The SEAF team is working with the Kyna team on the identified areas of development but have also identified where the organization is performing well. Below is a summary of the organization's performance on the 6 vectors. • **Pay Equity:** SEAF is working with Kyna to establish employee surveys or benchmarking studies, institutionalizing best practices and further improving pay equity. • **Benefits & Professional Development:** Kyna follows government regulations and guidelines on providing benefits for employees including social security and health insurance, paid-leave and time-off for emergencies. In addition, chief officers of departments are able to work from home one day a month to refresh and handle family matters. • **Workforce Participation:** The chief academic officer and all employees in content development & curriculum departments are women. • **Workplace Environment:** Kyna follows the AGILE working method which allows staff to focus on deliverables and reduces weekly meetings. • **Leadership & Governance:** Senior positions in the organization are held by women and leadership engage in broader education programmes in Vietnam. • **Women Powered Value Chains:** 58% of content partners and 53% of online tutors are women. The GES is aligned to feminist principles in its approach and use. In terms of approach, the scorecard is contextualized to geographic and sector conditions. In addition, the metrics are not imposed on entrepreneurs, but rather a collaborative process is followed, with SEAP working on building buy-in for the approach through focusing on the value in improving gender equality for the company
Select resources	• SEAF, Gender Equality Scorecard, Available: https://www.seaf.com/womens-economic-empowerment-and-gender-equality/gender-equality-scorecard/ • SEAF, Gender Equality Scorecard Manual, Available: https://www.seaf.com/ges-manual/ • SEAF, SEAF's Gender Equality Scorecard case studies, Available: https://www.seaf.com/womens-economic-empowerment-and-gender-equality/seafs-gender-equality-scorecard-case-studies/ • SEAF, Closing gender gaps, Available: https://www.seaf.com/closing-gender-gaps/ • SEAF, Inclusive sustainable development through gender equality, Available: https://www.seaf.com/inclusive-sustainable-development-through-gender-equality/ • SEAF, Delivering on the SDGs through gender lens investing, Available: https://www.seaf.com/delivering-on-the-sdgs-through-gender-lens-investing/

Example 9: Strengthening grantee capacity for MEL and strategic reflection

What do we think is of interest?	Organisation (as relevant)	Link with feminist approaches to MEL	Advantages	Challenges
Teaching grantees how to conduct MEL (on understanding AWDF MEL requirements)	African Women's Development Fund (AWDF) grantee Zambian National Women's Lobby	Places women and their material realities at the centre of evaluation planning and analysis. Collaborates with advocates and activists.	Given power dynamics between funders and NGOs/ community groups, building the ability to distinguish between an organization's activities and its influence, and to make this clear in writing is an essential skill if women's organizations are to be effective in story-telling and in fundraising. By offering this as a support to grantees they gain confidence and power.	Resource-intensive for a funder to offer trainings and coaching support to grantees Is only a progressive approach if the evaluation approach used in the training is cognizant of the need to be real, not requiring (of social change groups) pre-set indicators etc. but rather supporting participants to tell their story and their influence in ways that work for them.
Description	The Zambian National Women's Lobby's (ZNWL) grantees were provided with MEL training from members of AWDF. They revised their internal system to enhance their MEL approach			
Case examples and practical use	AWDF provides training on "the AWDF MEL requirements" annually to organizations provided grants in that year. This exercise takes place at the initial stages of the project to ensure grantees get adequate information on the AWDF MEL requirements. The training also provides the basic principles of MEL including the use of the most significant change (MSC) method. This provides additional knowledge to grantees on how to do MEL. Different training methods (presentation, discussion, take home, group work, use of real-life examples) are used. The training is participatory and uses real life examples of grantee projects. Then after the training there are follow up actions that each organization will agree to do including review and submission of the project result measurement framework and other internal tasks. The example provided above (ZNWL) was one of the organizations who took part in such training.			

