



**Western Cape
Government**

Social Development

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Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Commissioning and Conducting Social and Evaluation Research within the Department of Social Development

Directorate Research, Population and Knowledge Management

August 2018

DSD - Social and Evaluation Research – Standard Operating Procedure – August 2018

Preamble

This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) was compiled by the Research Unit within the Directorate: Research, Population and Knowledge Management. The purpose of this SOP is to provide for a standardized step-by-step guide on the process to follow when commissioning and conducting evaluation research within the Department. The SOP also describes the key roles, responsibilities and actions of officials in the evaluation process.

Revision History

Version	Date	Summary of Changes
V1	9 August 2018	First draft
V2	17 September 2018	Final draft

Approval

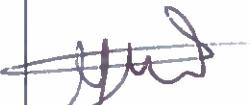
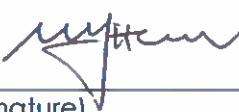
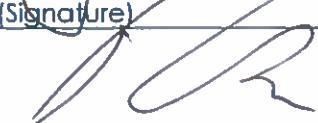
Gavin Miller Director: Research, Population & Knowledge Management		19 SEP 2018
	(Signature)	(Date)
Marion Johnson Chief Director: Business Planning & Strategy		21/9/18
	(Signature)	(Date)
Mzwandile Hewu Chief Director: Community & Development		2018/09/26
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Robert Macdonald Head of Department		2018 -09- 28
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1. Introduction

1.1. Definition of terms

Monitoring: Involves collecting, analyzing and reporting data on inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts. Monitoring aims to provide managers, decision makers and other stakeholders with regular feedback on progress in implementation, results and early indicators of problems that need to be corrected. It usually reports on actual performance against what was planned or expected¹.

Evaluation: The systematic collection and objective analysis of evidence on public policies, programmes, projects, functions and organizations to assess issues such as relevance, performance (effectiveness and efficiency), value for money, impact and sustainability, and to recommend ways forward².

Evaluation research: Research undertaken to see whether a programme or activity is meeting or has met the objectives set for it.

Evaluator: A specialist in evaluation methods who has primary responsibility for developing the evaluation proposal, conducting the study and reporting results.

Final report: For the purposes of this SOP, a final report is a publicly available report produced consequent to the interim or final findings of evaluation research.

Evaluation Steering Committee (internal) / Project Team: Consists of DSD staff who provide an oversight system for all evaluation research carried out by the Department. The committee or project team's responsibilities include reviewing all research proposals and methods, and where appropriate, drafts and final research products. The internal evaluation steering committee will also provide technical and procedural advice throughout the evaluation research process as required. The overall objective of the steering committee is to take responsibility for ensuring the quality of the evaluation and the approval of evaluation reports³.

Primary data: the creation of new data via first-hand collection.

Secondary data: Information gathered from pre-existing sources or databases.

¹ Policy Framework for the Government-wide Monitoring and Evaluation System

² Department: Performance Monitoring and Evaluation. National Evaluation Policy Framework, 23 November 2011.

³ DPME guideline for evaluation steering committee

1.2. Background and overview

The Policy Framework for the Government Wide Monitoring and Evaluation (GWM&E) System, published in 2007 by the Presidency, emphasizes the importance of monitoring and evaluation in realising a more effective government. When designed and implemented well, evaluations can provide a wealth of information on the performance and impact of government interventions.

This Standard Operating Procedure has been written in accordance with the DPME guidelines for evaluation research. It aims to assist the Department in implementing evaluations, widening the use of evaluations, promoting a culture of evaluation and to initiate steps to institutionalize the evaluation function in the Department. This SOP outlines the process for commissioning and conducting evaluation research within the Department. It includes details and plans of all stages of the process; from planning, design and inception to the use of findings.

The main objectives of the SOP are as follows:

1. To provide contextual clarity on the strategy for commissioning and conducting evaluations in the Department of Social Development.
2. To clearly articulate the roles and responsibilities of each official in the evaluation process; thereby, reducing ambiguity and allowing for the interaction of all stakeholders.
3. To provide information about essential requirements and detailed processes for each step within the evaluation process.

