



Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation

Report on the Assessment of Government Evaluations

External Summative Evaluation Study of the Social Responsibility Programme

Date Evaluation was completed: 01 February 2012

Name of assessor: Cathy Chames

Evaluation Number: 212

Date Assessment Completed: 07 February 2013

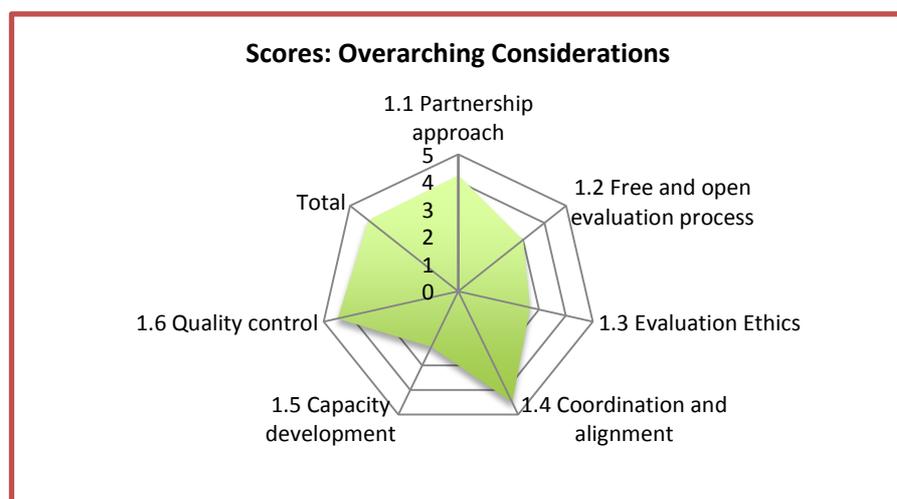
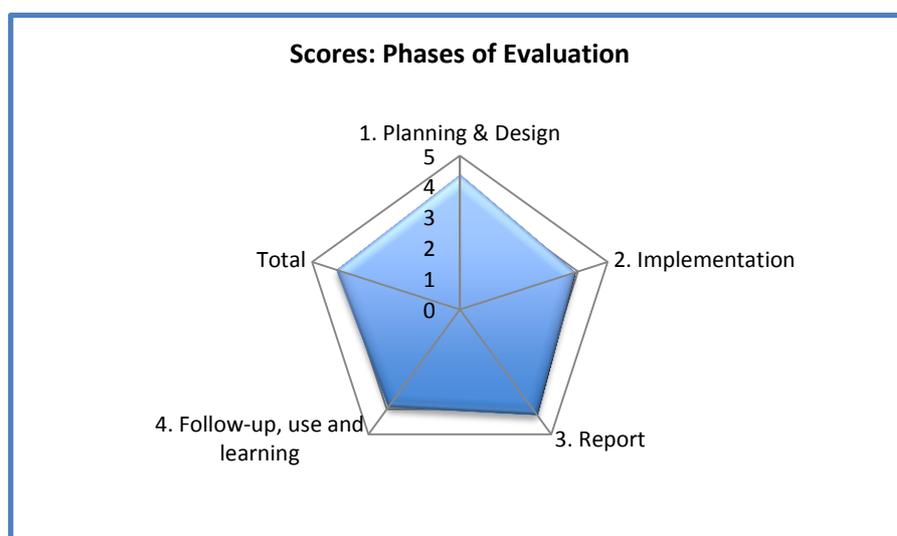
Evaluation Assessment Details

