



Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation

Report on the Assessment of Government Evaluations

Evaluation Title:	An Evaluation of the Market Access Programme
Evaluation Number:	438
Evaluation Completion Date:	30 June 2014
Period of Evaluation:	December 2013 - June 2014
Submitted:	14 October 2014 by Meagan Jooste
Approved:	14 October 2014 by Mike Leslie

Evaluation Details

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Created:	11 August 2014 by Mike Leslie
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Period of Evaluation:	December 2013 - June 2014
Known Cost:	R 423,870.00
Known Cost Type:	Referenced
Initiated By:	Western Cape Government: Department of Agriculture
Initiated By Internal:	Yes
Undertaken By:	Goss Gilroy Inc in collaboration with Phuhlisani
Undertaken By Internal:	No

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Assessment Documents

Document Name:	Document Type:	Added By:	Added On:
Evaluation of Market Access programme Report - Final.docx	Evaluation report	Mike Leslie	11 August 2014
TOR Market Access Evaluation.pdf	Terms of Reference (ToR) for the evaluation	Meagan Jooste	04 October 2014
Western Cape - Evaluation of Market Access Programme Proposal - GGI - November 29 2013.pdf	The proposal selected to conduct the evaluation	Meagan Jooste	04 October 2014
Western Cape - Evaluation of Market Access Programme Revised Financial Proposal - GGI - December 8 2013.pdf	The proposal selected to conduct the evaluation	Meagan Jooste	04 October 2014
MAP Evaluation Second Draft - GGI - May 23 2014 (revised).doc	Evaluation report	Meagan Jooste	04 October 2014
WCG-DoA MAP Evaluation Draft Improvement Plan.docx	Any other relevant documentation pertaining to the evaluation process	Meagan Jooste	04 October 2014
Assessment Report at Moderation.pdf	Assessment Report at Moderation	Mike Leslie	13 October 2014

Quality Assessment Summary

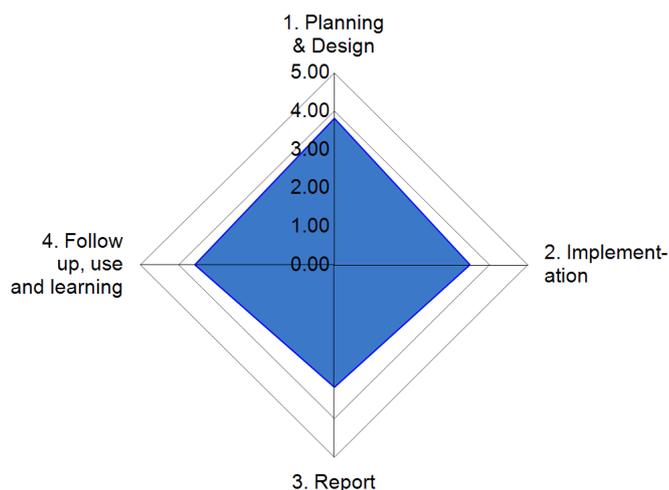
The overall score of this evaluation has been rated at 3.46 out of 5 on the Likert-type scale applied to assess the quality of government evaluations. This rating has been assigned to the evaluation as it is viewed to have been done to a fairly good standard. The planning phase underpinning the evaluation was well-utilized to formulate the study and some important adaptations to the approach were made. The Department collaborated well with an external evaluation specialist to provide the preparatory framework for the study and the evaluation team, including an international Credentialed Evaluator, provided strategic guidance on the evaluation design at the outset of the evaluation. This led to the upfront acknowledgement that a quantitative impact analysis would be infeasible due to a lack of sufficient quantitative information on the programme's impact. This quality assessment thus scored the planning & design stage the highest at 3.82. The follow-up use and learning stage was particularly well done as the Department has already begun engaging key stakeholders and drafting an improvement plan on the basis of the recommendations. This phase was thus scored at 3.60. The evaluation report was well-written and clear in terms of the evaluation approach and methodology. In the absence of quantitative data, the evaluation analysis relied on the identification of key issues and themes emerging from qualitative feedback. However, even with the adaptation of the evaluation approach, it is viewed that the evaluation yielded important insights to the Department in understanding how to improve its reach, impact and effectiveness in the rollout of the programme. All parties interviewed for this assessment felt that there was a very good communication channel through which the Department was able to coordinate with the evaluator's to ensure alignment in the approach underpinning the study. This factor contributed to the evaluation being scored fairly well in terms of the 'coordination and alignment' (3.52) and 'free and open evaluation process' (3.63) overarching considerations. Further, the involvement of an external evaluation specialist in the oversight of the evaluation supported the Department in building internal expertise in the implementation of evaluations and in ensuring compliance with best practice. This factor contributed to the evaluation being scored well in terms of the 'partnership approach' (3.60) criteria. There was a view held that this impact evaluation may have been premature given that the MAP has only been running for 3 years, but the evaluation identified key information/data gaps which can only but assist the Department in ensuring future evaluations have secondary data to facilitate the kind of rigorous quantitative impact analysis which this evaluation could not achieve. This quality assessment supports the view held by parties interviewed that the evaluation was conducted to a good standard and was timely for the Department in its strategic planning for the improvement of the MAP's design effectiveness.