The evaluation research processes within the Department will be continually developed and amended. It is therefore proposed that this SOP is reviewed annually.

2. Types of Evaluation

According to the DPME Guidelines for Evaluation, there are five (5) different types of evaluation that could be requested. These five types of evaluations are listed below, before looking at the different phases and steps involved when commissioning and conducting an evaluation in the Department.

Diagnostic Evaluation: Preparatory research to ascertain the current situation prior to an intervention, and to inform intervention design. It explores the current situation, the problems and

opportunities to be addressed, causes and consequences, including those that the intervention is unlikely to deliver, and the likely effectiveness of different policy options⁴.

Design Evaluation: A rapid precautionary exercise conducted after an intervention has been designed, but ideally before it has been implemented. This type of evaluation analyses the theory of change, and consistency of a programme, either before a programme starts, or during implementation to see whether the theory of change appears to be working. It can also be used for existing programmes as part of an implementation evaluation to check on the design⁵.

Implementation Evaluation: This type of evaluation provides an assessment of programme delivery, strategies, procedures and processes. An implementation evaluation can answer questions about what is happening in practice, how it is happening, and why it is happening⁶.

Impact Evaluation: Impact evaluations seek to understand the changes brought about by an intervention, at outcome and impact level. Impact evaluations should be conducted late enough for impacts, or longer-term outcomes, to be evident⁷.

Economic Evaluation: The process of systematic identification, measurement and valuation of the inputs and outcomes of two alternative activities, and the subsequent comparative analysis of these. The purpose of economic evaluation is to identify the best course of action, based on the evidence available. An economic evaluation takes non-monetary welfare impacts into account, such as improved health, reduced accident risks, congestion and pollution.

⁴ DPME Guideline 2.2.10 Diagnostic Evaluation

⁵ DPME Guideline 2.2.11 Design Evaluation

⁶ The National Evaluation Policy Framework (2011)

⁷ DPME Guideline 2.2.13 Impact Evaluation

3. Phases of Evaluation Research

In order to standardize the commissioning and conducting of evaluations in the Department, it is envisioned that the following evaluation phases will be covered.

The tables below highlight the different phases within the evaluation research process. Simultaneously, it presents the various activities, roles and responsibilities and proposed timeframes for each phase and activity.

Phases of evaluation research	Role Clarification		Timeframes	Reference to DPME guidelines
	Lead role	Secondary role		
	player	player		

Phase 1: Planning, Design and Inception

	DD: Research Unit	Quarter 4 ⁸ (of year preceding year in which the evaluation should begin to ensure that it is approved as part of the DSD Research and Evaluation Plan)	DPME Evaluation Guideline NO 2.2.4: Guideline for Inception Phase of Evaluation ⁹
1.1 Request for evaluation – concept note template completed	Director of the commissioning Lead Programme		

⁸ Allows for the evaluation requests to be incorporated into the approved research and evaluation work plan.

⁹ <https://evaluations.dpme.gov.za/images/gallery/Guideline%202.2.4%20Inception%20Phase%2001%2014.pdf>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request received from Programme. • Meeting with Programme to further discuss the research request. • Meeting minutes compiled and signed-off • Concept note template completed. 	<p>1.2 The sign-off of the concept note</p>	<p>Chief Director: Lead Programme</p>	<p>Director: Research Unit</p>
<p>1.3 The approval of the evaluation request as part of the research and evaluation work plan.</p>	<p>1.4 Establishment of the Project Team</p>	<p>HOD Support and Minister approves</p>	<p>Quarter 4</p>
	<p>1.5 Source data (i.e. TPAs & NFD) received from the Programme</p>	<p>Lead Programme to identify specific person</p>	<p>DD: Research Unit</p>
			<p>Quarter 1/2</p>

