

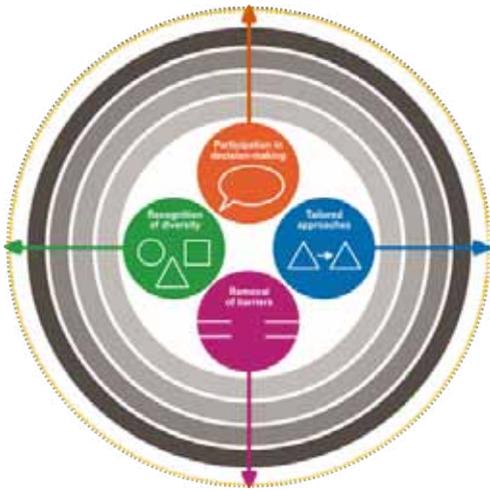


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This section shows how to use the framework to assess how inclusive a DRM practice is. It explains the rationale for the assessment and provides guidance on how to go about it, step by step.

ASSESSING INCLUSIVENESS: 4 BASIC QUESTIONS

This section shows how to use the framework to assess the inclusiveness of a DRM practice. The method consists of 4 basic questions that need to be answered in order. Each question includes a series of tips to consider to answer them in the best way.

By "practice" we mean anything we do from designing an assessment to contributing to an international policy framework. The framework works as a means to assess them all using the same four dimensions and levels within each.



Where are we at, on this dimension? (and why do we rank it as such?)

Ranking one ingredient at the time, to understand the level of achievement, and justify it.

Is it good enough?

Put the scoring in context: given the nature of our work, the capacities and challenges on the ground and the context where we work... is this achievement good enough? Is it too little? Or are we trying to go too far too quick?

What else could be done?

Given that inclusion is a never ending task, what else could be done to improve inclusiveness of DRM initiatives? How can we work strategically across the dimensions, combining them in a stronger recipe to become more inclusive?

How did we get there?

Do we know "how" exactly change was achieved? This question is useful to document practices and stories of change. It involves looking back and explaining how and why a dimension changed.

The purpose of assessing how inclusive a DRM practice is, is not to get a mark, (and not to get the higher mark!). Answering these 4 basic questions can reveal what efforts have been done, what process was put in place, and what was achieved - considering the particular circumstances, challenges and opportunities of inclusion in a given context. Assessing the level of inclusion leads to critically reflecting on practice and capture learning, and ultimately to improve the quality of DRM work. The following provide more information and tips on how to answer to the 4 basic questions..

1. WHERE ARE WE AT, ON THIS DIMENSION? AND WHY DO WE RANK IT AS SUCH?

We rank each dimension – independently - from "low to very high" and we explain the rationale for this (we ranked it as such because...)"

- ***The measurement scale: from low to very high***



This measurement scale is the same one used to classify the scenes in the cartoons. It goes from "low" to "very high". Very high is aspirational, and is likely to represent an ideal goal rather than what we can manage to achieve in the practice. The arrows you can see after "very high" expresses the idea that "inclusion" is never ending. The world is always changing so we should expect new forms of exclusion to arise, new challenges to overcome to sustain any gains, new barriers... The scale has a "blind to" no-level which applies when there is actually no trace of that dimension in at the practice (practices can easily completely miss a dimension!).

- ***To rank, we need to know the facts***

To rank a practice, we need to have enough information about it. We need to know the process, have facts and details. And we need to derive the information from multiple sources and processes: the views of different actors need to be represented (in particular these of the people at risk of exclusion).

• **One by one**

Dimensions are not steps, they always travel together and are all present in each practice. When gauging how inclusive a practice is, each dimension needs to be considered. We cannot say “this dimension is not relevant for this practice”. If we discover that we are blind to a dimension, we will have to look for more facts and evidence, and question how inclusiveness and DRM were affected by not considering it. For instance, if we are assessing the formation of a task force, we need to consider separately how strong was the recognition of diversity (of people, of task forces, of...), how much was the approach tailored to include people, what barriers were removed or tackled, how people participated in decision making, etc.