Title of evaluation report	External Summative Evaluation Study of the Social Responsibility Programme	
Completion Date of Evaluation	01 February 2012	
Name of Assessor	Cathy Chames	
Evaluation Number	212	
Completion Date of Assessment	07 February 2013	
Initiated by	Department of Environmental Affairs: Chief Directorate, Social Responsibility Policy and Projects	
Evaluation undertaken by	Genesis Analytics & Basic Blue Management Consultants	
Evaluation area / sector	Environment, climate change	
	Social development, social security & assistance	<i>Additional</i>
National Outcome	Outcome 4	
	Outcome 10	<i>Additional</i>
Type of Evaluation	Impact	
	Implementation	<i>Additional</i>
What is being evaluated	Programme	
		<i>Additional</i>
Geographic Scope	National	
Period of Evaluation	August 2011-February 2012	
Known Cost of Evaluation	R1,853,077	

Quality Assessment Scores

Phase of Evaluation	Score
Planning & Design	4.38
Implementation	3.89
Report	4.22
Follow-up, use and learning	3.91
Total	4.10

Overarching Consideration	Score
Partnership approach	4.24
Free and open evaluation process	3.00
Evaluation Ethics	2.67
Coordination and alignment	4.50
Capacity Development	2.25
Quality control	4.48



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 TOR is comprehensive, covering all details required from the evaluation, including: purpose; background; mandate; scope; questions/objectives; method; composition of team; deliverables/reporting; work plan; time frames. In preparation for the evaluation, the Chief Directorate: Social Responsibility, Policy and Projects conducted a verification exercise of all completed Social Responsibility Projects that fall within the period starting from 01 April 2004 to 31 March 2009. The purpose was to ascertain if there is a need for external evaluation, to determine the number of projects which will be included in the evaluation study (external evaluation), and gather issues to be considered when drafting the terms of reference. This report was then attached to the TOR.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

The purpose of the evaluation was clear and explicitly stated upfront in the TOR: to assess the value, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, relevance and sustainability of the Social Responsibility Program (SRP) projects in order to improve its design, implementation and provide the Department with information needed to make decisions about the future of the program and better influence policy development.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

A set of evaluation questions are clearly stated in the TOR for each of the five evaluation criteria: efficiency, effectiveness, relevance, impact and sustainability.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

The TOR did not specify that the approach should be qualitative and quantitative, however a mixed method approach was used in the evaluation itself which involved quantifying qualitative data. This is suited to the scope of the TOR since the quantitative analysis would allow for a comparison of the four SRP focus areas across the five evaluation criteria. The evaluation type is a hybrid of impact and implementation typologies which is suited to the purpose of the of the evaluation.

Rating **3**

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

Comment and Analysis

The intended users are identified in the TOR as the programme stakeholders of the DEA and the information will be needed to make decisions about the future of the programme and better influence policy development.

Rating **4**

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

Comment and Analysis

In preparation for the evaluation, the programme managers for each of the SRP focus areas were consulted to ensure that the issues they wished to cover in the evaluation were included. This exercise was undertaken by the Director: EPWP Coordination and Programme evaluation.

Rating **5**

1.2. Evaluation was adequately resourced

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

Comment and Analysis

The time allocated for the evaluation was 6 months which was adequate. However, the overall project was delayed by six weeks because the finalisation of the draft report took longer than anticipated.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

Interviewees confirmed that the evaluation 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 external evaluation team was well equipped to conduct a study of this nature since it was made up of environmental specialists and specialists in evaluation and impact assessments. It also included an expert in grant management who provided technical expertise with regards to the funding model.

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 building of internal staff was planned for and this task was part of the contract, however, there was lack of clarity around the purpose and scope of this capacity building.

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

There is no clear evidence that a review of relevant policy and programme environments had been conducted and used in the planning of the evaluation by the evaluators. However, the TOR contains details of the relevant policy and programme environments. The report also contains a brief review of the policy context. It also contains a detailed review of the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA's) Social Responsibility Programme (SRP), including an overview of its history, outputs and focus areas. This was used to inform the analytical framework for the study.

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

During the planning phase of this evaluation an extensive desktop review of project documentation was undertaken which enabled the evaluators to refine the indicators being measured in the 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***

One of the findings of this evaluation is that the SRP does not have a clearly articulated Theory of Change. However, the report contains an overview of the intervention logic and there is evidence that this was used during the planning of the evaluation as an analytic framework was developed at the outset of the evaluation. It contained a variety of indicators selected for each of the five evaluation criteria. The framework was presented to the Project Steering Committee meeting and approved prior to finalisation and implementation.

