

## Disability Inclusion Helpdesk Report No: 138

Query title	Good practice examples on Value for Money incorporating consideration of equity in the analysis in Business Cases and Annual Reviews
Authors	Amy Harrison and Nick Corby
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Query	To collect good practice examples from Business Cases (BCs) and from Annual Reviews (ARs) which show how equity can be incorporated into VfM analysis across a range of contexts that FCDO work in.
Enquirer	Equalities Impact Unit

### Case Study: Girls Education Challenge

#### Programme summary

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) launched the [Girls' Education Challenge](#) (GEC) in 2012. [Phase II](#) of the programme (2017-2024) supported 41 projects operating in 17 countries, managed through two windows: (1) GEC Transitions (GEC-T); and (2) Leave No Girl Behind (LNGB). The expected impact of the GEC II was to improve the life chances of marginalised girls.

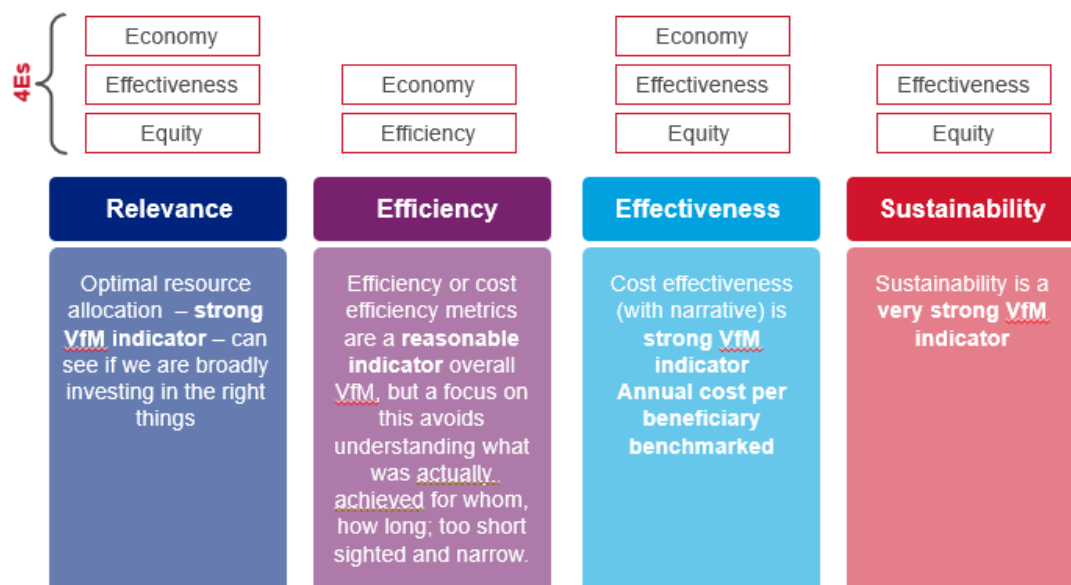
The LNGB Window aimed to reach up to 230,000 highly marginalised adolescent girls who were out of school, enabling them to gain foundational literacy and numeracy skills as well as to develop socio-emotional skills. The 14 LNGB projects operate in 10 countries across Africa and South Asia (Afghanistan, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nepal, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Zimbabwe).

#### Equity and Value for Money (VfM) in GEC

The GEC developed a VfM framework intended to facilitate a holistic approach to VfM. The GECs approach to VfM is underpinned by the National Audit Office (NAO) 4E framework; the framework integrated the 4Es (economy, efficiency, effectiveness and equity) within four of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria (relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability), to explicitly include sustainability and relevance, which are strong indicators of VfM (see Figure 1 for an illustration of the VfM framework).

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Figure 1: GEC's VfM Framework



The GEC developed a [rubric](#) in 2023 to provide an overall rating of GEC projects based on the GEC VfM framework. The rubric explicitly included equity as one of six, separate criteria: relevance; effectiveness; efficiency; sustainability; economy and cost-effectiveness; equity.

The equity component relates to the degree of marginalisation of the target participants, based on gender, poverty, ethnicity, rurality, caste/class, disability, conflict, parenting, as well as the degree to which they had been excluded from the education system (i.e., in school vs out of school – and for how many years). For each GEC project, each of the six components are ranked on a scale from 1 to 5 (1 = poor and 5 = excellent). An average of the six scores is used to achieve an overall score out of 5. Regarding equity specifically, a score of 4 or 5 reflects ultra-marginalised girls, out of school, in extreme poverty, with other marginalising characteristics such as disability or ethnicity. A middle score of 3 reflects girls in school, potentially at risk of dropping out and with a poverty status. A score of 1 or 2 reflects much less marginalisation.

The scorecard means that a project offering excellent VfM is likely to have a low-cost base, have been efficiently delivered with minimal wastage and good timeliness and management processes, be able to evidence strong outcomes and sustainability, with a relevant design which met the needs identified for marginalised girls.

### Key takeaways:

- Embedding equity in the scorecard explicitly signalled to projects that increased unit costs are justifiably higher to meet the challenges of achieving scale and equity; move beyond a narrow set of economic indicators; and thus, to better consider social justice, inclusion and fairness.
- A standardised scorecard enabled analysis within and across projects, enabling tailored improvements in VfM.

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For any further request or enquiry, contact [enquiries@disabilityinclusion.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@disabilityinclusion.org.uk)