• **Score can be low in one dimension and high on another**

Dimensions will be present in different degrees It is very possible that a practice is high in one dimension, and weak in another one. We cannot assume that because a practice ranks high in one dimension, it will rank high in the others! Eg, in a practice, participation in decision making can feature very strongly, with some excluded people being really influential in a process, yet recognition of diversity of who else should have been part, or what other processes were relevant to influence, can score very low because a check list approach was used.

• **Scoring if pointless, if you do not explain it.**

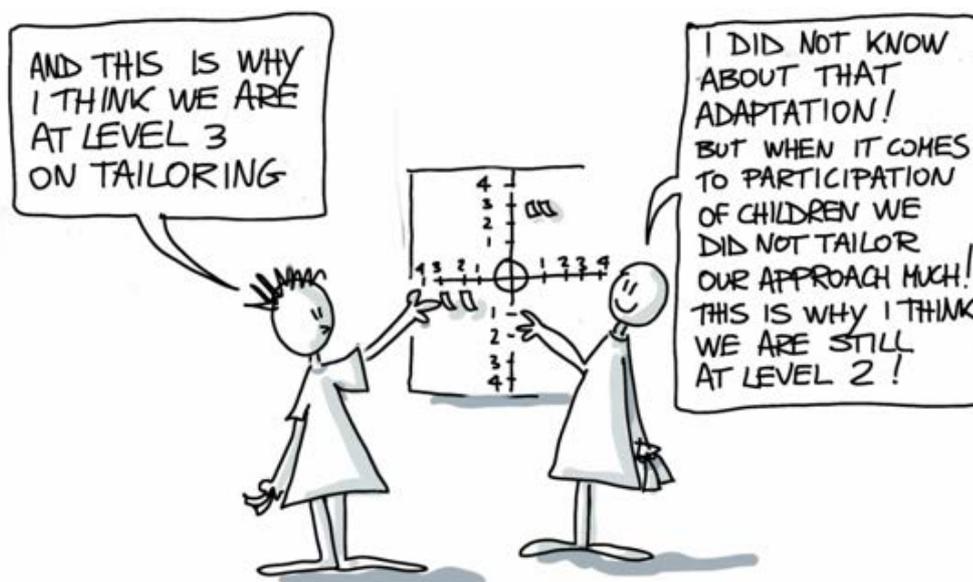
The levels are not indicators. So you cannot just “thick them” by saying “we are very low on this”. Fullstop. You should say “we are low on this because... It is the “because” that really matters, and it will lead you to make a case, and to aggregate meaningful evidence on your practice. Otherwise it will be just an opinion! It is the process of explaining why a practice matters that can also ultimately lead to identify what information and indicators are worth looking at. It will add rigour to your assessment, whilst leaving the space to set parameters that can be renegotiated, broadened and adapted.

• **To make the case, you need detailed examples**

To make the case, you will need to give examples, and detailed ones... For example, if we are scoring participation in decision-making in relation to a DRM plan, we should have examples of how meetings were organised and held, who took part doing what, what other consultations were held and how. Knowing for instance, if they were door to door or in other public meetings and any other detail that allow us to picture the “scene”. Only then we will be able to cross check this “scene” it against the descriptions of the levels, and score the practice accordingly.

• **Different actors might have different views on the ranking**

Different actors might have different views on the ranking. This is fine, and should be taken as an opportunity to better understand the inclusiveness of a practice. Participation is about creating a space for discussing different views (and reasons for a ranking!). This creates better and deeper understanding as a result.



2. IS IT GOOD ENOUGH?

This question checks if the level achieved is good enough - considering the context/circumstances

- **Context matters**

Inclusive DRM is always challenging, but in some places, with some people, in some circumstances, it can be much more challenging than in others. It is not the same to include women in decision making in a liberal neighbourhood in Sri Lanka, as it is in remote Afghanistan. Cultural norms, history, politics are just a few of the contextual factors that can tamper or support an inclusive DRM practice.

