



Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation

Report on the Assessment of Government Evaluations

Umdoni LED Strategy Impact Assessment Report

Date Evaluation was completed: 31 May 2007

Name of assessor: Katie Gull

Evaluation Number: 22

Date Assessment Completed: 12 March 2013

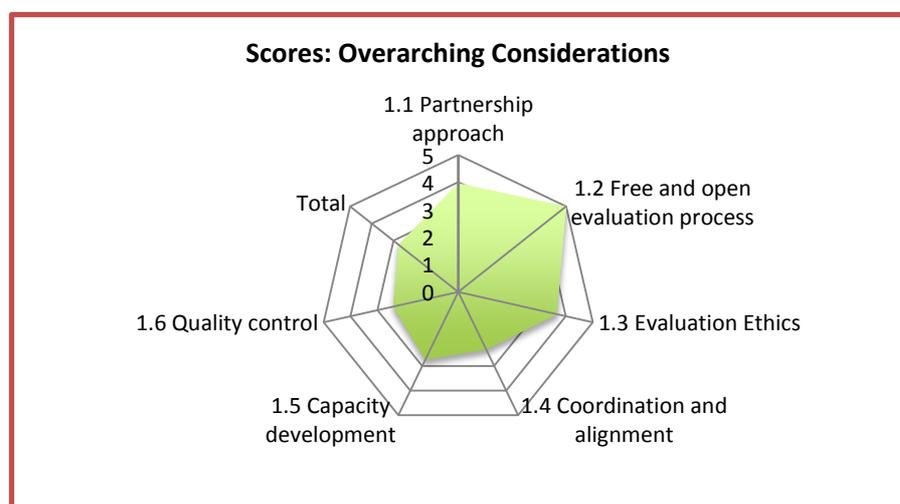
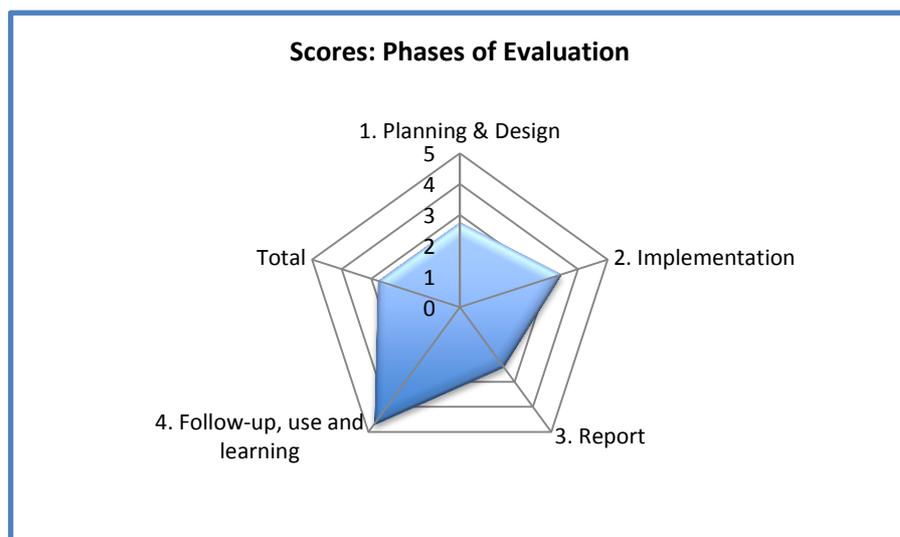
Evaluation Assessment Details

Title of evaluation report	Umdoni LED Strategy Impact Assessment Report
Completion Date of Evaluation	31 May 2007
Name of Assessor	Katie Gull
Evaluation Number	22
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	Local
Period of Evaluation	October 2006 - March 2007
Known Cost of Evaluation	Unknown

Quality Assessment Scores

Phase of Evaluation	Score
Planning & Design	2.76
Implementation	3.44
Report	2.39
Follow-up, use and learning	4.68
Total	2.97

Overarching Consideration	Score
Partnership approach	3.97
Free and open evaluation process	5.00
Evaluation Ethics	3.67
Coordination and alignment	2.33
Capacity Development	2.75
Quality control	2.43



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 guided by the TOR. The objectives in evaluation reflect the objectives outlined in the TOR. However, the methodology and scope are not clearly defined in the TOR and as a result, it is unknown as to whether the evaluation was appropriately guided.

Rating 3

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

A review of the policy context was conducted, however it was very brief and could have been further elaborated. Given this brief review, it is inferred that the relevant policy and programme environments did not guide the planning of the evaluation by the evaluators.

Rating 2

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

A brief introduction to the project and background information to the Umdoni Municipality was included. However, this background information focuses on the municipality, rather than the strategy itself. There is no evidence of a literature review being conducted.

