



Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation

Report on the Assessment of Government Evaluations

Evaluation Title:	Basic Education Macro Indicator Report
Evaluation Number:	422
Evaluation Completion Date:	31 October 2013
Period of Evaluation:	2000-2013
Submitted:	29 January 2014 by Nishendra Moodley
Approved:	03 February 2014 by Mike Leslie

Evaluation Details

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Known Cost:	
Known Cost Type:	No Data
Initiated By:	Department of Basic Education
Initiated By Internal:	Yes
Undertaken By:	DBE
Undertaken By Internal:	Yes

Assessors

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Assessment Documents

Document Name:	Document Type:	Added By:	Added On:
DBE 2013 Macro Indicator Report.pdf	Evaluation report	Mike Leslie	29 November 2013
Terms of Reference for 2012 & 13 Macro Indicator Report.doc	Terms of Reference (ToR) for the evaluation	Nishendra Moodley	27 January 2014
Assessment Report at Moderation.pdf	Assessment Report at Moderation	Mike Leslie	29 January 2014

Quality Assessment Summary

At the outset it must be pointed out that this Macro Indicator Report for the Department of Basic Education was not intended to be an evaluation. There have been previous iterations of this report that have been statistical journals. The 2013 version constitutes a significant evolution and advance on its predecessors in its improved use of statistics, debate that it facilitates on the appropriateness of conventional indicators, accommodations of alternative interpretations of trends and general evaluative tone.

It stands out as an exemplary use of data graphs and statistical analysis not often found in government documents generated in this sector.

If construed as an evaluation it could be typified as an diagnostic evaluation and an evaluation synthesis.

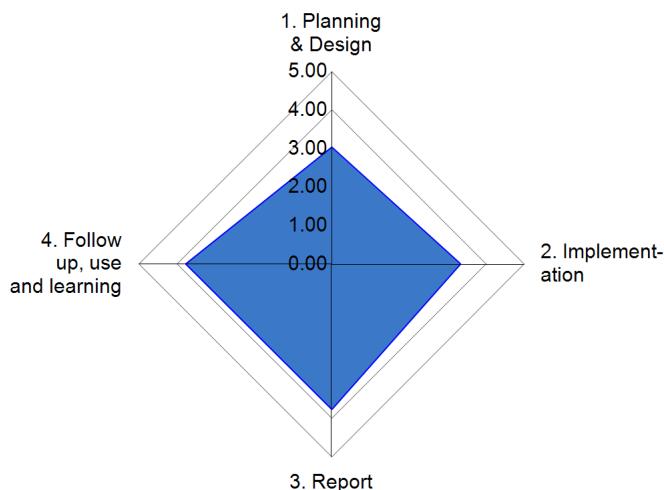
Whether or not it is treated as an evaluation it could benefit from a more explicit or better justified theory of change or intervention logic underlying the structure of the report. At the very least, a better rationale for the performance areas chosen to provide an overview of the education sector, would be welcome. It is currently not an evaluation and it is argued that it should not necessarily be judged as one. However, the authors should be encouraged to conceptualise it as one for future iterations as this would put it on a more powerful trajectory.

Quality Assessment Scores

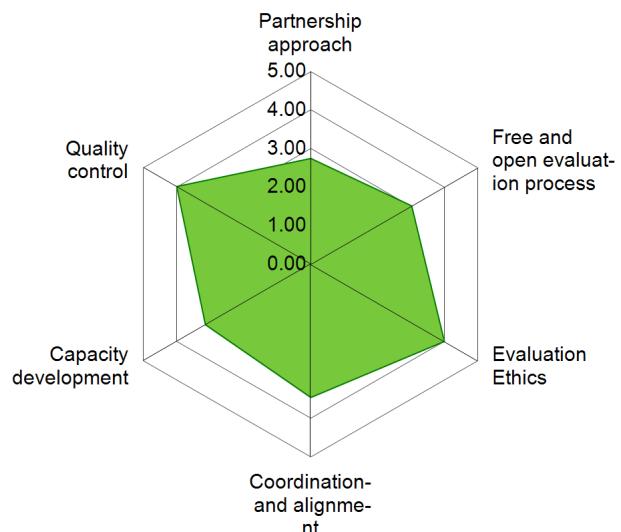
Phase of Evaluation	Score
1. Planning & Design	3.03
2. Implementation	3.35
3. Report	3.76
4. Follow-up, use and learning	3.79
Total	3.54

