



Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation

Report on the Assessment of Government Evaluations

Cape Gateway Evaluation

Date Evaluation was completed: 01 November 2005

Name of assessor: Tim Mosdell

Evaluation Number: 119

Date Assessment Completed: 21 January 2113

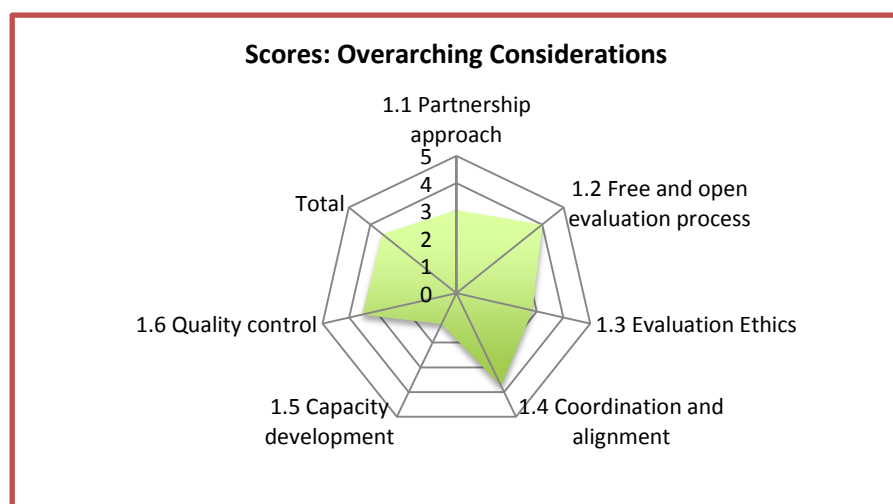
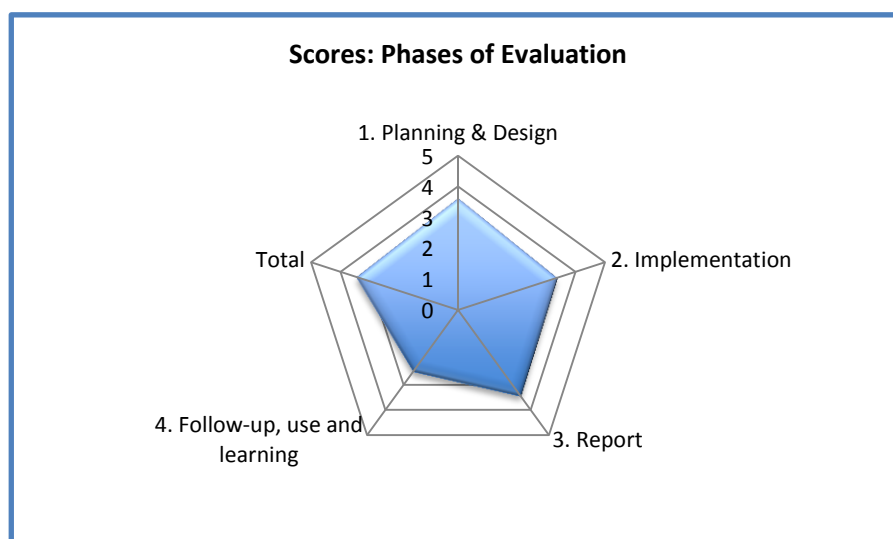
Evaluation Assessment Details

Title of evaluation report	Cape Gateway Evaluation
Completion Date of Evaluation	01 November 2005
Name of Assessor	Tim Mosdell
Evaluation Number	119
Completion Date of Assessment	21 January 2113
Initiated by	the Western Cape
Evaluation undertaken by	Radian - Alan Levin and Pam Sykes
Evaluation area / sector	Public service, governance, M&E
	Social development, social security & assistance <i>Additional</i>
National Outcome	Outcome 12
	<i>Additional</i>
Type of Evaluation	Implementation
	Impact <i>Additional</i>
What is being evaluated	Project
	Institution <i>Additional</i>
Geographic Scope	Provincial
Period of Evaluation	2001 - 2005
Known Cost of Evaluation	41000

