



Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation

Report on the Assessment of Government Evaluations

Zululand LED Strategy Support Impact Assessment Report

Date Evaluation was completed: 31 May 2007

Name of assessor: Katie Gull

Evaluation Number: 21

Date Assessment Completed: 12 March 2013

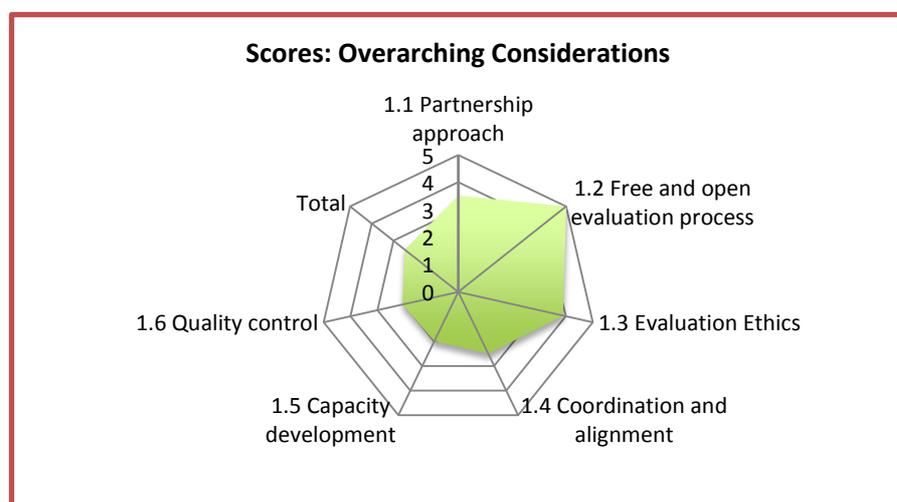
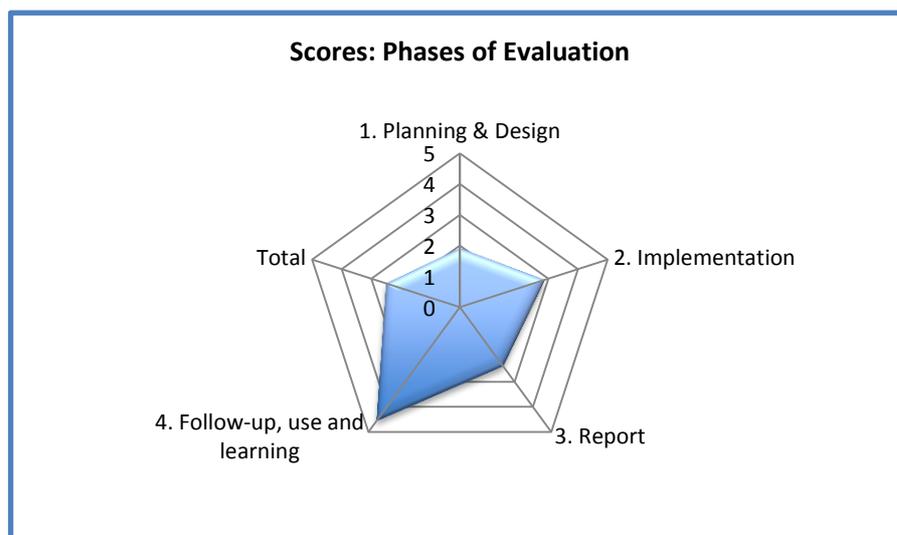
Evaluation Assessment Details

Title of evaluation report	Zululand LED Strategy Support Impact Assessment Report
Completion Date of Evaluation	31 May 2007
Name of Assessor	Katie Gull
Evaluation Number	21
Completion Date of Assessment	12 March 2013
Initiated by	KZN Department of Economic Development
Evaluation undertaken by	M&E Unit within the KZN Department of Economic Development
Evaluation area / sector	LED, SMEs and local development projects
	<i>Additional</i>
National Outcome	Outcome 4
	<i>Additional</i>
Type of Evaluation	Implementation
	<i>Additional</i>
What is being evaluated	Plan
	<i>Additional</i>
Geographic Scope	District
Period of Evaluation	January - April 2007
Known Cost of Evaluation	Unknown

Quality Assessment Scores

Phase of Evaluation	Score
Planning & Design	1.90
Implementation	2.85
Report	2.35
Follow-up, use and learning	4.55
Total	2.68

Overarching Consideration	Score
Partnership approach	3.52
Free and open evaluation process	5.00
Evaluation Ethics	3.89
Coordination and alignment	2.50
Capacity Development	2.00
Quality control	2.08



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 not guided by the TOR. Since the TOR is applied to eight projects, the link to the Zululand LED Strategy evaluation is tenuous. The overall objectives and the methodology do not seem to match the evaluation and the evaluation questions differ to the tentative assessment questions provided in the TOR.

Rating 1

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

Comment and Analysis

The purpose of the evaluation is not explicit and it is difficult to follow since the TOR is plagued with grammatical errors.