Example 10: Educating boards and funders to think differently about accountability, evaluation and learning

What do we think is of interest?	Organisation (as relevant)	Link with feminist approaches to MEL	Advantages	Challenges
Grantees are centred in the process specifically with regards to establishing a theory of change.	American Jewish World Service (AJWS)	Acknowledges and directly combats power dynamics between researchers and research subjects. Expertise of grantees are prioritised. Ensures that participants have ownership over the research process and findings. Acknowledges intersectionality. Recognises how gender roles and identifies change over time and differ by context.	Partly mitigates power dynamics between donors and grantees. Succeeds in contextualizing projects as grantees drive the process. Knowledge and expertise of women in marginalized groups are prioritised. Feminist principles are incorporated in the design phase of the project. Promotes empowerment efforts that reduce inequality. Uses the research process and findings to catalyze change in the lives and work of participants. Builds networks, alliances and collective action to put research to use.	Entirely dependent on donor buy-in. Not all donors/funders are receptive to having a process such as this. Success of a project is entirely dependent on grantee perception.
Description	AJWS supports grantee-led research dissemination and utilization processes. Funders emphasize that they are aware that they are funding grantee organisations because of their movements not because of their effectiveness when it comes to MEL. As a result, grantees are not burdened with rigorous data collection, and emphasis is on supporting reflection and learning through trust-based relationships.			
Case examples and practical use	There are a number of practical ways that AJWS has achieved this: • Forms capture the most essential information so that grantees are not burdened with data collection processes. • AJWS has developed a tool that helps AJWS determine social movements perspectives. This informs how they develop their strategies. • Grantees are able to synthesize their own information, conduct their own reflection and learning and put that in their own reports. • Three-year strategies are informed by the agendas of grantee partners. • The theory of change for each project is contextualized and developed in a participatory manner.			

Select resources	• AJWS, Connecting Local Communities to Research Findings, Available at: https://ajws.org/our-impact/measuring-success/research-early-child-marriage/connecting-local-communities-research-findings/ • AJWS, Strengthening Feminist Approaches to Research, Available at: https://ajws.org/our-impact/measuring-success/research-early-child-marriage/strengthening-feminist-approaches-to-research/ • AJWS (2018) Using Research for Gender-Transformative Change: Principles and Practice, Available at: https://ajws-americanjewishwo.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Gender-Transformative-Research.pdf • AJWS, AJWS' Theory of Change, Available at: https://ajws.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Theory-of-Change-with-definitions_horizontal-diagram.pdf

Example 11: Setting more flexible reporting guidelines

What do we think is of interest?	Organisation (as relevant)	Link with feminist approaches to MEL	Advantages	Challenges
Flexible guidelines from donors	Anonymous Donor's approach to MEL	Collaborative data collection and data analysis. Empowers enumerators and participants. Acknowledges that the process is more important than outcomes alone.	Partly mitigates power dynamics by making the process collaborative. More about the process of the evaluation opposed to outcomes alone.	Entirely dependent on donor buy-in. May not be as robust as other frameworks.
Description	The donor provided the organisation with a result framework as well as flexible guidelines.			
Case examples and practical use	The donor provided the organisation with their own framework – the Women's Rights and Gender Equality scorecard (WRGE) as well as guidelines associated with it. Although they provided a framework, the guidelines consisted of the following points: • That their "basket indicators" have been deliberately designed to capture (broad) categories of results to which partners can contribute by linking their own indicators. • Overall, partners are encouraged to develop and use a results framework tailored to their own program, with indicators that are well-operationalized, maximized for monitoring, evaluation and learning on their specific program. • Partner organizations are requested to contribute to the basket indicators, based on their own results framework. • Partners do not need to copy the exact formulation of the basket indicators, but can instead self-assess which of their own (maybe more specific) indicators contribute to the basket indicators. Please indicate the linkages clearly in the MEL section of your full proposal. • The basket indicators are designed to preserve the flexibility and richness of the partners' data, while also presenting an overall picture of the progress and scope of WRGE. • Partners are encouraged to keep results frameworks as light as possible to minimize administrative burden. Three things in particular that they appreciated about the guidance provided: • The flexibility to match a minimum amount of their "basket indicators"; • The inclusion of social norms and not just focused policy advocacy/legal change; and • The recognition that changes is at the individual and collective levels. This process leads to feminist outcomes as it seeks to tackle the inherent power dynamics that take place in the monitoring and evaluation space i.e. the varying hierarchies of power that exist between the donors, enumerators and the respondents.			

APPENDIX A: STAKEHOLDERS CONSULTED

Note, all stakeholders were asked their permission to mention names at the end of the document.