Rating 5***STANDARD: Key stakeholders were consulted on the design and methodology of the evaluation******Comment and Analysis***

The programme manager at the time had a clear idea of what was to be covered in the evaluation. In addition, a Steering Committee was constituted which was made up of representatives of the programme who had specific content knowledge and they therefore gave the evaluation its "content direction". Prior to the implementation of the evaluation an inception report was produced by the service provider and submitted to the Steering committee. Thereafter they gave input at numerous meetings throughout and were responsible for signing off the inception report, instruments etc. From this perspective the process was deemed to be both consultative and collaborative. Besides internal stakeholder consultation, there appears to have been very little consultation with the SRP partners regarding the design and method.

Rating 4***STANDARD: The planned methodology was appropriate to the questions being asked******Comment and Analysis***

In order to ask into the five evaluation criteria (efficiency, relevance, effectiveness, impact, sustainability) a mixed method approach was undertaken including a survey measuring performance against 35 indicators across the five evaluation criteria; review of documents; site visits; observations and interviews/focus groups.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

All 43 SRP projects which represented the total number of projects completed between 2004 - 2009 were included in the evaluation. The intention of including all projects was so that the results would provide a fair, well-balanced evaluation of the SRP in its entirety. A list of stakeholders for each project was provided by the DEA and it was intended that interviews would be conducted with project managers, partners and beneficiaries. It was difficult to reach the planned target of 10 beneficiaries per project since they were hard to reach and there was no record of their whereabouts.

Rating 3

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

Comment and Analysis

The TOR states that the the outcomes of the evaluation will be used by the DEA to improve implementation and management; establish funding criteria; identify characteristics of projects that make them sustainable in order to replicate them. The interviewee from the DEA confirmed that it was planned that the findings would be used for planning purposes and there are internal processes within the department to facilitate this - that the evaluation would inform the next strategic planning phase and budget.

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

The report states that an inception report containing the analytic framework and indicators for the 5 evaluation criteria was produced and submitted to a Steering Committee. Interviewees confirm that at the inception phase two separate meetings were held - a technical meeting to clarify all the technical aspects of the evaluation and its implementation; and a content meeting to explain the content and the context in terms of the broader government programmes and how SRP fits into this. Although these processes worked well to establish a common agreement on implementation, it was noted by interviewees that locating the relevant project documents was particularly challenging.

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

The report contains no details on ethical considerations. Interviewees stated that the DEA did not focus on this as, given the nature of the evaluation, these considerations were implied. Whilst individuals were not singled out in the report, there were issues of confidentiality in that it was easy to identify statements made by various stakeholders within the DEA and the evaluation team attempted not to reveal identities during presentations to the programme managers. Overall the assumption was that the focus of the evaluation was to learn lessons and not to penalise individuals. Beneficiaries were informed that the study was voluntary, that they would remain anonymous, and that they had the option of withdrawing from the interview. Due to the fact that a case study approach was used, individual projects and interviewees were identified in the report.

Rating 2

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 without interference during the fieldwork phase of the project. The Director for evaluation of this programme played a key role in supporting the evaluation process, however, he did not have any direct involvement in the programme. The service provider had full access to all records and the system used in the DEA to manage the programmes. Issues of trust between the service provider and the DEA were raised by interviewees.

Rating 3

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

There was no evidence of conflict of interest since the service provider was an external evaluator and did not have any stake in the SRP.

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 Steering Committee was constituted which was made up of representatives of the programme who had specific content knowledge and they therefore gave the evaluation its "content direction" since they understood the context of the programme. Thereafter they gave input at meetings throughout as their main job was to oversee what was happening in terms of content. The Director: EPWP Coordination and Programme Evaluation provided management support within the DEA. Monthly reports were submitted to the Directorate that provided updates on all interviews confirmed, stakeholders contacted etc.