- **"Good enough" is actually enough!**

The framework has been designed to be aspirational. It proposes a direction and a level of ambition on inclusion. It recognises that "inclusion" will always be work in progress. It requires that these engaging in DRM understand and embrace a rights-based approach and understand why equity is so important in the context of DRM. Asking if something is "good enough" is not rhetoric. Good enough means... good enough: That we are satisfied with what it is, and that we can explain why: for example because it is a good achievement given where we started, our resources, the opportunities and challenges we encountered.

- **A low score can be fine...**

There can be very good reasons for scoring low in one or more dimensions. For example, in contexts where forms of exclusion are very deeply ingrained in cultural norms held by the community as a whole (including the "excluded groups"), it could be wise not to try to remove barriers from the onset of the work. The risk is, otherwise, to be rejected by the community, or to do harm. What matters in these case, is to be aware of the issue, and have a long term strategy towards inclusiveness.

- **... and a high score can be too high!**

It is very common that processes are rushed because there are set deadlines and goals to achieve within them. We need to check that we are not going too quickly for what we are aiming to achieve. Inclusion is about excluded people being able to renegotiate their power relations. It also rests on continuously deepening the understanding of social dynamics, discovering who is excluded and why, beyond broad-brush understandings. This might require time, a gradual process with space for dialogue within the community and beyond. Imposing interaction between groups of people can result in further exclusion and conflict.

- **Consider the interplay of different dimensions**

When assessing if a project is "good enough" consider also how the different dimension interplays. You might justify a low achievement in one area because considerable energies were invested in another. Or, conversely, you might realize that what impede to an area to be "good enough" is that you did not address sufficiently another dimension. The interplay of different dimensions is very important also when it comes to the next question: what else can be done?

3. WHAT ELSE COULD BE DONE?

This question leads to identify options for next steps

- **There is always a next step**

Even if a practice scores "very high", there will always be a next step when talking about inclusion. It's a never ending challenge and even if we managed to include everyone who should be in today, tomorrow new groups of excluded people will arise. In each scenario the analysis derived from the first two questions should lead to ideas on things that could be done differently in the future, to make DRM even more inclusive.

- **We can skip levels**

Levels up do not represent steps: there is no need to go through each level until we reach the highest one. For example, if a practice is currently "blind to" tailored approaches, the next step can well be that the approaches are very tailored, even to the point of scoring "high" or "very high", in one go.

- **Sometimes awareness is all what was missing**

Sometimes practices are blind to a dimension and to its implications simply because there was no awareness of its importance, not because there are technical and financial constraints. For example, during the workshops in which the framework was introduced, some participants recognised that they had narrowed down participation in decision making to government decisions, rather than also considering participation of excluded people in the design of their own projects. When identifying the next steps, there will always be things you can improve on within your own reach.



4. HOW DID YOU GET THERE?

Once an understanding of inclusion within a practice is being reached, it is important to track the process, so that it is clear how it was achieved. This leads to understand impact and can feed into learning and better practices.

- **A story of change**

This last question is about tracking the process of change that led to a situation. What happened? Who did what? What were the defining moments of change? What unfolded as planned? What unexpected turns happened? All these questions will allow to tell the story of a practice. But this question is also relevant at the assessment phase: what was the story of change so far? It is important for inclusive DRM work to recognise and build on the processes that are already in place.

- **How could future change unfold?**

You might also want to look ahead, and tell “how will we get further”? Sharing the story of the change you want to see is very useful to make explicit your aspirational goals as well as the process you anticipate. It is a powerful way to build common aspirations and directions amongst different stakeholders. Does your narrative for change matches the aspirations and capacities of excluded people and their communities?

- **What do we see now that we did not see before?**

Knowing the current picture is useful to know where we are, but it does not show what change had happened. Impact can only be understood by looking at the difference of “now” and “before”. Tracking what you did, and illustrating what change happened, will help to understand who and how contributed to it. As in the point above, it is also worth asking, when thinking of the changes ahead “what will we see that we have not seen before”?

