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DEFINING EQUITY AND ADDRESING THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF
EQUITY IN INTERNTIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION

by

Kelly N. Robertson

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Interdisciplinary Ph.D. in Evaluation
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December 2015

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DEFINING EQUITY AND ADDRESSING THE SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF EQUITY IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION

Kelly N. Robertson, Ph.D.

Western Michigan University, 2015

The purpose of equity-focused evaluation is to examine the relationship between the evaluand and (1) experiences of social groups with different levels of advantage/disadvantage, and (2) the social determinants of equity, which shape those experiences. Equity-focused evaluation has emerged within the field of international development evaluation because of an increased emphasis on equity in the achievement of international development goals. However, empirically based theoretical and practical guidance on equity-focused evaluation is limited. There has not been a detailed examination of how equity—the conceptual root of equity-focused evaluation—is defined and differentiated from similar concepts in the field, despite having important implications for evaluation design, methods, reporting, and use. There has also been limited guidance on how to address the social determinants of equity (i.e., factors that both enable and act as barriers to equitable outcomes) in evaluation practice—despite being a theme central to the concept of equity. Contextually and culturally responsive equity-focused evaluation practice necessitates a focus on the social determinants of equity because they inform the *how* and *why* of current conditions and are situated within and/or are a product of history, culture, and context.

In this dissertation, I examine how international development organizations conceptualize and differentiate equity from similar concepts and the extent to which and how they recommend addressing the social determinants of equity in evaluation practice. This study is a descriptive content analysis of evaluation guidance documents from a sample of international development organizations. The findings indicate that key features that distinguish equity from similar concepts include the fact that equity is viewed as both the *process* of eliminating barriers, compensating for historical disadvantage, and treating people according to their level of need and an *outcome* of that process. Findings indicate that the degree to which organizations provide recommendations on how to address the social determinants of equity in evaluation practice varies greatly and improvement is warranted—especially as it relates to the interpretation of findings and conclusions. A summary of recommendations on how to address the social determinants of equity in evaluation practice is presented to inform future evaluation practice and research.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Despite making significant progress toward the achievement of the United Nations (UN) Millennium Development Goals, widening social disparities in many economically developing countries have led to a greater focus on equity in development policies, programs, and evaluation (Bamberger & Segone, 2011; Jones, 2009; United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 2013). Equity has increasingly been viewed as a smart development strategy as well as an imperative for the achievement of the UN's new Sustainable Development Goals (World Bank, 2012). To coincide with the launch of the Goals, 2015 was declared the International Year of Evaluation. The International Year of Evaluation was celebrated through a series of events held around the globe that were aimed to promote demand and use of high quality, context-relevant, equity-focused, and gender-responsive evaluation at country, regional, and local levels (My M&E, 2015b). The movement was led by EvalPartners, a collaboration of professional evaluation organizations, UN agencies, and international donor organizations. To promote equity-focused and gender-responsive evaluation, EvalPartners launched the *EvalGender+* initiative in December 2015. The *EvalGender+* initiative aims to bring attention to the importance of addressing equity and gender within evaluation by engaging key individuals and organizations, promoting practical innovation, and facilitating learning to inform equity- and gender-focused evaluation practice (My M&E, 2015a).

The UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) has been instrumental in bringing renewed attention to equity in international development evaluation. UNICEF has advocated for *equity-focused evaluation*, as a lens to guide evaluation practice across sectors, through the publication of two books and a webinar series. In the past, most evaluation efforts that addressed equity tended to focus on health. In UNICEF’s “How to Design and Manage Equity-Focused Evaluations,” Bamberger and Segone (2011), acknowledge that many equity-focused evaluation methods and techniques are based on approaches and practices that are already familiar to international development evaluation practitioners. The authors describe equity-focused evaluation as an assessment of “what works and what does not work to reduce inequity” and the “intended and unintended results for worst-off groups as well as the gaps between best-off, average and worst-off groups” (Bamberger & Segone, 2011, p. 9). Equity-focused evaluation practice is described as looking “explicitly at the equity dimensions of interventions, going beyond conventional quantitative data to the analysis of behavioral change, complex social processes and attitudes, and collecting information on difficult-to-reach socially marginalized groups” to empower worse-off groups (Bamberger & Segone, 2011, pp. 7-8). Similarly, Hay (2012) describes equity-focused evaluation “as a way of understanding how intersecting social cleavages (such as gender, race, class, sexuality, caste, and religion) define and shape the experience and the exercise of power in different contexts” (p. 40). Despite the recent increase in equity-focused evaluation publications, the literature and guidance on equity-focused evaluation is still emerging and somewhat limited (Bamberger & Segone, 2011).

In this dissertation, I address gaps in the international development evaluation literature, which have important practical and theoretical implications for the quality of evaluation design, methods, and reporting within an equity-focused evaluation context. More specifically, I examine how international development organizations define equity and the extent to which and how they recommend addressing the social determinants of equity within evaluation guidance documents. Addressing equity in evaluation by definition requires a focus on the social determinants because the goal of equity-focused policies is “to eliminate the unfair and avoidable circumstances” that limit the opportunity of certain social groups to exercise and fulfill their human rights (Bamberger & Segone, 2011, p. 3). The social determinants of equity are structural factors that directly or indirectly create conditions that explain the distribution of life outcomes (Braveman, 2006; Commission on the Social Determinants of Health [CSDH], 2008; Krumeich, & Meershoek, 2014; World Health Organization [WHO], 2010).

In this chapter, I describe the background, problem, and significance and intended contribution of my work to the field of international development evaluation. I also introduce the theoretical concepts guiding my research. At the conclusion of this chapter, I present an overview of how the remainder of the dissertation is organized.

Background of the Problem

Defining Equity. Equity is generally defined as “freedom from bias or favoritism” and “fairness or justice in the way people are treated” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2014). Equity can be operationalized as the absence of systematic disparities in individual outcomes and/or the presence of major social determinants of equity (i.e., structural determinants that influence the distribution of power, resources, processes, and

opportunities) between groups with different levels of social disadvantage/advantage (Braveman & Gruskin, 2003a). Social advantage/disadvantage “refers to one’s relative position in a social hierarchy determined by wealth, power, and/or prestige” and is most often associated with inequity in terms of gender/sex, geographic location, ethnicity/race, education, wealth, income, and occupation (Braveman, 2006, p. 168). However, individuals experience multiple intersecting forms of oppression and/or privilege associated with their various identities (e.g., gender/sex, race, and class) and therefore, experiences of advantage/disadvantage are neither uniform within nor across social groups (Crenshaw, 1989).

Not all differences between groups are unfair. Inequitable differences (1) are unjust, unnecessary, and avoidable because they are caused by social determinants; (2) further disadvantage vulnerable/marginalized groups; and (3) are systematic, in that differences between groups with different levels of advantage/disadvantage are significant and frequent, rather than random or occasional (Braveman & Gruskin, 2003a; Starfield, 2001; Whitehead, 1992). Equitable differences are (1) a result of natural inevitable biological factors; (2) based on free choice and/or an individual’s direct control; and (3) occasionally or randomly observed between groups with different levels of advantage/disadvantage (Starfield, 2001; Whitehead, 1992). For example, differences in maternal mortality rates between wealthy urban women and poor rural women are inequitable because the majority of these deaths are attributable to preventable social conditions (e.g., greater access to skilled health care professionals and facilities) rather than a result of biology or other factors that would fall within a women’s direct control.

Social Determinants of Equity. The concept of equity is concerned with fairness in the distribution of resources and opportunities so that all individuals have the opportunity to fulfill their life's potential (Braveman, 2006). Such fairness is thwarted when barriers cause an unfair distribution of resources and opportunities, resulting in conditions that bring about systematic differences between social groups that experience different levels of advantage/disadvantage. Therefore, the elimination of barriers that prevent fairness among social groups is central to the concept of equity and hence, a focus on equity in evaluation requires attention to the social determinants (Braveman et al., 2011; CSDH, 2008; Sen, 2002). The social determinants of equity are structural factors (e.g., social, cultural, political, economic)—not biological factors or individual behaviors—which directly or indirectly create conditions that explain the distribution of life outcomes (e.g., illness, wealth, power) within or between populations with different levels of social advantage/disadvantage (Braveman, 2006; CSDH, 2008; Krumeich & Meershoek, 2014). The social determinants of equity inform the *how* and *why* of current conditions and include both barriers and enabling factors. While many interventions seek to empower individuals and change individual-level behavior, it is the social determinants of equity that explain the majority of life outcomes (Krumeich, & Meershoek, 2014; Tarlov, 1999; Blas & Kurup, 2010). Therefore, how equity is conceptualized by a given organization, in terms of whether or not the social determinants of equity are regarded as central to the concept, influences the degree to which equity-focused evaluations conducted by or for those organizations addresses culture and context. Further, addressing the social determinants of equity in equity-focused evaluation practice is not only key to evaluating progress toward equity, but to adequately assessing culture and

context as a part of the evaluation process and moving toward the decolonization of evaluation practice.

Current states of inequity are a result of a wide range of economic, political, cultural, and environmental factors (e.g., legislation, culture, exposure to violence, school funding, and international trade) which are historic and complex because they are deeply “rooted and intricately intertwined with power structures, knowledge levels, belief systems, attitudes and values of societies” (Silva & Rugh, 2012, p. x). Further, understanding the history and current state of equity in formerly colonized countries is complicated by pre-colonial political, economic, and social dynamics in addition to conditions imposed by external forces during colonial and post-colonial periods (Cannella & Manuelito, 2008). Inequities are typically multidimensional, meaning they are most often caused by multiple factors that intersect and interact in complex ways varying across contexts and time (Sen, 2002). As a result, a conclusive determination of the causal pathway or even most immediate causes of inequities may not be possible (Braveman & Gruskin, 2003a; Sen, 2002). However, a social disparity is not considered an inequity “because we know the proximate causes of that disparity and judge them to be unjust, but rather because the disparity is strongly associated with unjust social structures” (i.e., the social determinants of equity) systematically disadvantaging, already disadvantaged populations (Braveman & Gruskin, 2003a, p. 256). Therefore, to justify the existence of an inequitable difference “it must be plausible, but not necessarily proven, that policies could reduce the disparities” (Braveman et al., 2011, p. 152; Sen, 2002).

Despite the fact that inequities are considered unjust, unfair, and avoidable they are “killing people on a grand scale” (CSDH, 2008, p. viii). For this reason, the CSDH (2008) urges immediate action and identifies evaluation that addresses the social determinants of equity as a critical component of reducing inequities. Addressing the social determinants of equity in evaluation can yield useful data for improvement of policies and programs seeking to reduce inequities (Annie E. Casey Foundation [ACF], 2006). For example, knowing only that rural women tend to have higher maternal mortality rates than urban women does not provide information that can be used for programmatic change. In contrast, gathering data on the social determinants of equity (e.g., distance to clinics, availability of trained health professionals, customs), inherently focuses on local culture and context, facilitates explanation of the *how* and *why* of outcomes, and provides information that can be used to make programmatic changes.

Culture and Context. A focus on the cultural context of the evaluand (i.e., what is being evaluated) is key for producing evaluations that are useful and responsive to local stakeholders needs (Ofir & Kumar, 2013; Phillips, Muller-Clemm, Ysselestein, & Sachs, 2013; Scriven, 1991). Cultural and contextual responsiveness is also essential for evaluation quality, given the impact of culture and context on the implementation and outcomes of an evaluand, as well as evaluative information generation, use, and dissemination (Chouinard & Cousins, 2014; SenGupta, Hopson, & Thompson-Robinson, 2004). Addressing social justice in evaluation (i.e., equity, equality, and/or empowerment) also necessitates a focus on culture and context (CSDH, 2008; Hopson, Kirkhart, & Bledsoe, 2012; Phillips, et al., 2013). Identifying and eliminating unfair social determinants is central to the concept of equity and thus, within the context of

equity-focused evaluation, the social determinants of equity represent much of the relevant cultural and contextual factors (CSDH, 2008). Therefore, addressing the social determinants of equity in evaluation practice requires a detailed understanding of local culture and context as the social determinants of equity vary across settings and time, and are situated within and/or are a product of history, culture, and context (Hopson, Kirkhart, & Bledsoe, 2012).

State of International Development Evaluation. International development agencies (i.e., multilateral, bilateral, and non-governmental organizations) often serve as the main “promoters, executors, and consumers” of evaluation that takes place in countries that receive development aid (Bamberger, 2000, p. 101). Therefore, international development organizations have substantial influence on international development evaluation practice and use. For the purpose of this research, international development evaluation refers to evaluation of interventions that take place in countries that receive international development aid and evaluations funded by foreign or external organizations.

The need for improved evaluation quality, in terms of methodological rigor, usefulness, and cultural and contextual responsiveness has been well documented within the field of international development evaluation (Chouinard & Cousins, 2014; Clements, Chianca, & Sasaki, 2008; Ofir & Kumar, 2013). Evaluation in the context of international development faces distinct challenges related to the following: (1) the complex and unpredictable contexts in which development interventions and evaluations take place; (2) the fact that interventions often focus on broad and complex topics such as improving the human condition or fulfillment of human rights; and (3) and limited resources,

capacity, and infrastructure for evaluation (Bamberger, 1991; Donaldson, Azzam, & Conner, 2013). Further, the existence of multiple cross-cultural stakeholder groups often results in the needs of foreign funding agencies being prioritized over those of local stakeholders and consequently, the imposition of externally favored methods that may not be contextually appropriate (Bamberger, 2000; Conlin & Stirrat, 2008; Ofir & Kumar, 2013).

In response to the aforementioned challenges, there is an increasing focus in the international development evaluation literature on ways to situate evaluation within local contexts, such as through participatory evaluation, cultural and contextually responsive evaluation, democratic evaluation, realist evaluation, country-led monitoring and evaluation, capacity development, and creation of professional evaluation associations. Further, evaluation methods that are able “to generate valid and reliable data that speaks to the nature and change” related to gender, human rights, equity-focused, and transformative evaluation have been presented as promising practices for evaluation in the context of poverty and disempowerment—themes often observed in countries that receive development aid (Hay, 2012, p. 48; Bamberger & Segone, 2011; Mertens, 2012; Reddy & Eriksen, 2012).

Decolonizing Evaluation. *“It is not about your project, it is about my country”* (Ba Tall, 2009 cited in Carden, 2003).

International development evaluation is situated within “a development context that has held, and often continues to hold, an explicitly colonial agenda” (Hopson, Kirkhart, & Bledsoe, 2012, p. 78). That is, the dynamics of international development aid, policy, and programming often result in economically and politically powerful donor

agencies exerting influence and control over less powerful countries. Likewise, the dynamics of international development evaluation have exerted a colonizing effect over marginalized and indigenous populations since evaluations are often required by and designed to meet the needs of foreign funding agencies (Johnston-Goodstar, 2012; Smith, 1999). Therefore, it is crucial that evaluators acknowledge this history and actively seek ways to avoid such practices (Hopson, Kirkhart, & Bledsoe, 2012; Johnston-Goodstar, 2012). Since equity-focused evaluation has been predominantly promoted by international development organizations, it is important to examine whether these agencies encourage an adequate focus on the context and culture of the evaluand given the centrality of context and culture to the concept of equity as well as the legacy of colonizing dynamics in evaluation.

Evaluation can be characterized as colonizing, when external notions of validity and determinants of program merit and worth are imposed without regard for the local cultural context (Hopson, Kirkhart, & Bledsoe, 2012). Such colonizing dynamics compromise the relevance and validity of evaluation findings within their local contexts, and thus, the degree to which evaluations are useful and responsive to the needs of marginalized groups and local stakeholders (Carden, 2013; Ofir & Kumar, 2013; Samuels, 2011). Colonizing evaluation practice is done to or imposed *upon the poor*, who neither benefit from nor have an opportunity to shape the evaluation process. In contrast, a decolonizing evaluation practice is conducted *with the poor* and benefits them directly (Hopson, Kirkhart, & Bledsoe, 2012). A decolonizing evaluation is grounded in and responsive to local epistemology which encourages culturally and contextually appropriate standards, validity, and methods; therefore, a key feature of a decolonizing

evaluation is a recognition and critical interrogation of “Eurocentric knowledge systems and standards of inquiry that have historically been imposed upon Indigenous cultures” (Hopson, Kirkhart, & Bledsoe, 2012, p. 62).

Evaluators can work to “challenge, disrupt, and strive to change the existing social order” or “maintain and reinforce the existing system” (Greene, Millett, & Hopson, 2004, p. 102). Colonizing evaluation practices intentionally or unintentionally reinforces and “bolsters majority power structures without critique or challenge” (Hopson, Kirkhart, & Bledsoe, 2012, p. 62). Utilization of participatory evaluation approaches throughout the evaluation process can help to structure an evaluation to confront power imbalances and circumvent exploitation by giving local stakeholders input or control in the evaluation process (Bishop, 2011). Further, decolonizing evaluation practices can empower disadvantaged groups by challenging existing systems and conditions by calling attention to inequities and the corresponding social determinants (Hopson, 2014). Consideration of the social determinants of equity informs *how* and *why* some groups are oppressed and others are privileged. Further, while equity-focused programming and evaluation may be perceived as an imposition of external value systems, in theory, equity-focused evaluation approaches should emphasize the importance of acknowledging and conducting evaluation in a locally appropriate manner; they do not have to be conducted in a manner that imposes evaluation approaches or methods (Hopson, Kirkhart, & Bledsoe, 2012).

Problem Statement

Research and guidance on equity-focused evaluation is still emerging and somewhat limited in terms of clarity and availability of conceptual theories and practical

guidance (Bamberger & Segone, 2011). While seminal UNICEF publications have been important in bringing a renewed focus to equity in international development evaluation, the guidance provided is somewhat limited in terms of distinguishing what constitutes equity-focused evaluation practice and theory. For example, while it has been indicated that many equity-focused methods and techniques overlap with existing evaluation practices, often the evaluation literature does not clearly distinguish between generally accepted promising evaluation practices—which strengthen the quality of any evaluation—and those that are exclusive or central to equity-focused evaluation.

International development organizations often use equity and similar terms (i.e., equality, empowerment, and mainstreaming) in a vague fashion, inconsistently, and interchangeably in development policy and program documents (Facio & Morgan, 2009; Freeman & Mikkelsen, 2003; O'Meara, 2008 cited in Jones, 2009; Whitehead, 1992; Pan-American Health Organization [PAHO], 1999). Such practices suggest there is a need to examine how organizations conceptualize equity in terms of evaluation practice. When equity-focused development policies and programming are implemented without a solid understanding of what organizations are striving toward or what it takes to achieve equity, the burden of defining and operationalizing the construct often falls on evaluators (Jensen, 2006; Jones, 2009). It is important that the definition of equity is well understood, given that equity is the conceptual root of equity-focused evaluation. In addition, key terms may influence choice of evaluation design and methods. While equity and similar concepts are regularly defined in the literature, the definition is typically not discussed at length nor differentiated from similar concepts. Such a distinctions and clarifications are needed and relevant given the tension and controversy between the use

of terms such as equity and equality as it relates to international treaties (Facio & Morgan, 2009). Without a comprehensive understanding of how equity is defined and differentiated from similar terms, it is difficult to distinguish which practices are especially useful for equity-focused evaluation. Moreover, because meaning and assumptions can vary across languages and settings, it is especially important to examine and clarify how influential terms are conceptualized and differentiated from similar terms within international development evaluation. For example, not all words have a direct translation in every language, as is the case with equity and equality (Facio & Morgan, 2009). Further, a failure to define and operationalize key terms “reduces the evaluation’s ability to compare across programs or initiatives, to find a common standard or measure of program outcomes and to contribute to the theoretical understanding of how successful programs function” (Donaldson, Azzam, & Connor, 2013, p. 227).

While the need to focus on context and barriers to equity is indicated within the growing equity-focused evaluation literature, there has neither been a detailed discussion nor an examination of how the social determinants of equity should be addressed within international development evaluation practice. Research suggests that equity is typically addressed in a vague fashion and that the social determinants of equity are rarely addressed within international development programming, policies, and evaluation (O’Meara cited in Jones, 2009). Similarly, current development practice tends to focus only on the *who* and *what* (e.g., who is impacted, what the intervention does, what the outcomes are) (Eversole, 2005). Consideration of the social determinants of equity calls attention to power relationships, local culture and context in order to understand the *why* and *how* of conditions, interventions, and outcomes (e.g., why did the results impact

groups differently, how did the results come about). Further, when inequities are discussed within international development evaluation, typically, the focus on *who* and *what* is communicated in terms of individual-or group-level outcomes (e.g., maternal mortality rates for urban versus rural women) that are symptoms or manifestations of the social determinants of equity (ACF, 2006; Whitehead, 1992). Neither individual- nor group-level outcomes indicate whether the factors that cause or perpetuate inequities have changed; therefore, individual- and group-level data alone does not provide the type of evidence decision makers need to develop or improve policies and programs seeking to reduce inequities (ACF, 2006; Dunn, Van der Meulen, O'Campo, & Muntaner, 2013; Sen, 2002). For this reason, attention must also focus on measuring changes in the social determinants of equity, which requires collection and/or use of structural-level data and conditions to assess whether contextual changes have occurred. Identifying and describing the social determinants of equity alone, as is often done in practice, is insufficient (Phillips et al., 2013). Furthermore, an understanding of the social determinants of equity, and how they relate to evaluation is about more than analyzing culture and context or developing good indicators. Rather, it involves the ability to identify and measure changes in the power structures that impact inequity, such as understanding how complex systems interact to affect groups and awareness of how intersecting identities impact individuals differently (CSDH, 2008; Phillips et al., 2013). Additionally, understanding the *why* and *how* as explained through the social determinants of equity can help evaluators to illuminate inequities, identify power imbalances, provide evaluative information that informs whether progress toward equity has been achieved, and yield evidence that can be used to inform the design or

improvement of equity-focused interventions (ACF, 2006; Hopson, 2014; Hopson, Kirkhart, & Bledsoe, 2012; Sen, 2002).

