



Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation

Report on the Assessment of Government Evaluations

Local Economic Development Impact Assessment Composite Report

Date Evaluation was completed: 01 May 2007

Name of assessor: Robin Richards

Evaluation Number: 26

Date Assessment Completed: 10 February 2013

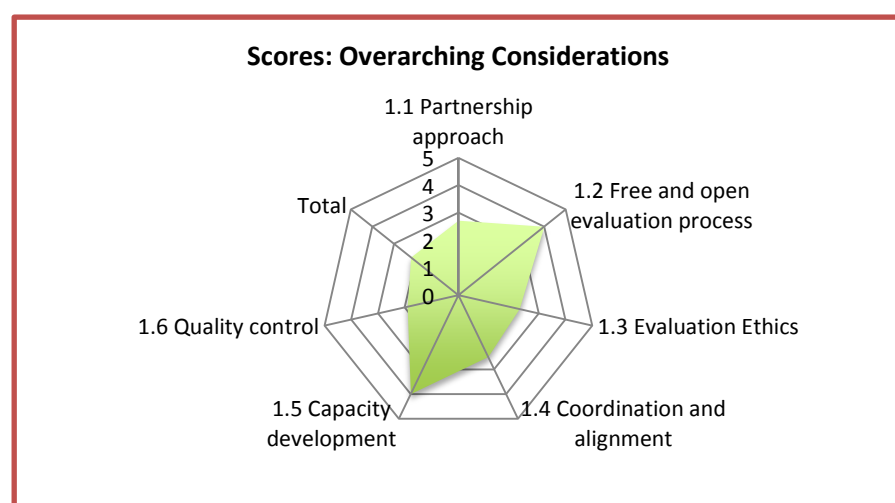
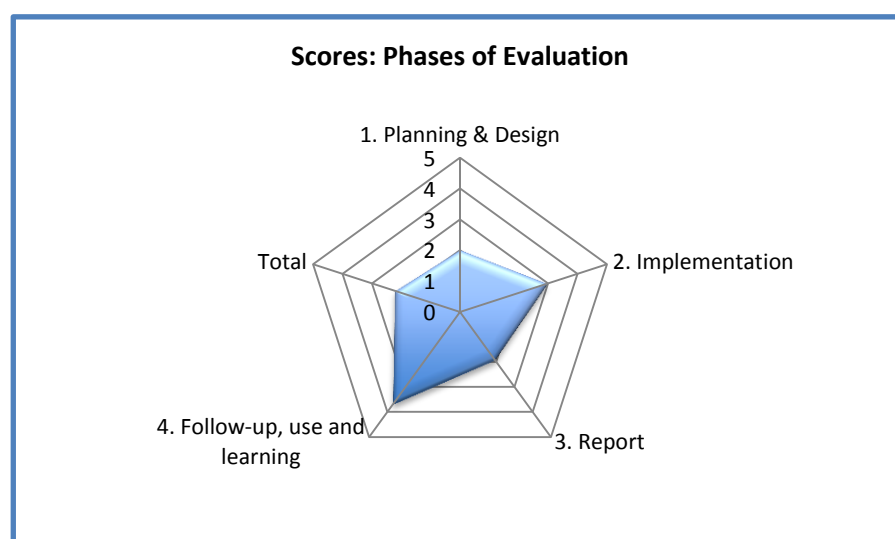
Evaluation Assessment Details

Title of evaluation report	Local Economic Development Impact Assessment Composite Report
Completion Date of Evaluation	01 May 2007
Name of Assessor	Robin Richards
Evaluation Number	26
Completion Date of Assessment	10 February 2013
Initiated by	KZN Department of Economic Development
Evaluation undertaken by	KZN Department of Economic Development and the Learning, Monitoring and Evaluation Facility (LMRF)
Evaluation area / sector	Local Economic Development
	Additional
National Outcome	Outcome 4
	Additional
Type of Evaluation	Implementation
	Additional
What is being evaluated	Project
	Additional
Geographic Scope	Provincial
Period of Evaluation	2003 -2006
Known Cost of Evaluation	Unknown

Quality Assessment Scores

Phase of Evaluation	Score
Planning & Design	2.00
Implementation	2.96
Report	1.91
Follow-up, use and learning	3.67
Total	2.41

