



Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation

Report on the Assessment of Government Evaluations

The Economy-wide Effects of Price-Reducing Reforms in Infrastructure Services in South Africa

Date Evaluation was completed: 01 February 2006

Name of assessor: Tim Mosdell

Evaluation Number: 42

Date Assessment Completed: 08 February 2013

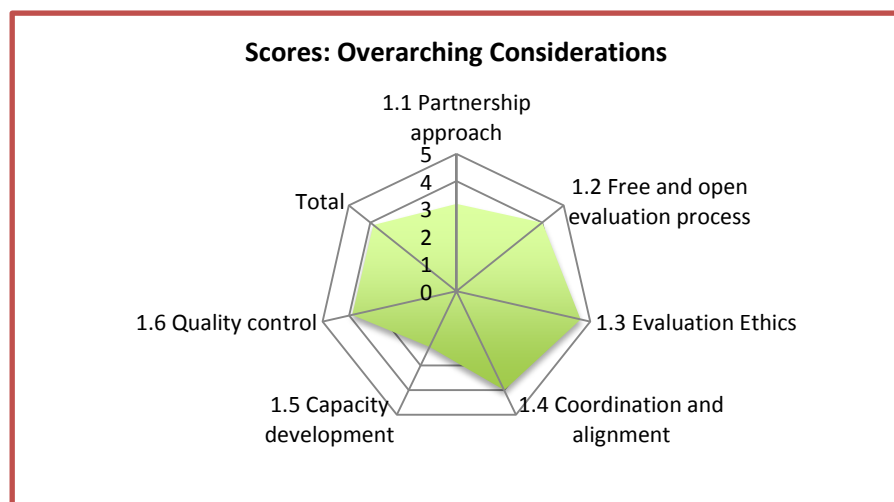
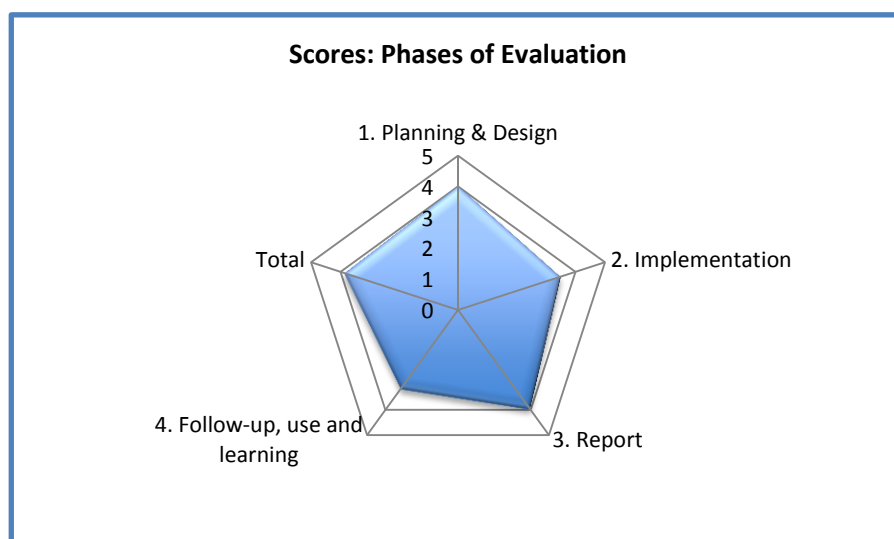
Evaluation Assessment Details

Title of evaluation report	The Economy-wide Effects of Price-Reducing Reforms in Infrastructure Services in South Africa
Completion Date of Evaluation	01 February 2006
Name of Assessor	Tim Mosdell
Evaluation Number	42
Completion Date of Assessment	08 February 2013
Initiated by	Department of Trade and Industry (dti)
Evaluation undertaken by	Human Sciences Research Council
Evaluation area / sector	Public finance, financial management
	Economic planning and development <i>Additional</i>
National Outcome	Outcome 6
	<i>Additional</i>
Type of Evaluation	Implementation
	<i>Additional</i>
What is being evaluated	Plan
	<i>Additional</i>
Geographic Scope	National
Period of Evaluation	2003-2005
Known Cost of Evaluation	Unknown

Quality Assessment Scores

Phase of Evaluation	Score
Planning & Design	4.00
Implementation	3.48
Report	3.94
Follow-up, use and learning	3.14
Total	3.73

Overarching Consideration	Score
Partnership approach	3.18
Free and open evaluation process	4.00
Evaluation Ethics	4.64
Coordination and alignment	4.00
Capacity Development	2.25
Quality control	3.89



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

Being a project conducted by the HSRC, it is assumed that the evaluation was guided by a TOR although this could not be confirmed.