Quality Assessment Scores

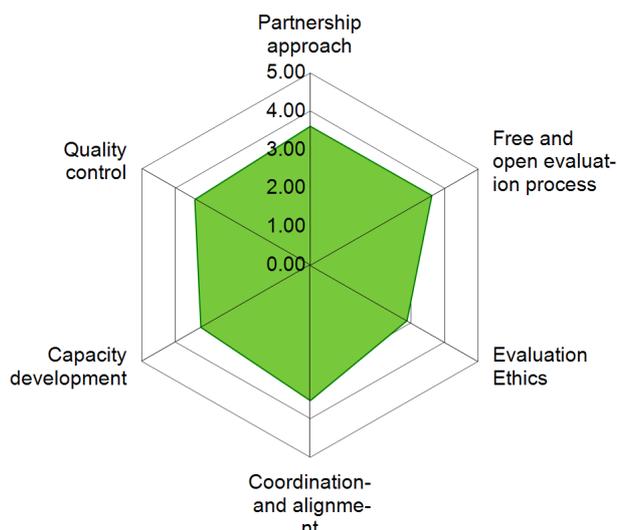
Phase of Evaluation	Score
1. Planning & Design	3.82
2. Implementation	3.51
3. Report	3.17
4. Follow-up, use and learning	3.60
Total	3.46

Overarching Consideration	Score
Partnership approach	3.60
Free and open evaluation process	3.63
Evaluation Ethics	2.89
Coordination and alignment	3.52
Capacity development	3.25
Quality control	3.42
Total	3.46

Scores: Phases of Evaluation



Scores: Overarching Considerations



Phase of Evaluation	Area of Evaluation	Score
1. Planning & Design	1.1. Quality of the TOR	3.83
1. Planning & Design	1.2. Adequacy of resourcing	3.82
1. Planning & Design	1.3. Alignment to policy context and background literature	3.00
1. Planning & Design	1.4. Appropriateness of the evaluation design and methodology	3.83
1. Planning & Design	1.5. Project management (Planning phase)	5.00
2. Implementation	2.1. Evaluation ethics and independence	3.64
2. Implementation	2.2. Participation and M&E skills development	3.20
2. Implementation	2.3. Methodological integrity	3.60
2. Implementation	2.4. Project management (Implementation phase)	3.00
3. Report	3.1. Completeness of reporting structure	3.46
3. Report	3.2. Accessibility of content	3.53
3. Report	3.3. Robustness of findings	3.14
3. Report	3.4. Strength of conclusions	2.64
3. Report	3.5. Suitability of recommendations	3.31
3. Report	3.6. Consideration of reporting risks and ethical implications	2.77
3. Report	3.7. Project management (Reporting phase)	3.00
4. Follow-up, use and learning	4.1. Resource utilisation	3.60
4. Follow-up, use and learning	4.2. Evaluation use	3.60
Total	Total	3.46

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: The evaluation was guided by a well-articulated ToR inclusive of: background information on the Market Access Programme; an outline of the evaluation purpose, key questions, scope and design; as well as identification of the key end users of the evaluation output.

Rating: 4

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 evaluation purpose is clearly outlined to be "...to assess the results and to utilise the findings to optimise the design of the programme to enhance its effectiveness." The ToR further specifies the objectives of the evaluation in the form of 3 key criteria: 1. describe and quantify the key intended and unintended outcomes of the programme; 2. document and analyse the key interventions and their contributions to the outcomes of the programme and; develop informed perspectives on future directions for the Market Access Programme. As such, there is very clear recognition of the purpose of this evaluation in relation to its key intentions.

Rating: 4

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 evaluation questions are explicitly outlined in section 3.1. of the ToR and align well with the purpose of the evaluation insofar as they relate to unpacking the extent to which the programme has been able to achieve its intended outcomes and, to the identification of areas for improvement in the programme's effectiveness.

Rating: 4

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 outlines an expectation that the evaluation be an ex-post impact evaluation with a strong element of a design evaluation aspect to focus on programme improvement. Given that the MAP was initiated in 2010, it may have been too soon to see the real impacts of the programme. The ToR however called for a mixed methods approach to collating quantitative and qualitative information which would appear most appropriate given that the nuances of the programme's impact was sought to be understood.

Rating: 3

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 explicitly identifies the intended users and stakeholders of the evaluation in section 3.2. These include the Western Cape Government: Department of Agriculture; Provincial Government; stakeholders in the agricultural field and retailers and other market stakeholders. This section also makes good differentiation between the information needs of these various stakeholders.