Overarching Consideration	Score
Partnership approach	2.75
Free and open evaluation process	3.03
Evaluation Ethics	4.00
Coordination and alignment	3.46
Capacity development	3.14
Quality control	4.01
Total	3.54

Scores: Phases of Evaluation



Scores: Overarching Considerations



Phase of Evaluation	Area of Evaluation	Score
1. Planning & Design	1.1. Quality of the TOR	2.00
1. Planning & Design	1.2. Adequacy of resourcing	4.27
1. Planning & Design	1.3. Alignment to policy context and background literature	4.00
1. Planning & Design	1.4. Appropriateness of the evaluation design and methodology	2.00
1. Planning & Design	1.5. Project management (Planning phase)	2.00
2. Implementation	2.1. Evaluation ethics and independence	4.00
2. Implementation	2.2. Participation and M&E skills development	2.10
2. Implementation	2.3. Methodological integrity	3.89
2. Implementation	2.4. Project management (Implementation phase)	3.00
3. Report	3.1. Completeness of reporting structure	2.79
3. Report	3.2. Accessibility of content	4.20
3. Report	3.3. Robustness of findings	4.27
3. Report	3.4. Strength of conclusions	4.27
3. Report	3.5. Suitability of recommendations	
3. Report	3.6. Consideration of reporting risks and ethical implications	
3. Report	3.7. Project management (Reporting phase)	
4. Follow-up, use and learning	4.1. Resource utilisation	5.00
4. Follow-up, use and learning	4.2. Evaluation use	3.58
Total	Total	3.54

1. Planning & Design

1.1. Quality of the TOR

Standard:	1.1.1. The evaluation was guided by a well-structured and complete TOR or a well-structured and complete internal evaluation proposal
Comment and Analysis:	<p>At the outset it must be noted that the Macro Indicator Report by the Department of Basic Education was not intended as an evaluation, but has evolved as such from previous iterations (2009 & 2011), and continues to have the potential to be a fully constituted evaluation. It was internally conducted, with arrangements for authorship and its scope evolving out of an organic process. There was a TOR originally developed for the appointment of a service provider. However, when that TOR went to the DG's newly appointed advisor (Dr Stephen Taylor) for comment he volunteered to reshape the document embarked on, originally, by the M&E unit.</p> <p>While there was an original TOR for procurement, this was not sufficient to scope and conceptually guide the internal process undertaken. The final outcome, arguably correctly, strayed far from the original TOR.</p>
Rating:	2
Standard:	1.1.2. The purpose of the evaluation stated in the TOR (or an internal evaluation proposal) was clear and explicit
Comment and Analysis:	The originally written TOR was written as a first draft for external procurement and abandoned. The process of realising the study as well as the outcome of the study deviated so significantly from the TOR, that it is possible to treat the TOR as not relevant.
Rating:	N/A
Standard:	1.1.3. The evaluation questions in the TOR (or an internal evaluation proposal) were clearly stated and appropriate for addressing the evaluation purpose
Comment and Analysis:	The TOR was not utilised and the original TOR did not pitch this as an evaluation.
Rating:	N/A
Standard:	1.1.4. The approach and type of evaluation was suited to the purpose and scope of the evaluation TOR (or an internal evaluation proposal)
Comment and Analysis:	The TOR was not utilised and the original TOR did not pitch this as an evaluation.
Rating:	N/A
Standard:	1.1.5. The TOR (or an internal evaluation proposal) identified the intended users of the evaluation and their information needs
Comment and Analysis:	The TOR was not utilised and the original TOR did not pitch this as an evaluation.
Rating:	N/A