Overarching Consideration	Score
Partnership approach	2.71
Free and open evaluation process	4.00
Evaluation Ethics	2.29
Coordination and alignment	2.50
Capacity Development	4.00
Quality control	1.90



1. Planning & Design

1.1. Clarity of Purpose and Scope in TOR

STANDARD: *The evaluation was guided by a TOR with at least the following sections explicit: purpose, scope and objectives; expectations regarding design and methodology; resources and time allocated; reporting requirements; expectations regarding evaluation process and products.*

Comment and Analysis

This was an internal evaluation implemented by the LED Unit of the KZN Department of Economic Development (DED). There was no information on ToRs for the project.

Rating N/A

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

Comment and Analysis

There was no information on ToRs for the project.

Rating N/A

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

Comment and Analysis

There was no information on ToRs for the project.

Rating N/A

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

There was no information on ToRs for the project.

Rating N/A

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

There was no information on ToRs for the project.

Rating N/A

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

There was no information on this.

Rating N/A

1.2. Evaluation was adequately resourced

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

Comment and Analysis

This was an internal evaluation, therefore existing departmental resources were utilised.

Rating 3

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

Comment and Analysis

This was an internal evaluation and therefore, the department's own resources including staffing were utilised for the study.

Rating 3

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

Comment and Analysis

This appeared to be the case because the evaluation was undertaken in collaboration with students from the University of KwaZulu-Natal and supervised by the department as well as the LMRF.

Rating 3

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

Comment and Analysis

This seemed to be the case because the DED and LMRF identified a number of Masters students from Planning and Development Studies departments from the University of KwaZulu-Natal to obtain practical research experience in evaluation through this study. The students were mentored by the M&E Unit in DED as well as the Learning, Monitoring and Research Facility (LMRF).

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 no evidence of such a review in the planning and design phase.

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 was no evidence of such a review in the planning and design phase.

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

There was no specific reference to the theory of change or intervention logic in the planning of the evaluation.

Rating 1

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

Comment and Analysis

There was no evidence of this in the report.

Rating 2

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

Comment and Analysis

This seemed to be the case because a range of qualitative methods were used, including interviews with key stakeholders and feedback workshops with beneficiaries and key stakeholders.

Rating 3

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

This a was a qualitative study but there was no information in the report on how many stakeholders were interviewed.

Rating 3

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

This was not evident from the report.

Rating 1

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***

There was no information on this.

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

This is not relevant to this study because there did not appear to be any ethical sensitivity to the evaluation.

Rating N/A

2.2. Evaluator independence

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

Comment and Analysis

This was primarily an internal evaluation managed by the M&E department of the DED

Rating N/A

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

This was an internal evaluation managed by the M&E department of the DED. This may have negatively affected objectivity of the evaluation.

Rating 2

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

Key stakeholders were consulted in various ways: through a workshop with beneficiaries as well as a feedback workshop with project stakeholders and beneficiaries.

Rating 4

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

The DED and LMRF identified a number of Masters students from the Planning and Development Studies departments from the University of KwaZulu-Natal to obtain practical research experience in evaluation through this study. The students were mentored by the M&E Unit in DED as well as the LMRF.

Rating 4

2.4. Methodology

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

Comment and Analysis

There is insufficient information on this. But this appeared to be the case.

Rating 3

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

Comment and Analysis

There is insufficient information on this. But this appeared to be the case.

Rating 3

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

Comment and Analysis

This appeared to be the case because there was a limited number of projects to be evaluated and these projects had already been implemented by the LED Unit between the period 2003-2006.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

There was no evidence of data analysis in the report. A summary-table of views between direct project beneficiaries and project managers would have been useful together with key findings across the seven projects.

Rating 2

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

Comment and Analysis

The report contains no summary information of who was interviewed across the seven projects.

Rating 2

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

Comment and Analysis

The report indicates that beneficiaries were engaged through interviews and workshops.

Rating 4

2.5. Project management

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

Comment and Analysis

The report contains no information on shifts in project milestones and timeframes.

Rating N/A

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

This was a summative report of key findings from 7 project evaluations. There was no Executive Summary

Rating 1

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

Comment and Analysis

This was a global evaluation report and a summary of the findings of 7 different project evaluations. However, context of the development interventions was not presented.

