
Evaluation from inside? Evaluating change processes to promote gender equality

Open Evaluation Conference 2016
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Gender equality policies in RTDI

- Main objectives of gender equality in RTDI
 - Fostering equality in scientific careers
 - Ensuring gender balance in decision making processes and bodies
 - Integration of the gender dimension in research and innovation content
- EC pursues this objectives through ...
 - European Research Area Priority
 - RRI
 - Horizon 2020
- Gender Equality Plans as a tool to promote structural changes
 - Shift from individual support measures to institutional changes
 - Raising gender awareness and modernizing the organizational culture
 - A systematic and integrated approach – long term perspective

Structural change in FP7 & H2020

- Since 2010 FP7 has funded structural change projects
- Objectives of these projects (WP SIS 2013)
 - Modernisation of institutional practices and cultures to promote GE in research institutions
 - Through developing and implementing Gender Equality Plans (GEPs)
 - GEPs are self tailored management tools
- Learning opportunity
 - Development of institutional knowledge
 - Practical knowledge and experiences on implementation processes
- Objectives of evaluation (WP SIS 2013)
 - Accompanying methodology for impartially monitoring and assessing
 - Effectiveness and the anticipated impacts
 - Achieved institutional progress
 - Impact on the situation of women scientists and on the integration of gender in research content.

Objective

■ Research objective

- To better understand the achievements of structural and cultural change projects that support gender equality based on gender equality plans
- To develop/discuss an evaluating concept for assessing the achievements of projects for structural and cultural change

■ Building blocks for the conceptual lens

- Organisational learning, institutional theorising
- Notions of structural and cultural change in research organization
- (Changing) role of evaluators

Data and approach

- Based on observations in two structural change projects
 - Involved as evaluators
 - GARCIA – Gendering the Academy and Research: Combating Career Instability and Asymmetries
 - Runtime: 02/2014 – 01/2017
 - 6 implementing partners
 - Focus on GE for early career researchers
 - Genera – Gender Equality Network in the European Research Area
 - Runtime: 09/2015 – 08/2018
 - 13 implementing partners plus 2 associated partners and 9 observers
 - Implementing and monitoring GEPs in physics research organizations
 - Raising the awareness for gender imbalances and bias in the physics community

The evaluators in the projects: Then and now

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■ GARCIA

- Planned: Impartial “observer”, assessing achievements, providing feedback during the project’s life-time
- Now: “Critical friend”, shift in focus on implementation processes, providing advice, safeguarding lessons learned
- But: Not intervening into and reflecting the implementation

■ Genera

- Planned: “Coach”, supporting implementation processes
- Now: “Very critical friend”, fostering and supporting empowerment and community building
- Observing (first) implementation processes made clear that a stronger reflection about challenges is important

Challenges

- Understanding of potential achievements often unclear
- Delay in implementation of measures
 - Difficulties to get “important people” on board
 - Lack of communication/exchange between partners
 - Lack of (financial, human) resources and expertise
 - Lack of time and space for reflecting challenges and facilitating factors
- Short runtime of projects
 - Projects have only just begun at the time of the first assessment
 - Developments did not (yet) “trickle-down” to policy and decision makers

Challenges, cont.

- Particularities of GARCIA and Genera:
 - Diverse institutional contexts, e.g. formal rules, informal norms, different size and complexity of institutions (power structures)
 - Measures are implemented in higher education institutions and non university research organisation (not in the industry)
 - Attribution problems: Difficult to track achievements due to other gender-related support measures that run simultaneously
- For the evaluators: Changed perspectives, re-aligning evaluation concept

Conclusions

■ Policy design

- Structural change projects need to develop a “Implementation Roadmap” with clear and realistic targets (aligned with the organisation context and coordinated with the responsible stakeholder)
- Specific knowledge (gender and implementation) needs to be provided for project partners
- Top management is supposed to be member of project team
- Projects can make a difference, but need more run time for impact analysis and questions with regards to sustainability
- Implemented actions should be monitored after the overarching project has ended

Conclusions, cont.

■ Evaluation design

- Focus on the process of implementation with the aim of creating an atmosphere for constructive discussions
- Providing data and information on current challenges and success
- Providing knowledge and advise based on expertise and experiences

■ The role of the evaluator

- Fostering reflexivity of all involved partners, engaging knowledge transfer between partners
- Make role clear from the beginning

Conclusions, cont.

■ Measuring achievements

- Combining process-oriented indicators (e.g. extent of supportive factors, encountered challenges, resistances) with results-oriented indicators
 - **Example outputs:** Meetings, discussions, coordination processes, preparations, etc.
 - **Example outcomes:** Raising awareness, getting gender at the agenda, getting greater visibility, “trickle-down” of topics in leadership, etc.
- Can be part of the Implementation Roadmap, where they are discussed ex-ante (e.g. SWOT) and assessed in the course of the evaluation

Thank you!

Questions?

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