Standard:	1.1.6. Key stakeholders were involved in the scoping of the TOR and choosing the purpose of the evaluation
Comment and Analysis:	The TOR was not utilised and the original TOR did not pitch this as an evaluation.
Rating:	N/A

1.2. Adequacy of resourcing

Standard:	1.2.1. The evaluation was adequately resourced in terms of time allocated
Comment and Analysis:	There were no significant timing pressures and timing was left to the team conducting the work, according to Dr Stephen Taylor, a key author. Justice Libago from the M&E Unit, who managed the process, concurs that time constraints were not an issue.
Rating:	5
Standard:	1.2.2. The evaluation was adequately resourced in terms of original budget
Comment and Analysis:	The original intention was to procure external services to complete the study and Dr Taylor, advisor to the DG, was asked to assist in drawing up terms of reference. Instead he recognised that he could undertake this work himself, working with departmental officials. They thus chose not to proceed with procuring external services. This choice according to Justice Libago, may have arisen from budget constraints that they were facing as well. They were able to produce the work adequately within these resource constraints.
Rating:	4
Standard:	1.2.3. The evaluation was adequately resourced in terms of staffing and skills sets
Comment and Analysis:	The first round of work was conducted within the M&E Unit, where it was acknowledged that they needed to access additional skills. Dr Stephen Taylor, an education economist, who has recently joined DBE as an advisor to the DG, led the refinement and conclusion of the report. He had substantial statistical and data analysis experience with repeat to the education sector and had published widely. Collectively this small team provided the combined set of skills necessary.
Rating:	4
Standard:	1.2.4. Where appropriate, the evaluation planned to incorporate an element of capacity building of partners/staff responsible for the evaluand
Comment and Analysis:	The choice to conduct this study internally is indicative of a choice to rely on and build internal capacity. As a new resource to the department Dr Taylor would use this process to develop internal departmental capacity on statistical methods and indicators. He believes he has had some success in this.
Rating:	4

1.3. Alignment to policy context and background literature

Standard:	1.3.1. There was evidence that a review of the relevant policy and programme environments had been conducted and used in planning the research
Comment and Analysis:	If this study can be classified as an evaluation as yet, where it has the potential to be, it is best described as a Diagnostic Synthesis. As a Diagnostic Synthesis, this study is well embedded in the policy and programme environments of the education sector and shows a rich appreciation of these throughout the report. It does so by triangulating data on the policy context using administrative studies and reporting for DBE, its own analysis of data from the General Household Survey and other Stats SA resources, and review and incorporates a range of international education benchmarking studies. In specific areas the report conveys academic debate on the relevance and appropriateness of indicators reflective of an up to date engagement with literature in this area.
Rating:	4

Standard:	1.3.2. There was evidence of a review of appropriate literature having been conducted and used in planning the research
Comment and Analysis:	There was evidence, mainly through the report, that an appreciation of appropriate literature and in particular additional literature on alternative indicators and measures of education performance in different contexts informed the direction in which the new macro indicators report was to take.
Rating:	4

1.4. Appropriateness of the evaluation design and methodology

Standard:	1.4.1. 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:	The report provides an indication of performance across the education sector focusing on four broad components: access to schooling, system efficiency, education quality and education financing. This approach is largely confined by alignment with international measures. Unfortunately this approach and model used does not convey a theory of change or intervention logic. Future iterations of this study should be encouraged to structure the study within an intervention logic or theory of change for the education sector.
Rating:	2

Standard:	1.4.2. Key stakeholders were consulted on the design and methodology of the evaluation
Comment and Analysis:	It was acknowledged in the interviews that other departmental stakeholders and external stakeholders were not engaged with, aside from the use of their data and in the final research dissemination process.
Rating:	2