Quality Assessment Scores

Phase of Evaluation	Score
Planning & Design	3.62
Implementation	3.37
Report	3.44
Follow-up, use and learning	2.45
Total	3.34

Overarching Consideration	Score
Partnership approach	3.03
Free and open evaluation process	4.00
Evaluation Ethics	2.83
Coordination and alignment	3.75
Capacity Development	1.25
Quality control	3.53



1. Planning & Design

1.1. Clarity of Purpose and Scope in TOR

STANDARD: *The evaluation was guided by a TOR with at least the following sections explicit: purpose, scope and objectives; expectations regarding design and methodology; resources and time allocated; reporting requirements; expectations regarding evaluation process and products..*

Comment and Analysis

The evaluation was guided by a project brief which outlined the purpose, scope and methodology.

Rating 4

STANDARD: *The purpose of the evaluation was clear and explicit in the TOR*

Comment and Analysis

The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the extent that the Cape Gateway project provides easy access to government information.

Rating 4

STANDARD: *The evaluation questions were clearly stated in the TOR and appropriate to addressing the evaluation purpose*

Comment and Analysis

The evaluation questions were clearly stated. Does the Cape Gateway project comply with best practice principles? Does the service give citizens real access to government information?

Rating 5

STANDARD: The approach and type of evaluation was suited to the purpose and scope of the evaluation TOR**Comment and Analysis**

The approach and evaluation type is suited to the objectives as outlined in the project brief.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Intended users and their information needs were identified in the TOR**Comment and Analysis**

Intended users were identified in the project brief as being the staff of the Gateway team.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Key stakeholders were involved in the scoping of the TOR and determining the purpose of the evaluation**Comment and Analysis**

Both the Gateway project team as well as the evaluation team were involved in finalising the project brief.

Rating 4

1.2. Evaluation was adequately resourced

STANDARD: The evaluation was adequately resourced in terms of time allocated

Comment and Analysis

The project was adequately resourced in terms of time allocated.

Rating 4

STANDARD: The evaluation was adequately resourced in terms of original budget

Comment and Analysis

The project was adequately resourced in terms of budget, although a larger budget would have allowed the evaluation to conduct a deeper evaluation.

Rating 3

STANDARD: The evaluation was adequately resourced in terms of staffing and skills sets

Comment and Analysis

The evaluation was adequately resourced in terms of staffing, drawing on the expertise of two highly experienced and qualified professionals.

Rating 4

STANDARD: *Where appropriate, the evaluation planned to incorporate an element of capacity building of partners/staff responsible for the evaluand*

Comment and Analysis

While the evaluation provides insight for staff and partners, there was not an explicit capacity building element incorporated in the evaluation.

Rating 2

1.3. Alignment to Policy Context and Background Literature

STANDARD: *There was evidence that a review of the relevant policy and programme environments had been conducted and used in the planning of the evaluation by the evaluators*

Comment and Analysis

The planning drew on other evaluation work related to the project as well as to relevant business and implementation plans.

Rating 4

STANDARD: *There was evidence of a review of appropriate literature having been conducted and used in the planning of the evaluation by the evaluators*

Comment and Analysis

There is evidence that the appropriate literature was reviewed and incorporated in the planning.

Rating 4

1.4. The evaluation methods planned were appropriate to the project

STANDARD: There was explicit reference to the intervention logic or the theory of change of the evaluand in the planning of the evaluation

Comment and Analysis

There was no explicit reference to a theory of change, although there was strong reliance on a SWOT approach to the evaluation, with a strong focus on opportunities and threats in terms of future intervention.

Rating 2

STANDARD: Key stakeholders were consulted on the design and methodology of the evaluation

Comment and Analysis

The Gateway team was counselled around finalising the methodology of the evaluation.

Rating 4

STANDARD: The planned methodology was appropriate to the questions being asked

Comment and Analysis

The methodology is consistent with the research questions being asked, although it could be argued that a quantitative market research approach could have strengthened the study - this limitation was identified in the report.

Rating 3

STANDARD: Planned sampling was appropriate and adequate given the focus and purpose of evaluation***Comment and Analysis***

The sampling was appropriate given the focus and purpose of the evaluation, although the study could have been strengthened by an analysis of end-user experiences.