Rating: 4

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 MAP Programme Manager led the development of the ToR and key stakeholders including the Western Cape Government: Department of Agriculture's Director: Business Planning and Strategy who acts as the overarching manager of evaluations completed for the Department, were involved. In addition, an external evaluation's specialist was involved in the scoping of the ToR to ensure its compliance with best practice in Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E). This was an important part of the scoping the work to ensure the clarity of the scope of work.

Rating: 4

1.2. Adequacy of resourcing

Standard: 1.2.1. The evaluation was adequately resourced in terms of time allocated

Comment and Analysis: All parties engaged for this assessment felt that the evaluation was adequately resourced in terms of time allocated. Some schedule adaptation had to be made to allow for delays in the approval of the contract, but the evaluator's team and MAP Programme Manager were able to find ways for the work to proceed while the contract administration was being resolved. In general, the fieldwork component of the evaluation could proceed smoothly and was completed with sufficient time for the compilation of the report.

Rating: 4

Standard: 1.2.2. The evaluation was adequately resourced in terms of original budget

Comment and Analysis: The evaluation was fairly well resourced in terms of the original budget. When proposals were initially received from all service providers they were in the range of R300-350,000. The Department was however concerned that service providers were underestimating the time and travel costs associated with the fieldwork component of the work. The Department thus re-invited service providers to propose adapted budget proposals to be more representative of the 'real' fieldwork costs. In general, parties interviewed for this assessment felt that the budget allocated was reasonable though there was a slight budget over-run on the evaluation team's side.

Rating: 3

Standard: 1.2.3. The evaluation was adequately resourced in terms of staffing and skills sets

Comment and Analysis: The evaluation team comprised a combined international and local team of agricultural sector evaluation's members. It was led by a Credentialed Evaluator an agribusiness professional based in Canada (who made at least two trips to Cape Town for face-to-face meetings with the Department) as well as three senior South African team members with extensive experience in the agricultural sector in South Africa supported by two field researchers. From the Department's side, the MAP Programme Manager was actively involved in the project and supported by an external evaluations specialist. All in all, the evaluation was very well resourced in terms of staffing and appropriate skills sets.

Rating: 5

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: In advance of the scoping of the evaluation, all Programme Managers of the WCG: DoA who were responsible for overseeing evaluations, were sent on training in the development of Terms of Reference for evaluations. This was done approximately four months prior to the scoping of work for this evaluation so as to coincide with the commissioning of the evaluation.

Rating: 3

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: Within the Background component of the ToR there is a high-level mention of some of the policies and programmes already in place in South Africa to support emerging farmer's. It also highlights the recognition of the inadequacy of these programme's in helping emerging farmers develop their businesses to have a global reach. As such, it is apparent that at a high level some relevant policy and programme environments were reviewed to inform the planning of this research.

Rating: 3

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: Within the Background component of the ToR there is a high-level mention of some of the context behind the status of emerging farmers in South Africa and the challenges they face in transforming the sector. This section also identifies that while the province has a well-developed agricultural sector, there is still significant room for transformation. As such, it is apparent that at a high level some literature was reviewed to inform the planning of this research.

Rating: 3

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:	Within section 4.1 of the ToR there is explicit mention of the need for the evaluation's design and methods to comprise a 'theory of change analysis'. Further to this, the ToR also highlights the importance of identifying the 'change process' to trace how changes happened and what other influences at play were. The evaluation team's proposal also identifies (in the 'overall approach' section) the need to employ a 'theory-based approach' to assessing the programme. All in all, there is explicit, consistent and clear reference made to the theory of change in the planning of the research.
Rating:	4
Standard:	1.4.2. Key stakeholders were consulted on the design and methodology of the evaluation
Comment and Analysis:	Key stakeholders including the MAP Programme Manager and other personnel from the Department with a clear understanding of the programme as well as its need to align with M&E practices, were consulted on the design and methodology of the evaluation. This included the Western Cape Government: Department of Agriculture's Director: Business Planning and Strategy who acts as the overarching manager of evaluations completed for the Department. In addition, an external evaluation's specialist was frequently engaged to ensure the design and methodology alignment with best practice in Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E).
Rating:	4
Standard:	1.4.3. The planned methodology was appropriate to the questions being asked
Comment and Analysis:	The planned methodology included a mixed methods approach (desktop literature review, interviews, focus groups and surveys as well as theory of change and economic analysis of case studies) to collating quantitative and qualitative data on the programme's status and areas for enhanced efficiencies. This would rely primarily on face-to-face engagements with key stakeholders across the spectrum of role-players in the agricultural sector in the province. Given that the evaluation questions, related to unpacking the extent to which the programme has been able to achieve its intended outcomes and, to the identification of areas for improvement in the programme's efficiency, it is viewed that the planned methodology was well-suited to the questions being asked.
Rating:	4
Standard:	1.4.4. Sampling was appropriate and adequate given focus and purpose of evaluation
Comment and Analysis:	The ToR identified the key sample to comprise: all farmers/agribusinesses of which 45 were known to exist; coverage of all six geographic localities across which the programme is known to be operating in; implementer's; market player's as well as the Western Cape: Department of Agriculture. The evaluator's proposal outlined that the sample would be selected based on a random sampling technique to ensure the representativeness of the sample. All in all this sampling approach appeared to be most appropriate given the focus and purpose of the evaluation in trying to understand the extent to which the programme is achieving its intended outcomes and/or requires enhanced improvement.
Rating:	4

