



Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation

Report on the Assessment of Government Evaluations

A Review of Labour Markets in South Africa: The impact of HIV/AIDS on the Labour Market

Date Evaluation was completed: 01 October 2005

Name of assessor: Cathy Chames

Evaluation Number: 123

Date Assessment Completed: 04 March 2013

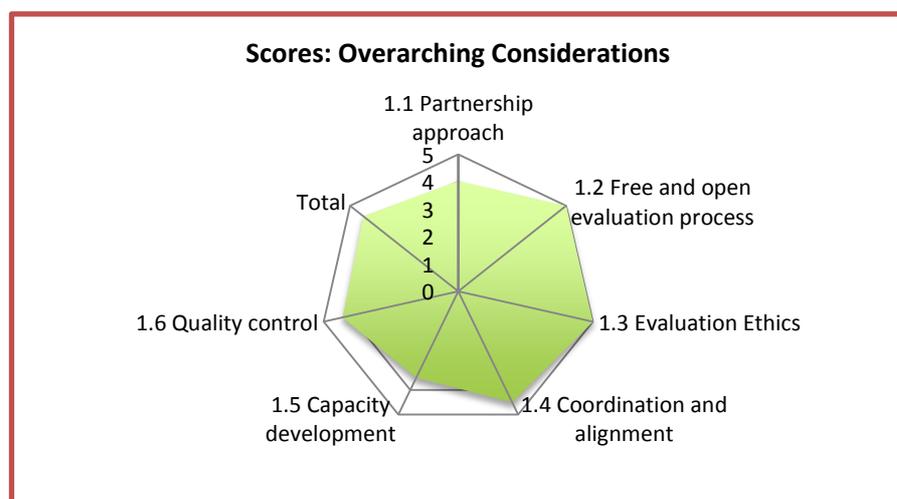
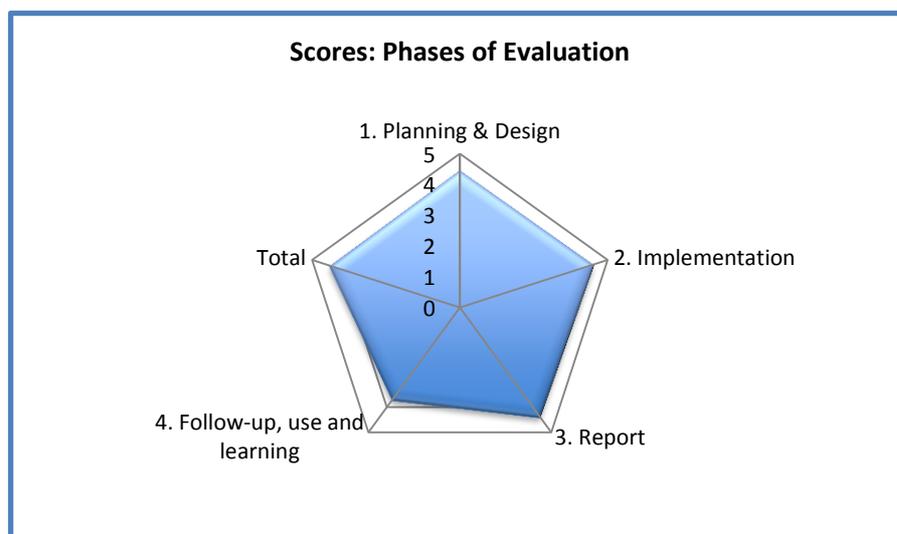
Evaluation Assessment Details

Title of evaluation report	A Review of Laour Markets in South Africa: The impact of HIV/AIDS on the Labour Market
Completion Date of Evaluation	01 October 2005
Name of Assessor	Cathy Chames
Evaluation Number	123
Completion Date of Assessment	04 March 2013
Initiated by	Employment and Ecomomic Policy Research Programme - Human Sciences Research Council
Evaluation undertaken by	Jocelyn Vass - HSRC
Evaluation area / sector	Labour issues & employment
	<i>Additional</i>
National Outcome	Outcome 4
	Outcome 5 <i>Additional</i>
Type of Evaluation	Other
	<i>Additional</i>
What is being evaluated	Policy
	Sector <i>Additional</i>
Geographic Scope	National
Period of Evaluation	July 2004 - October 2005
Known Cost of Evaluation	Under R500,000

Quality Assessment Scores

Phase of Evaluation	Score
Planning & Design	4.47
Implementation	4.52
Report	4.38
Follow-up, use and learning	3.68
Total	4.36

Overarching Consideration	Score
Partnership approach	4.03
Free and open evaluation process	5.00
Evaluation Ethics	5.00
Coordination and alignment	4.50
Capacity Development	3.50
Quality control	4.30