Rating 5

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

Whilst capacity building of internal staff was part of the contract, it was not adequately undertaken. This is largely because the scope and timing of this deliverable was not clarified by the DEA prior to the evaluation and hence the service provider was unable to deliver on client expectations in this regard.

Rating 2

2.4. Methodology

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

Comment and Analysis

Overall, the methods employed in the evaluation were consistent with those planned despite the fact that there were very few respondents in the beneficiary groups than anticipated.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

This report indicates the following fieldwork level problems: project data and documentation required for the document review was often inaccessible; not all stakeholders were contactable for various reasons; many of the beneficiaries had moved; some of the projects being evaluated were closed as long ago as 2005 making the accurate recall of data difficult. Despite these difficulties, data collection did not deviate from that which was planned and a substantial amount information was collected and interviews completed. Despite these difficulties, the validity of data was not affected and in instances where data was not available on a particular indicator this was clearly stated in the report.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

The forms of data gathering were appropriate since the interviews were conducted after the document review and were designed to collect information not available from the written reports; and site visits fulfilled the need to verify physical aspects including infrastructural and environmental aspects.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

The data analysis approach was comprehensive. The analytical framework detailed in the report covers three levels of analysis to ensure comprehensive coverage of all aspects of the SRP. These include: Level 1 was the analysis of individual projects (in depth evaluation); level 2 was on the focus areas of each individual project; level 3 was an overall diagnosis of the SRP. The evaluation team would also have preferred greater rigour in terms of their observation of the individual project deliverables since much of the work undertaken by them was for the period 2004 to 2009. The team therefore had to find a balance between 1) what infrastructure was observed, 2) what stakeholders told them and 3) documentation.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

A wide range of stakeholders were included as interviewees: SRP officials at provincial level; project implementers; municipal officials, national SRP officials (sample of 115). Some difficulty was experienced in engaging stakeholders who were involved in projects dating as far back as 2004 and therefore anecdotal evidence was relied on for data.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

Community members and beneficiaries of the project were included as a key source of information (sample of 253).

Rating 5

2.5. Project management

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

Comment and Analysis

The time spent on receiving comments from DEA once the report had been submitted took longer than anticipated and therefore the project was extended by six weeks. This was problematic since the DEA wanted to use the evaluation to plan for the beginning of the financial year and the report was only finalised in March, however, they were able to use it to influence their plans for 2013 for a five year period.

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

Executive summary contains key components in succinct detail: introduction, evaluation approach and methodology, findings, recommendations and considerations, funding model

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

The "programme overview" provides good background and historical context to the SRP (2004-2009) and its alignment to the EPWP. It also provides the intervention logic and alignment outputs of the EPWP Phase 1.

Rating 4

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

The rationale for the study is stated in the introductory chapter - to improve the design and implementation of the SRP projects for greater results; and to use the findings and lessons learned to assist SRP in future decision making.

Rating 5

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

The scope of the evaluation is clearly stated in the introductory chapter: to assess the effectiveness, efficiency, impact, relevance and sustainability of the 43 projects. More detail is provided in terms of the specific objectives of the study.

Rating 5

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 overall approach to the methodology lacks clarity since it is difficult to understand from this section of the report that the study is qualitative in its approach but that this qualitative data was then quantified. Despite this the methodology section provides sufficient detail of the sample, data collection and framework for analysis. There is limited input on how the qualitative data was analysed.

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

Findings are presented according to the three levels of the analytical framework, namely: level 1 - individual projects; level 2 - focus area performance; level 3 - Overall SRP performance. A further chapter entitled 'analysis and recommendations' then details the findings based on the five evaluation criteria.

