



Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation

Report on the Assessment of Government Evaluations

RED Door Impact Study: Phase Two

Date Evaluation was completed: 01 September 2008

Name of assessor: Tim Mosdell

Evaluation Number: 108

Date Assessment Completed: 10 December 2012

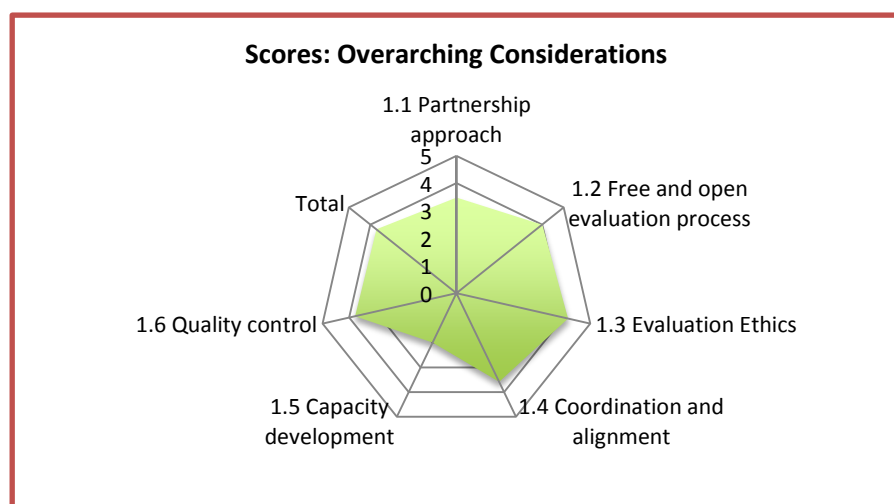
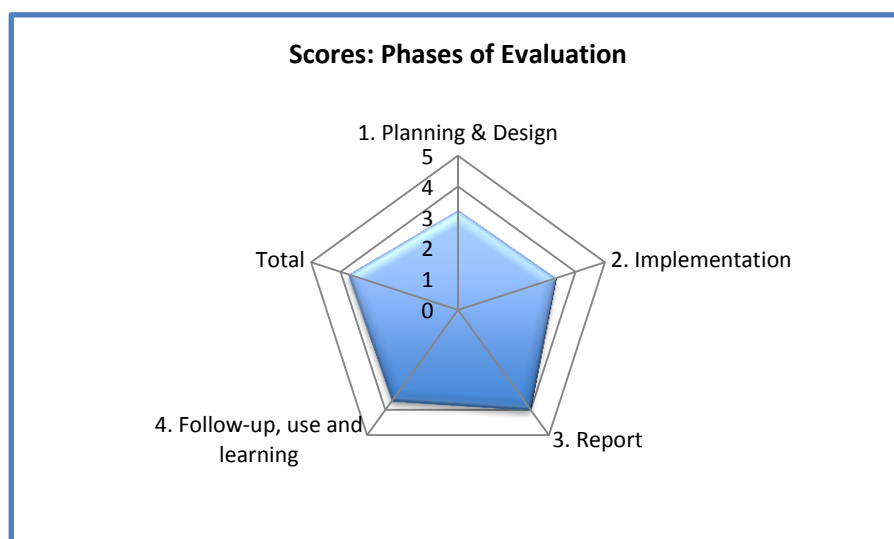
Evaluation Assessment Details

Title of evaluation report	RED Door Impact Study: Phase Two
Completion Date of Evaluation	01 September 2008
Name of Assessor	Tim Mosdell
Evaluation Number	108
Completion Date of Assessment	10 December 2012
Initiated by	Economic Development and Tourism
Evaluation undertaken by	Human Sciences Research Council
Evaluation area / sector	LED, SMEs & local development projects
	Economic planning and development <i>Additional</i>
National Outcome	Outcome 4
	<i>Additional</i>
Type of Evaluation	Impact
	<i>Additional</i>
What is being evaluated	Programme
	<i>Additional</i>
Geographic Scope	Provincial
Period of Evaluation	Project completed in Oct 2006
Known Cost of Evaluation	Unknown

Quality Assessment Scores

Phase of Evaluation	Score
Planning & Design	3.24
Implementation	3.33
Report	3.98
Follow-up, use and learning	3.62
Total	3.67

Overarching Consideration	Score
Partnership approach	3.48
Free and open evaluation process	4.00
Evaluation Ethics	4.17
Coordination and alignment	3.58
Capacity Development	2.00
Quality control	3.78



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 project purpose, scope and objectives were set out in a Memorandum of Modification (MoM) agreed in May 2008. The broad objective of this phase of the evaluation was to study and evaluate the impact of the Red Door system on clients who have used the service. The methodology was explicit, with the research questions being specified in the MoM.

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 gather the views of Red Door Clients to determine the impact of the service.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

The Memorandum of Modification clearly sets out the research questions underpinning the evaluation.