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

This report was one of a series of reports developed for this project entitled "Overview of Labour Market Function and Policy in South Africa". There is no TOR available for the study, however, it was guided by a proposal submitted to SIDA which includes details on the background, scope of work, methodology, deliverables and time frames. The impact of HIV/AIDS on the labour market was not mentioned in the proposal, however it is noted that areas (themes) being covered in the study will be determined in an initial workshop.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

The proposal states that the overall purpose of the project is "to perform a scoping exercise that reviews available information on the functioning of the labour market in South Africa, identify agencies involved in this work and critical gaps based on a good overview of 'best developing country' practice". More specifically, it involves the development of "a background paper on a gap analysis in labour market policy research in South Africa". Although the purpose of the overall evaluation is clear and explicit, there is no mention in the proposal on the need to focus on the effects of HIV/AIDS on the labour market.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

A series of questions and thematic areas to be covered in the evaluation are clearly stated and linked to the purpose, however, HIV/AIDS is not mentioned as a thematic area to be explored in this study.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

The proposal proposes a multidisciplinary approach to the study with a research team including people from different disciplines to investigate the research questions from different perspectives. This is well suited to the scope and purpose. In terms of typology this is closest to an Evaluation Synthesis since it synthesises the results of previous studies undertaken in relation to the effects of HIV and AIDS in the labour market sector. It also contains elements of a diagnostic evaluation as it involves an analysis of what is already known about HIV and AIDS and its effects on the labour market function and policy in South Africa and identifies what areas will require further research (research gaps).

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

The proposal indicates that the analysis will inform the Swedish government in the development of their 2004-2008 Country Strategy for South Africa that is under development. It will also contribute to the wider thinking about SA labour policy.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

It is unclear whether key stakeholders were involved scoping the TOR and in developing the proposal. An interview with the project leader for this study reveals that, based on the standard processes undertaken by HSRC in all of their studies, key stakeholders would certainly have been involved in determining the purpose of the evaluation.

Rating 4

1.2. Evaluation was adequately resourced

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

Comment and Analysis

The study was adequately resourced in terms of budget.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

The study was adequately resourced in terms of budget.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

The overall study made use of a multidisciplinary team including people from different disciplines such as economics, industrial sociology, psychology and law. Assistance was also provided by Gus Edgren, an international expert.

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

Although capacity building was not formally planned into the process, a number of interns from HSRC worked on this project.

Rating 3

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 research proposal was developed by the Employment and Economic Policy Research Programme (HSRC) which is involved in deep public interest research and policy development. Since the focus of the study is on labour market function and policy in South Africa, and more specifically the effects of HIV/AIDS on the labour market, it is assumed that the evaluators had enough knowledge and experience of the labour policy environment in order to conduct this research.

Rating 5

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 research proposal was developed by the Employment and Economic Policy Research Programme (HSRC) which is involved in deep public interest research and policy development. It can therefore be assumed that a review of literature has informed the planning of this study.

Rating 5

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

Not applicable - the report is a synthesis of research studies undertaken on HIV/AIDS and the labour market and therefore reference to intervention logic or theory of change is not required in the evaluation planning.

Rating N/A

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

Comment and Analysis

Although not explicitly stated in the report consultation with sector experts took place in a workshop. A reference group was established to discuss the scope and proposed frame of the research.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

Although there is no separate section in the report on the methodology undertaken for this study, it is clear that it involves an analysis of secondary sources and a gap analysis to determine key knowledge and research gaps in extending understanding of the HIV/AIDS impact on the labour market. The proposal for the overall study states that the methodology included a workshop with a multidisciplinary team to discuss the frame of research followed by a desktop analysis of secondary sources of information; and interviews with role players and experts. The mixed methods which include a participatory approach are appropriate given the questions being asked.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

The main method undertaken was a desktop analysis on available secondary sources and therefore sampling procedures were not considered.

Rating N/A

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

Comment and Analysis

This paper was prepared as one of seven papers for the Sida-HSRC project to review research on the labour market in South Africa and identify a set of knowledge gaps. It was therefore intended that the findings from this paper would be further analysed and then fed into the overall findings for the study. An interview with the project leader for the overall study reveals that standard processes are undertaken by HSRC in all of their studies, thus, for this study key stakeholders were brought together in order to discuss the proposed frame of the research. This was then followed by a series of meetings based on the different rounds of papers produced.

Rating 5

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

An initial workshop was held with the multidisciplinary team for the overall study to discuss the proposed frame of the research.

Rating 5

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

Not applicable as no primary data was collected.

Rating N/A

2.2. Evaluator independence

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

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable, since the research was initiated internally by the HSRC-Sida project.