Rating 2

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, an evaluation and feedback workshop in addition to document analysis was appropriate to the research questions being asked. Qualitative methods are deemed most appropriate since there was not enough information to warrant the use of other data.

Rating 3

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

Comment and Analysis

Key stakeholders were included in the planned sampling and 35 participants attended the workshop. The LED forum was combined with business people from the area and members of Non-Governmental Organisations who had special interest in LED projects.

Rating 3

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

Comment and Analysis

The evaluation does not indicate any process for using the findings of the evaluation. However, it is planned that the findings of the evaluation are shared with the workshop participants.

Rating 3

1.5. Inception phase

STANDARD: *The inception phase was used to develop a common agreement on how the evaluation would be implemented*

Comment and Analysis

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. However, the nature of data gathered during the evaluation was not ethically sensitive.

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

It appears that the evaluation team was impartial and there was no evident conflict of interest.

Rating 3

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, in the form of semi-structured interviews and workshops, was adopted for the evaluation.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

Although not explicitly stated as a capacity building intervention in the evaluation, the evaluand incorporated capacity development in the form of knowledge sharing.

Rating 3

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

Interviews with the project steering committee and the municipal manager did not take place, both important stakeholders. Although their views were captured through other interviews, this did compromise the evaluation to some degree.

Rating 2

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

Comment and Analysis

The forms of data gathering were appropriate considering the scope of the evaluation.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

The principles relating to relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability were applied to the findings and this data analysis approach was appropriate considering the purpose of the evaluation. It is surprising that the data analysis sought to answer summative questions at such an early phase in the project's overall life cycle.

Rating 3

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

Comment and Analysis

Key stakeholders were engaged in the process. Although not explicit in the report, the stakeholders were business people and NGOs who were part of the LED forum.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

The methodology did not engage beneficiaries. Instead, the data collection was focused mainly on project management and stakeholders. However, the LED strategy was a strategic initiative and therefore most people involved were project managers or interested stakeholders.

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 is 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 report provided context for the intervention adequately. The intervention was presented as relevant to the evaluation.

Rating 3

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

The rationale for the evaluation questions was clear. The questions stemmed from the overarching objectives of the evaluation. However, the questions could have been developed further.

Rating 3

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

This is not applicable for this assessment.

Rating N/A

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 not detailed, was too brief and needed to be more systematic, separating the data collection, analysis and interpretation.

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 findings were presented concisely and clearly. The findings were substantiated with evidence and were therefore decisive.

Rating **3**

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

Comment and Analysis

The conclusions and recommendations were brief, however this is to be expected since the report only contains twelve pages of written text. The recommendations need to be elaborated further and should be described in full sentences.

Rating **2**

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

Comment and Analysis

There were no acknowledgements of limitations of the study.

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

In some areas of the report, the quality of writing is poor. There are grammatical errors and incomplete sentences. The style of the writing needs to be improved to ensure consistency with tense.

Rating 2

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

There was no presentation of data and therefore 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 since the evaluation was not data intensive. Since no tables or figures were used, this is not applicable for this assessment.

Rating N/A

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

The qualitative analysis lacked depth and could have been better executed.

Rating 2

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

In general, findings were supported by evidence.

Rating 3

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

Comment and Analysis

The evidence was gathered sufficiently and appropriately analysed.

Rating 3

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

Comment and Analysis

There was no recognition of the possibility of alternative interpretations.

Rating 2

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

Comment and Analysis

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

Rating 3

3.4. Conclusions

STANDARD: Conclusions were derived from evidence

Comment and Analysis

The conclusions were derived from the evidence, however the analysis and conclusions were merged.

Rating 2

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 related work or other studies.

Rating 1

STANDARD: Conclusions addressed the original evaluation purpose and questions

Comment and Analysis

A stronger link between the conclusions and objectives would have improved the conclusions.

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 does not appear as if the recommendations were made in consultation with appropriate experts.

Rating 2

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

It does not appear as if the recommendations were shaped by relevant government officials or stakeholders. The recommendations were very brief and in bullet-point format and as a result, it is inferred that they did not receive adequate input from government officials or stakeholders.

Rating 2

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

The recommendations were relevant to the policy context. The recommendations are in the field of LED and local municipal relations with the business sector.

Rating 3

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

Only some of the recommendations were targeted to a specific audience. The recommendations are too brief and broad to assess whether they are acceptable and feasible. It is suggested that the recommendations be expanded and further developed.

Rating 2

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

No limitations of the evaluation were 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

Procedures undertaken to ensure confidentiality and secure informed consent were not documented in the report. However, the M&E Unit tried to conduct the interviews within the parameters that were set, such as to ensure confidentiality.

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 in disseminating information.

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

Results were presented in the form of a feedback session and participants expressed their appreciation for this.

Rating 5

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. 2006. Monitoring and Evaluation Sub-Program Terms of Reference.

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

List of Interviewees

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