Rating **5**

STANDARD: Conclusions and recommendations were clear and succinctly articulated

Comment and Analysis

There is no separate section containing conclusions and recommendations. Instead, the analysis, conclusions and recommendations relating to each of the five evaluation criteria are combined and integrated in one section of the report. This structure allows for linking of the findings and the recommendations which are clearly and succinctly communicated, however, it is difficult to get an overall sense of all recommendations made.

Rating **4**

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

Comment and Analysis

Limitations of the study are clearly articulated in the methodology section of the report.

Rating **5**

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 report is well presented and edited.

Rating 5

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

The data is well presented.

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, tables and text boxes are used throughout the report in order to illustrate the results. Overall, they are clear and assist with understanding the findings.

Rating 5

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

The methodology section provides details on data analysis of the quantitative data. A 5 point scale was used to rank each project according to their performance against the 35 indicators. This appears to have been well-executed. A footnote indicates that certain indicators were more qualitative and captured a descriptive level of detail. Thus, they were excluded from the 5-point scale system and were thus not included in data aggregation. These were analysed separately. However, there is no detail on how the qualitative data was analysed.

Rating 4

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

All findings are based on the quantitative evidence collected in field and the qualitative data was used to complement the quantitative data. The use of a 5-point scale to rank projects above or below a benchmark of 3.57 allowed for an objective and standardised approach. The 5-point scale was adjusted appropriately and contextualised for each individual indicator. In the limitations section of the report it noted that there were a number of projects which closed as long ago as 2005 with the most recent ones closing in 2009 therefore data could not be accurately recalled or with any level of detail by the various sources and stakeholders.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

Evidence was sufficiently and appropriately analysed.

Rating **5**

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

Comment and Analysis

Alternative interpretations of data are reported on to some degree during discussion of findings. Emerging themes arising are also reported on.

Rating **4**

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

Comment and Analysis

There does not appear to be any methodological and analytic flaws.

Rating **5**

3.4. Conclusions

STANDARD: Conclusions were derived from evidence

Comment and Analysis

Overall the conclusions are based on evidence, although the report notes that for projects dating as far back as 2004 it was difficult to obtain available evidence. It was noted by interviewees that there were some disagreements regarding the conclusions which were made in the report which did not take into full consideration the context of the programme.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

The evidence was substantiated by the review of programme documents. No other research studies were cited.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Conclusions addressed the original evaluation purpose and questions

Comment and Analysis

The conclusions are all related to the five evaluation criteria. The final section of the report summarises the major emerging considerations pertaining to all five areas of the evaluation which specifically focus on the ways in which the SRP programme can be improved in the future, the suggested funding model, and characteristics of projects which can be replicated in the future. These conclusions clearly address the purpose of the evaluation.

Rating 5

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

Although there is no theory of change for the programme, there is on-going reference to the intervention logic in the analysis of findings and recommendations. In the section on recommendations, the evaluation team recommends first and foremost that the Programme Theory or Logical Framework needs to be established.

Rating 5

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

An environmental specialist was part of the evaluation team and provided expert input on environmental issues throughout. Furthermore, the team had good technical expertise in the field of grants management and allocation of funding. The recommendations therefore drew on this expertise.

Rating 5

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

The high level findings from the study were provided to the DEA team followed by a discussion and input on the recommendations. Although meetings with two senior officials in the directorate were planned in order to get input into findings and recommendations, these did not take place.

Rating 4

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

Input received from the steering committee into the recommendations ensured that the context was taken into consideration. Interviewees indicated that it was important to locate the SRP within the context and boundaries of the EPWP programme and this had to be reiterated with the service provider.

Rating 4

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

The recommendations were targetted either generally to the SRP Directorate or more specifically to the programme manager. They appear to be feasible and affordable.

Rating 5

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

The limitations are clearly noted in the report.

Rating 5

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

There is no reference in the report around procedures to ensure confidentiality and informed consent. There are some instances in the summary report where individual organisations have been singled out and therefore the issue of informed consent would be important for a study of this nature. It is also worth noting that the names of interviewees have been captured in each of the case study reports thereby revealing their identity. This was at the request of the DEA and there is concern that this may not have been done with the consent of the individuals interviewed.