Research Questions

In this dissertation, I investigate the following research questions:

1. How do international development organizations conceptualize equity?
 - a. How do they define equity?
 - b. How do they differentiate equity from similar concepts (i.e., equality, empowerment, and mainstreaming)?
2. Do international development organizations recommend addressing the social determinants of equity in evaluation practice? If so,
 - a. To what extent does their guidance include specifics on how to address the social determinants of equity in evaluation practice?
 - b. What practices do they recommend?

Significance and Contribution

The intended audience for my study includes international development evaluation managers, practitioners, and scholars; however, many of the conclusions and general lessons learned are applicable to the field of evaluation in general. This dissertation is intended to benefit the audience by addressing gaps in the international development evaluation literature, which have important practical and theoretical implications for the emerging state of equity-focused evaluation and relatedly, the quality of evaluation design, methods, and reporting within an equity-focused evaluation context. This research is timely given the promotion of equity-focused evaluation has been central to the International Year of Evaluation, as it is viewed as necessary in the monitoring and

evaluation and ultimate, achievement of progress toward the UN's new Sustainable Development Goals (My M&E, 2015b). Yet, specific theoretical and practical guidance on equity-focused evaluation is still limited (Bamberger & Segone, 2011). Therefore, this study is the first to examine (1) how international development organizations conceptualize and differentiate equity from similar concepts; and (2) the degree to which and how international development organizations recommend addressing the social determinants of equity—a concept that is central to the notion of equity—in evaluation practice. The guidance provided in this dissertation is not entirely new; rather it identifies how to strengthen and adhere to existing promising evaluation practices within an equity-focused evaluation context.

A review of how equity is conceptualized within the field of international development evaluation is intended to contribute to the scholarly knowledge base and inform the development of practice. This research is relevant and timely, given the emergent nature of equity-focused evaluation theory and practice. To compose a more comprehensive view of how equity is conceptualized, I also examined how the definition of equity is differentiated from similar concepts (i.e., equality, empowerment, and mainstreaming) within international development evaluation. This analysis is especially relevant within the cross-cultural field of international development evaluation given that equity and similar terms are sometimes used interchangeably including being translated or interpreted differently across languages and settings (Facio & Morgan, 2009).

This study is also intended to increase awareness of why and how the social determinants of equity—factors central to the concept of equity—should be addressed within evaluation practice. The extent to which development agencies recommend

addressing the social determinants of equity in evaluation practice serves as indicator of whether organizations view the social determinants of equity as central to the concept of equity and encourage a focus on culture and context as it relates to equity-focused evaluation. Investigating how organizations recommend addressing the social determinants of equity in practice will help build the equity-focused knowledge base within the field of international development evaluation.

Theoretical Foundation

The theoretical foundation guiding this dissertation is informed by the Annie E. Casey Foundation's (ACF) (2006) racial equity lens. The ACF's basic approach recommends a concentrated focus on the social determinants of equity (represented by structural- and intermediate-level outcomes) throughout the presentation of research findings, as opposed to a focus on individuals or groups. A concentrated focus on the social determinants is intended to (1) more accurately describe and discuss the nature of inequities; (2) avoid activating prejudice, stereotypes, or implicitly stigmatizing individuals or groups; and (3) establish an analysis that can be used to identify and communicate areas of need for the development and improvement of policies and programs (ACF, 2006). Therefore, my research was guided by the assumption that within the context of equity-focused evaluation, an explicit focus on the social determinants of equity should be maintained throughout the entire evaluation process. For example, an evaluation that addresses the social determinants of equity in evaluation findings and conclusions would couch the presentation of individual- or group-level findings (e.g., maternal mortality rates of urban and rural women) within the larger context of the social determinants of equity (e.g., greater access to skilled health care professionals and

facilities) and draws conclusion accordingly. The ACF's racial equity lens supported my work because it is (1) detailed enough that evaluation practitioners can employ the basic principles without advanced training and (2) general enough that it could be employed in evaluation practice across sectors and settings. The influence of ACF's theoretical foundation can be observed throughout this dissertation. My use of the phrase, *addressing the social determinants of equity in evaluation*, refers to the application of an explicit focus on the social determinants of equity throughout the evaluation process. The influence of the ACF's theoretical underpinnings can also be observed in the instrument I developed to answer Research Question 2. The instrument, which can be viewed in Table 10 in Appendix B, was designed to assess the extent to which the social determinants of equity have been addressed in organizational recommendations that focused on (1) evaluation questions, criteria, and/or performance benchmarks; (2) local context of the evaluand; (3) methodology; and (4) findings and conclusions (see Table 10 in Appendix B).

Organization of the Dissertation

The remainder of the dissertation is organized into four chapters. In Chapter 2, I present an overview of how international development and evaluation approaches have evolved. I also describe seminal work that has contributed to notions of equity in international development monitoring and evaluation over time, as well as the historical tension between the use of equity and equality within international development. I also review relevant seminal literature on equity-focused evaluation, which discusses the concept of the social determinants of equity, and contextually and culturally responsive evaluation to provide background for my research. The study methodology and

procedures are presented in Chapter 3. I present my findings in Chapter 4 and discuss implications and conclusions of the study in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this dissertation, I sought to fill two primary gaps in the equity-focused evaluation literature. The first gap is the absence of empirical research examining how equity—the conceptual base of equity-focused evaluation—is defined and differentiated from similar concepts. The need for this research is driven by the inconsistent and vague use of equity in the field of international development, and the resulting implications on evaluation design, methods, implementation, and reporting (Facio & Morgan, 2009; O’Meara, 2008 cited in Jones, 2009). Therefore, in this dissertation I examine how a sample of international development organizations define and differentiate equity, equality, empowerment, and mainstreaming within organizational evaluation guidance documents. The second gap is the dearth of empirical research examining whether and how the social determinants—a theme central to the notion of equity—are addressed within international development evaluation. A focus on equity in evaluation by definition requires a focus on the social determinants (Braveman & Gruskin, 2003a). Further, addressing the social determinants of equity helps to address the cultural context of an evaluand and support a focus of individual- or group-level data in the context of the social determinants of equity. The latter of which is significant because neither individual- nor group-level outcomes indicate whether factors that cause or perpetuate inequities have changed and further, cannot provide the type of evidence decision makers need to develop or improve policies and programs seeking to reduce inequities (ACF, 2006; Dunn, Van der Meulen, O’Campo, & Muntaner, 2013; Sen, 2002). For this reason,

I also examine the extent to which and how international development organizations recommend addressing the social determinant of equity in evaluation guidance documents.

The literature informing my research predominately draws from the body of work focusing on monitoring and evaluation in international development contexts. More specifically, I reviewed literature focused on culturally and contextually responsive and equity-focused evaluation to situate my topic within the field of international development evaluation. I also reviewed international development monitoring and evaluation literature focused on the definition of equity and the social determinants of equity to inform the need and background for my research. Internationally, the concept of equity has been researched and developed the most within the health field, thus my research is also informed by international monitoring and evaluation literature within the health sector (Starfield, 2001; CSDH, 2008). In this chapter, I provide a brief historical overview of the evolution of international development approaches in the post-World War II era and description of how equity has been defined within international development monitoring and evaluation literature. Further, I provide a brief description of the social determinants of equity and an overview of the contentious debate surrounding the use of the terms equity and equality within the field of international development. Finally, I provide a brief overview of the concepts of equity-focused and contextually and culturally responsive evaluation.

Historical Overview of International Development Approaches and Evaluation

Initially, post-World War II development approaches concentrated on reconstruction and economic growth, operating from the assumption that a developing

country could not simultaneously experience economic growth and increased income equality (Hjertholm & White, 2000; UNDP, 2013). Therefore, economic models and frameworks were the predominant means through which understanding and determination of development aid effectiveness was made (Clements, 1996; Sasaki, 2008). At the end of the 1950s, development strategies began to move away from a national-level focus toward a project-level focus (e.g., food aid and community development). Around this time, publications focusing on evaluation methods (i.e., guidance documents) began to appear, such as the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation-sponsored “Evaluating Development Projects” report which provided basic guidance on how to conduct evaluations in the context of developing countries (Hayes, 1959 cited in Rossi, Lipsey, & Freeman, 2004). In the 1960s, as bilateral development agencies proliferated, the nascent field of international development evaluation was largely focused on economic cost-benefit and cost-effectiveness analyses (Hjertholm & White, 2000).

As research started to show that increased income equity could enhance economic growth, development programming began focusing on ways to augment policies that would increase per capita income (UNDP, 2013). Thus, in the 1970s, development approaches shifted from an economic development to poverty reduction approach through community-level interventions that focused on improving agriculture and meeting basic human needs (Hjertholm & White, 2000). During the 1970s, as multilateral organizations expanded, both bilateral and multilateral agencies began establishing evaluation units so that they could demonstrate fiscal and outcome accountability to stakeholders (Imas & Rist, 2009; Valadez & Bamberger, 1994). However, it soon became

apparent that economic analysis alone could not inform the new socially focused programming and that there was a need for more systematic evaluation. In the 1970s, evaluation research emerged as a distinct field with birth of the first evaluation journal “Evaluation Review.” In response to the need for systematic evaluation approaches that could address socially-focused development programming, in the late 1970s, Peter Rossi, Howard Freeman, and James Wright published their first edition of “Evaluation: A Systematic Approach” (1978), along with another book titled “Evaluating Social Projects in Developing Countries” (1979).

In the 1990s, when poverty rates in economically developing countries increased to alarming levels, development efforts shifted to *pro-poor* growth approaches that targeted the worse-off groups (UNDP, 2013). At this time, development and evaluation efforts began to shift from a focus on short-term project-based evaluations that measured outputs (i.e., immediate result of project activities) to longer-term sector- and country-level evaluations that measured outcomes (i.e., change in target population) and impact (i.e., change at the community level) (Conlin & Stirrat, 2008). This change was in part attributable to the Millennium Development Goals, which necessitated less donor-centric development and evaluation by calling for alignment between donors and the development priorities of countries (Conlin & Stirrat, 2008). During this time, development and evaluation efforts began to focus more heavily on building country-level capacity (Segone, 2010). In 2000, the formation of the International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation helped to foster the development of professional evaluation associations worldwide and a global evaluation community (Mertens, 2005).

Despite reported reductions in poverty and progress toward the Millennium Development Goals, it became apparent that factors other than money affected income inequality, as social groups with different levels of advantage/disadvantage (e.g., women, racial and ethnically marginalized) continued to systematically experience unequal outcomes (UNDP, 2013). However, it should be noted that despite reported improvements there is debate surrounding whether and the extent to which development aid has been led to improved economic and social conditions (Clements, Chianca, & Sasaki, 2008). In the mid-2000s, development approaches and evaluation practices shifted from a focus on inequality of outcomes or income (vertical inequalities) to inequality of opportunity (i.e., horizontal inequalities created by political, social, and cultural determinants) (Anderson & O'Neil, 2006; Equality for Children, 2013; UNDP, 2013).

Amartya Sen's (1992) human capability theory was instrumental in helping change the notion of well-being from equal income to equal capabilities (i.e., capacity and the freedom to choose and realize the type of life an individual desires). In fact, Sen's capability approach served as the conceptual framework guiding development of the UNDP's Human Development Index (i.e., HDI) in the early 1990s. The Human Development Index is a composite score—calculated based on life expectancy, years of schooling, and gross national income per capita—that is intended to serve as an indicator of well-being across and within countries (UNDP, 2015). Further, Sen's (2002) theory emphasized that equal incomes do not necessarily translate into equal levels of human capabilities because certain groups face more barriers than other groups because of systemic discrimination. Sen called for development to focus on equality of opportunity

so that all individuals would be free to live a life of their choosing. While the capability approach acknowledges that certain groups face more barriers than other groups, it did not challenge the structural determinants of inequity that lead to less freedom for some (Dean, 2009). The equity approach began to take shape in the mid-to-late 2000s; it focuses on the eliminating unfair barriers that prevent individuals from realizing their full potential (CSDH, 2008; World Bank, 2006). The equity approach promotes the idea that equity and growth are complementary and stimulate long-term growth, along with economic and innovative efficiency; while unequal opportunity leads to “wasted productive potential and to an inefficient allocation of resources” (World Bank, 2006, p. 7).

Definition of Equity

At a general level, equity is defined as “fairness or justice in the way people are treated” and “freedom from bias or favoritism” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2014). Similarly, the Oxford Dictionary (2014) defines equity as “the quality of being fair and impartial: equity of treatment.” Equity is the moral or ethical concept of equal opportunities or equal life chances, so that “there should be no differences in outcomes based on factors for which people cannot be held responsible” (Jones, 2009, p. vi). Further, the concept of equity is “grounded in principles of distributive justice”—in that inequity is caused by a distribution of resources and processes that drive systematic differences between more and less advantaged social groups (Braveman & Gruskin, 2003a, p. 254).

Internationally, as it relates to monitoring and evaluation, the concept of equity has been researched and developed most extensively within the health sector (Starfield,

2001; CSDH, 2008). One of the most influential and practical definitions of inequity within the health sector was provided by Margaret Whitehead and adopted by the European Office of the WHO. Whitehead's definition compares best-off and worse-off socioeconomic groups and states that inequities/inequalities are differences in health that are unnecessary, avoidable, unfair, and unjust (1992). (It should be noted that Whitehead's definition encompassed the concept of both inequities and inequalities). Braveman and Gruskin (2003a) later operationalized equity in health as "absence of disparities in health (and in its key social determinants) that are systematically associated with social advantage/disadvantage" (p. 256). Key themes I identified in the international monitoring and evaluation literature are presented in Table 1 and discussed in more detail throughout this section.

Table 1

Key Themes Identified Across Definition of Equity

Themes	Description
Process or outcome/ condition	Equity is the process of eliminating unfair and avoidable circumstances that deprive disadvantaged groups of the opportunities to exercise and fulfill their human rights (Bamberger & Segone; Whitehead, 1992). As an outcome or condition, equity is a condition in which there is an absence of unfair differences in the distribution of outcomes or the social determinants of equity between social groups (Braveman, 2006).
Social groups with different levels of advantage/disadvantage	Equity implies a comparison between social groups that experience different levels of advantage/disadvantage, determined by factors such as wealth, power, and prestige that explain where people are grouped within social hierarchies (Braveman, 2003a).
Absence of systematic differences	Equity is the absence of systematic differences; whereas inequitable differences are systematic in that they are frequent and persistent across outcomes, rather than occasional or random (International Society for Equity in Health, 2000; Starfield, 2001).
Does not disadvantage the disadvantaged	In an equitable state, there is an absence of unfair differences that systematically disadvantage historically marginalized groups (Braveman, 2006).
Absences of unfair, unjust, and avoidable differences	Equitable differences are attributable to free choice and are not considered unfair, unjust, and avoidable. Inequitable differences are caused and/or perpetuated by the social determinants of equity—not a result of free choice or within an individual's control (PAHO, 1999).
Need-based/ Differential distribution	Equitable distribution can be differential or equal but should be determined based on need. “The idea of need that underlies the concept of equity in the allocation of resources implies that resources are allocated not on the basis of criteria of equality/parity but of differentiation, based on need. Accordingly, to rectify inequity, resource allocation and interventions must target the groups with the greatest need” (PAHO, 2009, p. 17).
Focus on worse-off groups	Rectifying unfair conditions so that the most disadvantaged can have the opportunity to live to their full potential is considered non-discriminatory because the worse-off are in the greatest need and if the worse-off are better able to realize and exercise their rights, then so should everyone else in the society (Braveman & Gruskin, 2003a).
Social determinants of equity/Plausible causal agent	A difference is considered inequitable if it is possible—not necessarily proven—that the social determinants of equity could impact the distribution of resources and/or opportunities that lead to the unfair differences between more and less advantaged groups (i.e., these differences are not caused by free choice) (Braveman, 2006). Addressing these unfair conditions is often implied within the definition of equity and/or typically the focus of equity-focused policies and programs and involves compensating for historical disadvantage.

Equity is a normative concept, meaning that justice and fairness are determined by comparing the relative standing of social groups with different levels of disadvantage/advantage (often historical) on an outcome of interest and/or its social determinants (i.e., social factors and/or conditions that explain the distribution of resources and/or outcomes within or between populations) (Braveman, 2006; Krumeich & Meershoek, 2014). In fact, Braveman and Gruskin (2003a) specify that equity must be assessed by comparing differences between groups that have previously experienced different levels of advantage/disadvantage (e.g., individuals that are income-wealthy and poor or individuals that identify with different racial or ethnic groups) and not between groups that have *not* historically experienced different levels of advantage/disadvantage (e.g., sick and healthy populations). For example, while “comparing rates of a particular illness (e.g., cancer) between people who reside in two geographically distinct areas” but are socially similar (i.e., they have not historically experienced different levels of advantage/disadvantage) may be a “public health concern, (but) this kind of difference does not have social justice implications” and is not considered a health disparity (Braveman, 2006, p. 172).

If individuals were able to make free choices based on their particular wants, needs, or values—free from societal pressures and norms—there would likely be differences in outcomes between groups. However, those differences should not be sizable and consistently observed across outcomes for historically marginalized groups; as research in health has shown that behaviors do not significantly differ across social groups given relatively equal opportunities (Melamed & Samman, 2013; PAHO, 1999). The International Society for Equity in Health (2005) first described inequitable

differences as systematically associated with social advantage/disadvantage—meaning differences between groups with different levels of social advantage/disadvantage are frequently observed across outcomes (i.e., not occasional or random) and are large and/or statistically significant (Braveman & Gruskin, 2003a; Starfield, 2001). Such systematic differences are deemed inequitable because they are unnecessary, unjust, and preventable; associated with individuals' positions in the social hierarchy; and due to factors beyond an individual's control (e.g., race, gender) (Braveman, 2006; Jones, 2009; PAHO, 1999). These inequitable systematic differences “put groups of people who are already socially disadvantaged (for example, by virtue of being poor, female, and/or members of a disenfranchised racial, ethnic or religious group) at further disadvantage” (Braveman & Gruskin, 2003a, p. 254). However, it should be noted that outcomes for disadvantaged groups are not necessarily worse on all outcomes (Braveman, et. al., 2011).

While the concept of choice is relative and varies across cultures and contexts, the degree to which individuals or groups have free choice is an important determinant of equity. Equitable differences result from free choice (i.e., when an individual is able to reasonably choose from all options, such as participation in certain sports) or are in an individual's direct control (PAHO, 1999). In other words, “where people have little or no choice of living and working conditions, the resulting health differences are more likely to be considered unjust than those resulting from health risk that were chosen voluntarily” (Whitehead, 1992, p. 433).

Whitehead (1992) distinguishes inequitable differences between social groups with differing levels of disadvantage/advantage as unjust and unfair because they are

unnecessary and avoidable and not a result of free choice. In an equitable society everyone would have a fair opportunity to achieve their full potential and no one would be disadvantaged from attaining this potential (Whitehead, 1992). Inequitable differences are attributable to the social determinants of equity and are considered unnecessary because inequity could be reduced or eliminated by making changes within a society or societies (Tarlov, 1999). PAHO (1999) argues that avoidability must be determined in relation to the following: (1) whether it's possible to remedy the situation with current knowledge and technology; (2) the degree to which financial resources exist to meet fair conditions; and (3) if the proposed redistribution of resources and/or opportunities would not violate a greater sense of justice.

The notion of equal opportunity underlies the concept of equity, as well as equal concerns for individual's needs as "some goods and services are necessities, and should be distributed according solely to the level of need" (e.g., food, water, sanitation, medical care, protection from violence) (Jones, 2009, p. vi). Whitehead (1992) defines equity in health care "as equal access to available care for equal need, equal utilization for equal need, equal quality of care for all" (p. 434). Equitable access or distribution is determined by need, whether it involves equal or differential treatment (Culyer & Wagstaff, 1993). Equal treatment for equal need is termed horizontal equity, while unequal but equitable differential treatment for unequal need is referred to as vertical equity—the latter of which is often associated with measures to rectify unfair conditions or redistribute resources or goods (Mooney, 1996; PAHO, 1999).

John Rawls' (1991) work contributed to current notions of equity in terms of the prioritization of the most disadvantaged as part of the process of redressing undeserved

differences that result from systematic disadvantages. Likewise, Amartya Sen's book "The Idea of Justice" (2009) and work on the human capability approach contributed to the idea that efforts to redress inequity should be prioritized in a way that most effectively meets the needs and capabilities (i.e., capacity and the freedom to choose and realize the type of life an individual desires) of the disadvantaged (i.e., the people that need it the most) and not centrally or in a way that reaches the greatest number of people. Therefore, equity-focused interventions and policies call for a focus on worse-off groups because efforts redressing inequity should not be prioritized in a way that reaches the greatest number of people but rather in a way that most effectively meets the needs and capabilities of disadvantaged (i.e., the people that need it the most) (Sen, 2002). In terms of health, a focus on the worse-off groups is supported by the right to "the highest attainable standard of health" as set forth in the WHO Constitution (1946) and international human rights treaties; which can be operationalized as "the standard of health enjoyed by the most socially advantaged group within a society" (Braveman & Gruskin, 2003a, p. 255). In other words, the health status of the most privileged groups (e.g., rates of prevalence of diseases, life expectancy) demonstrates a biologically attainable and technically feasible standard of health that should be possible for everyone to achieve within a given society (Braveman & Gruskin, 2003a; PAHO, 1999).