Standard:	1.4.3. The planned methodology was appropriate to the questions being asked
Comment and Analysis:	As this is significantly an evaluation synthesis, and one where the process evolved rather than was planned, the fulfilment of the evaluation methodology against planned is not entirely relevant, or practical to assess.
Rating:	N/A

Standard:	1.4.4. Sampling was appropriate and adequate given focus and purpose of evaluation
Comment and Analysis:	This is not relevant to an evaluation synthesis.
Rating:	N/A

Standard:	1.4.5. There was a planned process for using the findings of the evaluation
Comment and Analysis:	There was no explicit plan for utilisation. The purpose articulated in the report to provide an overview of the education sector that equips, planners and policy-makers, academics and researchers and interested members of the public with information and statistics. This is a very broad and diffuse utility, not very conducive to being effectively planned, measured and monitored itself.
Rating:	2

1.5. Project management (Planning phase)

Standard:	1.5.1. The inception phase was used to develop a common agreement on how the evaluation would be implemented
Comment and Analysis:	The project process evolved organically until completion. It was not subject to a detailed plan.
Rating:	2

2. Implementation

2.1. Evaluation ethics and independence

Standard: 2.1.1. Where data was gathered in contexts where ethical sensitivity is high, appropriate clearance was achieved 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: Not relevant to an evaluation synthesis of this nature.

Rating: N/A

Standard: 2.1.2. Where external, the evaluation team was able to work freely without significant interference

Comment and Analysis: This was an internal study.

Rating: N/A

Standard: 2.1.3. The evaluation team was impartial and there was no evidence of conflict of interest

Comment and Analysis: There are many examples of uncomfortable findings for the DBE. The report puts forward alternate methodologies, measures and explanations to conventional ones, together with transparent debate about these, to reflect sufficient impartiality, despite this being undertaken taken internally. The high level of triangulation of administrative data, with surveyed data, both Stats SA and international surveys, were indicative of this.

Rating: 4

2.2. Participation and M&E skills development

Standard: 2.2.1. Key stakeholders were consulted through a formalised mechanism or institutional arrangement

Comment and Analysis: Outside the M&E unit, there is no evidence of the involvement of other stakeholders formally.

Rating: 1

Standard: 2.2.2. Where appropriate, an element of capacity building of partners responsible for the evaluand was incorporated into the evaluation process

Comment and Analysis: There was no evidence of this, except for a research dissemination workshop at the end of the process.

Rating: 2

Standard:	2.2.3. Where appropriate, the evaluation team incorporated an element of skills development amongst the evaluators (e.g. students, interns, recent graduates, etc)
Comment and Analysis:	This study is a great example of where a new internal resource with skills and experience in indicators, data and statistics, was able to contribute to a process in such a way as to build those skills amongst a broader team of individuals within the department in these much needed focus areas.
Rating:	5

Standard:	2.2.4. Peer review of the agreed evaluation design and methodology occurred prior to undertaking data collection
Comment and Analysis:	There was no peer review.
Rating:	1

2.3. Methodological integrity

Standard:	2.3.1. The methods employed in the process of the evaluation were consistent with those planned
Comment and Analysis:	For all intents and purposes, given how the project finally turned out, there was no TOR. There was no clear methodological plan. While the expectations are not high for an evaluations synthesis, they do require a clear statement of methodology employed and a methodological critique of studies heavily relied upon.
Rating:	2

Standard:	2.3.2. A pilot of data collection instrumentation occurred prior to undertaking data collection
Comment and Analysis:	No primary data collection was necessary.
Rating:	N/A

Standard:	2.3.3. Data collection was not compromised by fieldwork-level problems or unplanned diversions from original intentions
Comment and Analysis:	No primary data collection was necessary.
Rating:	N/A