Rating 4

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

The approach using in-depth interviews is well suited to the purpose and scope of the evaluation.

Rating 4

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

The intended users are explicitly identified as Red Door Management at both regional and central offices.

Rating 4

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

While office managers were informed of the purpose of the research and asked to nominate successful clients, they were not explicitly involved in scoping the project.

Rating 2

1.2. Evaluation was adequately resourced

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

Comment and Analysis

No constraints in this regard were identified.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

No constraints in this regard were identified.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

No constraints in this regard were identified.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

Capacity Development was not an explicit component of the study, although the evaluation was clearly intended to provide managers with insight into Red Door client perceptions.

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 policy literature around SMME development was used in planning the research.

Rating 3

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

The planning was conducted in the context of the relevant literature.

Rating 3

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

Although there is no explicit reference to a theory of change or intervention logic, it is implicitly clear that the evaluation and its methods are aimed at deepening an understanding of Red Door Client views.

Rating **2**

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

Comment and Analysis

Red Door managers were consulted on the sampling methodology and were asked to nominate interviewees.

Rating **4**

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

Comment and Analysis

The in-depth interview approach is entirely consistent with the questions being asked in the study.

Rating **4**

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

Managers were asked to identify successful clients to build up the sample. While this was intentional, it does introduce a bias in the sense that the sample represents successful clients only and does not cover the broad spectrum of clients.

Rating 2***STANDARD: There was a planned process for using the findings of the evaluation prior to undertaking the evaluation******Comment and Analysis***

The findings report is aimed at enabling Red Door Management at both regional and central level to realign clients services and ultimately improve client use of the Red Door initiative.

Rating 3**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***

The Red Door and the research team met resulting in a Memorandum of Modification which articulated agreement on how the evaluation was to be conducted.

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

Each interview opened with a negotiation of the consent of the client on the voluntary nature of the interview and the avenues of recourse open to any client with objections to the manner or content of the interview. This was documented in consent forms lodged with the HSRC.

Rating 3

2.2. Evaluator independence

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

Comment and Analysis

There is no evidence that the evaluation team experienced any external interference.

Rating 4

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

There was no evidence of a conflict of interest on the part of the evaluation team.

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***

Office managers were key in identifying the sample of clients to be interviewed.

Rating 3

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

There was no clear capacity building element in the project, although the outcome of the project was designed to provide insight to Red Door managers into the views of clients, with a view to improving their service offering.

Rating 2

2.4. Methodology

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

Comment and Analysis

The methods employed in the process were entirely consistent with the planned methodology.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

Generally data collection was not compromised at the fieldwork level, although the evaluation report did note that there was little scope to explore financial issues.

Rating 3

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

Comment and Analysis

Data gathering was appropriate to 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 involved coding of qualitative data into quantifiable variables. This is a recognised technique and is consistent with this type of evaluation.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Key stakeholders were significantly engaged as part of the methodology

Comment and Analysis

Stakeholder involvement was limited to the sampling methodology.

Rating 3

STANDARD: The methodology included engaging beneficiaries appropriately as a key source of data and information

Comment and Analysis

As Red Door clients are the ultimate intended beneficiaries of this project, they do represent a significant source of data and information.

Rating 4

2.5. Project management

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

Comment and Analysis

The evaluation appears to have been conducted without significant shifts to milestones and timeframes, although this is not explicit in the evaluation report.

Rating 3

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 provides a clear level of detail on each of the key components of the report.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

The context of the evaluation is relatively clear in the report and clear linkages and distinctions are made between this evaluation and the Phase One evaluation.

Rating 4

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

The evaluation questions are clearly linked to the objective of understanding Red Door client views.

Rating 4

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

The scope of the evaluation is clearly articulated 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**

The methodology is clearly set out in detail in the report and is easily accessible to the reader, regardless of whether they have evaluation experience or not.

Rating 4

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 are set out for each of the six key research questions, and then synthesised in a findings section. The findings are easy to find in this navigable report.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Conclusions and recommendations were clear and succinctly articulated

Comment and Analysis

The recommendations are clear and accessible, although more detail could be provided in the recommendations section.

Rating 3

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

Comment and Analysis

Limitations to the methodology were articulated and include the fact that only successful clients were selected for interviews and that more finance related questions could have been posed to those interviewed.

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 evaluation report is structured in eight parts each of which is clearly sign-posted both in the body of the report and in the executive summary. The style is clear and consistent throughout the report. There are some minor numbering problems in the findings section of the report, although these do not detract from the overall message of the report.

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

This report contains a number of tables and graphs, all of which are well structured and readable. Most of the tables report both frequency of occurrence as well as percent, making them easy to interpret. Where more complexity is found, the authors have made use of summary graphs for ease of explanation. Some minor formatting problems were noted, but these do not detract from the core message.

