A Stocktake on Culturally Responsive Evaluations in and outside the UN System

UNEG EPE Session 3: Evaluation as a transformative process

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“Cultural diversity provides fresh ideas and perspectives that enrich our lives in countless ways, allowing us all to grow and thrive together.”
Overview

Part I  What is culturally responsive evaluation?

Part II  Findings from the stocktake in and outside the UN system

Part III  Challenges in applying culturally responsive evaluation

Part IV  Lessons learned for the future
Understanding Culturally Responsive Evaluation (CRE)

- Evaluation cannot be separated from the sociocultural contexts within which social programmes are implemented.
- CRE honours the cultural context by bringing shared life experience and understanding to evaluation.
- Principles: integrity and validity, ethics, indigenous knowledge, privilege and power.
- Added value is enhanced credibility and utility.
- Integrating cultural perspectives ensures that evaluations contribute to transformative change.
Purpose of Stocktake

• Collect information on past efforts and lessons learned on integrating culture into evaluations in the UN
• Identify good practices outside the UN
• Distil lessons learned from academic literature
• Act as a catalyst for the engagement of UNEG on this issue
Framework for Analysing CRE

- Framing the evaluation questions
- Composition of the evaluation team
- Determining the data collection strategy

- Sharing the findings (mutual reciprocity principle)

- Observing cultural protocols & norms in-country
  - Respectful engagement with stakeholders

- Processes by which cultural perspectives are integrated in analysis, interpretation and reporting

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Key insights of the stocktake

- References to cultural dimensions remain limited in evaluations
- Cultural diversity and competence are not considered in team composition
- Context overviews tend to overlook cultural dimensions
- A CRE approach can be applied without explicit references to culture
Challenges in applying a CRE approach

- Limited understanding of the concept of culture as well as the links between culture and gender and human rights
- CRE approach difficult to apply to non culturally responsive programmes
- Inclusion of evaluation team members with shared living experiences
- Restrained time and resources for integrating a CRE approach
Lessons Learned for the Future

• Encourage an explicit focus on the cultural context of the evaluand

• Develop Terms of Reference that consider the impact of cultural context in analysis of findings

• Ensure evaluation teams are culturally diverse and have shared living experiences in the cultural contexts

• Adopt a flexible evaluation approach that takes into account various contexts
Discussion Document online at:

http://www.uneval.org

and

http://www.unesco.org/ios

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