Rating N/A

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

Comment and Analysis

Being a project conducted by the HSRC, it is assumed that the evaluation was guided by a TOR although this could not be confirmed.

Rating N/A

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

Comment and Analysis

Being a project conducted by the HSRC, it is assumed that the evaluation was guided by a TOR although this could not be confirmed.

Rating N/A

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

Being a project conducted by the HSRC, it is assumed that the evaluation was guided by a TOR although this could not be confirmed.

Rating N/A

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

Being a project conducted by the HSRC, it is assumed that the evaluation was guided by a TOR although this could not be confirmed.

Rating N/A

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

Being a project conducted by the HSRC, it is assumed that the evaluation was guided by a TOR although this could not be confirmed.

Rating N/A

1.2. Evaluation was adequately resourced

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

Comment and Analysis

It is assumed that the evaluation was adequately resourced, although this could not be confirmed.

Rating N/A

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

Comment and Analysis

It is assumed that the evaluation was adequately resourced, although this could not be confirmed.

Rating N/A

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

Comment and Analysis

The project had access to high level skills, with a team comprising highly experienced economists.

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

The process involved a presentation to the TIPS Forum which can be argued is developmental in nature, although capacity building was not planned.

Rating 2

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 compelling evidence that the project was planned in the relevant policy and programme environment - having been initiated by TIPS (Trade and Industry Policy Strategies).

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

The project was planned in the context of a body of pricing literature.

Rating 4

1.4. The evaluation methods planned were appropriate to the project

STANDARD: There was explicit reference to the intervention logic or the theory of change of the evaluand in the planning of the evaluation

Comment and Analysis

There was an implicit intervention logic underpinning the study, with a hypothesis that there would be economy wide effects associated with reducing infrastructure pricing, and building a case for this.

Rating 3

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

Comment and Analysis

TIPS were involved in the design and methodology of the project.

Rating 3

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

Comment and Analysis

The planned methodology and identified tools were appropriate to the questions being asked.

Rating 4

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

Sampling was appropriate given the focus of the work - the study chose to focus on communications and transport as studies indicated that these have a key role to play in determining South Africa's international competitiveness.

Rating 4

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

There was a planned process for using the findings of the research via the TIPS forum.

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***

It is assumed that an inception phase was used to develop a common agreement on how the evaluation would be implemented, although this could not be confirmed.

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

There was no ethical sensitivity related to this research.

Rating N/A

2.2. Evaluator independence

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

Comment and Analysis

There is no evidence of any interference.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

There is no evidence of 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

The project involved consultation between the HSRC, and TIPS.

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 is no evidence of structured capacity building in the process.

Rating 2

2.4. Methodology

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

Comment and Analysis

The methods, which centred around the use of an adapted static GCE mode, are appropriate for this kind of study.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

Data collection was not compromised by fieldwork issues.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

Forms of data gathering were appropriate for this type of study.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

The methods, which centred around the use of an adapted static GCE mode, are appropriate for this kind of study.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

TIPS and HSRC stakeholders were involved in the methodology.

Rating 3

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

Comment and Analysis

The methodology did not involve engaging with beneficiaries.

Rating 2

2.5. Project management

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

Comment and Analysis

As far as could be determined, the work was conducted without shifts to milestones and timeframes.

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

The study did not have an executive summary, although a brief abstract was provided outlining the main findings.

Rating 2

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 in the report, i.e. high infrastructure services pricing.

Rating 4

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

There was a clear rationale for the study, i.e. to explore the impacts of price-reducing reforms in infrastructure services.

Rating 4

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

The scope of the work was apparent, focusing primarily on price reductions in the communication and transport areas.

Rating 4

STANDARD: A detailed methodology was outlined in the relevant section of a report (full report or 1/3/25) to the point that a reader could understand the data collection, analysis and interpretation**Comment and Analysis**

The methodology was outlined in detail in the appendices of the report.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Key findings were presented in a clear way; they were made distinct from uncertain or speculative findings; and unused data was not presented in the body of the report

Comment and Analysis

The findings were presented in a relatively clear way, given the highly technical nature of the analysis and tools used. For the most part, the findings are accessible to a lay audience.