Rating N/A

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

The use of a multidisciplinary approach followed by this study allowed the research team to investigate the research questions from different perspectives. There is no evidence to suggest that the team was not impartial.

Rating 5

2.3. Key stakeholder involvement***STANDARD: Key stakeholders were consulted through a formalised mechanism or institutional arrangement during the evaluation******Comment and Analysis***

A reference group was set up for the overall study which met on a regular basis to discuss the findings throughout the process.

Rating 5

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

Although not a formal part of the evaluation, interns from HSRC were included in the process.

Rating 3

2.4. Methodology

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

Comment and Analysis

The methods undertaken are consistent with those specified in the project proposal. This was further confirmed in the interview with the project leader.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable since no primary data was collected for this study.

Rating N/A

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

Comment and Analysis

Although not explicitly stated in the report it is clear that secondary data collection of past research into HIV/AIDS and the labour market was conducted via a desktop review. This is appropriate given the scope of the study.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

There is no explicit explanation of the data analysis methods and approach used in the report. However, the project proposal for the overall study indicates that the analysis was based on a framework developed by a multidisciplinary team which then conducted a desktop analysis based on available secondary sources of information. This analysis approach is appropriate and sufficient given the scope of this study.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

A multidisciplinary team of people from different disciplines was engaged as part of the methodology. The timeline contained in the proposal suggests that the reference group met three times during the evaluation process.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

Given that this study involves a synthesis of the findings from previous research studies, beneficiary consultation is not applicable.

Rating N/A

2.5. Project management

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

Comment and Analysis

The timeline in the proposal indicates that final submission of the report is February 2005 and the date on the final report for the overall study is October 2005. According to the project leader interviewed this was a 'small project' and therefore there might have had delays in the timeframes.

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 report contains no executive summary.

Rating 1

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

Comment and Analysis

The background section of this report makes use of a conceptual framework to present the main structural channels of the HIV/AIDS impact on the economy at a micro and macro level.

Rating 5

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

No research questions have been explicitly stated in the report. However, the rationale of this paper is clear in the introduction - that an understanding of the HIV/AIDS impact on the labour market is key to assessing the extent to which it adversely affects ongoing efforts to redress historical inequalities, especially for those historically disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.

Rating 4

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

The introductory section of the report clearly outlines the scope and focus of the report. There is no mention of the fact that this report is one of seven overview reports that had been prepared as part of an overall research study aimed at identifying a set of knowledge gaps on the South African labour market.

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**

There is no detailed explanation of the methodology in the report. For example, there is no explanation of how the past research papers were identified and no framework for analysis is presented. However, the background section of the report provides insight into the types of data currently available in the labour sector with regards to understanding the impact of HIV/AIDS.

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

The findings have been grouped into seven key themes around the impact of HIV/AIDS on the labour market including: impact on the labour force; impact on skills profile of labour supply; impact on size and nature of labour demand; impact on human resources development; impact on sectors; private sector responses. The findings for each theme are clearly presented followed by a presentation of the implications for research gaps.

Rating **5**

STANDARD: Conclusions and recommendations were clear and succinctly articulated

Comment and Analysis

Although not referred to as recommendations in the report, each of the research themes covered concludes with a set of implications for research gaps. These are clearly and succinctly presented.

Rating **4**

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

Comment and Analysis

The background section of the report provides an extensive overview of the scope and quality of data which is currently available with regards to understanding the HIV/AIDS impact on the labour market. An explanation of the gaps and limitations of the current data is also covered.

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

Overall the quality of writing and formatting is good. References are complete, however, some of the cited references are not contained in the reference list. The 'Glossary' is contained as a separate section at the end of the report and presents a list of acronyms rather than an explanation of words or terms contained in the report.

Rating 3

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

Quantitative data from secondary sources is presented throughout the report with reference given to the sources. Appropriate conventions are used in its presentation.

Rating 5

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 tables, some of which have been sourced from secondary sources, are used in order to communicate some of the key findings. They are particularly useful and lend clarity to the findings made.

Rating 5

STANDARD: Data analysis appeared to have been well executed**Comment and Analysis**

According to the project proposal a desktop analysis based on available secondary sources of information was conducted. Whilst the framework for analysis is not presented in the report it appears that this data analysis has been well executed and key research gaps have been identified.

Rating 5

STANDARD: Findings were supported by available evidence**Comment and Analysis**

All of the findings are supported by the existing data and research available on the impact of HIV/AIDS on the labour market.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

The author has drawn on multiple sources of data to support individual findings even though it is acknowledged that data in this sector is limited.

Rating **5**

STANDARD: There was appropriate recognition of the possibility of alternative interpretations

Comment and Analysis

The existing data and past research studies have been extensively analysed, synthesised and compared in order to back up arguments and provide a balanced view of impact of HIV/AIDS on the labour market.