Rating 3

STANDARD: There was a planned process for using the findings of the evaluation prior to undertaking the evaluation***Comment and Analysis***

The planned findings of the evaluation were always intended to inform change and improvement.

Rating 4

1.5. Inception phase***STANDARD: The inception phase was used to develop a common agreement on how the evaluation would be implemented******Comment and Analysis***

Radian has a close relationship with the Gateway Team and this was used to develop a common agreement on how the evaluation was implemented.

Rating 4

2. Implementation

2.1. Ethical Review and Considerations

STANDARD: *Where data was gathered in contexts where ethical sensitivity is high, appropriate clearance was obtained through an ethics review board; e.g. in evaluation involving minors, institutions where access usually requires ethical or bureaucratic clearance, and situations where assurances of confidentiality was offered to participants*

Comment and Analysis

Ethical sensitivity was not high in this instance, and all of those interviewed explicitly wanted their views to be heard.

Rating 3

2.2. Evaluator independence

STANDARD: *Where external, evaluation team was able to work freely without significant interference*

Comment and Analysis

The external evaluation team was not subject to any undue pressure in conducting their work.

Rating 4

STANDARD: The evaluation team was impartial and there was no evidence of conflict of interest

Comment and Analysis

There is no evidence of conflict of interest.

Rating 4

2.3. Key stakeholder involvement

STANDARD: Key stakeholders were consulted through a formalised mechanism or institutional arrangement during the evaluation

Comment and Analysis

The methodology was structured around interviewing key stakeholders.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Where appropriate, an element of capacity building of partners responsible for the evaluand was incorporated into the evaluation

Comment and Analysis

The project did not include a capacity building element.

Rating 1

2.4. Methodology

STANDARD: The methods employed in the process of the evaluation were consistent with those planned

Comment and Analysis

The methods used in the evaluation were consistent with those planned, and centred primarily around face-to-face interviews.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Data collection was not compromised by fieldwork-level problems or unplanned diversions from original intentions

Comment and Analysis

Data collection was not problematic in any sense.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Forms of data gathering were appropriate given the scope of evaluation

Comment and Analysis

The form of data gathering, primarily via key stakeholder interviews, was appropriate given the scope of the evaluation.

Rating 4

STANDARD: The data analysis approach and methods were appropriate and sufficient given the purposes of the evaluation***Comment and Analysis***

The data analysis approach and methodology used was appropriate given the purpose of the evaluation, although a quantitative market research approach could have strengthened the study, but would have had large cost implications.

Rating 3***STANDARD: Key stakeholders were significantly engaged as part of the methodology******Comment and Analysis***

Key stakeholders were significantly engaged in the methodology, with much of the emphasis placed on key stakeholder interviews.

Rating 4***STANDARD: The methodology included engaging beneficiaries appropriately as a key source of data and information******Comment and Analysis***

The methodology centered around engaging key stakeholders for information. It could be argued that more engagement could have been made with citizens, the ultimate beneficiaries of the project.

Rating 2

2.5. Project management

STANDARD: The evaluation was conducted without shifts to scheduled project milestones and timeframes

Comment and Analysis

The evaluation met scheduled milestones and timeframes.

Rating 4

3. Report

3.1. Report was well-structured and presentation was clear and complete in each of these areas

STANDARD: Executive summary captured key components of the report appropriately

Comment and Analysis

The executive summary captures the key findings very well, although it could have been more explicit in terms of methodology.

Rating 4

STANDARD: The context of the development intervention was explicit and presented as relevant to the evaluation

Comment and Analysis

The findings, including a detailed analysis of opportunities and threats, set out a clear set of intervention recommendations.

Rating 4

STANDARD: There was a clear rationale for the evaluation questions**Comment and Analysis**

There was a clear rationale for the evaluation questions.

Rating 4

STANDARD: The scope or focus of the evaluation was apparent in the report**Comment and Analysis**

The focus and scope of the evaluation was apparent in the report.

