



Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation

Report on the Assessment of Government Evaluations

An Evaluation of Integration and Coordination in the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme

Date Evaluation was completed: 31 January 2009

Name of assessor: Katie Gull

Evaluation Number: 47

Date Assessment Completed: 12 March 2013

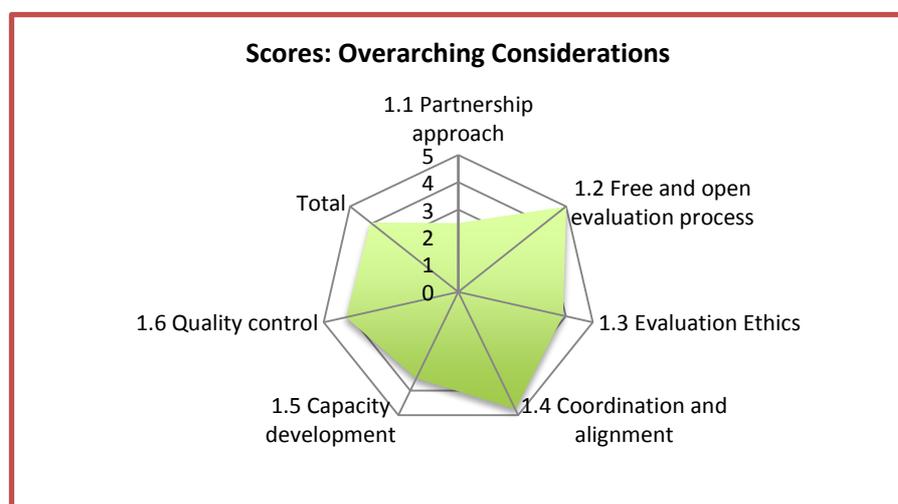
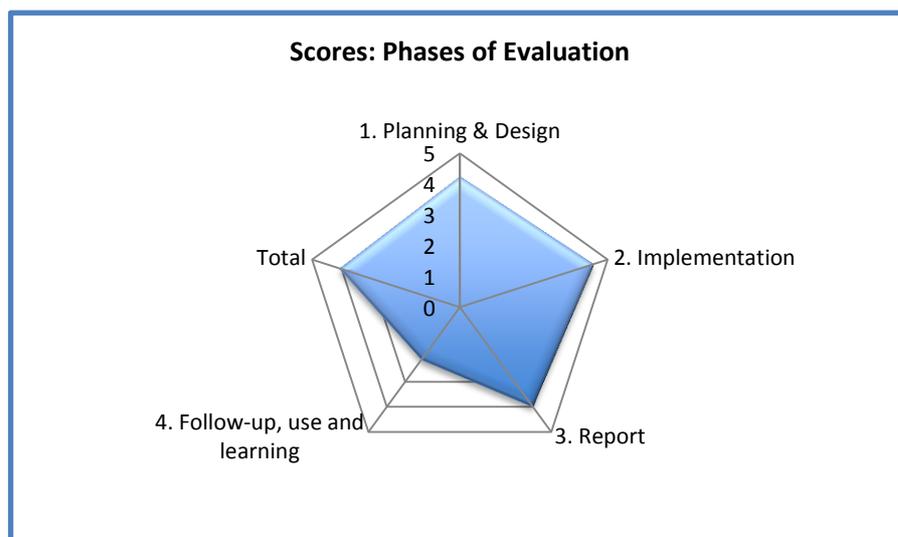
Evaluation Assessment Details

Title of evaluation report	An Evaluation of Integration and Coordination in the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme
Completion Date of Evaluation	31 January 2009
Name of Assessor	Katie Gull
Evaluation Number	47
Completion Date of Assessment	12 March 2013
Initiated by	Public Service Commission
Evaluation undertaken by	Umhlaba Rural Services
Evaluation area / sector	Poverty, socio-economic dev, access to credit
	<i>Additional</i>
National Outcome	Outcome 7
	<i>Additional</i>
Type of Evaluation	Implementation
	<i>Additional</i>
What is being evaluated	Programme
	<i>Additional</i>
Geographic Scope	District
Period of Evaluation	2008
Known Cost of Evaluation	800000

Quality Assessment Scores

Phase of Evaluation	Score
Planning & Design	4.24
Implementation	4.52
Report	3.97
Follow-up, use and learning	2.09
Total	3.97

Overarching Consideration	Score
Partnership approach	2.52
Free and open evaluation process	5.00
Evaluation Ethics	3.89
Coordination and alignment	4.75
Capacity Development	3.50
Quality control	4.17



1. Planning & Design

1.1. Clarity of Purpose and Scope in TOR

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

Comment and Analysis

The evaluation was guided by the TOR. The purpose and objectives of the evaluation derived from the TOR in addition to the methodology, time allocation and project budget.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

The purpose of the evaluation was clear and explicit in the TOR.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

The TOR does not incorporate evaluation questions, however the objectives and proposed methodology are incorporated.

Rating 3

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

Comment and Analysis

The type and approach was suited to the purpose and scope of the evaluation TOR.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

This is not applicable for this assessment.