Rectifying unfair conditions so that the most disadvantaged can have the opportunity to live to their full potential is considered non-discriminatory because the worse-off are in the greatest need and if the worse-off are better able to realize and exercise their rights, then so should everyone else in the society (Braveman & Gruskin, 2003a). For example,

a United States Agency for International Development (USAID) evaluation concluded that targeting girls' schooling improves overall development outcomes in education:

When systems are geared up to solve the problems that keep girls out of school or prevent them from learning in school, the solutions have broad applicability and relevance to both sexes. Boys, especially those belonging to vulnerable groups or who live in remote rural areas, face many of the same problems as girls meeting their basic learning needs: lack of nearby schools, poor school quality, and lack of parental resources, support, or participation in a child's education. (USAID, 1999, pp. 6-7 cited in Hunt & Brouwers, 2003, p. 98).

Amartya Sen (2002) suggests that issues of equity in health for example, are about more than the distribution of outcomes or services within a country; they are about larger issues related to social justice, social arrangements, allocation of resources, and the "role of health in human life and freedom" (p. 659). Sen describes the causes of health inequity as multidimensional—meaning they have a variety of complex and overlapping causes. Therefore, interventions that focus on addressing only one dimension of equity may have limited effectiveness. Similarly, given the complex nature of the social determinants of equity, Braveman and Gruskin (2003a) warn that

assumptions should not be made based on observed associations between particular measures of social advantage and any given health outcome. For example, when a particular health disparity in a society is systematically seen across income groups, the underlying causal differences could be in factors associated with income rather than in income itself [e.g., education level, stress level, inheritance laws]; thus, it would be a mistake to assume that efforts focused

only on equalising income would necessarily be effective in reducing that particular inequity. (p. 256).

The purpose of equity-focused programming and policies is “not to eliminate all differences so that everyone has the same level of income, health, and education. Rather, the goal is to eliminate the unfair and avoidable circumstances” that deprive disadvantaged groups of the opportunities to exercise and fulfill their human rights (Bamberger & Segone, 2011, p. 3; Whitehead, 1992). Similarly, Braveman and Gruskin (2003b) noted that pursuing equity means removing barriers that are systematically associated with underlying social advantage/disadvantage. The social determinants of equity are structural factors (e.g., social, cultural, political, economic)—not biological factors or individual behaviors—that directly or indirectly create the conditions explaining the distribution of life outcomes (e.g., illness, wealth, power) within or between populations with different levels of social disadvantage/advantage (Blas & Kurup, 2010; CSDH, 2008; Krumeich & Meershoek, 2014). For example, government health expenditures may impact the number of skilled physicians available in rural areas that can affect outcome such as maternal mortality rates. The social determinants of equity inform the *how* and *why* of current conditions and include both barriers and enabling factors. Despite the fact that many interventions seek to empower individuals by encouraging change in individual behavior, it is the social determinants of equity that have been shown to explain the majority of life outcomes (Blas & Kurup, 2010; Krumeich & Meershoek, 2014; Tarlov, 1999).

To justify the existence of an inequitable difference, there must be a “plausible, but not necessarily proven” causal agent (Braveman et al., 2011, p. 152). This means that

“it must be reasonable based on current scientific knowledge to believe that social determinants could play an important part in that disparity at one or more points along the causal pathways,” either directly or indirectly (Braveman & Gruskin, 2003a, p. 256). The PAHO (1999) states there is a need to identify potential causal agents to demonstrate that a situation is inequitable in order to justify changes in the current distribution of opportunities and/or resources that will be necessitated to rectify current inequitable conditions. However, Braveman and Gruskin (2003a), argue that because the causes of health inequities between more and less advantaged groups are typically complex and multidimensional, a conclusive determination of the causal pathway or even most immediate causes may not be possible. Therefore, to demonstrate the existence of an inequity, all that is needed is evidence that demonstrates that “the disparity is strongly associated with unjust social structures” which systematically disadvantage, already disadvantaged populations (Braveman & Gruskin, 2003a, p. 256).

Social Determinants of Health and Social Determinants of Equity

The phrase *social determinants of equity* is not commonly used outside of the health sector; therefore, I examined the literature to identify whether any distinctions were made between the social determinants of health and the social determinants of equity. However, literature on the difference between the social determinants of health versus the social determinants of equity is limited. Within the one article I located that distinguished between the two concepts, it was suggested that the social determinants of health are “conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age,” while the social determinants of equity are “systems of power” (Jones, 2014, p. 73). Jones (2014) elaborates on these concepts by stating the following:

If the social determinants of health are the contexts in which individual behaviors arise and convey risk, the social determinants of equity determine the range of contexts available and who is found in which context. The social determinants of equity govern the distribution of resources and populations through decision-making structures, policies, practices, norms, and values, and too often operate as social determinants of in-equity by differentially distributing resources and populations. (p. 73).

While the social determinants of health and equity are not necessarily distinguished this way throughout the literature, there are similarities between the distinctions made by Jones (2014) and the structural and intermediate determinants or conditions, which constitute the social determinants of health according to the CSDH (2008). The CSDH describe the social determinants of health as a product of the interaction between the structural and intermediate determinants of health equity that “are responsible for a major part of health inequities between and within countries” (CSDH, 2008, p. 1). The CSDH defines structural determinants as “all social and political mechanisms (governance, macroeconomic policy, social policy, public policy as well as social and cultural values) that generate, configure, and maintain socioeconomic position (social class, gender or ethnicity),” which is similar to what Jones (2014) refers to as the social determinants of equity (Krumeich & Meershoek, 2014, p. 2). The CSDH prefers the use of the term structural determinants rather than “distal factors,” which is commonly used within the health field, based on the belief that the phrase *structural determinants* better captures and underscores “the causal hierarchy of social determinants involved in producing health inequities” (CSDH, 2008, p. 30). The CSDH defines intermediate determinants as

“working and living conditions,” as well as “behavioral, psychosocial and biological factors” in addition to the health care system, this definition is similar to what Jones (2014) references as the social determinants of health (CSDH, 2008, p. 30). Based on the literature, I define the social determinants of equity as (1) structural factors and (2) the conditions structural factors directly or indirectly create and which explain the distribution of life outcomes (e.g., illness, wealth, power) within or between populations with different levels of social disadvantage/advantage (CSDH, 2008; WHO, 2010a; Krumeich, & Meershoek, 2014). The social determinants of equity do not constitute biological factors or individual-level behaviors. In Figure 1, I present a summary of guidance provided in the literature regarding the relationship between the social determinants and individual-level outcomes (Blas & Kurup, 2010; CSDH, 2008; WHO, 2010a). In Figure 1, the top portion shows the relationship between the structural factors and intermediate conditions that constitute the social determinants of equity and determine differential exposure to positive and negative environmental and social factors. The bottom portion of Figure 1 shows factors related to socioeconomic position that impact vulnerability and are impacted by the social determinants of equity.

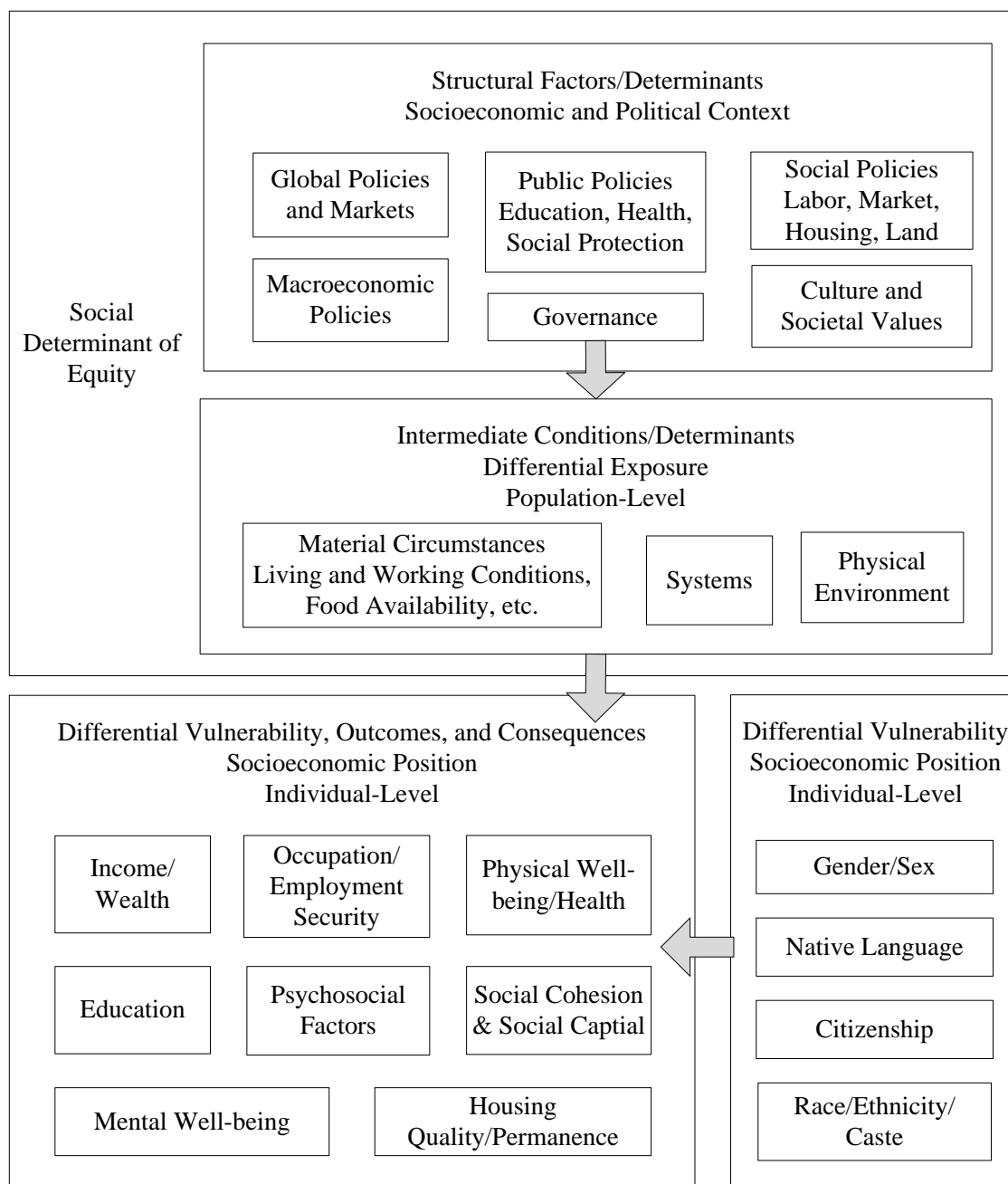


Figure 1. Social Determinants of Equity Conceptual Framework

Historical Overview of Tension Between Use of Equity and Equality

The terms equity and equality derive from the Latin word, *aequus*, meaning fair, even, level and became part of the English language during the Middle English period; the use of equity was first documented in the early 14th century and the first use of

equality during the late 14th century (Oxford English Dictionary, 2014). Although they share a common etymology, their respective connotations have diverged. In this section, I provide a brief overview of the use of the terms within the international development sector and the contentious debate that has emerged over implications for their use and meanings.

Equity and equality have a history of being used interchangeably, especially within international contexts (Facio & Morgan, 2009;). In the early 1990s, Whitehead's definition of equity became influential internationally. However, Whitehead noted that the European office of the WHO designated the terms *equity* and *inequity* to refer to concepts of both *inequality* and *inequity*—noting this was done to avoid confusion, given the inconsistent use of equity and equality (Whitehead, 1992). Prior to Whitehead's publication, within Europe, the phrase *health inequality* was predominately used to describe differences in health outcomes between groups with different levels of social advantage/disadvantage (Braveman, 2006).

International human rights treaties provide frameworks from which action to fulfill human rights can be justified. While the term equality is used almost exclusively within human rights treaties, the increasing popularity of equity has led to debate and contention over the use and definitions of equity and equality—much of which relate to implications for how international human rights laws are enacted and upheld (Facio & Morgan, 2009). The UN's 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) established universal human rights of women. Within the Convention, the term *equality* is used almost exclusively, while *equity* only appears once in the preamble because, as communicated by the CEDAW Committee—

the body that upholds and enacts Convention—equality is an objective standard, while equity is vague and subjective (Facio & Morgan, 2009). While equity's focus on fairness is assumed to imply a goal of equality for some, for those opposed to the use of equity in the CEDAW, fairness is viewed as a subjective concept. Opposition to the use of equity in CEDAW is based on the fear that the term can be used to justify similar but not equal conditions and unequal outcomes between social groups (i.e., the status quo) on the basis of cultural and social norms, diminishing the responsibilities of nation states to protect and ensure equal outcomes, as established within human rights treaties (Buss, 1998; Facio & Morgan, 2009).

Prior to and during the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995, a heated debate took place as to whether equality or equity should be used within the conference's Platform for Action, which sought to bring about greater gender equality and opportunity for women. Organizations that initially proposed replacing equality with equity were associated with conservative Islamic groups and the Vatican (Buss, 1998; Facio & Morgan, 2009). The Vatican did not view the Beijing Conference as having the authority to designate a new human rights category of women's rights and did not see the need for such actions because the scope of *universal* human rights outlined in existing treaties (e.g., Declaration of Human Rights) was inclusive of everyone, including women (Buss, 1998). Further, the Vatican interpreted the phrase the ideas that women's rights are human rights to mean that only women should fully enjoy human rights (Buss, 1998). While use of equality was eventually decided upon for the Platform for Action, due to its use within CEDAW and all other human right treaties, the controversy continued. As a result, after the 1995 Conference some government and non-governmental organizations,

especially within Latin America, began to substitute equity for equality in policy documents (Facio & Morgan, 2009).

Potential sources of confusion regarding the debate on how to define and differentiate equity and equality may be related to the subtypes referenced within the literature (see Figure 2). First, as previously mentioned, equity is sometimes discussed in the terms of vertical (i.e., unequal but equitable treatment for unequal need) and horizontal equity (i.e., equal treatment for equal need) (Mooney, 1996; PAHO, 1999). Vertical equity is associated with redistribution, as it is used to meet differential needs and/or change unfair conditions redressing past discrimination and preventing future inequities. In the context of CEDAW equality is discussed in reference to substantive (i.e., equality of results) and formal equity (e.g., mechanisms to bring about equality such as laws and policies or equal treatment). Substantive equality requires equality of results, in terms of equal outcome and power balances between social groups and often requires temporary measures to eliminate discrimination (Facio & Morgan, 2009). As shown in Figure 2, these subtypes can lead to confusion about the definition of each concept and how they differentiate—given the similarities between vertical equity and substantive equality and horizontal equity and formal equality.

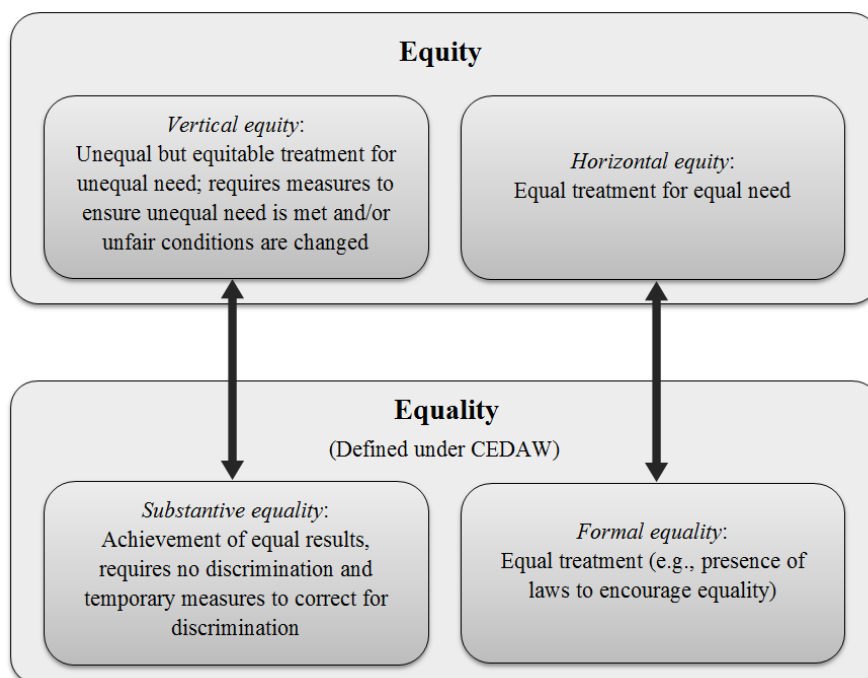


Figure 2. Visual of Potential Points of Confusion Between and Within Definitions of Equity and Equality Subtypes

Characteristics of equity and equality, as described in the literature, and equality as conceptualized with the CEDAW are outlined in Table 2. The latter of which was included because of how much it differs from the majority of the literature on equality and its similarity to descriptions of equity. The most notable distinction in terms of human rights laws is that equity is viewed as subjective and a non-legally binding term, while equality is a legally binding term and regarded as an objective and measurable concept (Facio & Morgan, 2009). Equity is not used widely within such legal documents due to concerns that it could be interpreted in a way that justifies inequitable differences and diminishes state responsibility to fulfill human rights (Facio & Morgan, 2009; Buss, 1998). Equity is viewed as a value-based ethical concept (Braveman & Gruskin, 2003a; Sen, 2002). Distribution within the context of equity is based on need and warrants, allowing differential treatment to meet needs.

Table 2

Comparison of Prominent Conceptualizations of Equity and Equality from the Literature and Equality as Envision by the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

	Equity (Literature)	Equality (Literature)	Substantive Equality (CEDAW; Facio & Morgan, 2009)
Objectiveness	Subjective (i.e., fairness, need) and difficult to measure	Objective and measurable	Objective and measurable
Legal	Not a legally binding term/Not enforceable as nation states are not legally bound to provide equity/Not used widely within human rights	Legally binding term/States are obligated to protect and ensure individual human rights (e.g., right to equality)	Legally binding or enforceable term that obligate states to provide formal (i.e., laws and policies that encourage equality and/or equal treatment) and substantive equality (i.e., equality of results)
Concerns for misuse	Subjective nature of equity (i.e., fair, avoidable, and need) could be misused to justify inequitable differences and diminish the responsibility of states	Equal treatment for all groups may not be fair and/or may not meet needs	None stated
Ethical Nature	Ethical and moral concept based on principles of distributive justice that focuses on the most disadvantaged	Not viewed as ethical concept but rather differences between groups	Based on principles of non-discrimination
Distribution	Distribution is based on need and thus, justifies the use of different treatment	Distribution of opportunities and/or resources is allocated equally to everyone	Distribution can be equal or differential, whatever is required to achieve equal outcomes and full-enjoyment of human rights among social groups
Context	Eliminate unfair and avoidable circumstances	Requires removal of discrimination but such change processes are not associated with this conceptualization	Temporary measures to eliminate discrimination in outcomes and/or power
Differentiate between equity/equality	Subset of unfair inequalities; Equity is a process or means to reach equality	Not all inequalities are considered inequities; outcome of equity	Subset of differences caused by discrimination; equality would be both an outcome and process

Equity-Focused Evaluation

While the term equity has appeared within the international development evaluation literature for some time, UNICEF has been instrumental in bringing renewed attention to the topic of equity and more specifically, equity as a lens to guide cross sectoral evaluation (i.e., not just health evaluation). Bamberger and Segone (2011) present UNICEF’s definition of equity that is described as a condition in which “all children have an opportunity to survive, develop, and reach their full potential, without discrimination, bias, or favoritism” (UNICEF, 2010, p. 4). Bamberger and Segone (2011) clearly identified the focus of equity to be the elimination of unfair and avoidable circumstances that limit the opportunity of certain social groups from exercising and fulfilling their human rights—which speaks to the social determinants being central to the concept of equity. The authors emphasize the importance of focusing on context and barriers to equity in evaluation and the importance of contextual analysis and use of tools such as the bottleneck analysis framework to assist in identifying barriers.

In her article “Strengthening Equity-Focused Evaluations Through Insights From Feminist Theory and Approaches,” Katherine Hay describes equity-focused evaluation “as a way of understanding how intersecting social cleavages (such as gender, race, class, sexuality, caste, and religion) define and shape the experience and the exercise of power in different contexts” (Hay, 2012, p. 40). In this definition and throughout her article, Hay focuses on the need to address power and structural factors that cause inequity as part of the evaluation process. Inequitable differences are unfair differences in the distribution of resources and opportunities, which is a form of power; thus, the use of a social determinant of equity framework can help identify and bring a focus to power

differences and distribution in the context of an evaluand (Chouinard, 2010). However, while I find Hay's description of equity-focused evaluation to be valuable, I would clarify that it is the social determinant of equity that define and shape experiences of power and not social cleavages. Another important observation from Hay's (2012) work includes her commentary on the importance of examining unintended impacts as part of equity-focused evaluation to detect whether the evaluand unintentionally reinforces inequities or creates new conflict as a result of challenging conditions and structural factors.