Standard:	1.4.5. There was a planned process for using the findings of the evaluation
Comment and Analysis:	The ToR outlines that the evaluation's findings would be used to optimise the design of the MAP programme to enhance its effectiveness. As such there was recognition made of the planned process for using the findings of the evaluation.
Rating:	3

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:	An initial and inception meeting was held between the evaluator's team and the WCG: DoA MAP Programme Manager. These meetings were important to developing a common understanding of the scope of work and approach to completing the evaluation. In addition, it presented an opportunity for the evaluator's team to collate key documents from the Department to inform their desktop literature review. It was at this stage of the project that the evaluator's team identified the absence of sufficient quantitative information on the programme to allow for a quantitative regression impact analysis. The team were able to consult with the Department to determine the most optimal approach to dealing with this constraint by relying more on the qualitative engagements to inform insight to the scale of impact which the programme has had to date. The inception phase was thus used to vital in the planning of the implementation of the evaluation.
Rating:	5

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: Parties interviewed for this assessment indicated that feedback gathered from stakeholders was such that a free and open process was employed in garnering views. This feedback was, in its collation, sufficiently masked to avoid attributing any comments to specific individuals and thus ensured the confidentiality of individual views. It is also understood that before data collection proceeded the Steering Committee overseeing the evaluation as well as the external evaluation specialist assisting the Department, were involved in ensuring consideration was taken of some of the sensitivities which stakeholders may have raised when being approached to be interviewed for the study. Stakeholders were interviewed through a mix of face-to-face, telephonic or email correspondence and while it is not evident that consent forms were signed, stakeholders were given the opportunity to opt out of engagement. This flexibility led to significant attrition in relation to retailers and market agents but was important to ensuring the openness of the process.

Rating: 3

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

Comment and Analysis: The evaluator interviewed for this assessment reported feeling absolute freedom and independence in conducting the research. The Department gave sufficient independence to the evaluation team particularly in terms of the fieldwork and was yet also available to provide support in accessing stakeholders where necessary.

Rating: 4

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

Comment and Analysis: The evaluation team were impartial as they were not directly involved in the implementation of the MAP programme. While the team has extensive experience in the agricultural and evaluation's sphere, there was no perceived conflict of interest. This was also a prerequisite outlined in the ToR.

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:	The evaluation was overseen by the MAP Programme Manager, the WCG: DoA Director: Business Planning and Strategy, an external evaluation expert as well as a Steering Committee. These parties were well engaged through telephonic conversations and face-to-face meetings where possible to ensure there was agreement on the manner in which the evaluation was being conducted and recognition of any potential obstacles to accessing stakeholders. In general, parties interviewed for this assessment felt that the communication and partnership between the evaluator and the Department, worked particularly well.
Rating:	4
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:	The Programme Manager (PM) responsible for the MAP programme engaged regularly with the evaluation team and through this was able to learn a great deal about the implementation of evaluations, the difference between the definitions of 'outputs' versus 'outcomes' and to understanding some of the fieldwork challenges posed to such research. An indirect element of capacity building the key WCG: DoA PM was thus incorporated into the evaluation process but was, in effect, an unintended consequence of the implementation of the evaluation rather than being one which was planned for.
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:	The evaluation team comprised an international agricultural evaluations expert and South African agricultural evaluations experts. In addition, the team was supported by fieldwork researchers. The evaluator reported that there was a significant transfer of knowledge between the international and local evaluations experts and to the junior fieldwork researchers. This has motivated the local team to do more evaluations work.
Rating:	3
Standard:	2.2.4. Peer review of the agreed evaluation design and methodology occurred prior to undertaking data collection
Comment and Analysis:	It is understood that the evaluation Steering Committee and external evaluations expert overseeing the evaluation reviewed the evaluation design and methodology prior to the implementation of the fieldwork engagement process. The questionnaires were built into the inception report and comments gathered were used to improve it. As such, an external peer review of the agreed evaluation design and methodology took place before data collection began. Through this communication channel, the evaluator team proposed that the impact analysis be more reliant on the qualitative feedback obtained through the engagement process as the available quantitative information would not suffice for an accurate regression impact analysis. Thus, improvements to the methodology were made before data collection proceeded.
Rating:	4

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: The methods used in the implementation of the evaluation aligned with those intended but some adaptations had to be made where the initially targeted stakeholders were unavailable and/or where there was recognition of insufficient data to assess the real impact of the programme. While the evaluation was intended a hybrid of an impact and design evaluation, conducting the former was constrained by the fact that there was insufficient quantitative data on a control versus experiment sample, to facilitate such an analysis. The evaluation relied heavily on the qualitative interview feedback. As a result, the study comprised a 'pilot' impact analysis and meant there was acknowledgement of what information would in future be needed to conduct a complete impact analysis.