Rating N/A

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

Comment and Analysis

This is not applicable for this assessment.

Rating N/A

1.2. Evaluation was adequately resourced

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

Comment and Analysis

This is not applicable for this assessment.

Rating N/A

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

Comment and Analysis

This is not applicable for this assessment.

Rating N/A

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

Comment and Analysis

This is not applicable for this assessment.

Rating N/A

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

Comment and Analysis

This is not applicable for this assessment.

Rating N/A

1.3. Alignment to Policy Context and Background Literature

STANDARD: There was evidence that a review of the relevant policy and programme environments had been conducted and used in the planning of the evaluation by the evaluators

Comment and Analysis

A thorough review of relevant policy and programme environments was conducted and used in the planning of the evaluation.

Rating 5

STANDARD: There was evidence of a review of appropriate literature having been conducted and used in the planning of the evaluation by the evaluators

Comment and Analysis

There is evidence that a review of relevant literature was conducted and used in the planning of the evaluation.

Rating 5

1.4. The evaluation methods planned were appropriate to the project

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

Comment and Analysis

This is not applicable for this assessment.

Rating N/A

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

Comment and Analysis

This is not applicable for this assessment.

Rating N/A

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

Comment and Analysis

The planned methodology, which was mainly qualitative, was appropriate to the questions being asked since the evaluation was on processes and coordination.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

The selection of the three nodes (out of a total of 15) was guided by the findings of the ISRDP mid-term review and were chosen to be as representative as possible. Although the TOR refers to 13 nodal areas, the evaluation only considers three. However, it is deemed that the planned sampling was appropriate.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

There was no planned process for using the findings of the evaluation prior to undertaking the evaluation.

Rating 1

1.5. Inception phase

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

Comment and Analysis

An inception note was provided and this was used to develop a common agreement. In particular, it was used to revise the focus of the review, discuss the implementation and revise the timeframe.

Rating 4

2. Implementation

2.1. Ethical Review and Considerations

STANDARD: *Where data was gathered in contexts where ethical sensitivity is high, appropriate clearance was obtained through an ethics review board; e.g. in evaluation involving minors, institutions where access usually requires ethical or bureaucratic clearance, and situations where assurances of confidentiality was offered to participants*

Comment and Analysis

Appropriate procedures were followed, although the context was not of high sensitivity and the questions that were asked dealt with processes and not people.

Rating 4

2.2. Evaluator independence

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

Comment and Analysis

This is not applicable for this assessment.

Rating N/A

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

Comment and Analysis

There was no apparent evidence of any conflicts of interest.

Rating 4

2.3. Key stakeholder involvement

STANDARD: Key stakeholders were consulted through a formalised mechanism or institutional arrangement during the evaluation

Comment and Analysis

The stakeholders were consulted through planned, yet semi-structured interviews. The list of questions was used as entry points into the conversations.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

The Umhlaba consultants were paired with PSC staff in the undertaking of the nodal research. This meant that the PSC retained the knowledge within the organisation.

Rating 4

2.4. Methodology

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

Comment and Analysis

This is not applicable for this assessment.

Rating N/A

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

Comment and Analysis

The data collection was not compromised by any significant problems.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

Secondary data sources were used and this data was complimented with semi-structured interviews held with the relevant stakeholders. Since the evaluation dealt with processes and coordination, this type of data gathering is deemed appropriate considering the scope of the evaluation.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

Mintzberg's coordination framework was used to analyse the data and the findings. This approach is considered appropriate and sufficient considering the purpose of the evaluation.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

Key stakeholders were significantly engaged. A substantial list of stakeholders is provided as an appendix.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

The methodology does not include engaging beneficiaries as a key source of data and information. However, since the evaluation deals with coordination and planning issues, it was not deemed necessary to engage beneficiaries of the ISRDP projects.

Rating N/A

2.5. Project management

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

Comment and Analysis

There were slight adjustments to the timeframes, however this was discussed at the inception phase.

Rating 3

3. Report

3.1. Report was well-structured and presentation was clear and complete in each of these areas

STANDARD: Executive summary captured key components of the report appropriately

Comment and Analysis

The executive summary captured the key components appropriately and concisely.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

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

Rating 4

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

Although the evaluation questions were not provided in the report, there was an implicit understanding of the evaluation questions for which there was a clear rationale.

Rating 4

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

The focus of the evaluation was apparent in the report.

Rating 4

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

The methodology was provided in the report. However, there could have been further explanation and detail regarding the data collection, analysis and interpretation approaches used.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

The findings were presented in a clear and concise and decisive manner.

Rating **5**

STANDARD: Conclusions and recommendations were clear and succinctly articulated

Comment and Analysis

Conclusions and recommendations were clear and succinctly articulated.

Rating **4**

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

Comment and Analysis

There was no acknowledgement of limitations of any aspects of the methodology.

Rating **2**

3.2. Writing and presentation

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

Comment and Analysis

The quality of writing and presentation was adequate for publication. There was consistency of style and writing conventions.

