



## **Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation**

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# **Report on the Assessment of Government Evaluations**

## **Economic Assessment of Poverty Nodes and Nodal Economic Profiles**

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**Date Evaluation was completed:** 01 January 2007

**Name of assessor:** TS Mosdell

**Evaluation Number:** 204

**Date Assessment Completed:** 25 February 2013

## Evaluation Assessment Details

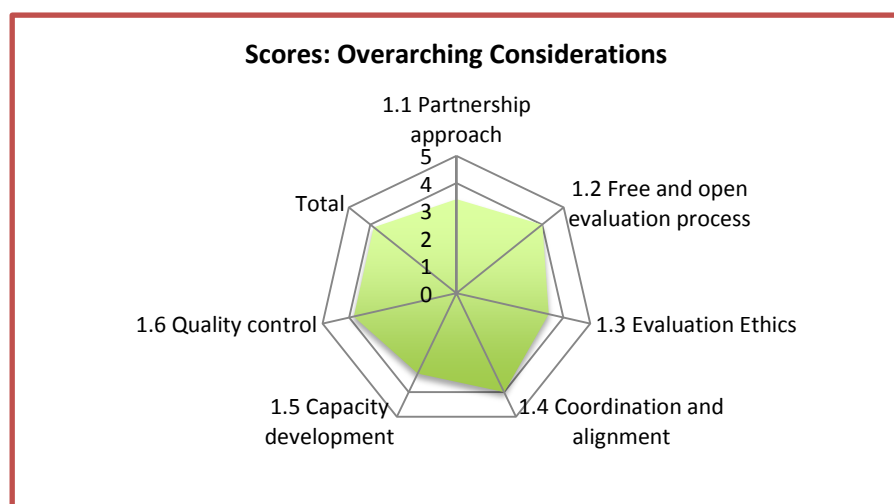
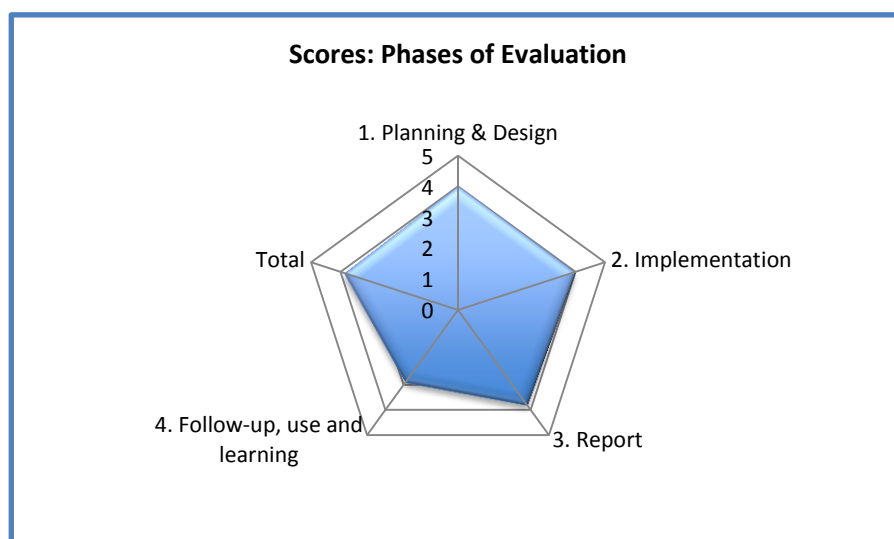
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Title of evaluation report	Economic Assessment of Poverty Nodes and Nodal Economic Profiles
Completion Date of Evaluation	01 January 2007
Name of Assessor	TS Mosdell
Evaluation Number	204
Completion Date of Assessment	25 February 2013
Initiated by	Business Trust, Office of the Presidency, Department of Provincial and Local Government
Evaluation undertaken by	Rhizome Management Services with the Monitor Group
Evaluation area / sector	Economic planning and development
	LED, SMEs & local development projects <i>Additional</i>
National Outcome	Outcome 4
	Outcome 7 <i>Additional</i>
Type of Evaluation	Economic
	<i>Additional</i>
What is being evaluated	Programme
	<i>Additional</i>
Geographic Scope	National
Period of Evaluation	2007
Known Cost of Evaluation	R8-10m

### Quality Assessment Scores

Phase of Evaluation	Score
Planning & Design	4.00
Implementation	3.96
Report	3.77
Follow-up, use and learning	2.86
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.76</b>

Overarching Consideration	Score
Partnership approach	3.42
Free and open evaluation process	4.00
Evaluation Ethics	3.44
Coordination and alignment	4.00
Capacity Development	3.25
Quality control	3.84



## 1. Planning & Design

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### 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 formal TOR setting out the objectives, expectations, methodology, etc.