While there has been an increased focus on equity within international development, it is important for evaluators to be aware of the reasons why equity-focused interventions and relatedly, evaluations may be met with resistance. First, the most significant constraint of equity-focused work for international development organizations is lack of genuine demand from governments and/or citizens for addressing equity issues, even when formal commitments between governments and development agencies have been made (Evaluation Cooperation Group, 2012; Ramilo & Cinco, 2005). Notions of equity, equality, and universal human rights may not be viewed as the most relevant issues or viewed as an imposition of values from external forces and thus, may be met with resistance or false promises when, for example, adherence to human rights standards are dependent on development assistance (Peterson, 2004). Second, achieving lasting meaningful change for worse-off groups often requires complex and resource intensive changes; thus, efforts to invest resources in worse-off groups—who tend to lack political power—may be met with political opposition from elites (World Bank, 2006). Third, addressing such complex issues among the most disadvantaged requires time and does not produce the quick and highly visible results that politicians can easily use to justify

large resource allocations and maintain political support (Bamberger & Segone, 2011). Fourth, addressing the needs of worse-off groups would likely necessitate the existence of public service agencies with the capacity to fund, design, and implement such programming, which is not always available in economically developing countries (Bamberger & Segone, 2011).

Similarly, Bamberger and Segone (2011) describe two evaluation specific barriers related to equity. First, complex equity-focused interventions often require more resource intensive (i.e., expensive) and complex evaluation, yet “the evaluation literature only provides emerging guidance on how to evaluate outcomes and impacts for these kinds of complex interventions” (Bamberger & Segone, 2011, p. 31). Second, equity-focused evaluations often require more detailed information (e.g., disaggregated data, data to measure changes in the social determinants of equity), which may be inhibited by lack of available data, data collection capacity, and/or reluctance or ability to change existing practices. For example, while most evaluations require use of contextual information, equity-focused evaluations require more detailed information obtained via contextual analyses and use of theories of change. Theories of change are described as follows:

Theory of Change is essentially a comprehensive description and illustration of how and why a desired change is expected to happen in a particular context. It is focused in particular on mapping out or “filling in” what has been described as the “missing middle” between what a program or change initiative does (its activities or interventions) and how these lead to desired goals being achieved. It does this by first identifying the desired long-term goals and then works back from these to identify all the conditions (outcomes) that must be in place (and how these related

to one another causally) for the goals to occur. (Center for Theory of Change, 2015).

Contextually and Culturally Responsive Evaluation

While there are multiple characterizations of culture, overall, it has been described to include shared meanings, knowledge, beliefs, morals and customs, as well as art, language, and context (Chouinard & Cousins, 2009). More specifically, culture manifests in activities such as “food, music, celebrations, holidays, dance, and dress and clothing” and “such manifestations are rooted in inherent beliefs and value orientations that influence customs, norms, practices, and social institutions, including psychological processes, language, caretaking practices, media, educational systems, and organizations” (SenGupta, Hopson, & Thompson-Robinson, 2004, p. 6). At its most basic level, the context of an evaluation is the setting (e.g., location, environment, social-cultural factors) in which the evaluand (i.e., what is being evaluated) is located and the evaluation takes place. The context of an evaluation is often communicated through a description of a multidimensional setting (i.e., that includes population demographics; economic, material, and physical environment; institutional and/or organizational climate of the evaluation client and/or evaluators; social and relational norms of the setting; and political power dynamics) (Mathison, 2005).

While culturally, responsive research and evaluation began taking place in the United States after World War II, the impact of culture and context on evaluation in international settings was not formally addressed within the field of evaluation until Michael Patton’s 1985 edited volume of the journal of “New Directions for Program Evaluation.” In this volume, Patton and the contributing authors reflect on the question, “What

happens when we export the ideas, concepts, models, methods, and values of evaluation to other countries?” (Patton, 1985, p.2). Patton challenges presumably US based evaluators, to think beyond the blinders and limitations of their own culture perspectives, and to think of the various ways in which culture impacts evaluation. In fact, Patton suggests that every evaluation can be considered a cross-cultural endeavor. Patton encourages non-generalization of interactions between culture and evaluation and suggests evaluators need to be situationally responsive. Likewise, equity-focused evaluation is presented as a situationally responsive lens that must be focused on local culture and context in order view the larger landscape of equity in a given setting.

Addressing the social determinants helps support a focus on cultural context, although as suggested by authors such as Chouinard and Cousins (2009, 2014) adequately addressing cultural context necessitates use of participatory methods. As it relates to equity-focused evaluation, participatory methods should engage stakeholders with different levels of social advantage (Temby, 2007). Identifying and measuring changes in social determinants of equity is the heart of the issue and the barriers and enabling factors that exist for one individual may not be relevant or perceivable for another, according to identity and social status. Further, participatory methods are necessary even when implementing “critical lenses” such as feminist-evaluation, as authors such as Chilisa and Ntseane (2010) noted that such lenses are just as susceptible to culturally unresponsive practices.

The study of and focus on cross-cultural evaluation has been largely influenced by international development evaluation and a focus on culture and context is now regarded as essential to evaluation design, implementation, validity of findings, and use of

evaluation, especially in terms of cross-cultural evaluation (Chouinard & Cousins, 2009; Chouinard & Cousins, 2014; Hopson, 2003; Kirkhart, 2010; SenGupta, Hopson, & Thompson-Robinson, 2004). The ability to adequately address culture within evaluation practice is described as cultural competence, which is

defined as a systematic, responsive inquiry that is actively cognizant, understanding, and appreciative of the cultural context in which the evaluation takes place; that frames and articulates the epistemology of the evaluative endeavor; that employs culturally and contextually appropriate methodology; and that uses stakeholder-generated, interpretive means to arrive at the results and further use of the findings. (SenGupta, Hopson, and Thompson-Robinson, 2004, p.13).

Yet, while it is widely accepted that culturally responsive evaluation practices lead to better quality and more decolonizing evaluation practice, there has been little discussion about the relevance of culture and context within international development evaluation (Chouinard & Cousins, 2014; Hopson, Kirkhart, & Bledsoe, 2012).

Summary

In this chapter, I described how international development approaches and evaluation have evolved from a focus on inequality of outcomes (i.e., income, health, level of education) to inequality of opportunity (i.e., unequal access to employment, health care, or education) (UNDP, 2013). I also described how equity-focused evaluation has been a central focus of the International Year of Evaluation, being viewed as pivotal in the achievement of the UN's new Sustainable Development goals. Further, I provided an overview of the state of international development evaluation, highlighting the need

for more rigorous and culturally responsive evaluation. I discussed how equity has been defined and differentiated in the international development monitoring and evaluation literature to situate why equity-focused evaluation necessitates a focus on the social determinants of equity. Equity is described in the literature as a process in which unnecessary, avoidable, and unfair differences between social groups with different levels of advantage/disadvantage are addressed by eliminating and/or compensating for the historical and social barriers that create and perpetuate differences between social groups and prevent individuals from claiming and using resources to meet their needs (Bamberger & Segone, 2011; Braveman, 2006; Whitehead, 1992). I discuss what the social determinants of equity are, how they relate to the social determinants of health, and how inequities are identified in relation to the social determinants of equity. I define the social determinants of equity as *structural factors*—not biological factors or individual-level behaviors—that directly or indirectly create *intermediate conditions or determinants* that explain the distribution of life outcomes (e.g., illness, wealth, power) within or between populations with different levels of social disadvantage/advantage (CSDH, 2008; WHO, 2010a; Krumeich, & Meershoek, 2014). Finally, I discuss how my research differs from what has been presented in the field in that focuses on the power dynamics that lead to inequity and proposes measurement of changes in these dynamics (i.e., the social determinants of equity), not just description of context.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Research Questions

In this dissertation, I investigate the following research questions:

1. How do international development organizations conceptualize equity?
 - a. How do they define equity?
 - b. How do they differentiate equity from similar concepts (i.e., equality, empowerment, and mainstreaming)?
2. Do international development organizations recommend addressing the social determinants of equity in evaluation practice? If so,
 - a. To what extent does their guidance include specifics on how to address the social determinants of equity in evaluation practice?
 - b. What practices do they recommend?

Design

The study design was non-experimental, descriptive, and cross-sectional. The design was also emergent and flexible, in that various aspects of the design changed after the initial phase of data collection (i.e., pilot study) (Patton, 2002). Corresponding with the research questions, the following is a brief overview of the main activities that took place during the two phases of the study. The first phase focused on data collection and analysis for Question 1. This phase began with a pilot study. The theme of the 2013 International Development Evaluation Association's Global Assembly was "Evaluation and inequality: in moving beyond the discussion of poverty." Given the alignment of the

theme with my research, I asked attendees of the Global Assembly to complete a questionnaire about how equity and similar terms are defined and how the concepts are applied within international development evaluation practice. However, the pilot study is not described in further detail, as the its methods and findings did not significantly impact the remainder of my research—beyond demonstrating that asking practitioners to comment on this topic in an online questionnaire was not an effective means for gathering meaningful data. Thus, I refined the methods for addressing Question 1, and instead conducted a document review of evaluation practice guidance documents from international development organizations. As presented in Chapter 4, my findings from Question 1 (i.e., review of how equity and similar terms are defined by international development organizations) verified that efforts to address the social determinants of equity (i.e., barriers and enabling factors of equity) are viewed as central to the concept of equity by sampled organizations. Hence, the relevance for Question 2 was affirmed—an exploratory analysis of how and the degree to which the social determinants of equity are addressed in evaluation practice guidance documents.

Sample. International development agencies (i.e., multilateral, bilateral, and non-governmental organizations) have a major influence on international development evaluation practice and use, as they often sponsor the majority of evaluation that takes place in countries that that receive development aid (Bamberger, 2000). Thus, for the purpose of this research, international development evaluation refers to evaluation of interventions that take place in countries that receive international development aid and evaluations funded by foreign or external organizations. As such, I chose international development organizations as my unit of analysis. In order to identify international

development organizations that work toward long-term goals such as equity, I focused on those primarily providing long-term development aid or programming—as opposed to agencies that primarily provide short-term humanitarian aid (i.e., aid to support crisis response and relief).

Given the high volume of evaluations commissioned by international development agencies, evaluations are often implemented by a variety of evaluators (i.e., internal, external, national, or foreign evaluators) and organizations (i.e., funding agencies themselves, organizations administering the program, or evaluation consultants) (Bamberger, 2000). Therefore, many international development organizations have evaluation offices that manage the evaluation process, set evaluation requirements (e.g., questions, criteria), and create evaluation practice guidance documents as a means to encourage consistency and quality of donor evaluations. As a result, guidance documents produced by these prominent organizations have the potential to influence international development evaluation practice. Evaluation guidance documents are guidelines and manuals that include substantive instruction or recommendations on how to conduct evaluation (i.e., explain concepts and how to implement) and are intended to influence evaluation practice. I assumed that evaluation guidance documents produced by international development organizations influence evaluation practice; although, I did not find literature that supported or contradicted this assumption. I chose evaluation guidance documents as my data source by employing the critical case sampling approach which entails strategically selecting a case that would likely “yield the most information and have the greatest impact on the development of knowledge” (Patton, 2002, p. 236). For this reason, when considering which organizational evaluation documents (i.e., terms of

reference, evaluation reports, and evaluation guidance documents) to use as my data source, I determined that evaluation guidance documents would be the most likely to contain detailed definitions of equity and similar concepts, and influence how terms are defined in practice and other organizational evaluation documents.

Sample Selection. Figure 3 outlines the multistage sampling process and inclusion criteria I used to identify international development organizations and relevant evaluation guidance documents. I determined the sample was complete when the point of saturation was reached (i.e., when no additional organizations could be identified).

First stage: Organizations. As shown in Figure 3, in the first sampling stage I employed multiple purposive sampling strategies to identify international development organizations via the following sources: (1) UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women's (UN Women) Gender Equality Evaluation Portal and (2) full version of the AidData 2.1 research release dataset (AidData, 2013; UN Women, 2013a). The UN Women's Gender Equality Evaluation Portal serves as a "global platform for learning from evaluations on gender equality and gender mainstreaming in the UN system and beyond" (UN Women, 2013b). Based on the logic that organizations that conduct gender equality-focused evaluations would be more likely to produce relevant evaluation guidance documents, I included all international development organizations with documents in the UN Women's Gender Equality Evaluation Portal as of November 21, 2013 ($n = 44$).

AidData is an initiative that makes aid information from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's Creditor Reporting System and donor agencies accessible via a searchable database; it is the most comprehensive collection of

data on development aid available (Tierney et al., 2011). I identified 71 organizations for inclusion in the study from the AidData 2.1 research release dataset for 2010—the most current year for which there was a complete dataset. Since there are more than 100,000 entries for 2010, I established criteria that would result in a manageable number of organizations within three strata: multilateral donors, bilateral donors/donor financing agencies, and implementing agencies. As shown in Figure 3, I selected organizations for the three strata that made (i.e., multilateral and bilateral donors/financing agencies) and/or received (i.e., implementing agencies) the largest contributions (i.e., more than \$100 million each which collectively accounts for 85 percent of documented aid in 2010). Given the magnitude of the funds being transferred, I theorized that these organizations would be more likely to require evaluation, have evaluation guidance documents, and be influential in terms of evaluation policy and practice. As shown in Figure 3, the first stage of the sampling process resulted in the identification of 89 international development organizations. See Appendix C to view a list of these organizations.

Second Stage: Document. In the second sampling stage, I searched for relevant evaluation guidance documents within the websites of the 89 organizations identified in the first sampling stage and used Google to search the Internet to ensure all relevant online documents from sampled organizations were retrieved. I established the following inclusion criteria for documents: published since 2000; free; available on the Internet; in English; and include the terms evaluation and equity, equality, empowerment, and/or mainstreaming (for Question 1) and evaluation and equity, equality, and/or empowerment (for Question 2) in the title, abstract, or introduction of the document. Equity, equality, empowerment, and mainstreaming are terms frequently used when the topic of social

disparities is discussed within international development evaluation guidance documents, and at times, used alongside or interchangeably (African Development Bank, 2012; Canadian International Development Agency, 2001; Facio & Morgan, 2009; Segone, 2012; Freeman & Mikkelsen, 2003; Whitehead, 1992; PAHO, 1999). Thus for Question 1, I examined evaluation guidance documents that focus on equity, equality, empowerment, and/or mainstreaming to identify how equity is defined and differentiated from similar concepts. For Question 2, I included evaluation guidance documents that focus on equity, equality, and/or empowerment because these concepts have a societal focus and excluded documents that focus on mainstreaming which traditionally have an organizational focus. For Question 1, the second sampling stage resulted in the identification of 49 evaluation guidance documents from 32 international development organizations. For Question 2, the second sampling stage resulted in the identification of 36 evaluation guidance documents from 23 international development organizations.

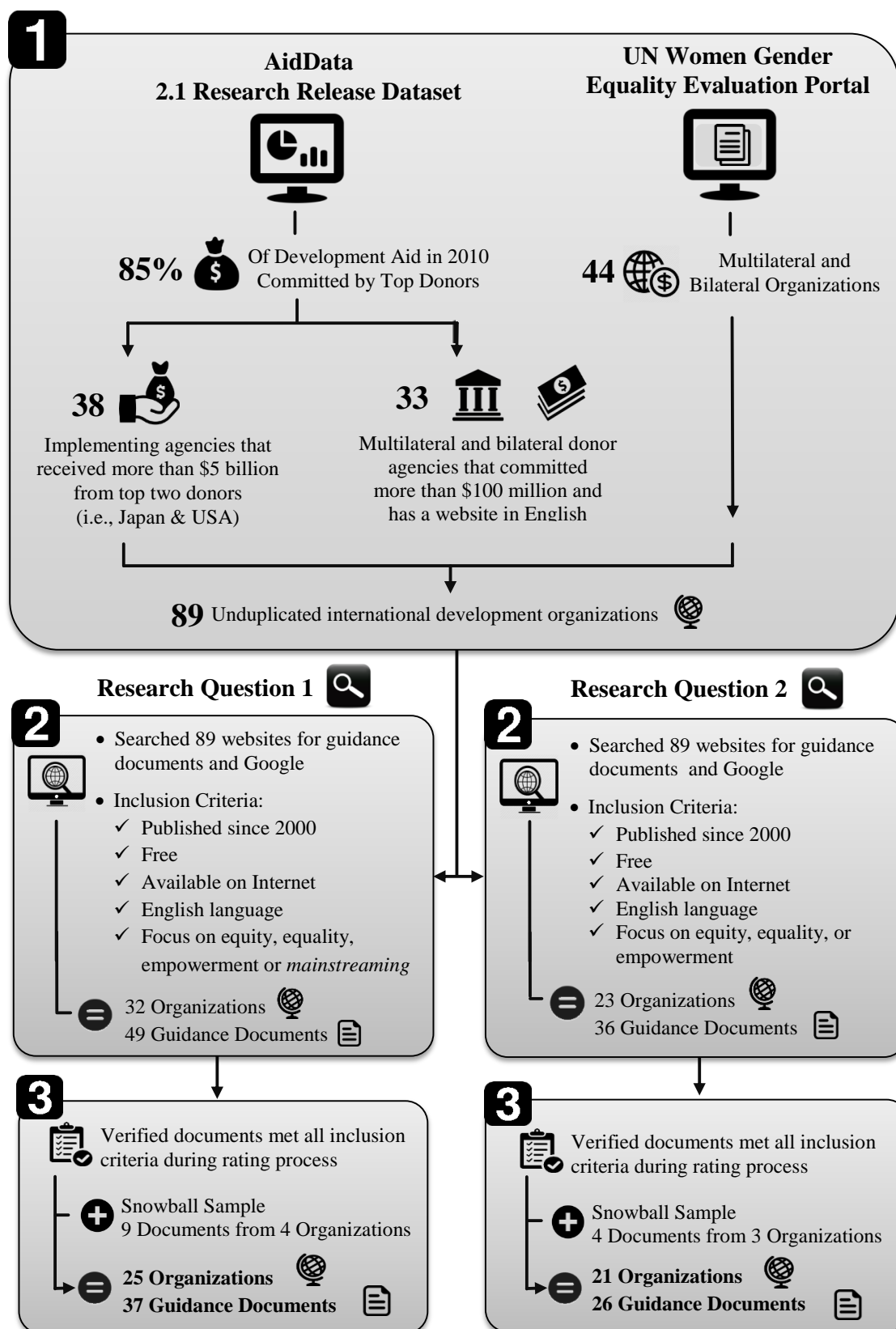


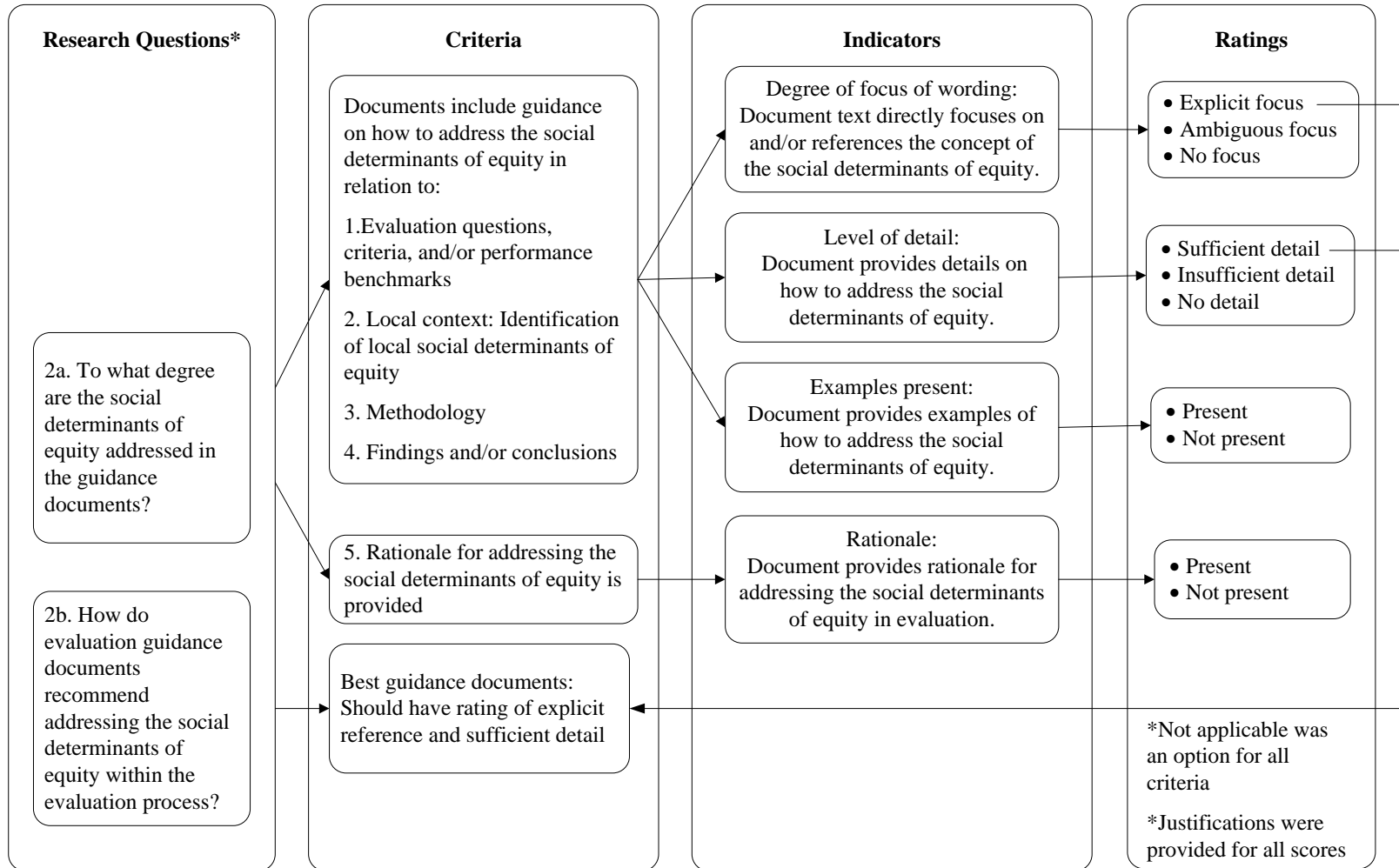
Figure 3. Multistage Sampling Process

Third Stage: Documents + Organization Snowball Sample. The third sampling stage involved closer scrutiny of the documents during the rating process. During the third sampling stage, I verified that the content of the documents met the inclusion criteria established in the second stage and identified additional documents and organizations via a snowball sampling approach. Documents were removed from the sample during this stage if, for example, the title indicated a focus on evaluation and gender equality but the content focused on organizational gender mainstreaming to achieve equality. Organizations were added to the snowball sample if they had guidance documents referenced within texts obtained from the first sampling stage. For Question 1, I identified four additional organizations and nine guidance documents via the snowball sampling approach, resulting in the review of 37 evaluation guidance documents from 25 international development organizations. For Question 2, I identified three additional organizations and four guidance documents via the snowball sampling approach, resulting in the review of 26 evaluation guidance documents from 21 international development organizations. See Appendix D to view a list of the organizations and evaluation guidance documents included in the sample and which documents contained definitions of equity, equality, empowerment, and/or mainstreaming.