1.6 Research/ Evaluation proposal and data collection instruments compiled	DD: Research Unit	Social Researcher: Research Unit	Quarter 2
1.8 Research/ Evaluation proposal and data collection instruments reviewed	DD: Research Unit	Director: Lead Programme	Quarter 2
1.9 Research/ Evaluation proposal finalized	Director: Research Unit Research Unit	DD: Research Unit	Quarter 2
1.10 Approval and sign-off of the evaluation proposal	Chief Director: Lead Programme	Director: Research Unit	Quarter 2
1.11 Ethics approval	DD: Research Unit	Lead social researcher: Research Unit	Quarter 2 ¹⁰
Phase 2: Research/ Evaluation Preparation			
2.1 Prepare a work plan to manage the evaluation	DD: Research Unit	Lead social researcher	Quarter 2
2.2 Briefing and information session with participants	DD: Research Unit	Director: Lead Programme	Quarter 2
• Meeting minutes compiled and signed-off			

¹⁰ The time frame assigned to the ethical approval process is dependent on the nature of a project. Agreed times frames will be set out in the project plan.

¹¹ <https://evaluations.dpme.gov.za/images/gallery/Template%20for%20Evaluation%20Project%20Plan.pdf>

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2.3 Logistical arrangements for fieldwork	Social Researcher: Research Unit	Social Work or Community Development Manager: Lead Programme	Quarter 2
Phase 3: Data collection and analysis			
3.1 Conduct fieldwork	Lead Social Researcher: Research Unit	Social researcher/research information officer	Quarter 3
3.2 Transcription of interviews, data capturing, and/or data coding	Lead Social Researcher Research Unit	Social researcher/research information officer	Quarter 3/4 ¹²
3.3 Data analysis	Social Researcher Research Unit	Social researcher/research information officer	Quarter 3/4
3.4 Project status report	DD: Research Unit	Lead social researcher	Quarterly
Phase 4: Report writing and dissemination			

¹² Dependent on the date of fieldwork completion.

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4.1 Draft evaluation report completed	Social Researcher Research Unit	DD: Research Unit	Quarter 4	Template for Full Report ¹³ Template for Summary Report ¹⁴
4.2 Presentation of preliminary findings and recommendations	DD: Research Unit	Social Work or Community Development Manager: Lead Programme	Quarter 4	DPME Evaluation Guideline 2.2.17: How to Develop Actionable Recommendations ¹⁵
• Meeting minutes compiled and signed-off				
4.3 Edit and review of draft report	DD: Research Unit	Lead social researcher	Quarter 4	
4.4 Final evaluation report Peer assessed by the Research Unit	DD: Research Unit	Social researchers	Quarter 4	
4.5 Final evaluation report	Director: Research Unit	Chief Director: Business Planning & Strategy	Quarter 4	Template for Full Report Template for Summary Report
4.6 Final report presented for Approval to Project Team	DD: Research Unit	Social Work or Community Development	Quarter 1 ¹⁶	
• Meeting minutes compiled and signed-off				

¹³ <https://evaluations.dpme.gov.za/images/gallery/Full%20Report%20Structure%20Template%2017%2002%2023.pdf>

¹⁴ <https://evaluations.dpme.gov.za/images/gallery/Final%20DPME%20Report%20Summary%20Template%2017%2002%2023.pdf>
<https://evaluations.dpme.gov.za/images/gallery/Guideline%202.2.17%20How%20to%20Dev%20Ac%20Actionable%20Recommendations%2017%2002%2016.pdf>

¹⁶ Quarter 1 of the following financial year.

		Manager: Lead Programme	Director: Lead Programme	Quarter 1 (Within 30 days of formal request to stakeholder)	DPME Guideline NO 2.2.5: How to develop a Management Response to an Evaluation Report ¹⁷
4.7 Management response requested	Director: Research Unit	Director: Lead Programme	Social Work or Community Development Manager: Lead Programme	Quarter 1	DPME Guideline NO 2.2.5: How to develop a Management Response to an Evaluation Report ¹⁸
4.8 Management response compiled	Director: Lead Programme	Chief Director: Lead Programme Senior Management	Director: Social Research	Quarter 1	DPME Guideline NO 2.2.5: How to develop a Management Response to an Evaluation Report