Rating 2

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

Comment and Analysis

Although individuals are not singled out in the report, the names of projects had been singled out thereby increasing the risk that individuals could be exposed due to their being linked to particular projects.

Rating 2

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

Comment and Analysis

The report contains individual project reports of each SRP project and individual projects are also singled out in the findings section of the summary report to some extent. This could place these projects at risk of exposure if report is disseminated on a public website.

Rating 2

4. Follow-up, use and learning

4.1. Presentation to stakeholders

STANDARD: Results were presented to all relevant stakeholders

Comment and Analysis

The findings were presented to: the programme managers responsible for running the programme on a daily basis; the executive management of the DEA; and the Director-General of the DEA. It was further presented to the current group of consultants who will be responsible for the implementation of the next phase of SRP projects in order to learn the lessons of the past.

Rating 5

4.2. Resource utilisation

STANDARD: The evaluation was completed within the planned timeframes

Comment and Analysis

The period under evaluation was from April 2004 to March 2009, making it difficult to locate relevant stakeholders and key informants. Despite this, the fieldwork phase was conducted within the specified timeframes. The time spent on receiving comments from DEA once the report had been submitted took longer than anticipated and therefore the project was extended by six weeks.

Rating 3

STANDARD: The evaluation was completed within the agreed budget

Comment and Analysis

The evaluation was completed within 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

Copies of the report were made available for all regional offices. It was indicated by interviewees that the report was meant to be an internal document.

Rating 3

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

The M&E team within the DEA did reflect on the evaluation process in order to improve future evaluations. For example, the team will ensure that there is more clarity around the capacity building element of the evaluation and will include a 'skills transfer report' for future external evaluations undertaken.

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

This evaluation is perceived to have significant value to improving the future implementation and management of the SRP within the context of the EPWP. The report has suggested quite significant recommendations that could make huge changes to the SRP programmes particularly with regards to the application and selection process of projects, the need for monitoring and proper reporting and the suggestions around the need to build sustainability models into the SRP projects.

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

Interviewees confirmed that the evaluation study has helped shaped policy and practice. For example, from the lessons learnt and recommendations the programme managers now have a better understanding of who to contract and how to contract. The evaluation also recommended a new funding model for the SRP which will shape future practice.

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 Director, in his business plan, indicated that 70% of the recommendations from this evaluation will be implemented within the next financial year. The recommendations were therefore used to inform planning and were then developed into an action plan with the requirement that progress reports be submitted in order to track implementation. These action plans are now in the process of being implemented.

Rating 5

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 was completed in March 2012 and therefore may be too soon to assess whether there has been a positive influence on stakeholders and beneficiaries. However, interviewees indicated that the findings of this evaluation were based on the opinions and input of the stakeholders which then influenced recommendations to improve the overall programme. Therefore, in an indirect way, the evaluation would certainly benefit the programme stakeholders and, ultimately, the programme beneficiaries in the long run.

Rating 3

References

Chief Directorate: Social Responsibility Policy and Projects; Directorate: EPWP Coordination and Programme Evaluation, 2011, "Terms of Reference for Conducting Summative Evaluation for Social Responsibility Programme (SRP) of the Department of Environmental Affairs"

Genesis Analytics and Basic Blue Management Consultants, 2012, "External Summative Evaluation Study of the Social Responsibility Programme", Prepared for Chief

Genesis Analytics and Basic Blue Management Consultants, 2011, "Project name: WftC SANParks Namaqua, A project report reflecting the experience and impact of an SRP

List of Interviewees

Alyna Wyatt, Project Manager and Lead Researcher, Genesis Analytics, Telephonic Interview, 7/2/2013.

Makgale Moela, Director: EPWP Coordination and Programme Evaluation, Chief Directorate: Social Responsibility, Policy and Projcets, Telephonic Interview, 4/2/2013.