Rating: 3

Standard: 2.3.2. A pilot of data collection instrumentation occurred prior to undertaking data collection

Comment and Analysis: The evaluator interviewed for this assessment reported that the questionnaires/data collection instruments, were built into the inception report and comments were invited from the evaluation Steering Committee (which included the MAP PM and the external evaluations specialist). The questionnaires were reportedly piloted to trial run the questions and where necessary adapted to improve clarity.

Rating: 4

Standard: 2.3.3. Data collection was not compromised by fieldwork-level problems or unplanned diversions from original intentions

Comment and Analysis: The evaluator interviewed for this assessment reported that no major deviations from the original intentions of the data collection occurred. Despite some stakeholders (particularly market agents) not availing themselves for engagement, the team were able to interview all of the targeted 34 farmers (the ToR proposed 45 farmers but contact details of only 34 farmers were available for the evaluation team). All in all, the data collection was not compromised by fieldwork-level problems.

Rating: 3

Standard: 2.3.4. Forms of data gathering were appropriate given the scope of evaluation

Comment and Analysis: The main forms of data gathering for this evaluation included: a document and literature review; interviews with WCG: DoA and the service providers responsible for the MAP; surveys with farmers; focus groups and case studies of a control versus experiment sample of 6 farms. Given that the evaluation was set out to be an ex-post impact evaluation with threads of a design evaluation, these data gathering techniques are viewed as particularly comprehensive for gathering key information on the programme.

Rating: 4

Standard: 2.3.5. The data analysis approach and methods were appropriate and sufficient given the purposes of the evaluation

Comment and Analysis: The data analysis and methods underpinning the evaluation were appropriate given the purposes of the evaluation. As the original method of implementing the evaluation had to be revised due to constraints in the availability of quantitative information on the programme, the evaluation findings relied on qualitative interview feedback. Insofar as possible an attempt was still made to use the qualitative feedback to understand the programme's impact but this was viewed as a 'pilot' of a true impact evaluation of the programme. The qualitative information was captured in MS Excel and screened to identify common threads of views.

Rating: 3

Standard: 2.3.6. Key stakeholders were significantly engaged as part of the methodology

Comment and Analysis: Key stakeholders including the parties responsible for the implementation of the MAP; agricultural sector market players and farmers were engaged as part of the evaluation methodology. There were challenges in accessing market players despite concerted efforts by the evaluation team to access such parties. There was a view held that more engagement with retailers, market agents, and other stakeholders in the programme's value chain would have been helpful but this was constrained by the availability of such parties, despite repeated attempts by the evaluator's team to access such parties.

Rating: 4

Standard: 2.3.7. The methodology included engaging beneficiaries appropriately as a key source of data and information

Comment and Analysis: The methodology of the evaluation included key engagements with farmers who are beneficiaries of the MAP. The methodology also included engagement with farmers who are non-beneficiaries of the programme through a case study analysis. In total, 34 farmers were engaged. These parties were considered a key source of data and information on the effectiveness of the MAP in the absence of any primary data on the experience beneficiaries have had of the programme.

Rating: 4

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: At the initial stages of the evaluation there was a slight delay in the finalisation of the contract for work. This delay did not however impede the team from proceeding with the evaluation. The desktop literature review and inception meeting proceeded with contract finalisation and on 'good faith'. This ensured there were no significant shifts in the scheduled milestones and timeframes.

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 executive summary provides a concise summary of the evaluation in terms of its intended objectives, key questions, findings as well as the proposed recommendations for the improved effectiveness of the programme. It thus captures the key components of the report appropriately.
Rating:	4
Standard:	3.1.2. The context of the development intervention is explicit and presented as relevant to the evaluation
Comment and Analysis:	The context of the development intervention in the form of the MAP, is explicitly outlined in the introductory component of the report. It also helps justify the reason for the evaluation as well as objectives thereof.
Rating:	4
Standard:	3.1.3. There is a clear rationale for the evaluation questions
Comment and Analysis:	The rationale for the evaluation questions is indirectly understood in relation to the purpose of the evaluation which the report clearly stipulates. This is explained as being "...to assess the results of the first three years of MAP implementation and to utilise the findings to optimise the design of the Programme to enhance its future effectiveness."
Rating:	3
Standard:	3.1.4. The scope or focus of the evaluation is apparent in the report
Comment and Analysis:	The report clearly documents the scope of the evaluation in relation to key parameters as outlined in the original ToR, specifically: i. the entire lifespan of the MAP; ii. 45 farmers/agribusinesses engaged in the Programme; iii. all 6 geographic localities covered by the programme; iv. implementer views; v. market perspectives; and vi. WCG: DoA perspectives.
Rating:	4
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:	The full report comprises a dedicated section which details the methodology undertaken for the study in such way that there is recognition of the sampling process and data collection processes. Further to this there is mention of the process whereby qualitative interview data was collated into Excel and analysed to identify key themes.
Rating:	3