Instrumentation

For Question 2, I developed a rating instrument to analyze the content of the evaluation guidance documents and collect descriptive information about how and the extent to which organizations recommend addressing the social determinants of equity. I modeled the structure of the instrument after the UN Women's UN System-wide Action Plan Individual Evaluation Scoring Tool that was developed to assess the degree to which

evaluation reports met the UN Evaluation Group's (2014) gender-related norms and standards. As shown in Figure 4, the instrument consisted of five fixed rating criteria. *Rationale* for addressing the social determinants of equity was the only criterion rated simply as *present* or *not present*. For each document, the remaining four rating criteria were scored in terms of degree of direct focus of the wording; level of detail; and presence of examples. *Not applicable* was used when criteria were not relevant to the stated purpose of a document (e.g., documents that focused heavily on monitoring or indicators typically did not comment on findings and conclusions). Space was provided for justification of each rating and examples from the guidance documents that addressed the social determinants of equity to the greatest extent (i.e., documents that received a rating of explicit reference and sufficient detail). The rating instrument and a detailed scoring guide that included guidance on what to look for in the documents and definitions of ratings are located in Appendix B.



* This instrument was not used to assess Research Question 1

Figure 4. Overview of Question 2 Rating Instrument

Data Collection and Recording

Research Question 1. I utilized the search function to locate terms and identify definitions within each of the documents. I developed a code for the definition of each terms (i.e., equity, equality, empowerment, and mainstreaming) and applied the code to relevant text in the sampled documents using MAXQDA 11 qualitative data analysis software. Since the coding structure consisted of four codes (i.e., one for each term) and “entailed little interpretation” I determined that it was appropriate for there to be only one coder (myself) (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 37). I checked for intra-coder reliability at one point in time (i.e., two months after initial coding) for seven documents or approximately 18 percent of the sample. The average rate of intra-coder reliability was 98 percent, which is considered to be of acceptable reliability (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014).

Research Question 2. After collecting relevant evaluation guidance documents from organizations identified in the sample, each document was rated using an Excel version of the rating instrument (see Table 10 in Appendix B). Given the complex nature of the criteria (i.e., ratings required a degree of inference), each document was assessed by two independent raters (i.e., myself and a doctoral-level evaluator with international development experience). I developed a detailed scoring guide to provide a common frame of reference that included guidance on key terms/topics of interest, as well as descriptions of rating levels, and examples excerpts from the text of several guidance documents (See Table 9 in Appendix B). We focused on the evaluation sections of each document (i.e., sections on other topics, such as program planning, were not subject to review) and used the search function to ensure we located relevant text. Prior to coding,

we piloted the instrument on three documents to familiarize ourselves with the coding procedure and to refine the instrument. We then worked independently and met regularly to calibrate ratings and resolve disagreement through deliberation and consensus seeking. In these meetings, we discussed and presented justification for each item in which our initial independent ratings differed. The documents were rated and consensus seeking was achieved over a period of five-weeks. While exact interrater agreement was not a requirement, we reached a consensus on ratings for all documents, indicating high interrater agreement.

Data Processing and Analysis

The analysis for Research Questions 1 and 2a was qualitative, while the analysis for Question 2b was quantitative. The qualitative analysis was implemented following Yin's (2011) five-phased cycle for qualitative analysis: 1) compiling data sources; 2) disassembling (i.e., coding or breaking down the data); 3) reassembling (e.g., identifying patterns or themes); 4) interpreting (i.e., generating meaning across patterns and themes); and 5) concluding (i.e., creating an informed opinion based on empirical evidence).

Research Question 1. Once all of the documents were coded, I exported the coded text segments from MAXQDA 11 to a Microsoft Excel document. Then in the Excel document, I created columns to represent themes I identified within the definitions through an inductive open coding process, followed by an iterative deductive process to verify the appropriateness of the coding and make modifications where necessary (Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Yin, 2011). Codes that merged from the iterative process can be viewed in Tables 4 and 5. Then I compared themes identified across definitions, as well as a comparison of definitions for UN agencies and non-UN agencies.

Research Question 2a. Ratings for each criteria and indicator were entered into an Excel sheet (see Figure 4 for an overview of the instrument/possible ratings). The extent to which organizations addressed the social determinants of equity in the sampled evaluation guidance documents was determined through a count of the ratings assigned to each organization for each criterion (see Table 6 in the results section). I also compared ratings between UN agencies and non-UN agencies for each criterion.

Research Question 2b. How organizations recommend addressing the social determinants of equity was identified through an analysis of recommendations from organizations that addressed the social determinants of equity to the greatest extent (i.e., received a rating of explicit reference and sufficient detail). Relevant content from the text was entered and analyzed in Excel. Within and across criteria, I interpreted the data by inductively identifying practical recommendations and related themes made within the sampled documents (Yin, 2011).

Limitations

Although sampling was conducted in a way that would identify organizations that are influential and/or known for their evaluation work on social disparities, the degree to which findings reflect the state of all evaluation guidance documents that focus on social disparities is unknown. It is probable that some unpublished and/or internal guidance documents (which are not freely accessible by the public) and non-English language documents were not captured in the sample. Thus, it is likely that the perspectives of some cultures and organizations were excluded while the voices of others were overrepresented. Similarly, organizations identified within the AidData database were

limited to agencies for which aid information could be obtained and excluded large donors for which little aid information was available, such as China.

The confirmability of my findings may be limited, as I chose documents as my sole data source, because I wanted the findings to be reflective of the limited information available in the field and what is communicated to practitioners across evaluation projects (Trochim, 2006). The majority of the documents were written in reference to or within the context of gender, which may have some impact on the transferability of the findings. Additionally, for Question 1, the number of organizations providing a definition of each term ranged from seven to 15; thus, the small sample size may affect the degree to which my findings are credible. Further, it should be recognized that my research is largely based on donor country or *Western* conceptualizations of equity and causes of inequity; therefore, the degree to which the findings are transferable to diverse global settings is unknown. Finally, one assumption of my study was that evaluation guidance documents produced by international development organizations (my data source) influence evaluation practice; although, I was unable to find literature that supported or contradicted this assumption.

For Question 2, high ratings (i.e., explicit focus and sufficient level of detail) do not necessarily imply that the social determinants of equity were addressed with the highest possible quality or that there was no need for improvement. Rather, these ratings indicate that the document met the minimum requirement for each rating. Finally, I designed the rating instrument so that recommendations had to be made in direct relation to each criterion. Thus, a generic statement at the beginning of a document such as “you

need to consider addressing the barriers to gender equity within all stages of evaluation,” did not ensure that the rating criteria were met.

Summary

I designed the study to produce a comprehensive overview of how equity is defined and differentiated from similar terms (equality, empowerment, and/or mainstreaming). The results from Question 1 confirmed that the elimination of barriers to equity and thus, the social determinants of equity were central to the concept of equity as defined by the sampled organizations. Subsequently in Question 2, I assessed how and the degree to which international development organizations recommend addressing the social determinants of equity in evaluation practice. I developed an instrument to assess the extent to which the social determinants of equity were addressed in recommendations that focused on evaluation questions, criteria, and/or performance benchmarks; context; methodology; as well as findings and conclusions. I also recorded and analyzed segments of text from the organizations that addressed the social determinants of equity to the greatest extent (i.e., received ratings of explicit focus and sufficient detail) to provide an overview of the practical recommendations.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

In this chapter, I present the results of my study, which are examined at the organization-level, rather than the document-level to avoid repetitiveness. This chapter is organized around my research questions:

1. How do international development organizations conceptualize equity?
 - a. How do they define equity?
 - b. How do they differentiate equity from similar concepts (i.e., equality, empowerment, and mainstreaming)?
2. Do international development organizations recommend addressing the social determinants of equity in evaluation practice? If so,
 - a. To what extent does their guidance include specifics on how to address the social determinants of equity in evaluation practice?
 - b. What practices do they recommend?

Sample Characteristics

The characteristics of the sampled organizations and evaluation practice guidance documents for Research Questions 1 and 2 are presented in Table 3. As stated in Chapter 3, organizations that had evaluation guidance documents that focused on equity and similar concepts (i.e., equality, empowerment, or mainstreaming) were included in the sample for Question 1. However, since Question 2 focuses on the social determinants of equity, only organizations that had evaluation guidance documents that focused on equity, equality, or empowerment—societal level concepts—were included in the sample.

Thus, organizations with evaluation guidance documents that focused on mainstreaming—which typically has an organizational level focus—were not included in the sample for Question 2.

Table 3

Characteristics of Sampled Organizations and Documents

	Research Question 1	Research Question 2
Evaluation Guidance Documents		
Guidance documents total	37	26
Gender-focused documents	31 (84%)	20 (77%)
Years published between	2001-2013	2000-2013
International Development Organizations		
Organizations total	25	21
Bilateral	7 (28%)	6 (29%)
Multilateral	18 (72%)	15 (71%)
United Nations agencies	9 (36%)	9 (43%)
Organization Headquarters Location		
Africa	1 (4%)	0
Asia	2 (8%)	1 (5%)
Australia	1 (4%)	1 (5%)
Europe	10 (40%)	9 (43%)
North America	11 (44%)	10 (48%)

Research Question 1: How do International Development Organizations

Conceptualize Equity?

Similarities Across Terms. In this section, I present the results of my definitional analysis for individual terms (i.e., equity, equality, empowerment, and mainstreaming) as well as across those terms. First, as shown in Table 4, I present the similarities that I

identified across organizational definitions—expressed as a percentage of the total number of organizations that defined each term. As shown, most organizations describe equity and empowerment to be both a process and condition or outcome, whereas equality is primarily characterized as a condition or outcome and mainstreaming as an organizational strategy or approach. Almost all of the organizations describe the terms at the group-level (e.g., men and women); empowerment was the only term that was defined in reference to both individual- and group-levels by a majority of organizations. Similarly, all organizations define the terms normatively—meaning the concepts are framed through a comparison of social groups with different levels of advantage/disadvantage (e.g., gender/sex, race/ethnicity, physical ability). Most organizations also define the terms in the context of gender (e.g., gender equity, gender equality, empowerment of women, mainstreaming gender).

Table 4

Similar Themes Identified Across Concepts by Percent of Organizations

		Equity	Equality	Empowerment	Mainstreaming
Number of organizations that define term		(<i>n</i> = 9)	(<i>n</i> = 15)	(<i>n</i> = 7)	(<i>n</i> = 11)
Themes		%	%	%	%
Term describes	Process	78	7	100	18
	Condition/outcome	78	100	100	18
	Strategy or approach	0	0	0	91
Similarities across terms	Defined in gender context	67	100	71	100
	Group level (focus)	100	100	86	100
	Normative concept	100	100	100	100

Salient Themes Within Concepts. A comparison of salient themes identified within and across organizational definitions are presented in Table 5 and discussed in detail later in this section. A more detailed summary of the distinct nature, common descriptions, and salient themes for each concept are shown in Table 8. I also compared themes identified in the definitions from UN and non-UN agencies, as listed in Tables 4 and 5, and did not find any substantial discrepancies within or across the definitions of *equity*, *equality*, and *empowerment*; however, I did identify discrepancies between UN and non-UN organizational definitions of *mainstreaming*, as will be discussed in more detail later in this section.

Table 5

Salient Themes Identified Within Concepts by Percentage of Organizations

Term	Salient Themes Within Concepts	Equity (<i>n</i> = 9)	Equality (<i>n</i> = 15)	Empowerment (<i>n</i> = 7)	Mainstreaming (<i>n</i> = 11)
		%	%	%	%
Equity	Compensate for historical disadvantage	78	0	0	0
	Eliminate barriers	100	13	71	18
	Fair (Use of term)	100	7	29	0
	Meet needs/Differential distribution based on need	78	0	0	23
	Unequal treatment/Differential treatment	67	20	0	0
Equality	Equal (Use of term)	33	100	29	46
	Opportunity	56	100	29	15
	Goal not equal outcomes	33	53	0	9
	Rights (Use of term)	22	80	29	0
Empowerment	Control/Power	56	33	100	18
	Decision making	0	33	86	18
	Individual level (Focus)	22	27	100	0
Mainstreaming	Equality goal	44	-	29	91
	Not perpetuate inequalities	0	0	0	45

Discussion and Comparison of Terms

Equity. The nine organizations that defined equity described it as a condition or outcome ($n = 3$ or 33%), process ($n = 1$ or 11%), or both a condition/outcome and process ($n = 5$ or 56%). While the definitions vary in their particular wording, equity is largely described as the absence of systematic, unfair, and avoidable differences among social groups experiencing different levels of advantage/disadvantage in terms of their capacity to claim and use resources to meet their needs. In an equitable state, resources are said to be allocated differentially—based on need—rather than parity (i.e., equally). Thus, differences between groups are a result of personal choices rather than factors beyond an individual's control. Equity is also described as a process during which unnecessary, avoidable, and unfair differences between social groups are addressed by eliminating and/or compensating for the historical and social barriers that create and perpetuate differences between social groups and prevent individuals from meeting their needs.

Through a comparative analysis of definitions presented by international development organizations, I identified five salient themes across definitions of equity, including fairness, removing barriers, compensating for historical disadvantage, meeting needs, and differential treatment (a comparison of salient themes identified within and across organizational definitions are shown in Table 5). Each organization uses the term *fair* to describe equity. Fairness is most often discussed in reference to the relationship between societal context (e.g., distribution and access to resources, opportunities, power, etc.) and capability to meet individual needs. For example, fairness was described in a USAID (Foreit, 2012) document using a quote from Whitehead that stated “the crucial test of whether ... health differences are considered unfair seems to depend to a great

extent on whether people chose the situation that caused the ill health or whether it was mainly out of their direct control” (1992, p. 432.) Each organization also indicates that equity involves or is achieved by removing systematic, avoidable, and unfair barriers that advantage or disadvantage some social groups but not others, and that prevent individuals from claiming and/or using resources to meet their needs. For example, in a PAHO (2009) document, it was noted that “achieving equity in access to services entails . . . identifying and eliminating economic, cultural, legal, and institutional barriers that prevent certain socioeconomic groups from using health services when and as they need them” (p. 41). Removing barriers was also identified as being central to the concept of empowerment by three-fourths of organizations; however, equity was the only concept also associated with compensating for historical and social barriers faced by disadvantaged social groups. For example, in an United Kingdom, Department for International Development-funded guide (Ramilo & Cinco, 2005) it was noted that “to ensure fairness, measures must often be available to compensate for historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from otherwise operating on a level playing field” (p. 153). The concept of meeting needs and/or the differential distribution of resources based on need is specifically referenced by over two-thirds of organizations when describing equity. For example, in a PAHO (2009) guide it was explained that “the idea of need that underlies the concept of equity in the allocation of resources implies that resources are allocated not on the basis of criteria of equality/parity but of differentiation, based on need” (p. 17). Further, while approximately a third of organizational definitions of equality state that differential needs should be *considered*, they do not specify that meeting needs is part of the concept of equality, as is indicated with equity. For example,

a Commonwealth Secretariat (2008) document reported that “gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men” (p. 2). Finally, approximately two-thirds of organizations indicate that equity does not imply equivalent treatment for everyone; while less than a quarter of organizations indicate that equality does not imply equivalent treatment for everyone. For example, in one USAID document, the following was noted:

Gender Equity means fairness of treatment for women and men, according to their respective needs. This may include equal treatment or treatment that is different but considered equivalent in terms of rights, benefits, obligations, and opportunities. In the development context, a gender equity goal often requires built-in measures to compensate for the historical and social disadvantages of women. (Bloom & Negroustaoueva, 2013, p. vi).

Equality. The 15 organizations that defined equality, described it as a condition/outcome ($n = 13$ or 87%) or both a condition/outcome and process ($n = 2$ or 13%). When described as a condition or outcome, the definitions of equality from all but one of the organizations ($n = 14$ or 93%) describe a state in which social groups have equal or similar conditions and opportunities for realizing and exercising their human rights and full human potential. The other organization describes equality as a process in which social groups with different levels of advantage/disadvantage participate equally in the change process.

Three salient themes I identified across definitions of equality include equivalence, a focus on equal opportunity and rights, and a goal that does not necessarily

imply equal outcomes (see Table 5). The term *equal* is most frequently used to describe a state in which there is parity in opportunities, individual rights, and/or opportunities to exercise individual rights. For example, in a joint Asian Development Bank and Australian Agency for International Development guide (2013), gender equality was defined as “equal status, opportunities, outcomes, and rights for females and males, including in decision making” (p. 11). Half of the organizations also use the term *equal* when defining equality in reference to participation/contribution/representation; responsibilities; access to resources/services/goods; and consideration of interests, needs, and priorities of different social groups. Each organization used the term *equal* to describe equality; however, 20 percent of organizations specifically indicate that equality does not necessarily imply that social groups should be treated the same, and over half note that the goal of equality is not equivalent outcomes or to eliminate all differences between groups. For example, one organization noted the following about gender equality:

It does not simply or necessarily mean equal numbers of women and men (girls and boys) in development activities, nor does it necessarily mean treating women and men (girls and boys) exactly the same. The aim is not that women and men become the same, but that their opportunities and life chances become and remain equal. (Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation, 2003, p. 7).

Only one organization defines equality as the lack of difference between groups, further suggesting equality is regarded as more than equal outcomes among social groups by most organizations.

Given the debate about and frequency with which the terms equity and equality are used interchangeably within international development evaluation literature, I also examined the degree to which equity and equality are differentiated by organizations (Facio & Morgan, 2009). While all organizations that define equity and/or equality use both terms at least once, only half either directly state or suggest that the meaning of the terms differ. Based on my analysis, I identified two distinct ways in which the organizational definitions of equity and equality differ. First, equity is predominately described as both an outcome and a process, whereas, equality is more often regarded as a condition or outcome as opposed to a process. For example, all organizations that define equity ($n = 9$) note that a change process is either *part of* or necessary to *achieve* equity. In contrast, only 40 percent ($n = 6$) of organizations that define equality state that a change process is needed to *achieve* equality. Further, within organizational definitions, equality is described as an outcome of equity, mainstreaming, and empowerment. The second critical differentiation is that while both equity and equality focus on conditions and opportunities, equality focuses on the degree to which these are similar, whereas equity focuses on whether they are fair in terms of meeting the needs of social groups.

Empowerment. Empowerment is described by all organizations as both a process in which people *take control* or condition/outcome in which people *have power* and *control* over their lives in terms of increased ability to claim and use resources ($n = 7$ or 100%) and exercise capability and/or agency (i.e., capacity to act in the world) ($n = 7$ or 100%) and choice and decision making ($n = 6$ or 86%). Empowerment is conceptualized as taking place at the individual- and collective- or group-levels and is facilitated by efforts at the institutional or systemic levels ($n = 7$ or 100%). In contrast, equity, equality,

and mainstreaming largely focus on the group level. Further, three organizations (43%) describe empowerment as something that can only come from within an individual or group—not an outside source. Themes predominately associated with empowerment include a focus on control/power, decision making, and both individuals and groups. Control/power and decision making are referenced by all organizations when describing empowerment; fewer organizations refer to these concepts when describing equity, equality, and mainstreaming. For example, empowerment was described in one PAHO (1999) document as

being able to choose from among several options, make decisions, and put them into practice in contexts where this ability had previously been denied. It is a process, but it is also a result; it is collective and at the same time individual.

Others cannot empower women; only women can empower themselves. (pp. 17-18).