Rating 1

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

Comment and Analysis

The list of assessment questions are provided to show the type of questions that need to be asked.

Rating 3

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

Comment and Analysis

The TOR does not indicate the type of evaluation that should be undertaken. The scope and approach described is not clear.

Rating 1

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

Comment and Analysis

The intended users were identified since a feedback session is included in the methodology.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

It is uncertain as to whether key stakeholders were involved in the scoping of the TOR and determining the purpose of the evaluation.

Rating N/A

1.2. Evaluation was adequately resourced

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

Comment and Analysis

The time allocated was not sufficient because the project experienced delays. However, had the project gone according to plan, the time allocation would have been adequate.

Rating 2

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

Comment and Analysis

This is not applicable for this assessment.

Rating N/A

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

Comment and Analysis

This is not applicable for this assessment.

Rating N/A

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

Comment and Analysis

This is not applicable for this assessment.

Rating N/A

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 no evidence that a review of relevant policy and programme environments was conducted. There was no discussion as to how the Siyaphambili LED Strategy aligned to the LED policy.

Rating 1

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 no that a literature review was conducted. Only information on the Siyaphambili LED Strategy itself and what it contains was provided. The objective of the evaluation was to determine whether the implementation of the strategy matched the LED priorities, however there was no discussion or information on these priorities.

Rating 1

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

This is not applicable for this assessment.

Rating N/A

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

Comment and Analysis

This is not applicable for this assessment.

Rating N/A

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

Comment and Analysis

The planned methodology, which included interviews, a workshop and feedback session, was adequate. However, there is no evidence of a documentary analysis, which would have complemented the methodology.

Rating 3

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

Comment and Analysis

The planned sampling was appropriate given the focus of the evaluation.

Rating 3

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

Comment and Analysis

There is no evidence that there was a planned process for using the findings since the report contained no discussion on how the findings were to be used.

Rating 2

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

This is not applicable for this assessment.

Rating N/A

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

Effort was made to work according to proper ethical principles and in accordance with the values and principles advocated by the M&E Framework. The evaluation did not contain sensitive issues.

Rating 4

2.2. Evaluator independence

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

Comment and Analysis

This is not applicable for this assessment.

Rating N/A

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

There is no evidence that the evaluation team was partial or that there was a 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***

Stakeholders were consulted and involved in the evaluation process through a formalised interview and workshop approach. However, the report does not elaborate further on whom the key stakeholders were since it only refers to 'local municipalities.'

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 capacity building element incorporated into the evaluation.

Rating 2

2.4. Methodology

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

Comment and Analysis

This is not applicable for this assessment.

Rating N/A

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

Comment and Analysis

The data collection was compromised since only two out of the five local municipalities attended the workshop. Although a feedback session was planned to verify key findings, due to political issues, this was not held. As a compromise, the feedback session was combined with other projects, however in an interview with Mr Bheki Nowele, KZN DED: M&E Unit, it was explained that the attendance was poor.

Rating 2

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

Comment and Analysis

The forms of data gathering were appropriate given the scope of the study although because it was reliant on stakeholders and was susceptible to subjectivity.

Rating 3

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

Comment and Analysis

The analysis focused on the project relevance, project efficiency and project effectiveness and sustainability. The analysis and conclusions are combined and it is believed that the analysis lacked depth and constructive criticism. The link between the objectives of the evaluation and the analysis was weak and should be strengthened.

Rating 2

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

Comment and Analysis

It appears that the stakeholders who attended the interviews and workshops were suitably engaged. However, there were three missing municipalities, which impacted on the level of engagement possible.

Rating 2

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

Comment and Analysis

The methodology did not engage the project beneficiaries. However, most of the projects were strategic initiatives that were being piloted and therefore most of the people involved were project managers.

Rating 4

2.5. Project management

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

Comment and Analysis

According to Mr Bheki Nowele, KZN DED: M&E Unit, the project experienced some delays.

Rating 2

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

There was no executive summary in the report.

Rating 1

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 presented as relevant.

Rating 3

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

The evaluation questions that were asked during the interviews were appropriate and there was clear rationale for them. However, the questions asked using the participatory card exercise in the workshop did not fully cover the objectives of the evaluation. Overall, there were too few questions and the link between the questions and the analysis is somewhat unclear.

Rating 2

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

The scope and focus of the evaluation was apparent.

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 provided was too brief. Although it explained the approach used in terms of stakeholder interaction and data collection, it failed to explain the analysis and interpretation approaches used.

Rating 2

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 key findings were separated according to the two sessions that were held: the interviews and the workshop. The key themes were then summarised. However, the structure could be improved by linking the questions to the findings. The key findings lacked data to substantiate the claims. For example, the findings were generalised to "most municipalities." It would have been better to have used concrete data, rather than broad and vague statements.