Standard:	2.3.4. Forms of data gathering were appropriate given the scope of evaluation
Comment and Analysis:	Primary data collected through General Household Survey was subject to original analysis in this study. Most other data utilised was secondary data, which is in keeping with expectations of Evaluation Syntheses. The appropriateness stands out as exceptional because of the high levels of triangulation in both primary and secondary data use. In most performance areas multiple perspectives of administrative data, household data and sometime schooled surveyed data and an international studies are contrasted. This is particularly important and exemplary in this type of synthesis.
Rating:	5

Standard:	2.3.5. The data analysis approach and methods were appropriate and sufficient given the purposes of the evaluation
Comment and Analysis:	Most data used in the study was analysed secondary data from a range of recent local and international research studies and evaluations. Some of the analysis was original analysis of primary data collected through general household survey. The data was well-treated in analysis and the issue of triangulation highlighted earlier also enriches data analysis significantly.
Rating:	5
Standard:	2.3.6. Key stakeholders were significantly engaged as part of the methodology
Comment and Analysis:	Being an evaluation synthesis, the opportunities to engage key stakeholders were not exploited. However the studies undertaken by key stakeholders, such as those on enrolment rates, annual national assessments, learner-educator ratios were central to this piece of work.
Rating:	2
Standard:	2.3.7. The methodology included engaging beneficiaries appropriately as a key source of data and information
Comment and Analysis:	The study, in an exceptional way, triangulates data from various sources on a variety of topics, often juxtaposing different views. It balances administrative data from the DBE, with surveyed data from General Household Survey, Community Survey 2007, International studies on our education system that use classroom and teacher surveys. For example, the section of access to schooling juxtaposes enrolment data from the DBE using conventional indicators to age-specific enrolment from general household survey. Similarly under quality of education, it contrasts annual national assessment data with general household survey data and teacher subject knowledge surveys.
Rating:	5

2.4. Project management (Implementation phase)

Standard:	2.4.1. The evaluation was conducted without significant shifts to scheduled project milestones and timeframes
Comment and Analysis:	There were no apparent pre-defined timeframes, other than the report needing to be completed in 2013.
Rating:	3

3. Report

3.1. Completeness of reporting structure

Standard:	3.1.1. Executive summary captures key components of the report appropriately
Comment and Analysis:	The three page executive summary is clear and succinct, capturing the key findings of the report in 9 points. It speaks to the key findings and conclusions of the report.
Rating:	4
Standard:	3.1.2. The context of the development intervention is explicit and presented as relevant to the evaluation
Comment and Analysis:	Except for a brief two paragraph overview of the education sector and another explaining the three phases of education, there is not enough of an explanation of the sector and why this report is important to the sector. There is missed opportunity here to set up a theory of change, even at the level of the sector, to help to structure the assessment.
Rating:	2
Standard:	3.1.3. There is a clear rationale for the evaluation questions
Comment and Analysis:	As indicated at the outset, this did not set out to be an evaluation. There are thus no evaluation questions. It is arguable as to whether research questions would have been helpful in structuring the report. This was a missed opportunity to utilise a set of research or evaluation questions to provide an analytical structure to the report. There is little rationale presented for the performance areas selected to provide an overview of the education sector and those not selected. The interviews have alluded to the performance areas being selected for international alignment of indicators, but this is not sufficiently explained or defended in the report.
Rating:	1
Standard:	3.1.4. The scope or focus of the evaluation is apparent in the report
Comment and Analysis:	There is no specific articulation in the report of the scope and focus of the research, other than to say that its an overview of the school education system at a macro level covering four broad components: access to schooling, system efficiency, education quality and education financing. A substantiation or rationale for these areas would have strengthened the report. There is also not a clear statement of scope or focus regarding the time period under consideration.
Rating:	2

Standard: 3.1.5. A detailed methodology is outlined in the relevant section of the report to the point that a reader can understand the data collection, analysis and interpretation approaches used

Comment and Analysis: This is largely an evaluation synthesis. While the report does highlight some methodological issues, as it discusses different findings, it probably does not provide a sufficiently detailed and critical explanation of the methodology of the studies on which it heavily relies.
For an evaluation synthesis, it is worth having an appendix that includes a critical methodological summary of each study that is significantly relied upon in the synthesis.