Mainstreaming. Mainstreaming is described as an organizational strategy or approach that focuses on changing practices in terms of taking into account the needs of and potential implications for social groups with different levels of advantage/disadvantage during a policy's, program's, and project's life cycle (e.g., formation, monitoring, evaluation) ($n = 11$ or 100%). For example, in a UNDP document, Moser (2007) defines gender mainstreaming as “an organisational strategy to bring a gender perspective to all aspects of an institution's policy, programme and project processes” (p. 17). Themes identified within organizational definitions of mainstreaming include a focus on organizations ($n = 10$ or 91%), an ultimate goal of equality, and avoiding the perpetuation of inequalities. Mainstreaming is the only term for which UN

and non-UN organizations differed substantially in their definitions. Over two-thirds of UN agencies ($n = 7$ or 70%) specifically note that mainstreaming should not perpetuate inequalities, something that is not mentioned by any non-UN organizations ($n = 4$).

Research Question 2: Do International Development Organizations Recommend Addressing the Social Determinants of Equity in Evaluation Practice?

As shown in Table 6, over half of organizations explicitly referenced and/or sufficiently described how to address the social determinants of equity in relation to the criteria for *identification of local context* and *methodology*. The social determinants of equity were referenced and described by the fewest organizations in terms of *evaluation questions, criteria, and/or performance benchmarks* and *findings and/or conclusions*.

When comparing UN versus non-UN agencies, the only sizable difference in findings was that non-UN agencies (92% or $n = 11$) were more likely to provide examples of how methods can address the social determinants of equity in evaluation practice as compared with UN agencies (56% or $n = 5$). Further, while not shown in Table 6, most organizations (81%; $n = 17$) also explained why it is important to address the concept of the social determinants of equity within the evaluation process. The following are three of the evaluation guidance documents that addressed the determinants of equity to the greatest extent (i.e., received the highest ratings): (1) “Tool Kit on Gender Equality Results and Indicators” (Australian Agency for International Development & Asian Development Bank, 2013); (2) UNICEF’s “How to Design and Manage Equity-Focused evaluations” (Bamberger & Segone, 2011); and (3) “Guide for Analysis and Monitoring of Gender Equity in Health Policies” (PAHO, 2009)

The remainder of this section summarizes recommendations from organizations that addressed the social determinants of equity to the greatest extent (i.e., received a rating of explicit reference and sufficient detail) in reference to their guidance on (1) *evaluation questions, criteria, and/or performance benchmarks*; (2) *identifying local context/social determinants of equity*; (3) *methodology*; and/or (4) *findings and/or conclusions*. To avoid duplication, a summary of the guidance from these documents, as well as the recommendations from the broader literature, are presented in Figure 7 in Chapter 5.

Guidance on Evaluation Questions, Criteria, and/or Performance

Benchmarks. In terms of addressing the social determinants of equity within *evaluation questions, criteria, and/or performance benchmarks*, recommendations predominately centered on evaluation questions with little guidance provided on evaluation criteria and performance benchmarks. Examples of evaluation questions that address the social determinants of equity as presented by the sampled organizations included (1) to what extent was there a change in the underlying causes of inequity? and (2) “did the program address the key barriers to women’s economic empowerment and build on their strengths?” (Australian Agency for International Development & Asian Development Bank, 2013, p. 93). Although most organizations were not explicit in their guidance, suggesting that the social determinants of equity could be informed via typical outcome-focused evaluation questions that get at *how* and *why* change occurred (e.g., Why did it change? How did it change? How much did it change?).

Table 6

Percentage of Organizations That Addressed the Social Determinants of Equity in Evaluation Guidance Documents

Rating Criteria	Degree of focus of wording			Level of detail			Examples	
	Explicit	Ambiguous	No reference	Sufficient	Insufficient	No detail	Provided	Not provided
1. Evaluation questions, criteria, and/or performance benchmarks (n = 20)	45%	25%	30%	10%	45%	45%	70%	30%
2. Context: Identifying local social determinants of equity (n = 21)	81%	10%	10%	71%	14%	14%	76%	24%
3. Methodology (i.e., design, measurement, indicators, and/or analysis) (n = 21)	62%	24%	14%	52%	33%	14%	76%	24%
4. Findings and/or conclusions (n = 15)	7%	13%	80%	0%	20%	80%	7%	93%

Guidance on Identifying the Local Context and the Social Determinants of

Equity. Organizations addressed the social determinants of equity to the greatest extent through guidance on how to understand the *local context*. Guidance typically centered on the importance of conducting multiple forms of contextual analyses (e.g., situational, social, poverty, gender, and/or vulnerability analysis) and use of the results to inform each stage of the evaluation process. Contextual analysis provides evaluators with an understanding of possible structural factors and conditions that cause and/or perpetuate inequity and impact program implementation, outcomes, and sustainability. While contextual analysis identifies which social groups (*who*) are experiencing particular disadvantage/advantage (*what*), the main purpose of an equity-focused contextual analysis is to identify *why* and *how* power relations, systems, and structures interact and affect access and control of opportunities and resources (Kalanda, Makwiza, & Kemp, 2004). Practical suggestions for conducting contextual analyses are presented in Figure 5.

As mentioned in Figure 5, it was suggested that theories of change be used to map out contextual analyses (i.e., visually display the relationship between relevant factors influencing equity such as economic, political, legal, social, cultural, and environmental factors). Theories of change illustrate and explain the *how* and *why* of intervention pathways of change by articulating underlying assumptions often associated with complex interventions and/or contexts; while logic models, on the other hand, describe and illustrate the relationships between program components (i.e., inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes (Clark & Anderson, 2004). In fact, one UNICEF document suggests that equity-focused evaluations should require a theory of change “so that hypotheses can be developed and tested about behavioral, cultural and other factors

affecting implementation” and outcomes (Bamberger & Segone, 2011, p. 31).

Collectively, organizations posited that theories of change should be used to help situate the evaluand within the local context and in relation to the social determinants of equity by identifying (1) how the evaluand intends to bring about change; (2) factors that are likely to affect the implementation and outcomes; and (3) the main weaknesses and threats to success of the evaluand.

In Table 7, I present themes I identified within organizational recommendations on how to identify inequities between social groups, as well as, structural factors and conditions that lead to inequitable outcomes. Additionally, this guidance can be used to facilitate the description and measurement of changes in the social determinants of equity. Only a handful of organizations referenced the concept of the *social determinants* as part of such recommendations, and those that did, primarily focused on health. The left side of Table 7 includes guidance on how to identify inequities between social groups by considering factors that (1) are commonly associated with social advantage/disadvantage, (2) may be associated with inequities in particular contexts, and (3) mediate the experience of different social groups in relation to the evaluand. The right side of Table 7 includes examples of structural-level factors that create conditions that explain the distribution of life outcomes across groups with different levels of social advantage/disadvantage.

Factors to be addressed in the contextual analysis

- ✓ What is inequitable?
 - ✓ Who experiences advantage and disadvantage as it relates to the inequity?
 - ✓ What are the underlying causes of inequity? / Why are some groups worse off?
 - ✓ Why does the inequity exist? / How did it get that way? (i.e., historical factors)
 - ✓ What are the factors that act as barriers and enabling factors of equity? (i.e., What prevents equity? What helps encourages equity?)
 - ✓ What are the power relationships that enable or prevent inequity?
 - ✓ How do factors that act as barriers and enablers of equity intersect or interact?
 - ✓ How do factors that act as barriers and enablers of equity impact social groups over time?
 - ✓ What are the needs of disadvantaged groups? What are the aspirations of disadvantaged groups?
 - ✓ For which outcomes are systematic differences observed between the most advantaged and disadvantaged groups?
 - ✓ What change needs to take place to ameliorate the underlying causes of inequity?
-

Guidance for conducting the contextual analysis

- ✓ Document whether or not a contextual analysis was conducted prior to project implementation
 - ✓ Conduct during project and/or evaluation planning
 - ✓ Utilize multiple forms of contextual analysis (e.g., situational, social, poverty, gender, and/or vulnerability analysis)
 - ✓ Engage stakeholders with different levels of advantage/disadvantage to conduct a contextual analysis
 - ✓ Use contextual analysis throughout the evaluation process (e.g., to analyze and interpret findings and conclusions)
 - ✓ Use a theory of change to map out a contextual analysis (i.e., enablers and barriers to intended change) and demonstrate how the evaluand is expected to bring about change
-

Figure 5. Practical Considerations on How to Conduct a Contextual Analysis

Table 7

Themes Identified from Recommendations on How to Identify Inequity and the Social Determinants of Equity

Identifying Inequities: Do systematic differences exist between social groups in relation to . . .			Underlying Structural and Conditions that Cause Inequity		
factors commonly associated with disadvantage?	the following general factors?	factors that mediate the experience of social groups in relation to the evaluand?	Material/ Physical environment	Social/ Cultural	Structures/ Systems
Citizenship	Access	Acceptability	Built environment (i.e., buildings, transportation, roads, parks)	Attitudes/ Perceptions	Budgets
Education	Awareness/ Knowledge/Skills	Accessibility (e.g., physical and geographic)	Housing	Bias/ Discrimination	Economics
Employment status	Benefit	Affordability	Humanitarian emergencies	History	Education
Ethnicity/race	Choice/Decision-making	Appropriateness (e.g., facilities, culture)	Natural environment (e.g., geography, plants, climate, weather)	Norms/ practices	Employment
Gender/sex	Control/Power/Influence	Awareness of	Physical barriers/ Accessibility	Power-relations/ Dynamics	Health services
Income/wealth	Labor division/Time use	Availability	Pollution and physical hazards	Social support/ Social interactions	Housing
Language	Exposure (e.g., pollution, technology)	Capacity (e.g., qualified staff, equipment/supplies, service volume)	Public safety/ Exposure to violence		Institutions/ Operations
Location of residence (e.g., rural/urban)	Leadership/Representation	Distribution (e.g., evenly)	Sanitation		Labor
Occupation	Mobility	Quality			Legal/judicial
Permanence of residence (e.g., homeless, displaced, nomadic, migratory)	Opportunity	Relevance			Markets/trade
Physical/mental health status (e.g., HIV status, depression)	Participation/Contribution	Responsiveness			Policy and political context
	Public/Visible role models	Satisfaction			Political stability
	Responsibilities/Roles	Treatment/Experience			Resource allocation
	Resources/Ownership	Outcomes gaps/unequal Utilization/Participation			
	Safety/Vulnerability				
	Security (food, insurance)				

Guidance on Methodology. Recommendations on how to incorporate the social determinants of equity in evaluation *methods* most often focused on the types of outcomes to measure and the importance of disaggregating data. Most organizations also recommend engaging stakeholders with different levels of advantage/disadvantage in the identification of outcome indicators; however, only a few reference the importance of involving participants in data interpretation. For example, one document suggests it is important to include both males and females in the identification of outcomes and indicators because perceptions of whether, how, and why gender relations are changing (e.g., in terms of roles, time use, decision making) depends on whether you ask individuals that identify as male or female (Temby, 2007).

In Figure 7, I present a summary of considerations for outcomes that address the social determinants of equity related to timeframe, directness of measure (i.e., proxy outcome indicators), and level or degree to which outcomes reflect changes or challenges to the barriers to equity. Timeframe corresponds with when outcomes are anticipated to be observed and include short-term, intermediate/medium-term, and long-term. For example, in Figure 6, sexual behavior and knowledge of HIV and AIDS are used as intermediate indicators for an intervention with corresponding long-term outcomes related to disease prevalence, reproductive health, mortality, and quality of life. Directness of measure refers to proxy measures serve as an indicator of unobservable or complex constructs. An example of such a proxy indicator is the use of “the percentage of women enrolling in agricultural training in X provinces before and after the project intervention” to represent a more complex outcome, such as “the number of women motivated to pursue agricultural training as a result of project empowerment” (World

Bank, 2009, p. 712). The sampled organizations also referenced outcome indicators that represent the degree to which barriers to equity have been affected and include practical and strategic outcome indicators and breakthroughs. Practical outcome indicators describe the result of an intervention and/or conditions of individuals that do not challenge an individuals' subordinate position in society and often focus on adequacy of living conditions (Moser, 1993). Strategic outcome indicators represent intervention results that challenge existing social disadvantage and often are focused on longer-term change (e.g., legal rights, division of labor/use of time, equal wages) (Moser, 1993). Relatedly, CARE International describes breakthroughs, as a form of a strategic change "that represents a significant leap forward that is not easily reversed" (Picard & Gillingham, 2012, p. 80). Breakthroughs can "exist as one-time events (e.g., structural, policy, or precedent change) or as a critical threshold for an incremental change" (Picard & Gillingham, 2012, p. 80). An example of a one-time breakthrough is the passage of a domestic violence act. An example of a critical threshold breakthrough for incremental change is "50% of all medical facilities have specific confidential services available for survivors of violence who seek help" (Picard & Gillingham, 2012, p. 80).

Guidance on Findings and Conclusions. The social determinants of equity were referenced and described to the least extent in terms of evaluation *findings and/or conclusions*. The few organizations that made recommendations related to findings and conclusions emphasized the importance of pairing disaggregated data with qualitative contextual data to facilitate accurate interpretation of results.

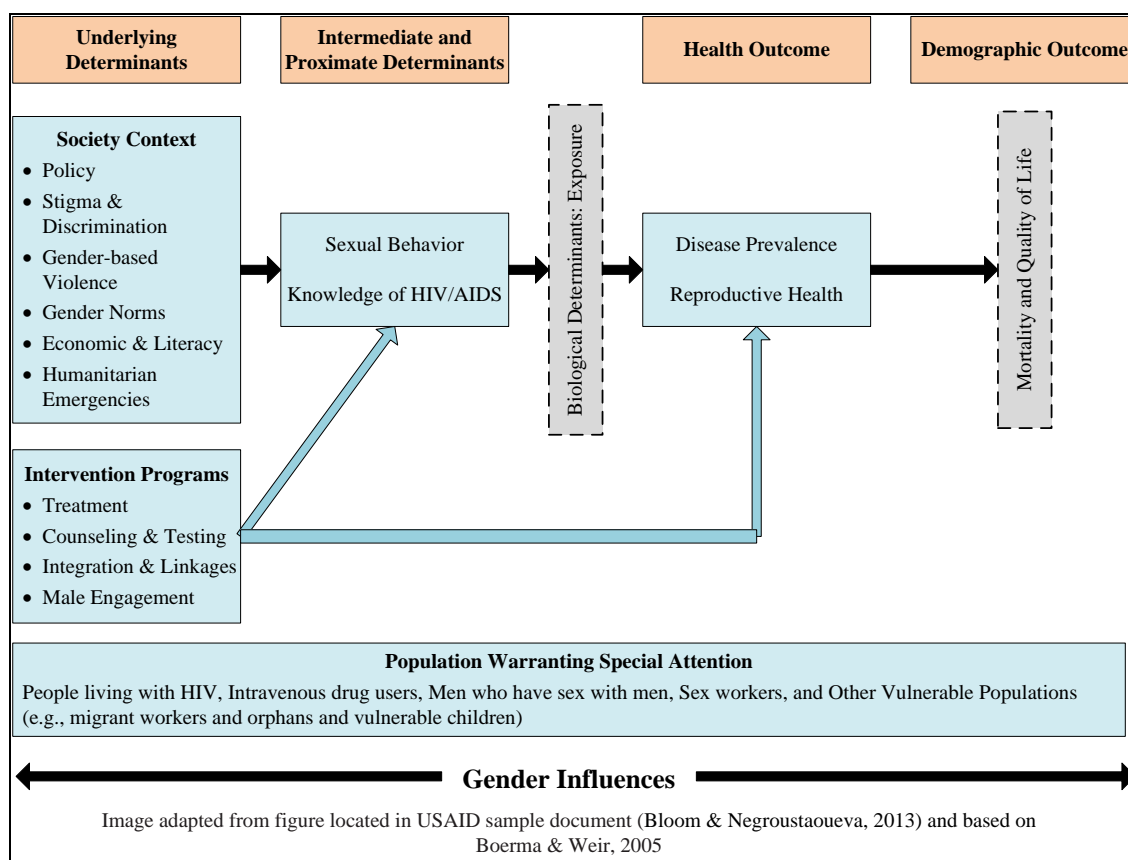


Figure 6. Example of Intermediate/Proximate Indicators

Summary

The following is a summary of the findings presented in this chapter. I discuss the implications of these findings in Chapter 5.

Research Question 1. A summary of findings related to Question 1 is presented in Table 8. Most organizations describe equity and empowerment to be both a process and condition or outcome, whereas equality is primarily characterized as a condition or outcome and mainstreaming as an organizational strategy or approach. One significant finding for this research study in particular, was the confirmation that, removal of unfair barriers was central to the concept of equity—therefore, affirming the relevance of Research Question 2. Removing barriers was also identified as central to the concept of

empowerment by three-fourths of organizations; however, equity was the only term also associated with compensating for historical and social barriers faced by disadvantaged social groups. The concept of meeting needs and/or the differential distribution of resources based on need is specifically referenced by over two-thirds of organizations when describing equity. While approximately a third of organizational definitions of equality state that differential needs should be *considered*, they do not specify that meeting needs is part of the concept of equality, as is indicated with equity. Additionally, approximately two-thirds of organizations indicate that equity does not imply equivalent treatment for everyone; while less than a quarter of organizations indicate that equality does not imply equivalent treatment for everyone. As it relates to the differentiating equity and equality, while both concepts are noted to focus on conditions and opportunities, equality tends to be more concerned with the degree to which conditions and opportunities are equal or similar, whereas equity is considered with whether they are fair in terms of meeting the needs of social groups.

Research Question 2a. Over half of organizations explicitly referenced and/or sufficiently described how to address the social determinants of equity in relation to the criteria for (1) *identification of local context* and (2) *methodology*. The social determinants of equity were referenced and described by the fewest organizations in terms of (1) *evaluation questions, criteria, and/or performance benchmarks*; and (2) *findings and/or conclusions*.

Table 8

Summary of Organizational Descriptions and Salient Themes

	Equity	Equality	Empowerment	Mainstreaming
Most common descriptions	<p>Condition/outcome in which there is an absence of systematic, unfair, and avoidable differences among social groups in their capacity to claim and use resources to meet their needs and where resources are allocated differentially—based on need—rather than parity (i.e., equality).</p> <p>Process that involves eliminating and/or compensating for unfair barriers that create and perpetuate systemic, avoidable, and unfair differences between groups and prevent individuals from meeting their needs.</p>	<p>Condition/outcome in which social groups have equal life chances, meaning they have equal or similar conditions and opportunities for realizing and exercising their human rights and full human potential.</p>	<p>Condition/outcome in which individuals or groups <i>have</i> control over their lives in terms of their power to claim and use resources as they see fit; capability and agency (i.e., capacity to act in the world); and power/opportunity to make decisions .</p> <p>Process in which individuals or groups <i>take</i> control over their lives in terms of their power to claim and use resources as they see fit; capability and agency (i.e., capacity to act in the word); and power/opportunity to make decisions.</p>	<p>Organizational approach or strategy that focuses on changing practices related to how social groups with different levels of advantage/disadvantage are addressed by taking into account the needs of and potential implications for social groups during the life cycle (e.g., formation, monitoring, and evaluation) of policies, programs, and projects.</p>
Salient themes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fairness in societal context (e.g., distribution and access to resources) • Remove barriers that create unfair conditions • Compensate for historical disadvantage • Distribution of resources based on need/Individual capacity to meet needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equal or similar opportunities and conditions for realizing and exercising rights • Goal not necessarily equivalent or similar outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on control/power and decision-making • Focus on at the individual- and group-level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational approach or strategy • Equality is the goal • Should not perpetuate inequalities
Term describes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Condition/outcome • Process 	<p>Condition/outcome</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Condition/outcome • Process 	<p>Organizational approach or strategy</p>

Research Question 2b. Overall many organizations highlighted the importance of contextual analysis to encourage quality throughout the evaluation process, as contextual analyses help to identify the *why* and *how* of unfair distribution of resources and opportunities for social groups. Other recommendations that addressed the social determinants of equity tended to focus on evaluation questions, data disaggregation, and use of contextual data to support accurate interpretation of findings. Guidance documents also included recommendations on using different outcome types to adequately assess the complex change process associated with equity. The types of indicators varied in relation to timeframe, directness of measure, and level or degree to which outcomes reflect changes or challenges to the barriers to equity. A summary of the findings from the sampled guidance documents and broader literature is provided in Figure 7 in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter, I summarize and discuss my findings and their implications for the field of international development evaluation. My dissertation was designed to fill gaps in the international development evaluation literature by examining how international development organizations define equity and the extent to which and how they recommend addressing the social determinants of equity—a theme central to the concept of equity—within evaluation guidance documents (ACF, 2006; Braveman, 2006).

Research Question 1: How do International Development Organizations

Conceptualize Equity?