Name	Organization / Affiliation
Alyssa Ely	Criterion Institute
Angelica Pino	Sexual Violence Research Initiative
Anna Davies-van Es	Just Associates (JASS)
Dr. Anna Du Vent	Oxfam Canada
Dr. Barbara Klugman	Independent Evaluator
Dr. Carol Miller	Gender at Work
Catherine Gander	Independent Evaluator
Christina Madden	Criterion Institute
Courtney Bolinson	Independent Evaluator
Denise Beaulieu	Independent Evaluation
Dr. Emma Fulu	Equality Institute
Fadekemi Akinfaderin	Prospera Community of Practice
Henriette Kolb	International Finance Corporation
Ingrid Chou	SEAF
Irit Houvras	American Jewish World Service
Jennifer Buckley	SEAF
Jo Andrews	Equileap
Katharine Tengtio	CDC Group
Kecia Bertermann	Luminate
Laura Haylock	Independent Evaluator
Leticia Emme	GIIN - IRIS+ team
Lissa Glasgo	GIIN - IRIS+ team
Elizabeth Dartnell	Sexual Violence Research Initiative
Luis Marquez	Value for Women
Margaret Capelazo	Global Affairs Canada
Dr. Miranda Morgan	Global Affairs Canada
Nilah Mitchell	60 Decibels
Dr. PeiYao Chen	Global Fund for Women
Dr. Pierre Tremblay	Global Affairs Canada
Refilwe Mokoena	Graca Machel Trust
Renee Hunter	Value for Women

Rowena Reyes	SEAF
Silvia Salinas	International Organisation for Cooperation in Evaluation
Dr. Sonal Zaveri	Independent evaluator, Founder and Board Member, Community of Evaluators South Asia and Regional Coordinator, Gender and Equity Network South Asia (GENSA).
Svetlana Negroustoueva	CGIAR / American Evaluation Association Feminist Topical Interest Group / EvalGender+
Tanya Beer	Centre for Evaluation Innovation
Tony Quinlan	Narrate
Zeytuna Abdella Azasoo	African Women's Development Fund

APPENDIX B: STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW GUIDE

Feminist MEL, Evaluations and Gender-lens approaches *(Discussion will be tailored based on each individual stakeholder's context)*

Hello, my name is _____. I work for a firm called Genesis Analytics. The Equality Fund has engaged us to conduct research on Feminist MEL, and other approaches that complement it, and identify practical applications. They will use the information we gather to inform the work that they do.

You have been identified as a person who can provide useful information, and we would appreciate hearing about your experiences on how you have practically applied feminist evaluations, or feminist values, in monitoring or evaluation. Thank you for taking the time to speak to us and share your knowledge.

- *Please know that you can stop this interview at any time, and at any time ask to see our interview notes. We will be taking notes to record your answers. Do we have your permission to continue?*
- *Do we have your permission to list your name in the back of the paper, to acknowledge that we interviewed you?*

Do you have any questions for us before we begin?

Introduction

1. Please tell us a bit about you and the work that you do. *(Probe: organization.)*

2. We are starting with a broad question. What is your understanding of Feminist MEL? *(Probe: Monitoring, evaluation, MEL system, underpinning principles. <u>Note the Equality Fund's definition of feminist values, as they describe them here, is what will be used to probe questions below</u>)*

3. Tell us a bit about your experience when you explain that understanding to others *(Probe: What is accepted, challenged, pushed back on? How do you/have you mitigated these situations?)*

Examples from your experience/organization

4. Tell me a bit about how you/your organization has applied Feminist approaches or methods that complement or support feminist values. *(Probe: usefulness, challenges)*

5. Please share any concrete examples, methods, tools, approaches, processes or other examples that highlight the how feminist MEL has been useful.

6. Can you share any relevant documents with the Genesis team?

Opportunities

7. How has Feminist MEL supported your organization to fulfil its mandate, if at all? (*Probe: Have other approaches or methods supported a feminist approach, that are not overtly feminist?*)

8. What specific practices / tools could you identify have been most important at achieving this?

Challenges

9. What are some of the challenges encountered when implementing Feminist MEL? (*Probe: How have you mitigated that?*)

10. What do you think is a key lesson that you have learnt with regards to implementing feminist MEL, that you would want to share with the Equality Fund?

Summarizing

11. We will use this information to inform a document that the Equality Fund will use to guide and inform their Feminist MEL approach. With that understanding, what do you think is important to highlight or emphasize?

12. We have asked you a lot of questions. Is there anything that you would like to ask us, before we begin to wrap up this interview?

Our last two questions are about other sources of information.

Other experts who also work in this field

13. Do you know of any other experts who work in the field of Feminist MEL and Evaluations, please could you share their details with us?
14. What about other websites, or literature that you think we should read or be aware of?

Thank you so much for your time.

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