Phase 5: Use of Findings

¹⁷ <https://evaluations.dpme.gov.za/images/gallery/Guideline%202.5%20%20Management%20Response%2014%2006%2029.pdf>
¹⁸ <https://evaluations.dpme.gov.za/images/gallery/Guideline%202.5%20%20Management%20Response%2014%2006%2029.pdf>

<p>5.1 Implementation plan requested</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This will be included in the Management Response request. 	<p>Director: Research Unit</p> <p>Programme</p> <p>(Within 4 months of request)</p>	<p>Director: Lead</p> <p>Programme</p>	<p>Quarter 1</p> <p>(Within 4 months of request)</p>	<p>DPME Guideline NO 2.2.6:</p> <p>How to develop an Improvement Plan to address evaluation recommendations¹⁹</p>
<p>5.2 Compile Implementation Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting minutes compiled and signed-off 	<p>Director: Lead</p> <p>Programme</p>	<p>DD: Research Unit</p>	<p>Quarter 1</p>	<p>DPME Guideline NO 2.2.6:</p> <p>How to develop an Improvement Plan to address evaluation recommendations²⁰</p>
<p>5.3 Approval of Implementation Plan</p>	<p>Chief Director</p> <p>Senior</p> <p>Management</p>	<p>Director: Lead</p> <p>Programme</p>	<p>Social Work or</p> <p>Community</p> <p>Development</p>	<p>Every 6 months for at least two years</p>
<p>5.4 Compiling of progress reports for at least two years on the implementation plan.</p>	<p>Deputy</p> <p>Director:</p> <p>Monitoring & Evaluation</p>	<p>Manager: Lead</p> <p>Programme</p>	<p>Manager: Lead</p> <p>Programme</p>	

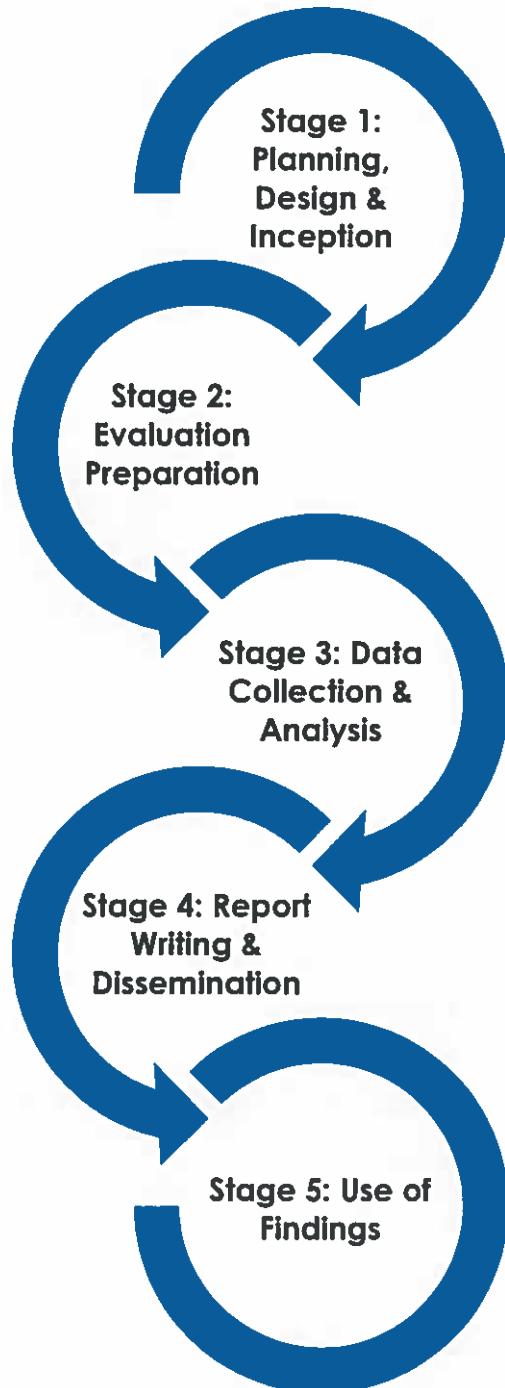
¹⁹ <https://evaluations.dpme.gov.za/images/gallery/Guideline%202.2.6%20Improvement%20Plan%2014%2007%2018.pdf>