Rating 2

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

There were no evaluation questions articulated in the report, but rather broad evaluation themes.

Rating 2

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

This was specified in the Introduction/ Foreword of the report.

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**

This was a summative report and the report contained only a very short description of the methodology for data collection.

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

Key findings were presented in summary-form. The report highlights that these findings are perceptions of individuals and groups. There appeared to be no attempt to support any of these findings with summary-observations of project-functioning at site-level.

Rating 2

STANDARD: Conclusions and recommendations were clear and succinctly articulated

Comment and Analysis

These were summarised in bullet-form.

Rating 3

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 of the evaluation.

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 the writing was adequate and clearly presented in a scientific style. The publication was professionally presented and there were few typographical or grammatical errors.

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

There was no substantial content to the report. Only a summary findings were presented as part of the narrative.

Rating **1**

3.3. Presentation of findings

STANDARD: *The use of figures and tables was such that it supported communication and comprehension of results; and data reported in figures and tables was readily discernible and useful to a reader familiar with data presentation conventions*

Comment and Analysis

Figures and tables were used to a very limited extent but where used they did assist the reader to some extent in understanding the evaluation.

Rating 1

STANDARD: Data analysis appeared to have been well executed

Comment and Analysis

There was no data-analysis including a summary of whether views differed across projects or across stakeholder-type.

Rating 1

STANDARD: Findings were supported by available evidence

Comment and Analysis

No evidence was provided to support findings.

Rating 1

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

Comment and Analysis

The report provided no indication that the evidence gathered was sufficiently analysed to support the argument.

Rating 1

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

Comment and Analysis

This was not evident from the report.

Rating 1

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

Comment and Analysis

The report contained no analysis. Only a summary of key findings for all projects was provided.

Rating 2

3.4. Conclusions

STANDARD: Conclusions were derived from evidence

Comment and Analysis

No evidence was provided to support the conclusions.

Rating 2

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

Comment and Analysis

This was not present in the report.

Rating 1

STANDARD: Conclusions addressed the original evaluation purpose and questions

Comment and Analysis

There were no research questions in the report because of its summative content. The conclusions are very brief and limited.

Rating 2

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

There was no specific reference to the theory of change or intervention logic in the conclusions.

Rating 2

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

This was not evident in the report.

Rating 2

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

There was a feedback workshop with key stakeholders and beneficiaries, so this may have happened. But there is insufficient information on this in the report.

Rating 3

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

This did appear to be the case because they focussed on ways to improve implementation of LED projects.

Rating 4

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

This was not explicitly indicated in the report. But the recommendations were simple and easy to implement and identified who they were targetted at.

Rating 3

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

These were not evident.

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

This was not 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

This did not seem to be the case given the nature of the evaluation, focussing on LED projects.

Rating 3

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

Comment and Analysis

This did not seem to be the case.

Rating 3

4. Follow-up, use and learning

4.1. Presentation to stakeholders

STANDARD: *Results were presented to all relevant stakeholders*

Comment and Analysis

This appeared to be the case as indicated in the report with the convening of a feedback workshop with key stakeholders and beneficiaries.

Rating 4

4.2. Resource utilisation

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

Comment and Analysis

There was no information on this.

Rating N/A

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

Comment and Analysis

This was an internal evaluation, utilising exiting resources available within the department.

Rating 3

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 evaluation is a published report and is therefore publically available.

Rating 4

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

There is no information on this.

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

There is no information on this.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: *The evaluation study was of conceptual value in understanding what has happened and possibly in shaping policy and practice*

Comment and Analysis

This does seem to be the case, because the recommendations deal with how LED projects can be implemented, resulting in improved performance.

Rating 3

4.6. Utilisation of findings and recommendations

STANDARD: *There was clear evidence of instrumental use - that the recommendations of the evaluation were implemented to a significant extent*

Comment and Analysis

There is no information on this.

Rating N/A

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 no information on this.

Rating N/A

References

KwaZulu-Natal Department of Economic Development, 2007. LED Impact Assessment Composite Report. KZN Government Printers, Durban.

List of Interviewees

No interviews could be scheduled.