Rating **5**

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

Comment and Analysis

There is no section in the report clarifying the methodology applied for the review, thus limiting the reader's ability to assess it for methodological flaws. Overall the analysis appears free of significant errors.

Rating **3**

3.4. Conclusions

STANDARD: Conclusions were derived from evidence

Comment and Analysis

The conclusions regarding the impact of HIV/AIDS on the labour market are all supported by existing data and findings from previous studies.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

Extensive reference to previous studies and datasets is made throughout the report.

Rating 5

STANDARD: Conclusions addressed the original evaluation purpose and questions

Comment and Analysis

The brief conclusion addresses the original purpose and rationale of this paper by highlighting 1) the need for HIV/AIDS to be considered as a key co-factor in labour market trend analysis; and 2) the fact that HIV/AIDS threatens efforts to address historical inequities in the labour market.

Rating 5

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

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

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

The recommendations are not referred to as such in the report. Instead they are identified as 'implications for research gaps' for each of the seven key themes. It was confirmed in the interview with the project leader that these were made in consultation with experts in a workshop, (interview).

Rating 5

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

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

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

The findings of this paper contributes to an overall study which focuses on Labour markets and social policy and therefore it is assumed that the findings, and more specifically the research gaps identified, are relevant to and will assist in shaping labour market policy.

Rating 5

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

The project proposal for the overall study indicates that the recommendations from this study should be targeted to Sida and the Swedish Embassy in South Africa to inform the country strategy and also to 'wider thinking' about SA labour policy. No specific audience is identified in the report although it is assumed that, given the nature of this review, that the recommendations for further research is targetted to both the state both state and non-state actors who are interested in policy change; academics and researchers.

Rating 3

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

There is no specific section in the report which recognises the limitations of the study. However, the background section of the report provides an extensive overview of the scope and quality of data which is currently available with regards to understanding the HIV/AIDS impact on the labour market. An explanation of the gaps and limitations of the current data is also covered.

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

Since this is an evaluation synthesis and no primary data was collected procedures for confidentiality and informed consent is not applicable.

Rating N/A

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

Comment and Analysis

The report for this evaluation is already publically available on the HSRC website.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

The report for this evaluation is already publically available on the HSRC website.

Rating 5

4. Follow-up, use and learning

4.1. Presentation to stakeholders

STANDARD: Results were presented to all relevant stakeholders

Comment and Analysis

The results of this individual paper were not presented to stakeholders. However, the results of the overall study to which this paper contributed were presented to key stakeholders from Treasury, the Presidency, Department of Labour, Statistics South Africa.

Rating 3

4.2. Resource utilisation

STANDARD: The evaluation was completed within the planned timeframes

Comment and Analysis

It is difficult to assess whether this particular paper was completed within the planned timeframes, however, for the overall study there was some deviation from the original timeframes.

Rating 3

STANDARD: The evaluation was completed within the agreed budget

Comment and Analysis

The evaluation was completed within the agreed 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 was published and is available on the HSRC website.

Rating 5

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

A reflective process was integrated into this research process for the overall study to which this paper contributed. The study group met continuously to discuss the interim findings and made decisions around what direction the study should be pursued in the next phase.

Rating N/A

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

It is difficult to comment on this particular research paper, however the overall study to which this paper contributed is thought to have influenced thinking around labour market dynamics.

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

It is difficult to comment on the impact of this particular research paper, however the overall study to which this paper contributed is thought to have dramatically influenced and shaped the way people think about different employment scenarios. It drew together key decision makers and experts in order to discuss the issue of unemployment. Discussions were held on how to target it by breaking down the issues in 'bit sized chunks' and taking people through a process to heighten their thinking around unemployment.

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

There is no clear evidence of whether the recommendations regarding research gaps in understanding the impact of HIV/AIDS on the labour market were used for further research.

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

It is difficult to comment on the impact of this particular research paper, however the overall study to which this paper contributed can provide no clear evidence of instrumental use. Despite this it is felt that the overall study has made an important contribution to the wider thinking about South African labour policy and practice. For example, a focus of the National Development Plan is on bringing down the cost of living so that people can make ends meet.

Rating 4

References

Vass, J, 2005, "A Review of Labour Markets in South Africa: The Impact of HIV/AIDS on the Labour Market", submitted by the Employment & Economic Policy Research Project proposal "Overview of Labour Market Function and Policy in South Africa", submitted by the Employment & Economic Policy Research Programme, HSRC, for SIDA,

List of Interviewees

Dr Miriam Altman, Project Manager and Lead Researcher, HSRC, Telephonic Interview, 12/2/2013