Rating: 2

Standard: 3.1.6. Acknowledgement of limitations of all aspects of the methodology and findings are clearly and succinctly articulated

Comment and Analysis: Particularly in its use of statistics, error margins, confidence levels and limitation of certain measures, these are clearly defined, and the report stands out as exemplary in this regard.

Rating: 5

Standard: 3.1.7. Key findings are presented in a clear way; they are made distinct from uncertain or speculative findings; and unused data is not presented in the body of the report

Comment and Analysis: The report uses data appropriately ensuring that it is not used superfluously and that the correct type of graph or table is used for the type of data. Findings are cautiously made from the data, proving for alternative explanations as well.

Rating: 4

Standard: 3.1.8. Conclusions and recommendations are clear and succinctly articulated

Comment and Analysis: The report does not make explicit recommendations. However conclusions are clearly made and articulated and are never over-stated. Conclusions however are largely restricted to each area of assessment and the opportunity to draw more systemic conclusions across areas of assessment are not fully exploited. This may relate to the limitation of not developing a theory of change for the sector as the departure point for the analysis.

Rating: 3

3.2. Accessibility of content

Standard:	3.2.1. The final evaluation report is user-friendly, written in accessible language and its content follows a clear logic
Comment and Analysis:	The report is very user-friendly and accessible. It makes indicators, their definitions and the debates around them very empowering for individuals not in the education sector and potentially for non-quantitative readers as well. However, I would argue that the structure of assessment and its four sections could have followed a more apparent logic. They were access to schooling, system efficiency, education quality and education financing. These don't sit easily on an input-output-outcome-impact logical chain. Education quality for example includes quality of learning outcomes NSC pass rates, Literacy on the one hand and teacher inputs (learner-teacher ratios, teacher subject knowledge, curriculum coverage) on the other hand.
Rating:	3
Standard:	3.2.2. Quality of writing and presentation is 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:	It is well written and referenced. The graphs and tables are used well and make for a good report.
Rating:	4
Standard:	3.2.3. Appropriate conventions are 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 document is exceptional in its treatments and reporting of secondary data, often citing confidence levels where appropriate and indicating limitations of the data.
Rating:	5
Standard:	3.2.4. The use of figures and tables is such that it supports communication and comprehension of results; and data reported in figures and tables are readily discernible and useful to a reader familiar with data presentation conventions
Comment and Analysis:	This report uses tables and graphs very well. There is no superfluous data. The correct type of graph is used for different types of data e.g. line graph or bar graph or scatter plot. Every graph is fully detailed, labelled and referenced. The use of data stands out as exemplary.
Rating:	5

3.3. Robustness of findings

Standard:	3.3.1. Data analysis appears to have been well executed
Comment and Analysis:	Analysis of data, both existing and new data, appears well conducted and articulated confidently and accurately. Arguments using this data are well made.
Rating:	5
Standard:	3.3.2. Findings are supported by available evidence
Comment and Analysis:	Both findings and conclusions are cautiously made, relying only on the evidence available. Often alternate explanations are put forward, debated and discounted, where applicable.
Rating:	4
Standard:	3.3.3. The evidence gathered is sufficiently and appropriately analysed to support the argument
Comment and Analysis:	Without going into the data itself, it appears that the data and evidence is sufficiently analysed. The inter-relationship between different indicators and performance areas is something that could be analysed in future through the development of theory of change for this analysis.
Rating:	4
Standard:	3.3.4. There is appropriate recognition of the possibility of alternative interpretations
Comment and Analysis:	In many areas of assessment, this report poses alternative measures for education sector performance in a South African context and alternative interpretations of the data. An example would be in the treatment of the debate it generates on the conventional General Enrolment Ratio (GER) and Net Enrolment Rate (NER) versus age-specific enrolment rates from the General Household Survey. It purposefully reflects the debate on every finding where relevant.
Rating:	5
Standard:	3.3.5. The report appears free of significant methodological and analytic flaws
Comment and Analysis:	The report does not contain methodological and analytical flaws, with what is in it. However, it does not conceptually build a model for education sector performance and a logical theory of change. The building of this theory of change and structuring the report along these lines would significantly enhance it. As an example, it does not tell us, if school infrastructure is not an important performance area, why it is not important to this analysis. As a reader I would like to know why the performance areas chosen are the best way of providing an overview of the education sector.
Rating:	3