Rating 4

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

Figures and graphs are used sparingly in this report, but where they are used, they tend to make interpretation of the data more accessible.

Rating 3

STANDARD: Data analysis appeared to have been well executed

Comment and Analysis

The data analysis in the evaluation report is not complex, but it is adequate and appropriate to the methodology and has been well executed.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Findings were supported by available evidence

Comment and Analysis

There is a clear link between the data provided and the findings in the report.

Rating 4

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

The data evidence has been analysed in such a way that it contributes significantly to the findings and recommendations.

Rating 4

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

The report is written in such a way that the complexity of the issues is well articulated and set out. In many cases, minority views are articulated as an alternative position.

Rating 4

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

In general, the report appears to be free of significant methodological flows, the one exception being in the sampling, where only succesful clients have been interviewed.

Rating 4

3.4. Conclusions

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

The findings of the report are clearly linked to the research questions posed, which are, in turn, directly linked to the data evidence analysed.

Rating 4

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

The concluding findings are primarily derived from the data collected and analysed as part of this evaluation, although these are contextualised by an in-depth literature review.

Rating 3

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

The concluding findings are directly related to the evaluation questions identified at the outset in the memorandum of modification.

Rating 4

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

There is no explicit reference in the conclusion to a theory of change, although the findings do address the key research questions and contribute to the objective of deepening the understanding of Red Door client views.

Rating 2

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

The recommendations are based on methodologically demonstrated answers to the set of research questions and were made in consultation with sectoral partners or experts. Extensive discussions were held between the HSRC and provincial official in this regard.

Rating 4

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

The recommendations were shaped by discussions with officials and stakeholders, and were extensively discussed and debated before being finalised.

Rating 4

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

The recommendations are relevant to the current policy context and align well with both the policy and general SMME literature.

Rating 4

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

The recommendations are targetted directly at Red Door managers and are accesible to that audience.

Rating 4

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

Limitations to the evaluation are acknowledged and noted in the report. These relate to sampling - only successful clients were interviewed, and the fact that financial questions could have been more vigorously pursued in the interviews.

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

Following the terms set out by the HSRC Ethic Committee, all clients interviewed consented to the interviews and this consent was recorded in writing.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

There are no risks to disseminating the report from a participant point of view as no directly attributable responses can be identified. All responses are recorded as coded frequencies and percentages. Individual responses are not reported in a way where a response can be attributed to a particular individual.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

There are no apparent risks to institutions in disseminating the original report publicly, although the report does identify certain shortcomings and limitations to the Red Door programme - for example, despite success at the start-up phase, the report acknowledges that the Red Door has been less successful in building capacity to provide longer term support to fledgling businesses.

Rating 4

4. Follow-up, use and learning

4.1. Presentation to stakeholders

STANDARD: *Results were presented to all relevant stakeholders*

Comment and Analysis

The results were presented widely to stakeholders within the Department of Economic Development and Tourism.

Rating 3

4.2. Resource utilisation

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

Comment and Analysis

The project was completed within the planned timeframes.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

The evaluation was completed on budget.

Rating 5

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 report is publicly available from the HSRC on request.

Rating 4

4.4. Lessons learnt

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

Comment and Analysis

Not enough information was gathered to rate this standard

Rating 5

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 evaluation has contributed to far reaching changes to the SMME development landscape in the province, resulting in the incorporation of RED Door's activities into SEDA (Small Enterprise Development Agency). Some of the stakeholders are positive about these developments, whilst others feel that the closure of the RED Door initiative leaves a gap.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

The evaluation study had significant conceptual value in shaping policy and practice. One of the recommendations was that the relationship between the RED Door and SEDA (Small Enterprise Development Agency) ought to be expanded and strengthened. In the period since the evaluation, this relationship has been reviewed extensively, to the point where the RED Door's activities have been subsumed into the work of SEDA.

Rating 4

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

The recommendations have been considered and used and have contributed to significant changes in the way the Department operates.

Rating 4

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

The evaluation has had the effect of contributing to changes in the institutional landscape in terms of providing services to SMMEs in the province. Interviews with the Department suggest that these changes are beginning to have a positive impact in terms of supporting SMME clients, although there is an acknowledgement that these changes have created some uncertainty and will take some getting used to.

Rating 3

References

Tony Morphet, Sandra Prosalendis, Ntabiseng Mohlakoana, Adrian Hadland and Derek Davids, 288. Red Door Impact Study: Phase Two - Prepared for Department of Economic Development and Tourism Western Cape - Prepared by Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC)- 8 September 2008.

List of Interviewees

Mr John Peters - PGWC - Department of Economic Development and Tourism - Chief Director - 10 Dec 2012

Dominique Vincent - PGWC - Department of Economic Development and Tourism - Director - 10 Dec 2012

Deon Damons - PGWC - Department of Economic Development and Tourism - Deputy Director - Enterprise Development - 10 Dec 2012