Rating 4

STANDARD: A detailed methodology was outlined in the relevant section of a report (full report or 1/3/25) to the point that a reader could understand the data collection, analysis and interpretation**Comment and Analysis**

Although a detailed methodology was not explicitly outlined in the report, the focus on key interviews was clear.

Rating 3

STANDARD: Key findings were presented in a clear way; they were made distinct from uncertain or speculative findings; and unused data was not presented in the body of the report

Comment and Analysis

Key findings were structured in a SWOT format and were presented in a clear way.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Conclusions and recommendations were clear and succinctly articulated

Comment and Analysis

Most of the recommendations are embedded in the SWOT framework, with the conclusion offering a very brief overview of the key observations.

Rating 3

STANDARD: Acknowledgement of limitations of all aspects of the methodology and findings were clearly and succinctly articulated

Comment and Analysis

The report acknowledged the lack of any quantitative market research to back up the qualitative interviews.

Rating 4

3.2. Writing and presentation

STANDARD: *Quality of writing and presentation was adequate for publication including: adequate layout and consistent formatting; complete sentences and no widespread grammatical or typographical errors; consistency of style and writing conventions (e.g. tense, perspective (first person, third person); levels of formality; references complete and consistent with cited references in reference list and vice versa; etc)*

Comment and Analysis

The quality of writing was good and the report reads well.

Rating 4

STANDARD: *Appropriate conventions were used in presentation of data (e.g. use of appropriate statistical language; reporting of p-values where appropriate; not reporting statistically insignificant findings as significant; clarifying disaggregation categories in constructing percentages; not using quantitative language in reporting qualitative data, etc.)*

Comment and Analysis

Very little use was made of data and graphs, but where these were used, appropriate conventions were followed, although the data could have been better referenced.

Rating 3

3.3. Presentation of findings

STANDARD: *The use of figures and tables was such that it supported communication and comprehension of results; and data reported in figures and tables was readily discernible and useful to a reader familiar with data presentation conventions*

Comment and Analysis

Very little use was made of data and graphs, but where these were used, they were clear and unambiguous.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Data analysis appeared to have been well executed

Comment and Analysis

The limited data analysis that was done was adequately executed.

Rating 3

STANDARD: Findings were supported by available evidence

Comment and Analysis

The findings were supported by the available evidence.

Rating 4

STANDARD: The evidence gathered was sufficiently and appropriately analysed to support the argument**Comment and Analysis**

The evidence gathered was appropriate to the study, although more quantitative analysis would have enhanced the evaluation, particularly in terms of understanding end user perspectives.

Rating 3***STANDARD: There was appropriate recognition of the possibility of alternative interpretations*****Comment and Analysis**

There was no explicit recognition of the possibility of alternative interpretations.

Rating 2***STANDARD: The report appeared free of significant methodological and analytic flaws*****Comment and Analysis**

The main methodological gap in the study is the absence of a quantitative element to augment the qualitative interviews - but given the resource constraints on the project, this was planned.

Rating 3

3.4. Conclusions

STANDARD: Conclusions were derived from evidence**Comment and Analysis**

Conclusions were derived from the collected evidence.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Conclusions took into account relevant empirical and/or analytic work from related research studies and evaluations**Comment and Analysis**

The conclusions took other studies and work into account, notably, a 2003 evaluation of the Cape Gateway project.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Conclusions addressed the original evaluation purpose and questions**Comment and Analysis**

The conclusions address the original purpose and discuss appropriate opportunities accordingly.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Conclusions were drawn with explicit reference to the intervention logic or theory of change**Comment and Analysis**

No explicit reference was made to an intervention logic or theory of change, although the project adopted a SWOT approach, implicit in which are identified opportunities, many of which are interventionist in nature.

Rating 2

3.5. Recommendations***STANDARD: Recommendations were made in consultation with appropriate sectoral partners or experts*****Comment and Analysis**

The recommendations were extracted from a methodology that was deeply consultative in that the partners were also the key informants.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Recommendations were shaped following input or review by relevant government officials and other relevant stakeholders**Comment and Analysis**

The recommendations were extracted from a methodology that was deeply consultative in that the relevant key officials were also the key informants.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Recommendations were relevant to the policy context**Comment and Analysis**

The recommendations were relevant to the policy context and were aimed at improving access to government information.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Recommendations were targetted to a specific audience sufficiently - were specific, feasible, affordable and acceptable**Comment and Analysis**

The recommendations were targetted to a rather narrow audience, namely the staff of the Gateway project. There exists a potentially larger audience, i.e. the public that interface with the project. This potential audience was not targetted.