Standard:	3.1.6. Acknowledgement of limitations of all aspects of the methodology and findings are clearly and succinctly articulated
Comment and Analysis:	The report highlights some of the limitations to the methodology, in particular, the limited availability of quantitative information and access to certain stakeholders. There is no explicit identification of the limitations of the findings however.
Rating:	2
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 study's key findings are made with direct reference to the outcomes of the qualitative interviews conducted across a range of stakeholders. These are usefully presented in relation to 3 key criteria which were the focus of this evaluation of the programme: i. effectiveness, ii. programme design and efficiency and iii. relevance and sustainability. The findings are firmly grounded in the interview feedback which are summarised in respect to sub-criteria such as 'market linkages', 'training and capacity building', etc. and so are made distinct from speculative findings.
Rating:	4
Standard:	3.1.8. Conclusions and recommendations are clear and succinctly articulated
Comment and Analysis:	The key conclusions and recommendations of the study are clearly outlined in dedicated sections for each, of the main report. These are succinctly stated and provide the reader with a clear overview of the key programme considerations, and areas for potential improvement in the programme's effectiveness.
Rating:	4

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 final evaluation report is well-structured and written in clear, accessible language to the common reader. The content follows a clear logic and is very user-friendly.
Rating:	4
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:	The quality of writing and presentation of the report is well done and can be published. The layout is neat and consistent and there are no widespread grammatical or typographical errors. In general, the report is of a good quality and formatting and referencing is compliant with good practice.
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 study relied heavily on qualitative feedback from stakeholders as quantitative data was insufficient. The qualitative interview feedback is presented in relation to a set of key criteria of the programme (in response to the evaluation questions) and is aggregated up to the various stakeholders engaged (such as WCG: DoA, producer perspectives, etc). While this is clearly and consistently done, it may have been useful to see some of the feedback reflected in a cross-tabular form to more explicitly, highlight any divergent views across stakeholders. The absence of this does not however make the report inconsistent with conventions of the presentation of such data.

Rating: 3

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: The report makes very minimal use of tables and no figures are presented. Where tables are presented these support the communication and comprehension of the results well. The tables are well-introduced within the text which is a precursor to it. It is understood that limited quantitative data exists on the programme and so inferred that there is a limited amount of information which could be displayed through tables and figures.

Rating: 3

3.3. Robustness of findings

Standard: 3.3.1. Data analysis appears to have been well executed

Comment and Analysis: The study relied on the collation of qualitative interview feedback into an MS Excel platform which were then analysed to identify key issues and themes emerging from the interviews with the various information. It focused on comparing and contrasting perspectives of producers, market agents and officials. In general the data analysis appears to have been adequately executed for the purposes of the study.

Rating: 3

Standard: 3.3.2. Findings are supported by available evidence

Comment and Analysis: The findings contained in the report are strongly grounded on the qualitative feedback garnered from stakeholders in regards to key feedback on the evaluation questions. This is succinctly recorded for each of the various stakeholders engaged.

Rating: 3

Standard:	3.3.3. The evidence gathered is sufficiently and appropriately analysed to support the argument
Comment and Analysis:	The evidence gathered across the various MAP programme stakeholders is qualitative nature. The analysis of this feedback included the identification of key issues and themes emerging from the interviews with the various informants. It focused on comparing and contrasting the perspectives of farmers/producers, MAP service providers, market agents and officials. In respect to the farmers/producers, the feedback was usefully analysed to produce quantitative results (i.e. proportions of producers holding certain views relative to others) reflecting on the divergence in views on the programme's impact. In terms of officials, MAPS service providers and market agents, these views were analysed to determine commonality or notable divergence in views held. It is thus viewed that the qualitative data has been appropriately analysed to support the key study's findings in relation to the areas of the MAP's effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability as well as areas for improvement in its design.
Rating:	3
Standard:	3.3.4. There is appropriate recognition of the possibility of alternative interpretations
Comment and Analysis:	The report makes good recognition of alternative interpretations. As an example, in terms of the MAP programme design and efficiency, while a perceived expectation is that producers would see the programme as having created linkages between others farmers and businesses, in effect, only one producer interviewed agreed with this view. A similar recognition of divergent views is made in relation to producer views on training and capacity-buiding. In general there was thus a fairly good recognition of alternative interpretations.
Rating:	4
Standard:	3.3.5. The report appears free of significant methodological and analytic flaws
Comment and Analysis:	The report does not appear to have methodological or analytic flaws. The methodological and analytic approach is succinctly articulated in the report and the findings gathered aligns to these suggested methodological and analytical frameworks.
Rating:	3
Standard:	3.3.6. Relevant limitations of the evaluation are noted
Comment and Analysis:	Limitations are documented in relation to the methodology underpinning the study. The methodological limitations are thus well-articulated but not made distinct from the limitations of the evaluation itself particularly those which, due to limited quantitative data, inhibited a quantitative comparison of a control versus experiment group of beneficiaries. This limitation is implicitly acknowledged in section 2.2. Methods of the report as it states that "Overall there is a limited availability of reliable quantitative data related to the MAP programme which placed the emphasis on a literature review, key informant and producer interviews augmented by focus group discussions, case studies and a review of primary documents and reports which together have helped identify the unintended results/impacts of the programme." As such, it is fair to say that a fair acknowledgement of this limitation is made.
Rating:	3