- **Share the findings!**

As you answer the 4 question, you should have gained worthy knowledge about change and the process of change. If you did so through participatory processes, many people already benefit from the insights. You can also consider further sharing your learning and understanding with other practitioners and communities. Do not feel that all this should feed only in traditional reporting. The framework is designed to encourage your own way to document and share information... experiment with it!

For further guidance on how to document an inclusive DRM practice for learning and tracking change, please refer to the document -> “Guidance for reflecting on and collecting of DRM practices”.

GUIDANCE FOR REFLECTION ON AND COLLECTION OF DRM PRACTICES

guidance on how to document a case study or story of change on inclusive DRM, you can check "



Analysis is what tells

There is an unfortunate tendency to identify monitoring and evaluation of inclusive DRM with the collection of a set of pre-established indicators. Such indicators are often referred to outputs, and fail to capture the quality of inclusion. For example, an indicator like "x% of participating women in group meeting" tend to recur in logframes. This indicator could only have meaning if we know: Is it easy to bring them in meetings in this context? Who are these women? Better off ones or really the most marginalized ones? Do they actually have a say in the meeting? And can they act on it? Are they likely to continue coming? And what are they other existing opportunities for participation?

It is clear that collecting all the data that might matter, is a cumbersome and never ending process. And the effort of trying to collect "all possible data" is not justifiable or realistic. The way to tackle this, is to start from the other end, i.e. with the analysis, which will tell you what data matters. This is what the framework proposes. Analysis can lead to building a narrative of change, linked to evidence, to make a strong case.

Indicators (which, by the way are not only "numbers"!) and facts, are worthless if they are not connected to a story of change. And in the iteration of building a narrative and substantiate it, the best indicators are developed, incrementally.

Baselines can be "blind to"

Trying to show progress on the baseline commonly leads to continued focus on the categories assessed initially rather than tackling exclusion as it unfolds. Therefore this framework moves away from "checking progress against a baseline". A baseline captured at the beginning of a project might be blind to many forms of inclusion such as exclusion (or power!). We must recognize that the categories that are usually catalogued as "excluded" are actually very diverse and can only be understood with increased exposure and openness to the dynamics of a community. Setting them from the start might lead to exclude people "because they are not in the logframe".

The risk of perverse incentives

The wrong choice of evidence and indicators, might lead to to perverse incentives. They might make the projects blind to new forms of exclusion and limit the space to work in dialogue with affected communities. Some examples of perverse incentives for inclusive DRM:

- **Looking for big numbers.** Numerical indicators are a perverse incentive when they can lead to look for "high numbers" to show success. In the context of inclusion, this can make it look better to work with the easiest groups so that you can meet the quota. Indicators on attendance in meeting are a case in point. Focusing on having large attendance of an "excluded group" might

distract from the need to check if there are others who should be there too, and if the ones there have a voice. You can have a room full of people with disabilities with no influence on decision making. You can have a room with many elderly people, but they were already the ones holding the power in a community already. Despite the obvious flaws, these indicators are very often found in project logframe, as they are the “low hanging fruit” in terms of measuring something.

- ***Small numbers can mean a lot.*** Because inclusion is not “business as usual” one person with a voice and accountable to their peers can make a huge difference. Building leadership of excluded groups rarely results in large numbers. But can be very effective. To justify your strategy, you need to know that value will be given to the case you can make, as your number alone will look unimpressive.

- ***The same number has a different meaning in different contexts.*** Because Asia-wide/regional numbers will make little sense in local contexts: how many women is a good amount of women in India? And In Afghanistan? What happens if most men in the location we work migrated elsewhere, like in border areas? Is having 90% women engagement, when men are not around, really that outstanding in terms of inclusion? Also, challenges to inclusion depend on context, even at the very local level there will be differences from village to village.

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