²⁰ <https://evaluations.dpme.gov.za/images/gallery/Guideline%202.2.6%20Improvement%20Plan%2014%2007%2018.pdf>

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5.5 Project closure report	DD Research Unit	Lead social researcher	Quarter 1
5.6 Publication of evaluation report on Departmental website	Director: Research Unit	DD: Research Unit	After approval of report and management response

Figure 1: The major stages of managing and conducting evaluation research



Annexure 1: Concept Note

Part A: Key contact details

Name of proposed evaluation		Year proposed to be implemented	
Directorate / Programme proposing evaluation			
Directorate / Programme who will be the custodian (and will implement the improvement plan arising from the evaluation)			
Programme Manager		Title	
Telephone		Email	
M&E Person/Officer		Title	
Telephone		Email	
Other key Departments/agencies involved in the intervention			

Part B: Background to the intervention being focused on

Specific unit of analysis of the evaluation (eg. Policy, plan, programme or project)	
Give some background to the intervention	
Summary description of the intervention	
The problem or opportunity the intervention focusses on	
Key components of the intervention	
Duration and timing of the intervention	

Part C: Details on the evaluation proposed

Key focus of the evaluation	for example, the evaluation may only focus on part of a programme or policy
Type of evaluation	
What are the main evaluation questions that you would like the evaluation to answer?	
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Annexure 2: Template for evaluation project plan

Annexure 3: Management response to an evaluation report

Date

Reference :
Enquiries : Gavin Miller/ Petro Brink
Telephone : 021 483 4168/ 021 483 4512

Name of requester

Name of Directorate/Programme
Department of Social Development
Cape Town
8000

Dear XXX

Management Response to the Evaluation of XXXXXXXXXXXX

Please find attached the final reports in respect of the '**(Name of evaluation study)**' as requested by your Chief Directorate.

1. Your co-operation, with the compilation of the formal Management Response to the report, is requested. In order to achieve this, please find attached the Management Response template which contains the recommendations of the reports attached to this correspondence.
2. In order to finalise this response, please can you indicate your written agreement or disagreement next to each recommendation and return the Management Response template to Gavin Miller, Director: Research, Population and Knowledge Management within 30 days; as per the National DPME Guidelines.
3. Following the return of the Management Response, discussions regarding the formulation of the Implementation Plan can commence.

Yours sincerely

Gavin Miller
Director: Research, Population and Knowledge Management
Date:

Table X: Recommendations and management response

Recommendations	Record of agreement or disagreement	Reason for disagreement	Page No.
High Level Recommendations			
Internal Recommendations			
External Recommendations			

Annexure 4: Improvement plan and Quarterly Reporting Template to address evaluation recommendations

Title of Evaluation	Date of Publication of Evaluation Report
Name of lead Department	Date of Approval of Improvement Plan
Contact Person	Position
Telephone	Email

Date of report	1	2	3	4
Quarter mark with an X				

Improvement Objective 1

Outputs to achieve the objective	Priority Low(L)/ Medium (M)/High (H)	Activity to achieve output	Person responsible	By when? (Deadline)	Target	Budget available	Current situation/Progress Report
					What is the target in relation to the output		

Improvement Objective 2

Improvement Objective 2

Outputs to achieve the objective

Outputs to achieve the objective	Priority Low(L)/ Medium (M)/High (H)	Activity to achieve output	Person responsible	By when? (Deadline)	Target	Budget available	Current situation/Pro gress Report

Improvement Objective 3

Improvement Objective 3

Outputs to achieve the objective

Outputs to achieve the objective	Priority Low(L)/ Medium (M)/High (H)	Activity to achieve output	Person responsible	By when? (Deadline)	Target	Budget available	Current situation/Progress Report