Rating 3

STANDARD: Conclusions and recommendations were clear and succinctly articulated

Comment and Analysis

The conclusions were clear and relatively succinctly articulated in the report.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

Acknowledgement of limitations were articulated in the report, e.g. limiting the focus to communications and transport.

Rating 4

3.2. Writing and presentation

STANDARD: *Quality of writing and presentation was adequate for publication including: adequate layout and consistent formatting; complete sentences and no widespread grammatical or typographical errors; consistency of style and writing conventions (e.g. tense, perspective (first person, third person); levels of formality; references complete and consistent with cited references in reference list and vice versa; etc)*

Comment and Analysis

The quality of writing and presentation is adequate for publication.

Rating 4

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 report, particularly in the appendices, makes extensive reference to data - this is done using accepted statistical language and conventions.

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 and tables are only used in the appendices of the report, but are clear and comply with data presentation conventions.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Data analysis appeared to have been well executed

Comment and Analysis

The data analysis appears to have been well executed.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Findings were supported by available evidence

Comment and Analysis

The findings are supported by the analysed evidence.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

The evidence gathered supports the main arguments of the report.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

There was no explicit recognition of possible alternative interpretations, although it was acknowledged that the focus of the study could have been constructed around a broader notion of infrastructure, i.e. beyond communications and transport.

Rating 2

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

Comment and Analysis

The report appears to be free of methodological and analytic flaws.

Rating 4

3.4. Conclusions

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

The conclusions were derived from evidence.

Rating 4

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

The work draws heavily on other work, including work by the same authors and other work using CGE models.

Rating 4

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

The conclusions address the initial purpose of the work, i.e. to explore the potential impacts of price-reducing reforms.

Rating 4

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

The conclusions were drawn with explicit reference to an intervention logic.

Rating 4

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

Recommendations were made in consultation between TIPS and the HSRC.

Rating 3

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

Relevant government officials in TIPS were involved in the recommendations.

Rating 4

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

The recommendations were relevant to the policy context.

Rating 4

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

The recommendations were targetted to a specific audience and were presented to the TIPS Forum.

Rating 4

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

Limitations around the areas of infrastructure covered were noted in the report.

Rating 4

3.7 Protection of participants and risk considerations

STANDARD: *The full report documented procedures intended to ensure confidentiality and to secure informed consent where this was needed (in some cases this is not needed - e.g. evaluation synthesis - in which case N/A should be recorded)*

Comment and Analysis

There were no issues around confidentiality related to this project.

Rating N/A

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

Comment and Analysis

There are no risks to participants in disseminating the original report on a public website.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

There are no risks to institutions in disseminating the 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 results were presented to the TIPS Forum.

Rating 4

4.2. Resource utilisation

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

Comment and Analysis

As far as could be determined, the work was completed within the planned timeframes.

Rating 3

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

Comment and Analysis

As far as could be determined, the work was completed on budget.

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 report is available on a public website.

Rating 4

4.4. Lessons learnt

STANDARD: *After completion of the evaluation, a reflective process was undertaken by staff responsible for the evaluation to reflect on what could be done to strengthen future evaluations*

Comment and Analysis

The report was presented to the TIPS Forum for discussion and reflection.

Rating N/A

4.5. Symbolic and conceptual value

STANDARD: *The evaluation study was seen by interviewed stakeholders as having added significant symbolic value to the policy or programme (eg raised its profile)*

Comment and Analysis

The report contributes to a broader discussion around infrastructure pricing and has been seen to add value in this regard.

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

The study adds conceptual value to debates around infrastructure prices and their economic impacts.

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

There is no clear evidence that the recommendations of the report have been used, although the work's contribution to knowledge in the area is clear.

Rating 2

STANDARD: *There was clear evidence that the evaluation has had a positive influence on the evaluand, its stakeholders and beneficiaries over the medium to long term*

Comment and Analysis

There is no clear evidence that the recommendations of the report has had a positive influence on the evaluand, its takeholders or beneficiaries, although the work's contribution to knowledge in the area is clear.

Rating 2

References

Human Sciences Research Council, 2006. The Economy-Wide Effects of Price-Reducing Reforms in Infrastructure Services in South Africa, Rob Davies and Dirk van Seventer. HSRC - Economic Growth and Development Initiative, February 2006.

List of Interviewees

Dr Miriam Altman, HSRC, electronic correspondence January and February 2013.