3.4. Strength of conclusions

Standard: 3.4.1. Conclusions are derived from evidence

Comment and Analysis: The conclusions are well-grounded in the outcomes of the analysis of the qualitative feedback of the various stakeholders and thus are derived from evidence.

Rating: 3

Standard: 3.4.2. Conclusions take into account relevant empirical and/or analytic work from related research studies and evaluations

Comment and Analysis: The conclusions reflect on the outcomes of the qualitative feedback gathered from the stakeholder engagement process and do not take into account any other relevant empirical and/or analytic work from related research studies and evaluations.

Rating: 1

Standard: 3.4.3. Conclusions address the original evaluation purpose and questions

Comment and Analysis: The conclusions are well-articulated in relation to the original evaluation questions and its overall purpose. Specifically, the conclusions provide insight to feedback on the extent to which the programme has facilitated market linkages, training and capacity-building, technical guidance, compliance with standards and regulations as well as where there are opportunities for improvement in the programme's design. As such, the conclusions address the original evaluation purpose and questions very well as they are structured in a way which responds to the key questions.

Rating: 4

Standard: 3.4.4. Conclusions are drawn with explicit reference to the intervention logic or theory of change

Comment and Analysis: The conclusions do not make explicit reference to the intervention logic though to some degree there is indirect reference to the design of the evaluation in terms of: i. the need to improve monitoring mechanisms in relation to veterinary certification of livestock; ii. distinguishing better between market readiness and access; and, iii. emphasizing farmer to farmer linkages.

Rating: 2

3.5. Suitability of recommendations

Standard: 3.5.1. Recommendations are made in consultation with appropriate sectoral partners or experts

Comment and Analysis: The recommendations of the report were derived independently by the evaluator's team. The draft reports including these recommendations were reviewed by the external evaluation's specialist supporting the Department in oversight of the evaluation.

Rating: 3

Standard: 3.5.2. Recommendations are shaped following discussions with relevant government officials and other relevant stakeholders

Comment and Analysis: The evaluation's Departmental MAP Programme Manager ensured that the draft report including the key recommendations was circulated for comment by the evaluation Steering Committee. In general, the Steering Committee were in agreement with the recommendations, especially as some of the recommendations had or were being implemented. As such, the recommendations were made through consultation with the department but were independently derived by the evaluator's team.

Rating: 3

Standard: 3.5.3. Recommendations are relevant to the current policy context

Comment and Analysis: The recommendations contained in the evaluation are of high relevance to the Department and the current policy context within which the programme is operating. One of the evaluation's key recommendations was that the MAP programme requires better branding as programme beneficiaries do not necessarily draw a distinction between it and other rural land development programmes such as the RECAP. The recommendations also advise that, to improve MAP's branding, closer alignment with Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP) and RECAP is made. In general, the recommendations are of high relevance to the current policy context.

Rating: 4

Standard: 3.5.4. Recommendations are targetted at a specific audience sufficiently - are specific, feasible, affordable and acceptable

Comment and Analysis: It is evident from the recommendations that they are primarily targetted at the WCG: DoA and those managing the MAP programme. The recommendations are specific, feasible and implementable. The recommendations also mention other stakeholders who could support the department in the attainment of the proposed objectives, such as for example, the national Department of Rural Development.

Rating: 3

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: The external evaluation specialist supporting the Department with the oversight of the study was given the opportunity to review three drafts of the report before it was finalised. This external peer reviewers feedback was used to revise the report.

Rating: 4

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:	The report does not explicitly document procedures undertaken to ensure the confidentiality of stakeholders engaged. However, the report does not reflect feedback of any specific individuals - the qualitative feedback is aggregated up to a grouping of stakeholders such that the identity of stakeholders is protected.
Rating:	2

Standard:	3.6.3. There are no risks to participants in disseminating the original report on a public website
Comment and Analysis:	There are no apparent risks to participants in disseminating the original report on a public website as the perspectives of stakeholders are captured for the various stakeholder groupings, rather than for individual parties.
Rating:	3

Standard:	3.6.4. There are no unfair risks to institutions in disseminating the original report on a public website
Comment and Analysis:	While there are no apparent major risks to institutions in disseminating the original report on a public website, cognisance should be taken of the fact that the views of the service providers supporting the WCG: DoA in the implementation of the programme are outlined explicitly in the report. Caution may need to be exercised in releasing the full content of that feedback as it appears in the main report. One suggestion would be to potentially release a summary of the spectrum of views (across all stakeholder groupings) so as to avoid isolating the feedback of service providers.
Rating:	2

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:	The project closed out with a final presentation being made by the evaluator's team. This gave the team the opportunity to reflect upon the evaluation process as well as to identify the adaptations which had to be made to the evaluation approach due to, for example, the limited availability of quantitative information to complete a quantitative regression impact analysis.
Rating:	3

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: The evaluation was viewed to have been completed within the planned timeframes outlined in the evaluator's proposal. The WCG: DoA were surprised to receive the complete final report before the expected deadline which was notably appreciated.