Discussion and Conclusions. Definitions of equity presented in organizations' evaluation guidance documents differed from those presented in the international development literature, as few organizational definitions explicitly stated that equity involved (1) a focus on social groups *with different levels of social advantage/disadvantage*; (2) a focus on the *worse-off groups*; or (3) *systematic* differences between social groups (i.e., sizable differences consistently observed across outcomes for historically disadvantaged groups). I attribute these discrepancies to the fact that most sampled documents focused on gender, and therefore, the social groups to be examined (i.e., males and females) were already identified, with females implicitly understood to be the disadvantaged group. This omission could also be a result of confusion regarding the evolving and interchangeable use of equity and equality within international development organizations. For example, the WHO has defined equality and

equity as a singular concept and used the terms interchangeably. In the WHO's "World Health Report 2000," the concept of inequality/inequity was defined and operationalized as the magnitude of differences across previously *ungrouped individuals* that had not historically experienced different levels of social advantage/disadvantage—as opposed to predetermined social groups that had historically experienced different levels of disadvantage/advantage (e.g., race/ethnicity, caste, or socioeconomic status). This change was based on the argument that comparing differences between predetermined groups assumes causation (i.e., a relationship between the social determinants of equity and unequal outcomes) and overlooks differences within groups. However, this definition did not reflect notions of fairness as it relates to distributional justice or the elimination of barriers that lead to the inequities that are inherent in the concept of equity (Braveman, 2006; Braveman & Gruskin, 2003a). While the WHO eventually reversed the practice a few years later, it is apparent that there is variation within and across organizations and easy to see how such changes within the field may have contributed to widespread variations—which perhaps explain some variation in the sampled documents.

Based on my findings and the literature, I offer the following definitions of equity. Equity is a condition characterized by an absence of systematic, unfair, and avoidable differences in the distribution of outcomes or the social determinants of equity between social groups with different levels of advantage/disadvantage (Braveman, 2006; Whitehead, 1992; Starfield, 2001). Equity is also described as a process in which unnecessary, avoidable, and unfair differences between social groups with different levels of advantage/disadvantage are addressed by eliminating and/or compensating for the historical and social barriers that create and perpetuate differences between social groups

and prevent individuals from claiming and using resources to meet their needs (Bamberger & Segone, 2011; Braveman, 2006; Whitehead, 1992). Based on these definitions, I describe the purpose of equity-focused evaluation as an examination of the relationship between the evaluand and (1) experiences of social groups with different levels of advantage/disadvantage, and (2) the social determinants of equity, which shape those experiences (Braveman, 2006; Hay, 2012).

Based on my findings, equity is distinguished from equality, empowerment, and mainstreaming as it (1) is regarded as both a process and outcome; (2) focuses on the notion of fairness; (3) focuses on the elimination of barriers that to lead to inequity; (4) compensates for historical disadvantage; and (5) calls for differential treatment to meet differential needs—often to help overcome historical disadvantage. However, based on the variation in the definitions of equity and similar concepts in the literature review as well as sampled documents, I caution that evaluators should not make assumptions about how such terms are conceptualized and operationalized by organizations and individuals with whom they work. It is important to understand how terms are conceptualized because use of multiple and competing definitions of key terms can affect operationalization and reduce the degree to which evaluation findings and methods are comparable (Donaldson, Azzam, & Connor, 2013). Thus, the meanings of equity and equality should not be assumed given the large amount of variation found across their definitions in the literature and guidance documents.

Recommendations for Practice. Within my sample, only one third of organizations that use the term equity defined it within their evaluation guidance documents. As previously stated, despite the fact that commonalities were identified across definitions of equity, I suggest that evaluators should not apply preconceived notions or assumed meaning of terms, and that explicit definitions should always be provided by the evaluator and/or organizations. How equity and similar terms are defined and operationalized within an evaluation can have important implications for evaluation methods and the validity of findings; therefore, key terms should always be defined within evaluation documents (e.g., evaluation plans, terms of reference, reports, and guidance documents)—especially in cross-cultural contexts, where meaning and assumptions can vary across languages and settings (Facio & Morgan, 2009). To provide clarity and address common themes related to equity and equality, I recommend that equity and equality be described in relation to the themes listed in Table 1.

To encourage more culturally responsive evaluation practices, evaluation guidance documents should include basic definitions of key terms (e.g., equity and equality) so that evaluators can collaborate with stakeholders to operationalize constructs in a culturally and contextually relevant and appropriate manner (Donaldson, Azzam, & Connor 2013; Freeman & Mikkelsen, 2003). However, whether a basic standardized definition or multiple definitions are utilized, it is imperative that key concepts are clearly defined and operationalized in evaluation documents in order to maximize potential for learning, accountability, and validity of findings (Brambilla, 2001; Evaluation Cooperation Group, 2012). Further, evaluators can play a significant role in helping programs operationalize these concepts, as well as contribute to the knowledge base

about how equity-focused projects and evaluations are being conducted. Evaluators can facilitate this process through clear articulation of program theory and evaluation components (i.e., by linking evaluation questions, criteria, and/or performance benchmarks through use of visual evaluation matrices) (Robertson & Schroeter, 2014).

Research Question 2: Do International Development Organizations Recommend Addressing the Social Determinants of Equity in Evaluation Practice?

Discussion and Conclusions. My definitional review demonstrated that the sampled organizations conceptualize the social determinants as a theme central to the concept of equity. While the findings indicate that organizations discussed how to address the social determinants of equity in evaluation practice to some extent there is room for improvement—specifically in terms of the clarity and directness of language, and quality and level of detailed instructions. The fact that so many organizations included little or no guidance on how to address the social determinants of equity in relation to *evaluation questions, criteria, and/or performance benchmarks and findings and/or conclusions* raises concerns about the degree to which evaluations that adhere to such guidance documents are culturally responsive; promoting decolonizing evaluation practices; and adequately assessing changes in the social determinants of equity. If the social determinants of equity are not addressed within evaluation questions, criteria, and/or performance benchmarks, the determinants will likely not be addressed in the remainder of the evaluation either. Additionally, evaluation findings and conclusions constitute the majority of information used for decision making and/or program improvement. A lack of guidance on how to address the social determinants of equity in evaluation findings and conclusions is problematic, as identification of the social

determinants of equity help to support accurate interpretation of individual- or group-level outcomes within local cultural contexts.

Based on my review of the sampled documents and broader literature, I identify the social determinants of equity as both (1) structural factors (e.g., customs, policies, systems) that cause and (2) intermediate conditions (e.g., conditions of schools, availability of clinics) that perpetuate equity and inequity (CSDH, 2008; WHO, 2010a; Krumeich, & Meershoek, 2014). The ACF (2006) distinguishes the social determinants of equity from individual- and group-level data (e.g., percentage of males and females who complete secondary school). The ACF (2006) recommends collecting, analyzing, and presenting both types of data together to keep the focus on the social determinants of equity—the factors that enable or prevent equity and level at which change can most effectively be made. Thus, generating a discussion on the social determinants of equity results in a more collective and societal focus to the issue at hand, compared to viewing inequity in terms of biological factors/medical model and individual-level behaviors, as is often done and advocated by donor countries (Macdonald, 2010). Further, both the social determinants of equity include factors that both enable and act as barriers to equity, highlighting the problem areas as well as the strengths of a society which prevent or resist inequity, the latter of which is advocated by more indigenous methods of research (Chilisa & Ntseane, 2010).

Recommendations for Practice. Recommendations about how to address the social determinants of equity in evaluation guidance documents predominantly focused on the importance of conducting and utilizing contextual analyses throughout the evaluation process, thereby encouraging a focus on the cultural context of the evaluand.

Most organizations provided example outcomes and indicators, such as USAID's (Bloom & Negroustaoueva, 2013) "Compendium of Gender Equality and HIV Indicators." Very few organizations provided figures or visual tools to help identify relevant contextual factors, such as UNICEF's bottleneck framework (Bamberger & Segone, 2011) and CARE's Strategic Impact Inquiry classification of outcomes (Picard & Gillingham, 2012). Themes identified across these organizational recommendations are presented in the findings section in Table 7 and can be used by evaluators to help identify inequities and relevant social determinants. I recommend that evaluators use visual and conceptual frameworks to help identify structural, intermediate, and individual- or group-level outcomes across contexts—such as models are often used in the health sector to represent the social determinants of health (see CSDH, 2008 and WHO, 2010a). Such tools can also be used to engage and communicate with stakeholders when conducting contextual analysis.

In Figure 7, I present a list of ways in which the social determinants of equity can be addressed throughout the evaluation process, informed by my findings and the broader literature. I suggest that international development organizations incorporate these recommendations into evaluation guidance documents, terms of reference, and requirements for evaluation reporting, so that evaluation practice can move beyond just identifying the structural determinants of equity to include the measurement of changes in the structural determinants of equity over time.

Evaluation Planning

Contextual Analysis: Conduct and use multiple forms of contextual analyses throughout the evaluation process. (Most sampled organizations recommended).

Participatory Evaluation: Engage stakeholders with different levels of social advantage/disadvantage and provide them with opportunities for input or decision making throughout the evaluation process. (Most sampled organizations recommended).

Theory of Change: Visually demonstrate how the evaluand intends to bring about change as it relates to the social determinants of equity and context (UNICEF/Bamberger & Segone, 2011; CARE/Picard & Gillingham, 2012).

Model of Program Theory: Use such a visual model (e.g., logic model, log frame) to depict the relationships between program components and intended impact on the social determinants of equity (Rogers, 2012).

Benchmarks: Performance benchmarks for the worse-off should be set to reflect status of the most advantaged group in a society, since this reflects the level of outcomes that should be attainable for everyone (Braveman & Gruskin, 2003a).

Evaluation Matrix: Explain how the social determinants of equity are addressed at each stage of the evaluation process. For example, develop an evaluation matrix that clearly links the evaluation questions, criteria, and performance benchmarks to demonstrate the degree to which the evaluation addresses the social determinants of equity (Robertson & Schroeter, 2014).

Measurement

Types of Data: Include and present data on the social determinants of equity and individual- or group-level outcomes together as much as possible to enable accurate analysis and a focus on the social determinants of equity (ACF, 2006).

Timeframe: Include outcome indicators that are realistic within the given timeframe (i.e., short-term, intermediate /medium-term, and long-term) (USAID/Bloom & Negroustaoueva, 2013; CARE/Picard & Gillingham, 2012).

Proxy Outcome Indicator: Use a proxy outcome indicator to measure unobservable or complex constructs (e.g., legal empowerment measured via number of federally elected representatives) and explicitly document their use—especially with social constructs (e.g., race used as a proxy for racism) (Davis, 1992; USAID/Bloom & Negroustaoueva, 2013).

Figure 7—Continued

Measurement
<i>Degree of Equitable Change:</i> Determine and explain how outcome indicators relate to the degree to which the social determinants of equity are changed or challenged (i.e., practical, strategic, and breakthrough indicators) (CARE/Picard & Gillingham, 2012).
Findings and Conclusions
<i>Findings:</i> Present both individual- or group-level and structural-level data on the social determinants of equity together as much as possible (ACF, 2006).
<i>Disaggregation of data:</i> Disaggregate data by social groups that have historically experienced different levels of social disadvantage/advantage. (Most sampled organizations recommended).
<i>Data interpretation:</i> Describe data and explain the why or how of individual- or group-level outcomes in relation to structural-level data (i.e., the social determinants of equity) to support accurate interpretation of results (ACF, 2006).
Reporting
<i>Focus on the social determinants of equity:</i> Maintain a focus on social determinants of equity rather than specific groups to avoid activating prejudices and appropriately describe the situation—even when data on the social determinants of equity is not available (ACF, 2006).
<i>Structural language:</i> Use language that accurately describes the structural or underlying causes of inequitable conditions (e.g., disadvantaged, underrepresented, or marginalized populations versus minorities; countries that receive development aid versus global south) (ACF, 2006).
<i>Acknowledge the socially constructed nature of demographic characteristics:</i> State or accurately reflect socially constructed nature of demographic characteristics within language and construction of surveys (e.g., what race(s) do you identify with versus what race are you) (Ward, 2003).
<i>Participatory evaluation:</i> Engage stakeholders with different levels of social advantage/disadvantage and provide them with opportunities for input or decision making throughout the evaluation process. (Most sampled organizations recommended).

Figure 7. Summary of How to Address the Social Determinants of Equity Throughout the Evaluation Process

As presented in Figure 7, one important takeaway from the ACF's (2006) racial equity lens, is the distinction between individual- or group-level outcomes (i.e., manifestations of unfair conditions and structural factors) and outcomes that represents the social determinants of equity. According to the ACF (2006), presenting individual- or group-level outcome data in relation to the structural determinants helps to (1) more accurately describe and discuss the nature of inequities; (2) avoid activating prejudice, stereotypes, or implicitly stigmatizing individuals or groups; and (3) establish a structural-level analysis that can be used to identify areas of need for policy and programs improvement. Such recommendations are supported by the health equity literature in which the social determinants of equity have been shown to explain the majority of life outcomes; therefore, it could be misleading not to connect individual- or group-level data to the contextual and structural factors (ACF, 2006; Krumeich & Meershoek, 2014; Tarlov, 1999; WHO, 2010a). For example, if the secondary school dropout rates are higher for females than males, it does not mean that girls are not capable of succeeding academically rather it could indicate that there are barriers to female participation, such as cultural norms and practices that prioritize girls' work in the home above their attendance at school. While there is a need for "more practical, affordable, sustainable, and scientifically sound methods and data sources" to monitor and evaluate progress toward equity, it has been suggested "in virtually every country more could be done now with existing data and relatively simple methods" (Braveman & Gruskin, 2003b, p. 542). For example, if structural-level project data is not available, the ACF (2006) suggests using existing regional or national data to aid in understanding why individual- or group-

level results may or may not have been achieved. Furthermore, the ACF (2006) suggests that even without data on structural-level factors, individual-level outcomes can be presented in a way that directs the reader's attention to potential structural or contextual considerations.

The ACF (2006) also recommends using language throughout the evaluation that focuses on and accurately describes the structural determinants of equity. For example, instead of labeling families as *families in poverty*, organizations should consider more structurally focused language such as families *making a living wage* or *families able to meet basic needs*. Additionally, while communities that have historically experienced discrimination or disadvantage are often referred to as minorities—a term that means a smaller segment of a larger group or population—it may be more accurate to use structural language that reflects the experience of the group such as disadvantaged, underrepresented, oppressed, or marginalized populations. Likewise, terms such as *advantaged* or *privileged* should be used to refer to dominant groups to highlight the socially constructed nature of demographic variables and inequities. Further, within the international development context, *global south* (i.e., literally references countries located south of the equator) and may not reflect the underlying cause of the issues of interest. Thus, it may be more appropriate to refer to these countries as *countries that receive development aid* or *formerly colonized countries*, depending on the context.

While not addressed in the sampled documents, it is important to state that race or other indicators of social advantage (e.g., sex/gender, sexual orientation) are being used as proxies for structural inequities such as racism, because doing so shifts focus to

the structural explanations rather than individual or group biases and stereotypes (Davis, 1992). For example, racial inequities in test scores are not *caused* by the color of children's skin, but rather structural factors and conditions associated with racism that directly and indirectly privilege or disadvantage children because of their skin color. Likewise, the sampled organizations did not discuss the importance of acknowledging the socially constructed nature of the demographic characteristics associated with systematic disparities (e.g., gender, race, ethnicity). Acknowledging the socially constructed nature of such concepts can be stated explicitly and/or indirectly through wording choice (e.g., questionnaire items). While altering the wording does not explicitly demonstrate that variables such as race are being used as proxies for racism, they do reflect a more accurate description of the construct. Further, *non-traditional* wording may draw attention to and remind the reader of the socially constructed nature of the concepts. For example, instead of asking *what is your race?* Ask, *what race(s) do you identify with?* Or *what gender do you identify with?* Versus *what is your gender?*—ideally providing a text box and/or options such as man, woman, my gender is not listed (i.e., not other) (Ward, 2003).

Value Added

This research is intended to stimulate the international development evaluation community to think critically about what equity-focused evaluation practice means, explore ways to strengthen it, and engage in research to advance the development of equity-focused evaluation practice. Further, I hope my research will prompt the international development evaluation community to reflect on the meaning of equity and

the connection between equity and the social determinants of equity as it relates to evaluation practice. More specifically, I hope this work encourages more frequent measurement of change in the social determinants of equity, rather than just descriptions of relevant social determinants and contextual factors. While monitoring and evaluation that has focused on the social determinants of equity has been largely confined to the health sector, I hope my research encourages scholars and practitioners to apply and expand these practices in other contexts to support equity-focused, culturally responsive, and decolonizing evaluation practices.

Future Research

Equity-focused evaluation practice necessitates attention on the social determinants of equity. Therefore, future research on and development of equity-focused evaluation should focus on two key areas, that are describe in detail in the following paragraphs. First, additional research and guidance is needed to inform how the social determinants of equity should be addressed in evaluation practice. Second, research is needed on how to bring about practical changes that result in a greater focus on the social determinants of equity in international development evaluation.

Since the social determinants of equity have not been addressed extensively in evaluation, additional research and guidance is needed to inform evaluation practice. For example, there is a need to translate the lessons from the substantial amount of evaluation research and guidance in the health field, which focus on addressing the social determinants of equity, into interdisciplinary guidance that can inform the larger evaluation knowledge base. There is also a need for research and development of

recommendations on how to address heterogeneity within marginalized communities during the evaluation process. More specifically, guidance is needed on how to identify populations that experience the least equitable conditions (e.g., women with disabilities) so that the population can be involved in the evaluation process and their needs considered. Further, additional research and guidance is needed regarding analysis of population data for heterogeneous populations so that worsening inequities experienced by some groups are detected and not masked by progress experienced by other groups. Likewise, further development and guidance is needed on how best to group and analyze data for heterogeneous marginalized communities that may, for example, normally be examined as one group (e.g., the bottom quintile). Future research should also address how to identify ways to eliminate social determinants that act as barriers to equity when conducting contextual analyses and/or as part of the evaluation process (Mertens & Wilson, 2012). Such information is contextual in nature and can inform what is and is not being done, and identify factors that may confound the outcomes and impact of the evaluation—as well as identifying options for future policies and programming. Relatedly, additional empirical research is needed to investigate how and the degree to which the social determinants of equity are addressed in evaluation practice (e.g., by reviewing evaluation reports and terms of reference and conducting interviews with practitioners or managers). Such pursuits should also explore how addressing the social determinants of equity in evaluation practice affects evaluation quality and use. Given the highly sensitive nature of the topic and opposition to addressing equity in many countries, it would be helpful if additional research also identified ways to navigate barriers to addressing

equity in evaluation across settings (Bamberger & Segone, 2011). Informed by this research, the creation of a comprehensive guide on how to address the social determinants of equity in evaluation practice would be beneficial to the field, as well as the identification of relevant exemplary evaluations.

Finally, research is needed on how to bring about a cultural shift to enable a greater focus on the social determinants of equity in international development evaluation. International development evaluation practice is often dictated by donor agency terms of reference (Bamberger, 2000). Such terms of reference often do not clearly articulate a need for a focus on or measurement of the social determinants of equity in the evaluation process—often only requiring a focus on individual-level outcomes or description of existing barriers. A change toward evaluation practice that places a greater focus on the social determinants of equity will require a cultural shift at multiple levels within international development evaluation (e.g., development organizations, professional organizations, evaluators). Future research can focus on the range of dynamics necessary to create a cultural shift so that addressing the social determinants of equity in evaluation practice and use of subsequent evaluation findings becomes the expected and practiced norm within the larger pursuit of transformative social change (Mertens, 2015).

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APPENDIX A

Acronyms

ACF	Annie E. Casey Foundation
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CSDH	Commission on the Social Determinants of Health
PAHO	Pan-American Health Organisation
UN	United Nations
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WHO	World Health Organization

APPENDIX B

Social Determinants of Equity Exploratory Rating Instrument

Purpose

The purpose of this instrument is to assist in an exploratory descriptive assessment of evaluation guidance documents produced by international development organizations in order to examine Research Question 2a (i.e., the degree to which the social determinants of equity are addressed in the guidance documents); and Research Question 2b (i.e., to identify examples of the type of guidance that is being provided).

Development

The structure of the rating instrument was modeled after the [UN Women's UN-System-wide Action Plan \(UN-SWAP\) Individual Evaluation Scoring Tool](#) which was developed to assess the degree to which evaluation reports are meeting the UN Evaluation Group's norms, standards, and integration of gender in evaluation practice (UN Evaluation Group, 2014).

Materials

The following have been created to assist with the rating process:

- A visual representation of the rating scale and criteria is presented in Figure 4.
- A detailed explanation of the rating scale is shown in Table 9.
- The rating instrument is displayed in Table 10.

Rating Instructions

The instrument consists of five fixed rating criteria. Rationale for addressing equity is the only criterion rated simply as *present* or *not present*. For each document, the remaining four rating criteria (i.e., *questions, criteria, and/or performance benchmarks; identifying the local context; methodology; and findings and/or conclusions*) should be rated in terms of degree of direct focus of the wording (i.e., *explicit, ambiguous, not*

referenced); level of detail (i.e., *sufficient*, *insufficient*, *no detail*); and presence of examples. *Not applicable* is an option when criteria are not relevant to a particular document given its stated purpose (e.g., documents that focus heavily on monitoring or indicators often do not focus on findings and conclusions). Justification should be provided within the instrument for all ratings. Examples from the guidance documents that addressed the social determinants to the greatest extent (i.e., that receive a rating of explicit reference and sufficient detail) should also be recorded in the rating instrument.

Definition of the Social Determinants of Equity

The social determinants of equity are structural factors (e.g., social, cultural, political, economic)—not genetic or biological factors or individual level behaviors—that directly or indirectly create conditions that explain the distribution of life outcomes (e.g., illness, wealth, power) within or between populations with different levels of social disadvantage/advantage (CSDH, 2008; WHO, 2010a; Krumeich, 2014).