Rating 2

STANDARD: Conclusions and recommendations were clear and succinctly articulated

Comment and Analysis

The conclusions needed to relate more to the objectives. Although succinctly articulated, the conclusions drawn are not adequately substantiated. The link between the findings and conclusions was not always clear and in some cases, contradictory. The recommendations, however, were clear and succinctly presented and tie into the findings clearly.

Rating 2

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

Comment and Analysis

There was no acknowledgement of limitations and this is a shortcoming since there clearly were limitations in terms of data gathering.

Rating 1

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 adequate.

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

Appropriate conventions were used, however since the evaluation was not data intensive, this is not applicable for this assessment.

Rating N/A

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

There were no figures to display and therefore figures and tables were not reported. The key findings did not lend themselves to this level of reporting. This is therefore not applicable for this assessment.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: Data analysis appeared to have been well executed

Comment and Analysis

The data analysis lacked depth.

Rating 2

STANDARD: Findings were supported by available evidence

Comment and Analysis

The findings were supported by evidence gathered during the interviews.

Rating 3

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

Comment and Analysis

The evidence gathered and presented in terms of the key findings was not critically analysed. Detailed evidence was not provided.

Rating **2**

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

Comment and Analysis

There was not appropriate recognition of the possibility of alternative interpretations.

Rating **1**

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

Comment and Analysis

There are no methodological flaws or analytical flaws that are evident, however the analysis was not substantiated enough.

Rating **3**

3.4. Conclusions

STANDARD: Conclusions were derived from evidence

Comment and Analysis

The conclusions were not adequately drawn from the evidence provided.

Rating 1

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

Comment and Analysis

There was no reference to other related research studies.

Rating 2

STANDARD: Conclusions addressed the original evaluation purpose and questions

Comment and Analysis

The conclusions did not address the original evaluation purpose and questions.

Rating 2

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

This is not applicable for this assessment.

Rating N/A

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

It is uncertain as to whether the recommendations were made in consultations with sectoral partners or experts. The evaluation mentions a feedback session, however this attendance was poor.

Rating 2

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

The recommendations were not shaped following input or review by relevant government officials and stakeholders. The recommendations were derived from the analysis in the report.

Rating 2

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

The recommendations were relevant to the policy context. The recommendations aligned local government's role in LED and the planning processes that accompany this function.

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 the specific audience. The recommendations were specific, although could have been further unpacked as they were a bit too broad.

Rating 3

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

The limitations of the evaluation were not noted.

Rating 1

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 did not document procedures intended to ensure confidentiality and to secure informed consent. In an interview it was found that the M&E Unit had tried to conduct the interviews within the parameters set out in the M&E Framework, such as to ensure confidentiality. However, no mention of this was documented in the report.

Rating 1

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

Comment and Analysis

There were no risks to participants in disseminating the original report.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

There were no unfair risks to institutions in disseminating the original report on a public 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 methodology planned for findings to be presented to managers and municipalities in the form of a feedback session. However, due to political issues, this was not held. As a compromise, the feedback session was combined with other projects, but according to Mr Bheki Nowele, KZN DED: M&E Unit, the attendance from the Zululand LED was poor.

Rating 4

4.2. Resource utilisation

STANDARD: The evaluation was completed within the planned timeframes

Comment and Analysis

According to Mr Bheki Nowele, KZN DED: M&E Unit, the evaluation project experienced some delays.

Rating 2

STANDARD: The evaluation was completed within the agreed budget

Comment and Analysis

This is not applicable for this assessment.

Rating N/A

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 publicly available and was easily accessible on the World Wide Web using any search engine. The report was also available on the KZN DED's 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

It does not appear as if a formal reflective process was undertaken by the staff responsible for the evaluand. However, in an interview with Mr Bheki Nowele, KZN DED: M&E Unit, it was explained that the evaluation process taught them how to strengthen future evaluations. For example, the planning and methodology needs to be meticulous and must be able to withstand interrogation.

Rating 1

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

In an interview with Mr Bheki Nowele, KZN DED: M&E Unit, it was found that a reflective process was undertaken after the evaluation. This process reflected on the strengths and weaknesses of the project and discussed ways in which to achieve the desired outcomes. In this way, the evaluation study added symbolic value as it empowered the community and brought awareness as to how they can be more involved in such initiatives.

Rating 5

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 was of conceptual value in understanding what has happened. It also added significant value in terms of contemplating and implementing the Theory of Change and ensuring that policies are developed with this at the forefront.

Rating 5

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 used on the part of the municipalities and an estimated 70% of recommendations across all KZN LED projects have been implemented. The evaluations have brought practical insight into the practise of conducting evaluations.

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

There was clear evidence that the evaluation has had a positive influence on the evaluation process. The evaluations assisted with being able to access additional funding.

Rating 5

References

KwaZulu Natal Department of Economic Development, 2007. Zululand LED Strategy Report Impact Assessment Report.

KwaZulu Natal Department of Economic Development. 2006. Monitoring and Evaluation Sub-Program Terms of Reference.

List of Interviewees

Bheki Nowele. KwaZulu Natal Department of Economic Development. Telephonic Interview, 18/2/2013