Standard:	3.3.6. Relevant limitations of the evaluation are noted
Comment and Analysis:	This does not claim to be an evaluation. In the specific performance areas assessed limitations of data and the study are noted. It does this very well and consistently through the document.
Rating:	5

3.4. Strength of conclusions

Standard:	3.4.1. Conclusions are derived from evidence
Comment and Analysis:	The conclusions drawn are evidence based and carefully made. However there may be the opportunity to draw additional conclusions from analysis across different assessment areas and a more systemic approach.
Rating:	4

Standard:	3.4.2. Conclusions take into account relevant empirical and/or analytic work from related research studies and evaluations
Comment and Analysis:	Being an evaluation synthesis conclusions are almost entirely based on other empirical and analytical work. It does so using a wide breadth of analytical data that is highly triangulated, well understood and articulated.
Rating:	5

Standard:	3.4.3. Conclusions address the original evaluation purpose and questions
Comment and Analysis:	The purpose of the evaluation, as stated in the report is to provide a wide range of stakeholders with an overview of the schooling system. This includes information and analysis, firstly for policy-makers and planners, secondly local and international researchers and thirdly interested members of the public. The conclusions certainly align to the assessment areas selected, but it is not entirely obvious that the areas selected, while appearing comprehensive, sufficiently constitute an overview of the education sector.
Rating:	4

Standard:	3.4.4. Conclusions are drawn with explicit reference to the intervention logic or theory of change
Comment and Analysis:	There is no clear TOC.
Rating:	N/A

3.5. Suitability of recommendations

Standard:	3.5.1. Recommendations are made in consultation with appropriate sectoral partners or experts
Comment and Analysis:	As this was not intended to be an evaluation and given its intended purpose, recommendations were not included in this report.
Rating:	N/A

Standard:	3.5.2. Recommendations are shaped following discussions with relevant government officials and other relevant stakeholders
Comment and Analysis:	As this was not intended to be an evaluation and given its intended purpose, recommendations were not included in this report.
Rating:	N/A
Standard:	3.5.3. Recommendations are relevant to the current policy context
Comment and Analysis:	As this was not intended to be an evaluation and given its intended purpose, recommendations were not included in this report.
Rating:	N/A
Standard:	3.5.4. Recommendations are targeted at a specific audience sufficiently - are specific, feasible, affordable and acceptable
Comment and Analysis:	As this was not intended to be an evaluation and given its intended purpose, recommendations were not included in this report.
Rating:	N/A
3.6. Consideration of reporting risks and ethical implications	
Standard:	3.6.1. Peer review of the draft evaluation report occurred prior to finalisation of the evaluation report
Comment and Analysis:	As this was not intended to be an evaluation it was not subject to peer review requirements.
Rating:	N/A
Standard:	3.6.2. The full report documents procedures intended to ensure confidentiality and to secure informed consent where necessary (in some cases this is not needed - e.g. evaluation synthesis - in which case N/A should be recorded)
Comment and Analysis:	As an evaluation synthesis this was not necessary.
Rating:	N/A
Standard:	3.6.3. There are no risks to participants in disseminating the original report on a public website
Comment and Analysis:	Not applicable
Rating:	N/A
Standard:	3.6.4. There are no unfair risks to institutions in disseminating the original report on a public website
Comment and Analysis:	Not applicable
Rating:	N/A