Rating 3

3.6. Relevant limitations of the evaluation have been noted**STANDARD: Relevant limitations of the evaluation were noted****Comment and Analysis**

Limitations to the methodology, particularly in terms of an absence of quantitative data was noted.

Rating 4

3.7 Protection of participants and risk considerations

STANDARD: *The full report documented procedures intended to ensure confidentiality and to secure informed consent where this was needed (in some cases this is not needed - e.g. evaluation synthesis - in which case N/A should be recorded)*

Comment and Analysis

Informed consent was implicit with stakeholder interviewees wanting their views to be noted and attributed to them.

Rating 3

STANDARD: *There were no risks to participants in disseminating the original report on a public website*

Comment and Analysis

There are some risks disseminating the original report on a public website as the findings were intended to be used internally, and as such, some confidentiality may be breached if the report is made public in this way.

Rating 2

STANDARD: *There were no unfair risks to institutions in disseminating the original report on a public website*

Comment and Analysis

The findings were intended to be used internally and could constitute a reputation risk to the institution if published on a public website.

Rating 2

4. Follow-up, use and learning

4.1. Presentation to stakeholders

STANDARD: *Results were presented to all relevant stakeholders*

Comment and Analysis

The report was presented to the staff of the Gateway Project, although it is unclear if any other presentations have been made.

Rating 3

4.2. Resource utilisation

STANDARD: *The evaluation was completed within the planned timeframes*

Comment and Analysis

The evaluation was completed on time.

Rating 4

STANDARD: *The evaluation was completed within the agreed budget*

Comment and Analysis

The evaluation was completed on budget.

Rating 4

4.3. Transparency

STANDARD: *The report was publicly available (website or otherwise published document), except where there were legitimate security concerns*

Comment and Analysis

The evaluation is publically available on
http://www.westerncape.gov.za/text/2006/3/radian_cg_eval_v1.pdf

Rating 4

4.4. Lessons learnt

STANDARD: *After completion of the evaluation, a reflective process was undertaken by staff responsible for the evaluand to reflect on what could be done to strengthen future evaluations*

Comment and Analysis

It is unclear whether a reflective process has been undertaken post evaluation - the Radian consultants who worked on the projects are unaware of this if it has happened.

Rating 3

4.5. Symbolic and conceptual value

STANDARD: *The evaluation study was seen by interviewed stakeholders as having added significant symbolic value to the policy or programme (eg raised its profile)*

Comment and Analysis

The study gave interviewed stakeholders the opportunity to engage with issues related to the programme and to identify opportunities going forward. It is debatable whether they regard the initiative as adding value to the programme.

Rating 3

STANDARD: *The evaluation study was of conceptual value in understanding what has happened and possibly in shaping policy and practice*

Comment and Analysis

The study has potential conceptual value in shaping policy and practice, provided that the report is acted on.

Rating 3

4.6. Utilisation of findings and recommendations

STANDARD: *There was clear evidence of instrumental use - that the recommendations of the evaluation were implemented to a significant extent*

Comment and Analysis

There is no evidence of instrumental use and the consultants who conducted the work are not aware of it being taken forward in any meaningful capacity.

Rating 2

STANDARD: *There was clear evidence that the evaluation has had a positive influence on the evaluand, its stakeholders and beneficiaries over the medium to long term*

Comment and Analysis

There is no clear evidence that the evaluation has had a positive influence on the evaluand, stakeholders, or beneficiaries.

Rating 1

References

Alan Levin and Pam Sykes, 2005. Cape Gateway Evaluation - Report for the Centre for E-Innovation, Published by the Provincial Government of the Western Cape, and conducted by Radian, November 2005.

List of Interviewees

Pam Sykes, Radian Author, Interview, 21 January 2013.

Alan Levin, Radian Author, Email correspondence, 21 January 2013.