Other terms that may indicate the concept of the social determinants of equity is being discussed may include but is not limited to the following: barrier, constraint, obstacle, root, cause, problem, factor, structure, institution, contribute, limit, context, system, challenge, exclude, support, progress, discrimination, change. Other phrases may include theory of change, gender analysis, contextual analysis, vulnerability analysis, and power relations. A reference to gender equality does not constitute a reference to the social determinants of equity.

Table 2

Explanation of Rating Scale

Rating	Description	Example
Degree of Direct Reference of Wording: Degree to which the wording of the text directly references the social determinants of equity in relation to this criterion.		
2	Words used in text explicitly reference the concept of the social determinants of equity in relation to the criterion. The exact words ‘social determinant of equity’ do not need to be used, only needs to refer to the concept (see a list of other terms that could be used below the definition of the social determinants of equity). The reference is unambiguous in that the text clearly refers to the concept of the social determinants of equity.	[Criteria 1] “Has there been an increase in women’s access to or control over productive resources, services, or assets, including resources provided by the program? How does this compare to men’s access to these resources, services, and assets? (Consider land, property, employment, income, information, financial services, and other economic opportunities.) Did the program address the key barriers to women’s economic empowerment and build on their strengths?” (Asian Development Bank & Australian Agency for International Development, 2013, p. 93).
1	Words used in text make ambiguous reference to the concept of the social determinants of equity (i.e., specific factors that cause or perpetuates equity or inequity in the context of the evaluand) in relation to the criterion. The text does not explicitly reference the concept of the social determinants of equity, leaving the reader uncertain as to whether the social determinants of equity have been referenced. Such a reference may be observed when differences between two social groups with different levels of advantage/disadvantage are discussed.	[Criteria 1] “Are women and men likely to benefit differently from project’s activities? Do results (outputs and outcomes as effects of activities) affect women and men differently? If so, why and in which way?” and “What effects (expected/unexpected) are the interventions likely to have on gender relations?” (International Labour Organization, 2012).
0	Words used in text do not focus on or reference the concept of the social determinants of equity	[Criteria 3] “Gender-sensitive indicators have been developed to measure both qualitative and quantitative GE [gender equality] results at all levels of the results chain” (Canadian International Development Agency, 2001).

Table 9—Continued

Rating	Description	Example
Level of Detail: Degree of guidance or level of detail provided on how to address the social determinants of equity with regard to this aspect of an evaluation.		
2	A sufficient level of detail is provided in terms of clearly stating that the social determinants of equity should be addressed and how they should be addressed in relation to the rating criterion (examples/list of indicators do not count towards level of detail). Enough detail is provided, such that it would be reasonable to assume an evaluation practitioner would realize the social determinants of equity should be focused on and has enough information to address them, as they relate to the criterion, in practice.	[Criteria 1] “GE/HR [gender equality/human rights] evaluation explicitly recognizes gender & power relations (& the structural & other causes that give rise to inequities, discrimination, & unfair power relations). It assesses the degree to which both gender & power relationships change as a result of an intervention. . .” “Example Questions: To what extent have efforts been successful in stopping harmful & discriminatory practices against women?” (UN Women, 2010, p. 15 & 29).
1	An insufficient level of detail is provided in terms of whether the social determinants of equity should be addressed and how they should be addressed in relation to the criterion (examples/list of indicators do not count towards level of detail). There is not enough detail to reasonably assume an evaluation practitioner would realize the social determinants of equity should be focused on and has enough information to address them, as they relate to the criterion, in practice.	[Criteria 3] Australian Agency for International Development & Asian Development Bank (2013) “Reporting on gender equality indicators should also be accompanied by gender and social analysis, to ensure that information is interpreted correctly” (p. 8); and “Where there are significant or unintended differences between women’s and men’s participation and benefits, it is important to analyze why these differences occur, so that the initiative can be modified” (p. 9).
0	No detail	
Presence: 1) Examples of how to address the social determinants of equity in evaluation relation to the criterion; and 2) An explanation of why or a rationale for addressing the social determinants of equity in evaluation is included in the document.		
1	Present	[Example]: Examples indicators of political participation: “Percentage of women in the country’s senate (upper chamber of the national legislature); Percentage of women in the lower chamber (in countries with a bicameral system); Percentage of women in ministerial positions; Percentage of women mayors.” (PAHO, 2009, p. 26) [Rational]: Department for International Development: “Our spectacles also need a lens that will enable us to see a gender issue in terms of its underlying causes because addressing an issue necessitates tackling its underlying causes, more than the effects.” (Ramilo & Cinco, 2005, p. 37).
0	Not Present	

Table 3

Evaluation Practice Guidance Document Scoring Instrument

Scoring Criteria	Notes	Degree of focus 2 = Explicit 1 = Ambiguous 0 = No focus 99 = NA	Level of detail 2 = Sufficient 1 = Insufficient 0 = No detail 99 = NA	Presence of examples (or why criterion 6) 1 = Present 0 = Not present 99 = NA	Justification for all ratings	Example(s) for criterion with explicit focus (2) & sufficient detail (2)
1. Document suggests addressing the social determinants of equity in evaluation questions, criteria, &/or performance benchmark.	Recommendations suggest integrating the social determinants of equity into the evaluation questions, criteria, &/or performance benchmarks, as appropriate in evaluations &/or terms of reference (TORs). Such recommendations <u>MAY</u> include but are not limited to evaluations that focus on: the social determinants of equity when analyzing how the evaluand was designed to impact equity; how intentional or unintentional outcomes effect progress on the social determinants of equity; &/or whether the evaluand was successful in making progress on the social determinants of equity.					
2. Document suggests identifying the local social determinants of equity (i.e., specific factors that cause or perpetuates equity or inequity in relation to the context of the evaluand) in order to explain how the evaluand intends to impact equity &/or how the outcomes effect equity.	Recommendations may suggest identifying the local social determinants of equity in order to describe the context of the evaluand, how the evaluand is designed/intended to impact the social determinants of equity, how the intentional or unintentional outcomes of the evaluand were achieved, &/or how the evaluand's intentional or unintentional outcomes effect the social determinants of equity. The text should reference identifying the local social determinants of equity for the specific context of the evaluand (not just commonly known determinants). Wording/phrases that indicate that a focus on the local determinants is located near the definition of the social determinants of equity in this document.					

Table 10—Continued

3. Document suggests that the social determinants of equity should be addressed within the methodology (i.e., design, measurement, indicators, <u>&/or</u> analysis) in a way that would ensure data on the social determinants of equity will be collected.	<p>Recommendations focused on integrating the social determinants of equity in the methodology, would likely suggest that the evaluation measurement & analyze how the evaluand is designed/intended to impact the social determinants of equity, how the intentional or unintentional outcomes of the evaluand were achieved, &/or how the evaluand's intentional or unintentional outcomes effect the social determinants of equity.</p> <p>Such recommendations <u>MAY</u> include but are not limited to: consistent disaggregation of data into groups associated with social dis/advantage & inclusion of indicators that demonstrate progress in relation to the social determinants of equity (i.e., not just data that focuses on an individual's outcomes but rather informs the contextual situation).</p>	-	-	* Rated for each document once	-	-
4. Document suggests that the findings &/or conclusions present outcomes contextualized in relation to the social determinants of equity.	Recommendations would suggest presenting & discussing findings or conclusions in the context of the social determinants of equity (e.g., death rates by race will be presented & discussed in relation to information about access to clinics, availability of trained medical professionals, cost of medicine, etc.).					
5. Document provides rationale/ explains why it is important to address the social determinants of equity within the evaluation process.	Such justifications may include but are not limited to the need to document progress toward equity, equality, or empowerment or need to identify program or policy intervention points.	-	-	* Rated for each document once	-	-

APPENDIX C

Organizations Selected in First Sampling Stage

Table 4

International Development Organizations Selected in First Sampling Stage

Organization	Acronym	AID Data	UN Women Portal	Snowball Sample
1. Africa Development Bank	AFDB		X	
2. African Medical and Research Foundation	AMREF	X		
3. Agency for Cooperation and Research in Development	ACORD	X		
4. Andean Development Corporation	CAF	x		
5. Asian Development Bank	ADB/ASDB	x	x	
6. Australian Government	AusAID		x	
7. Canada: Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development	DFATD/CIDA	x	x	
8. Canada: International Development Research Centre	IDRC	x		
9. Collaborative Centre for Gender and Development	CCGD		x	
10. Commonwealth Secretariat	COMSEC		x	
11. Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research	CGIAR	x		
12. Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere	CARE			x
13. Denmark: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark	DANIDA		x	
14. Economic Commission for Latin America (UN)	ECLAC			x
15. European Commission - Development and Cooperation -EuropeAid	EU		x	
16. European Development Fund (Dev org part of EU)	EDF	x		
17. Food and Agriculture Organization (UN)	FAO	x	x	
18. France: Agency of Treasurer	TRESOR	x		
19. France: French Development Agency	AFD	x		
20. France: French Ministry of Foreign Affairs	MAE	x		
21. Germany: German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development	BMZ	x	x	

Table 11—Continued

Organization	Acronym	AID Data	UN Women Portal	Snowball Sample
22. Germany: Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau	KFW	x		
23. Germany: Entrepreneurial Development Group Subsidiary of KfW	DEG	x		
24. Germany: Federal Foreign Office	F O	x		
25. Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition		x		
26. Inter-American Institute for Co-operation on Agriculture	IICA	x		
27. International Alert		x		
28. International Development Association (UN)	IDA (WB)	x		
29. International Fund for Agricultural Development (UN)	IFAD		x	
30. International HIV/AIDS Alliance	IHAA	x		
31. International Monetary Fund (UN)	IEO/IMF	x		
32. International Organization for Migration	IOM	x	x	
33. International Planned Parenthood Federation	IPPF			x
34. International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease		x		
35. International Union for the Conservation of Nature	IUCN	x		
36. Ireland: Irish Aid			x	
37. Japan: Japan International Cooperation Agency	JICA	x		
38. Japan: Ministry of Foreign Affairs	MOFA	x		
39. Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS	UNAIDS	x	x	
40. Norway: Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation	NORAD		x	
41. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development	OECD	x		
42. Organisation of American States		x		
43. Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe	OSCE		x	
44. Oxfam	Oxfam		x	
45. Pan-American Health Organisation (UN)	PAHO	x		
46. Population Services International	PSI	x		

Table 11—Continued

Organization	Acronym	AID Data	UN Women Portal	Snowball Sample
47. Save the Children				x
48. Southern African Development Community	SADC	x		
49. Spain: Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Environment	AG	x		
50. Spain: Ministry of Economic Affairs and Competitiveness	ECON	x		
51. Spain: Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation/Spanish Agency for International Development Co-Operation	MFA/ AECID	x		
52. Spain: Ministry of Industry and Energy	MIE	x		
53. Sweden: Swedish Agency for Development Evaluation	SADEV		x	
54. Sweden: Swedish International Development Agency	SIDA		x	
55. Switzerland: Swiss Agency for Development	SDC		x	
56. The Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab	J-PAL		x	
57. Transparency International	TI	x		
58. UN Economic Commission for Africa	UNECA			x
59. UN Office of Internal Oversight Services/Department of Social and Economic Affairs	OIOS (DESA)		x	
60. United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women	UN Women		x	
61. United Kingdom: Commonwealth Development Corporation	CDC	x		
62. United Kingdom: Department for International Development	DFID	x	x	
63. United Kingdom: Department of Energy and Climate Change	DECC	x		
64. United Kingdom: Foreign and Commonwealth Office	FCO	x		
65. United Nations Children's Fund	UNICEF	x	x	
66. United Nations Development Group	UNDG		x	
67. United Nations Development Programme	UNDP	x	x	
68. United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia	UNESCWA		x	
69. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation	UNESCO	x	x	

Table 11—Continued

Organization	Acronym	AID Data	UN Women Portal	Snowball Sample
70. United Nations Environment Programme	UNEP		x	
71. United Nations Evaluation Group	UNEG	x		
72. United Nations High Commission for Refugees	UNHCR		x	
73. United Nations Human Settlement Programme	UNHABITAT	x	x	
74. United Nations Industrial Development Organization	UNIDO		x	
75. United Nations International Labour Organization	ILO		x	
76. United Nations Population Fund	UNFPA	x	x	
77. United Nations Statistics Division	UNSD	x		
78. United States: Department of Agriculture	AGR	x		
79. United States: Department of Defense	DOD	x		
80. United States: Department of State	STATE	x		
81. United States: Department of Treasury	DTRE	x		
82. United States: Health and Human Services	HHS	x		
83. United States: Institute of Peace	PEACE	x		
84. United States: Millennium Challenge Corporation	MCC	x		
85. United States: United States Agency for International Development	USAID	x	x	
86. World Bank (UN)	WB/IEG	x	x	
87. World Food Program (UN)	WFP	x	x	
88. World Health Organization (UN)	WHO	x		
89. World Vision				x

APPENDIX D

Description of Sampled Documents Organizations

Table 5

Description of Sampled Organizations and Documents

Author Citation Under	Organization (Acronym)	Title	Year	Term Defined				Research Question		Sample Source
				Equity	Equality	Mainstreaming	Empowerment	1	2	
National Economic and Development Authority, National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women, & Official Development Assistance Gender and Development Network	Asian Development Bank (ADB)	Harmonized Gender and Development Guidelines for project development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation	2007	x				x	x	Aid Data UN Women
Australian Agency for International Development	Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)	Tool Kit on Gender Equality Results and Indicators	2013	x	x	x		x	x	UN Women
Canadian International Development Agency	Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)	How to Perform Evaluations - Gender Equality	2001					x	x	Aid Data UN Women
Commonwealth Secretariat	Commonwealth Secretariat (COMSEC)	Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005-2015	2008	x				x	x	UN Women

Table 12—Continued

Author Citation Under	Organization (Acronym)	Title	Year	Term Defined				Research Question		Sample Source
				Equity	Equality	Mainstreaming	Empowerment	1	2	
Picard & Gillingham	Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE)	Women's Empowerment Impact Measurement Initiative (WEIMI)	2012				x	x	x	Snowball sample
Denmark Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Denmark Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DANIDA)	Gender-sensitive Monitoring and Indicators	2006					x	x	UN Women
Ramilo & Cinco	Department for International Development (DFID) United Kingdom	Gender Evaluation Methodology for Internet and ICTs A Learning Tool for Change and Empowerment	2005	x	x		x	x	x	Aid Data UN Women
Evaluation Cooperation Group	International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)	Gender Equality and Development Evaluation Units: Lessons from Evaluations of Development Support of Selected Multilateral and Bilateral Agencies ECG Paper #5	2012		x	x		x		UN Women
International Labour Organization	International Labour Organization (ILO)	Integrating Gender Equality in Monitoring and Evaluation of Projects	2012		x	x		x	x	UN Women
Food and Agriculture Organization	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	Gender Sensitive Indicators: A Key Tool for Gender Mainstreaming	2001					x		Aid Data UN Women
Food and Agriculture Organization		Guidelines for Quality Assurance of Gender Equality Mainstreaming into FAO Evaluations	2013					x	x	

Table 12—Continued

Author Citation Under	Organization (Acronym)	Title	Year	Term Defined				Research Question		Sample Source
				Equity	Equality	Mainstreaming	Empowerment	1	2	
Hunt & Brouwers	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)	Review of Gender and Evaluation: Final Report to DAC Network on Development Evaluation	2003	x	x			x	x	Aid Data
Pan-American Health Organisation	Pan-American Health Organisation (PAHO)	Guide for Analysis and Monitoring of Gender Equity in Health Policies	2009	x	x	x	x	x	x	Aid Data
Theis	Save the Children (STC)	Rights-based Monitoring and Evaluation	2003					x	x	Snowball sample
Holland & Ruedin	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)	Monitoring and Evaluating Empowerment Processes	2012				x	x		Aid Data
Freeman & Mikkelsen		Reflection on Experiences of Evaluating Gender Equality	2003		x	x		x		
Batliwala	Swiss Agency for Development (SDC) Switzerland:	Strengthening Monitoring and Evaluation for Women's Rights: 13 Insights for Women's Organizations	2011					x	x	UN Women
Brambilla		Gender and Monitoring: A Review of Practical Experiences	2001			x		x	x	
Swiss Agency for Development		Gender in Practice: A Tool-kit for SDC and its Partners	2003		x	x		x		
Kalanda & Makwiza		Proposed Framework for Monitoring Equity in Access and Health Systems Issues in Antiretroviral Therapy Programmes in Southern Africa	2004	x				x	x	

Table 12—Continued

Author Citation Under	Organization (Acronym)	Title	Year	Term Defined		Research Question		Sample Source	
				Equity	Equality	Mainstreaming	Empowerment		1
Moser	United Nations Development Program (UNDP)	Gender and Indicators Overview Report	2007			x	x	x	Aid Data UN Women
United Nations Economic Commission for Africa	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)	Monitoring and Evaluation Programme of the African Plan of Action to Accelerate the Implementation of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action: Part I - Monitoring and Evaluating Institutional Mechanisms for Gender Mainstreaming at the National Level	2002			x		x	Snowball sample
United Nations Economic Commission for Africa	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)	Monitoring and Evaluation Programme of the African Plan of Action to Accelerate the Implementation of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action: Part II - Monitoring and Evaluating Institutional Mechanisms for Gender Mainstreaming at the Sub- regional and Regional Levels	2002			x		x	Snowball sample
United Nations Economic Commission for Africa		Monitoring and Evaluation Programme of the African Plan of Action to Accelerate the Implementation of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action: Part I - A Guide to Data Collection for Impact Evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming on the Status of Women in Africa	2004			x		x	

Table 12—Continued

Author Citation Under	Organization (Acronym)	Title	Year	Term Defined				Research Question		
				Equity	Equality	Mainstreaming	Empowerment	1	2	
United Nations Economic Commission for Africa	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)	Monitoring and Evaluation Programme of the African Plan of Action to Accelerate the Implementation of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action: Part I - A Guide to Data Collection for Impact Evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming on the Status of Women in Africa	2004			x		x		Sample Source
United Nations Economic Commission for Africa		Monitoring and Evaluation Programme of the African Plan of Action to Accelerate the Implementation of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action: Part II - Tools for Impact Evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming on the Status of Women in Africa	2004			x		x		
United Nations Economic Commission for Africa		Monitoring and Evaluation Programme of the African Plan of Action to Accelerate the Implementation of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action: Part IV - A Guide to Data Analysis & Reporting for Impact Evaluation of Gender Mainstreaming on the Status of Women in Africa	2004					x		
Bamberger & Segone	United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)	How to Design and Manage Equity-Focused Evaluations	2011	x				x	x	Aid Data UN Women

Table 12—Continued

Author Citation Under	Organization (Acronym)	Title	Year	Term Defined				Research Question		Sample Source
				Equity	Equality	Mainstreaming	Empowerment	1	2	
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)	Guidelines for Implementing, Monitoring and Evaluating Gender Responsive EFA Plans	2003	x	x	x	x	x	x	Aid Data UN Women
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)	A Manager's Guide to Gender Equality and Human Rights Responsive Evaluation	2010					x	x	Aid Data UN Women
United Nations Evaluation Group	United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG)	Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation - - Towards UNEG Guidance	2011		x	x		x	x	AidData
Foreit	United States Agency for International Development (USAID)	Addressing Poverty A Guide for Considering Poverty-related and Other Inequities in Health	2012	x	x			x	x	Aid Data UN Women
Bloom & Negroustaoueva		Compendium of Gender Equality and HIV Indicators	2013	x	x			x	x	

Table 12—Continued

Author Citation Under	Organization (Acronym)	Title	Year	Term Defined				Research Question		Sample Source
				Equity	Equality	Mainstreaming	Empowerment	1	2	
Maramba & Bamberger	World Bank (WB)	A Gender Responsive Monitoring and Evaluation System for Rural Travel and Transport Programs in Africa A Handbook for Planners, Managers and Evaluators	2001	x	x			x		Aid Data UN Women
Wagner		Pro-equity Approaches to Monitoring and Evaluation: Gender, Marginalized Groups and Special Needs Populations	2005					x	x	
World Health Organization	World Health Organization (WHO)	Monitoring Equity in Access to AIDs Treatment Programmes: A Review Of Concepts, Models, Methods, and Indicators	2010b	x				x	x	Aid Data
Avakyan	World Vision (WV)	Gender Integration in Program Design, Monitoring, & Evaluation: A Sectoral Approach	2010	x	x			x	x	Snowball sample
Temby		Measuring Gender Equality Results	2007					x	x	

APPENDIX E

HSIRB Approval Notification

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY



Human Subjects Institutional Review Board

Date: February 22, 2013

To: Douglas Davidson, Principal Investigator
Kelly Robertson, Student Investigator for dissertation

From: Amy Naugle, Ph.D., Chair 

Re: Approval not needed for HSIRB Project Number 13-02-51

This letter will serve as confirmation that your project "Equity within the Context of International Development Evaluation" has been reviewed by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (HSIRB). Based on that review, the HSIRB has determined that approval is not required for you to conduct this project because you are analyzing evaluations and their impact on equity and not collecting personal identifiable (private) information about individuals.

Thank you for your concerns about protecting the rights and welfare of human subjects.

A copy of your protocol and a copy of this letter will be maintained in the HSIRB files.

Walwood Hall, Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5456
PHONE: (269) 387-8293 FAX: (269) 387-8276