Rating 4

STANDARD: *Appropriate conventions were used in presentation of data (e.g. use of appropriate statistical language; reporting of p-values where appropriate; not reporting statistically insignificant findings as significant; clarifying disaggregation categories in constructing percentages; not using quantitative language in reporting qualitative data, etc.)*

Comment and Analysis

The appropriate conventions were used in presenting the qualitative evaluation. For example, there was no use of quantitative language in the report. Tables and boxes were used appropriately and diagrammes and figures were used to keep the reader interested.

Rating 5

3.3. Presentation of findings

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

Comment and Analysis

Appropriate conventions such as tables and flow diagrammes were used to present the figures and the analysis.

Rating 5

STANDARD: Data analysis appeared to have been well executed

Comment and Analysis

The analysis of the findings using the conceptual framework was well executed.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Findings were supported by available evidence

Comment and Analysis

The findings were supported by evidence discussed in the report.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

The evidence was gathered and was analysed appropriately to support the argument.

Rating 4

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

Comment and Analysis

There was not always appropriate recognition of the possibility of alternative interpretations.

Rating 2

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

Comment and Analysis

The report appeared free of significant methodological and analytical flaws.

Rating 5

3.4. Conclusions

STANDARD: Conclusions were derived from evidence

Comment and Analysis

The conclusions were derived from the evidence gathered in the evaluation.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

The conclusions did take into account analytical work and relevant literature.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Conclusions addressed the original evaluation purpose and questions

Comment and Analysis

The conclusion addressed the original objectives of the study; however the link could have been made more explicit in the conclusion.

Rating 3

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

This is not applicable for this assessment.

Rating N/A

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

It appears that the recommendations were not made in consultation with appropriate sectoral partners. However, both Umhlaba Rural Services and the PSC are experts in the field of the evaluation and therefore applied their own expert opinion.

Rating 3

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

The recommendations stemmed from the findings in the report and these findings were shaped by relevant stakeholder and government engagement.

Rating 4

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

The recommendations were relevant to the policy context.

Rating 5

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

The recommendations were projects in and of themselves and therefore perhaps were too ambitious. However, they were targetted to a specific audience.

Rating 4

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

The relevant limitations of the evaluation were not noted.

Rating 2

3.7 Protection of participants and risk considerations

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

Comment and Analysis

The report did not document procedures intended to ensure confidentiality. However, in an interview with PSC, it was explained that the appropriate procedures were followed.

Rating 1

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

Comment and Analysis

There were no risks in disseminating the original report.

Rating 5

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

Comment and Analysis

There were no unfair risks to institutions in disseminating the original report.

Rating 5

4. Follow-up, use and learning

4.1. Presentation to stakeholders

STANDARD: Results were presented to all relevant stakeholders

Comment and Analysis

The results were not presented to all relevant stakeholders. The PSC admitted that this is a shortcoming of the evaluation since the focus is only delivering the output, and not on presenting the findings.

Rating 1

4.2. Resource utilisation

STANDARD: The evaluation was completed within the planned timeframes

Comment and Analysis

There was a slight delay, but it was not serious.

Rating 3

STANDARD: The evaluation was completed within the agreed budget

Comment and Analysis

The evaluation was completed within the agreed budget.

Rating 5

4.3. Transparency

STANDARD: The report was publicly available (website or otherwise published document), except where there were legitimate security concerns

Comment and Analysis

The report was publicly available.

Rating 5

4.4. Lessons learnt

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

Comment and Analysis

It appears that no reflective process was undertaken by the staff after the evaluation was completed.

Rating 1

4.5. Symbolic and conceptual value

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

Comment and Analysis

The evaluation was not presented to the interviewed stakeholders and therefore could not be considered as adding value to the programme.

Rating 2

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

Comment and Analysis

There was no feedback on the evaluation and therefore it cannot be deemed to have provided conceptual value in understanding.

Rating 2

4.6. Utilisation of findings and recommendations

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

Comment and Analysis

There is no evidence of instrumental use. However, PSC believes that although the ISRDP has since closed, the recommendations and conclusions drawn are still relevant as they deal with coordination and processes which affect effective planning and implementation of similar poverty programmes.

Rating 1

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

Comment and Analysis

The evaluation was not sufficiently utilised. However, as PSC explains, the information and knowledge gained through the evaluation is not lost and is still relevant and will add value on future and similar evaluations.

Rating 2

References

Public Service Commission. 2007. Terms of Reference Evaluation of the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme December 2007

Public Service Commission. 2008. ISRDP Review: Research Guide. Working Document

Public Service Commission. 2008. ISRDP Review: Proposed Research Framework. Working Document, May 2008

Public Service Commission. 2008. Inception Note: Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme Review May 2008

Public Service Commission. 2009. An Evaluation of Integration and Coordination in the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme. The Public Service Commission,

List of Interviewees

Kobus van der Merwe, Chief Director, Monitoring and Evaluation: Public Service Commission, Telephonic Interview, 21/2/2013.