3.7. Project management (Reporting phase)

Standard:	3.7.1. A project closure meeting that reflected on the challenges and strengths of the evaluation process occurred
Comment and Analysis:	Given the institutional arrangements for this study, this requirement is not treated as applicable.
Rating:	N/A

4. Follow-up, use and learning

4.1. Resource utilisation

Standard:	4.1.1. The evaluation was completed within the planned timeframes
Comment and Analysis:	There were no stipulated hard timeframes for the project, against which to assess completion.
Rating:	N/A
Standard:	4.1.2. The evaluation was completed within the agreed budget
Comment and Analysis:	It was completed using internal resources only, negating the need for a planned external appointment, thus saving resources.
Rating:	5

4.2. Evaluation use

Standard:	4.2.1. Results of the evaluation have been presented to all relevant stakeholders
Comment and Analysis:	A research dissemination workshop was held in October 2013 to share the learning from the report. All relevant programme managers were invited. It was well attended with some of the relevant programme managers attending. The report will also soon feed into a workshop on the internal efficiency for the schooling system where it is likely to access more of the appropriate stakeholders and programme managers.
Rating:	4
Standard:	4.2.2. A reflective process has been undertaken by the steering committee (if no steering committee exists then by the evaluation management team or the involved department officials) to reflect on what could be done to strengthen future evaluations
Comment and Analysis:	There is no evidence of a reflective process planning for the next iteration of the macro indicators report. the next report is expected in 2015.
Rating:	2
Standard:	4.2.3. The evaluation study is seen by interviewed stakeholders as having added significant symbolic value to the policy or programme (e.g. raised its profile)
Comment and Analysis:	An interviewed stakeholder who also happens to be an author of the report, sees this as a much improved process and better quality of report as compared to previous iterations. It is no longer a statistical journal, but an evaluative report. It is the view of this quality assessment that this constitutes a major advance in sector wide data review and has the potential in future iterations to constitute a proper diagnostic evaluation synthesis.
Rating:	4

Standard:	4.2.4. The evaluation study is of conceptual value in understanding what has happened and possibly in shaping policy and practice
Comment and Analysis:	While the study has advanced in the use of triangulated data and well-used statistics in a good overview report, it is likely to provide better conceptual value through improved use of a theory of change and intervention logic in its structure and analysis.
Rating:	3

Standard:	4.2.5. Development of a draft improvement plan has been started, but not completed, based on the findings and recommendations set out in the evaluation
Comment and Analysis:	The report does not intend to have recommendations.
Rating:	N/A

Standard:	4.2.6. The report is publicly available (website or otherwise published document), except where there were legitimate security concerns *Note: only apply if sufficient time has elapsed since completion of the evaluation
Comment and Analysis:	The report is publicly available on the departments website and has been actively circulated via email to academia and other external stakeholders.
Rating:	4

Standard:	4.2.7. There is clear evidence of instrumental use - that the recommendations of the evaluation were implemented to a significant extent *Note: only apply if sufficient time has elapsed since completion of the evaluation
Comment and Analysis:	The report does not intend to have recommendations.
Rating:	N/A

Standard:	4.2.8. There is clear evidence that the evaluation has had a positive influence on the evaluand, its stakeholders and beneficiaries over the medium to long term *Note: only apply if sufficient time has elapsed since completion of the evaluation
Comment and Analysis:	The report was only released at the end of October 2013 and it is too early to assess this. It is expected to be quoted in academic references soon and it has been quoted in speeches, sometime only focusing on the positive findings.
Rating:	N/A

References

DBE, Terms of Reference for Macro Indicator Study, 2013

DBE, Macro Indicator Trends In Schooling: Summary Report, 2011

DBE, Trends In Education Macro Indicators Report ,2009

List of Interviewees

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