**Rating** 4

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

#### Comment and Analysis

The purpose of the evaluation was clear in the TOR.

**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 in the TOR.

**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 outlined in the TOR was suited to the type of evaluation.

**Rating** 4

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

The intended users were identified in the TOR.

**Rating** 4

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

Key stakeholders were involved in scoping the TOR.

**Rating** 4

**1.2. Evaluation was adequately resourced**

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

***Comment and Analysis***

The evaluation ended up running over time.

***Rating*** 2

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

***Comment and Analysis***

The budget was adequate to resource the project.

***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 and skills sets.

***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**

Research teams used fieldworkers from the IDT and CIDA who benefitted from a capacity building point of view.

**Rating** 4

**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**

There was clear evidence that a review of relevant policy and programme environments informed the planning of the evaluation.

**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 project was planned taking existing literature into account.

**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***

Although the Presidential Poverty Nodes are built on a premise of intervention and change, there was no explicit reference to a theory of change in the planning of the evaluation.

**Rating** 2

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

***Comment and Analysis***

Key stakeholders, via a project management committee, were consulted on the design and methodology of the evaluation.

**Rating** 4

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

***Comment and Analysis***

The planned methodology, incorporating desk research, interviews, visits to the nodes, and a development of nodal profiles, was appropriate to the questions being asked.

**Rating** 4



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

The planned sampling, covering all the nodes, was appropriate to the evaluation.

**Rating** 4

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

There was a planned process for using the evaluation - it was intended to facilitate the implementation of the Programme of Action.

**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***

An inception phase was used to finalise and inform the implementation of the evaluation.

**Rating** 4

## 2. Implementation

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### 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**

Although not taken through an ethics review board or committee, the project was sensitive to ethical issues and where appropriate, informed consent was secured.

**Rating** 3

### 2.2. Evaluator independence

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

**Comment and Analysis**

The evaluation team was able to work unhindered, free from 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 any partiality or 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***

A formalised mechanism, a project management committee consisting of representatives from DPLG, the Business Trust, the Presidency, and the Independent Development Trust, was established.

**Rating** 5

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

Research teams used fieldworkers from the IDT and CIDA who benefitted from a capacity building point of view.

**Rating** 4

## 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 evaluation were consistent with those planned.

**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 compromised by problems in the field.

**Rating** 4

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

***Comment and Analysis***

Forms of data gathering were appropriate to the evaluation.

**Rating** 4

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

***Comment and Analysis***

Data analysis was appropriate given the purposes of the evaluation.

***Rating*** 4

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

***Comment and Analysis***

A formalised mechanism, a project management committee consisting of representatives from DPLG, the Business Trust, the Presidency, and the Independent Development Trust, was established to ensure robust engagement.

***Rating*** 4

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

***Comment and Analysis***

The methodology involved interviews and visits to each of the nodes.

***Rating*** 4

## 2.5. Project management

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

### **Comment and Analysis**

The project did run over time.

**Rating** 2

## 3. Report

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**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**

A clear executive summary - entitled 'Expanding economic opportunity in the Presidential poverty nodes', serves as a summary and an entry to the other project outputs.

**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 development intervention was explicit and clearly relevant to the evaluation.

**Rating** 4

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

There was a clear rationale for the structure and nature of the evaluation approach.

**Rating** 4

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

The scope of the evaluation was apparent in the report, although the distinction between the assessment of the nodes, and the actual profiles was a little unclear.

**Rating** 3

**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 was outlined in a dedicated section of the report.

**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**

The findings are set out in two separate documents, one providing an economic snapshot of comparative data, the other a summary of nodal profiles. The findings, however, are not integrated and are not tied together in a firm conclusion.

**Rating** 3

**STANDARD: Conclusions and recommendations were clear and succinctly articulated**

**Comment and Analysis**

Conclusions and recommendations are not clearly articulated in a single section, although reflections on what is required in each node is usefully presented.

**Rating** 3

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

**Comment and Analysis**

Methodological challenges and limitations, including insufficient and unreliable economic data, were acknowledged in the report.

**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

This was a complex project with a range of sub-reports making up the overall report - which was published in CD form. It was sometimes difficult to navigate this complexity. The reports, are however, well written and thorough.

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

Where data was presented, this was done in a way which complies to standard conventions.

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**

Tables and graphs were used effectively in the overall report.