Rating: 4

Standard: 4.1.2. The evaluation was completed within the agreed budget

Comment and Analysis: The parties interviewed for this evaluation reported that there was a budget overrun for the evaluation. The lead evaluator ultimately carried the financial cost of this over-run by discounting his actual effort expended. In general the budget was viewed as 'reasonable' but could have been more and would have possibly even allowed the study to reach a broader audience of stakeholders potentially impacted by the programme.

Rating: 3

4.2. Evaluation use

Standard: 4.2.1. Results of the evaluation have been presented to all relevant stakeholders

Comment and Analysis: The evaluation team presented the results of the study to the WCG: DoA Steering Committee and the programme's implementing agent. Further to this, the MAP Programme Manager has already had regular meetings with WCG: DoA responsible for coordinating the programme as well as District Managers of the programme to talk through the evaluation's results. The MAP Programme Manager also intends formally meeting with the PM of Economics and Farmer Support and Development in the WCG: DoA to share the results and identify opportunities for collaborative effort to improve the effectiveness of the programme.

Rating: 3

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: The evaluation was used as a case study into the recent WCG: DoA's strategic planning this year to inform the approach to conducting evaluations in the Department. This has helped informed the means to improving future evaluations conducted by the Department. A good reflective process has thus already occurred by the Steering Committee to reflect on what could be done to strengthen future evaluations.

Rating: 4

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:	The evaluation study is viewed by interviewed stakeholders as having vitally raised the profile of the programme particularly amongst farmers. One of the key findings of the study was that there is limited knowledge by farmers of the MAP. Through the engagement process the evaluation team were able to raise awareness of the programme and in so doing raised the programme's profile. There is recognition that some of the 'impact' which the MAP has correlates to that of other policies and programmes such as the Recapitalisation and Development Programme (RECAP) of the national Department of Rural Development.
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:	The evaluation has assisted the WCG: DoA in understanding 'what should be done' and it was viewed that the study represents the 'tip of the iceberg' in understanding 'what else' can be done. There was a view held that more investigation into the MAP value chain (including the web of role-players in the global context such as retailers and market agents) could have been done. This would have assisted the Department in understanding more about the actual design impact of the programme. It is potentially too soon to tell what impact the study will have in shaping policy but it is suspected it may influence the approach undertaken in implementing the RECAP.
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 WCG: DoA MAP Programme Manager has already begun drafting an improvement plan which outlines 'reasons for agreement/disagreement' with the recommendations of the study as well as a set of 'improvement objectives' which represent plans of action in addressing the studies recommendations. As such, there are a set of itemised action points for addressing the studies recommendations.
Rating:	4
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 evaluation was only completed in June 2014 and is still under internal discussion within the WCG: DoA. It is thus not yet publicly available.
Rating:	N/A
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 evaluation was only completed in June 2014 and is still under internal discussion within the WCG: DoA. It is thus not fair to comment on the degree to which the evaluation recommendations have been implemented.
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 evaluation was only completed in June 2014 and is still under internal discussion within the WCG: DoA. It is thus not fair to comment on the degree to which the evaluation has had an influence on the evaluand, its stakeholders and beneficiaries in the medium to long term.
Rating:	N/A

References

Goss Gilroy Inc. 2013. 'An Evaluation of the Market Access Programme - Proposal (Revised Financial only)'.

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Western Cape Government: Department of Agriculture (Ralehoko, E.N and Matoti, B). 2014. 'Market Access Evaluation Management Improvement Plan'.

Goss Gilroy Inc. 2013. 'An Evaluation of the Market Access Programme - Second Draft Report'.

Western Cape Government: Department of Agriculture. 2014. 'An Evaluation of the Market Access Programme - Final Report'. Goss Gilroy Inc.

Western Cape Government: Department of Agriculture (Agricultural Economic Services). 2013. 'Terms of Reference for the Evaluation of the Market Access Programme'.

List of Interviewees

Dr Dirk Troskie (Western Cape Government: Department of Agriculture - Director: Business Planning and Strategy). Telephonic interview conducted on 10 September 2014.

Mr Hubert Paulmer. (Goss Gilroy Inc. - Principal). Telephonic interview conducted on 25 September 2014.

Mr. Enoch Ntala Ralehoko (Western Cape Government: Department of Agriculture - Manager: Marketing and Agribusiness). Telephonic interview conducted on 18 September 2014.