**Rating** 4

**STANDARD: Data analysis appeared to have been well executed**

**Comment and Analysis**

The data analysis appears to have been well executed.

**Rating** 4

**STANDARD: Findings were supported by available evidence**

**Comment and Analysis**

Generally, the findings were supported by available evidence, both quantitative and qualitative.

**Rating** 4

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

**Comment and Analysis**

The evidence gathered appears to be sufficient to support the report's argument.

**Rating** 3

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

**Comment and Analysis**

There was no formal recognition of the possibility of alternative interpretations, although much of the report lends itself to interpretation by the reader.

**Rating** 4

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

**Comment and Analysis**

The report appeared to be free of significant methodological and analytic flaws.

**Rating** 4

### 3.4. Conclusions

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

The conclusions were derived from 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 into account relevant work from other studies, building on a broader Programme of Action.

**Rating** 4

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

The conclusions addressed the evaluation purpose.

**Rating** 4

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

Although conclusions, particularly those related to each of the nodes, were often explicit about change and were generally solution based, they were not explicitly drawn with explicit reference to a theory of change.

**Rating** 2**3.5. Recommendations*****STANDARD: Recommendations were made in consultation with appropriate sectoral partners or experts*****Comment and Analysis**

A formalised mechanism, a project management committee consisting of representatives from DPLG, the Business Trust, the Presidency, and the Independent Development Trust, was used to facilitate consultation.

**Rating** 4***STANDARD: Recommendations were shaped following input or review by relevant government officials and other relevant stakeholders*****Comment and Analysis**

A formalised mechanism, a project management committee consisting of representatives from DPLG, the Business Trust, the Presidency, and the Independent Development Trust, was used to facilitate consultation.

**Rating** 4

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

Recommendations were relevant to the policy context.

**Rating** 4

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

Recommendations, in the most part, were targetted specifically at stakeholders within each of the nodes and were change orientated. One of the principles underlying the recommendations was that they should be realistically implementable.

**Rating** 4

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

Methodological challenges and limitations, including insufficient and unreliable economic data, were acknowledged in the report.

**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

The report does not document procedures to ensure confidentiality, but care was taken in the project process to ensure that informed consent was secured when appropriate.

**Rating** 2

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

#### Comment and Analysis

There are no apparent risks to participants in disseminating the reports online.

**Rating** 4

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

#### Comment and Analysis

There do not appear to be any risks to institutions in disseminating the reports online.

**Rating** 4

## 4. Follow-up, use and learning

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### 4.1. Presentation to stakeholders

**STANDARD:** *Results were presented to all relevant stakeholders*

#### Comment and Analysis

Results were presented to the DPLG, Business Trust, Presidency and were distributed widely via CD.

**Rating** 4

### 4.2. Resource utilisation

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

#### Comment and Analysis

The evaluation ran over time.

**Rating** 2

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

#### Comment and Analysis

The evaluation was completed within the agreed 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 report is publicly available, both online and on CD.

**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

No formal reflective process was undertaken post the evaluation.

**Rating** 2

### 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 project was seen by those interviewed as having raised the profile of the Presidential Nodes initiative.

**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 evaluation adds to a body of research and intervention related to the Urban Renewal and Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programmes.

**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 report is a useful research output and is used accordingly. It has not had the impact of significantly altering policy or practice other than in this way. This can be attributed in part to restructuring within Cogta, where initiatives such as this have lost momentum.

**Rating** 3

**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 not yet evidence that the study has had a positive impact on the evaluand, although the recommendations target change within each of the nodes.

**Rating** 1

## References

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Rhizome Management Services, 2007. Nodal Economic Profiling Project, Economic Snapshot: Comparative Data - Prepared by Rhizome for the dplg and Business Trust, 2007.

Rhizome Management Services, 2007. Nodal Economic Profiling Project, Summary of Summaries of Nodal Profiles - Prepared by Rhizome for the dplg and Business Trust, 2007.

Rhizome Management Services, 2007. Nodal Economic Profiling Project, Profiles of the Urban and Rural Nodes - Prepared by Rhizome for the dplg and Business Trust, 2007.

Rhizome Management Services, 2007. Nodal Economic Profiling Project, Nodal Investment Atlas - Prepared by Rhizome for the dplg and Business Trust, 2007.

Rhizome Management Services, 2007. Nodal Economic Profiling Project, Expanding Economic Opportunity in the Presidential Poverty Nodes - Prepared by Rhizome for the dplg and Business Trust, 2007.

## List of Interviewees

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Andreas Bertoldi - Rhizome Management Services. Study Team Member - 20 February 2013