



planning, monitoring
& evaluation

Department:
Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



PSPPD

PROGRAMME TO
SUPPORT PRO-POOR
POLICY DEVELOPMENT

POLICY BRIEF SERIES

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Evidence-based policy-making and implementation



RURAL COMMUNITIES NOT FORGOTTEN

BACKGROUND

The Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP) aims to achieve social cohesion and develop rural areas by improving access to basic services, business development, and industrial development in villages. The programme achieves this through contributing to agrarian (agricultural) transformation, rural development, and land reform. The programme partners with departments in all three spheres of government (national, provincial and local).

The CRDP was evaluated to assess if the institutional arrangements (policies, systems and processes) that support the programme are appropriate and that roles and responsibilities are clearly outlined. The evaluation included an assessment of goals the CRDP has achieved, and considered how the programme could be improved and expanded through lessons learnt.

Not all CRDP systems performed equally well. The programme was most successful in meeting basic needs, but achieved limited success in empowering communities and creating jobs. The jobs it did create were for very low wages and of short duration. The evaluators recommended that the CRDP improve its organisational processes, build up its rural job creation model, and focus on value for money and sustainability.

The model needs to be cost-effective and suitable for use countrywide. An improvement plan is being carried out, and Cabinet has requested that the programme be effectively combined with other related rural programmes.

INTRODUCTION TO CRDP

The President launched the CRDP in July 2009 as the leading programme of the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform (DRDLR) to show the country's renewed focus on rural development. The CRDP's goal is to deal with the needs of the person, household, community, and land.

THE CRDP HAS FIVE OBJECTIVES

1. Mobilise and provide rural communities with opportunities to improve their skills and living conditions, with the support of government.
2. Encourage rural job creation and promote economic livelihoods so people are able to provide for themselves.
3. Improve access to basic needs such as housing, electricity and water in CRDP sites.
4. Implement sustainable land and agricultural reform.
5. Concentrate on vulnerable groups, including women, youth, people with disabilities, child-headed households, people living with HIV and AIDS, and the elderly.

A complex set of partnerships with many organisations, both within and outside government, is required to manage the needs of rural development. The CRDP's first phase began in 2009 with an experimental (pilot) project in 18 wards in all nine provinces.

The programme aims to provide assistance to 160 wards. By June 2013 it had reached 80 wards.

The CRDP deals with the needs of the person, household, community, and land.

EVALUATING THE PROGRESS

The CRDP was evaluated to assess if the institutional arrangements to support the programme are suitable; if the CRDP is achieving its policy goals; and how the programme could be improved and expanded. The evaluation covered the CRDP's performance from its start in June 2009 until June 2012.

The evaluation examined the original 18 wards selected in the programme's first phase. Evidence was gathered from a wide range of sources and included:

- case studies from the wards (two per province)
- 110 informant interviews to collect information
- 52 focus group workshops involving over 500 CRDP participants and beneficiaries
- interviews with national government staff
- a national institutional survey involving 60 participants in CRDP sites from all provinces and nationally
- a review of publications
- international case studies of similar programmes in middle-income countries.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

JOB CREATION AND ECONOMIC LIVELIHOODS

The evaluators found that jobs have mostly been created through government's public works programmes. These include the Community Work Programme (CWP) and the National Rural Youth Service Corps (NARYSEC), both of which offer short-term work and low wages. CWP paid R535 for eight days' work per month and NARYSEC paid R1 320 per month. The work opportunities have not provided any openings for entry into the job market.

The programme's food garden project was one of the more successful projects, but water shortages affected food production in household and community gardens. Several other livelihood projects were also badly affected. The CRDP has had limited success in supporting sustainable cooperatives through providing money for start-up costs, technical training, guidance, or setting up good market connections.

MOBILISING AND EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES

The CRDP has made limited progress in uplifting communities through opportunities to improve their livelihoods, partly due to low education and skills levels within the community. There are also low levels of buy-in, and the will to carry out the programme at a local government level is weak because it is seen as a national (top-down) project.

In addition, many officials do not participate enough in CRDP structures like councils.

IMPROVED ACCESS TO BASIC NEEDS

The programme was most successful in meeting basic needs and this was done by financing projects in often forgotten wards. In many cases, large investments have significantly changed communities and their living standards. For example, 383 RDP houses were built in Muyexe.

The downside of this is the high costs per ward. An average of R42 million was spent in each of the 18 wards covered in the evaluation. The estimated cost to roll out the current CRDP to all 2 920 rural wards in South Africa over the next 18 years would be at least R61.6 billion. Several projects started successfully, but financing could not be continued because the CRDP did not have a clear infrastructure maintenance strategy in place.

Overall, the programme needs to adapt its model if it is to expand cost-effectively across the country.

SUSTAINABLE LAND AND AGRICULTURAL REFORM

The CRDP has not added much value to land reform. In several of the case studies though, communities identified lack of access to land as directly affecting their food security (access to healthy food) and the ability to make a living for themselves. The CRDP's contribution to establishing smallholder farmers and providing them with additional support has also been limited.

TARGETING VULNERABLE GROUPS

Some success was achieved in reaching women, youth, the elderly, and the unemployed.

INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES

- Structures such as councils of stakeholders at national, provincial and local level were established to support the CRDP's operations. Just over 50% of participants in the national institutional survey felt that the various structures effectively fulfil their roles. This is in contrast to the views expressed in the case studies and interviews which found that stakeholder councils were not functioning effectively in most case study sites.
- Developing partnerships and requesting contributions from other organisations is critical to addressing rural development. The DRDLR has not had enough authority to get all departments and spheres of government to work together, which has slowed down the progress of the CRDP.
- At a provincial level, premiers and members of the executive councils need to do more to support the programme.
- Weak programme monitoring and evaluation did not identify areas that need to be improved and has badly affected progress and delivery.

The major challenges in achieving meaningful and sustainable benefits lie in improving the planning and implementation processes of all three spheres of

government, strengthening the roles of provincial and municipal governments, and creating stronger partnerships with non-governmental organisations and business. This will allow the various programmes to support and complement each other at a local level. For example, there are concerns that the maintenance budget has not kept up with the level of infrastructure development, suggesting there is not enough coordination between the spheres of government.

KEY POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The CRDP is an ambitious attempt to deal with the multi-sectoral nature of rural development.

Although the programme has achieved some socio-economic benefits, the CRDP's funding model is costly and not effective enough, and stakeholder ownership is limited and uneven across the pilot sites.

To be sustainable, community-based programmes must be wholly owned by those who will benefit. Involving different stakeholders in local-level planning is important. Lessons learnt from the CRDP evaluation should be used to improve current programmes focusing on creating rural economy and promoting economic growth.

RECOMMENDATIONS

STRENGTHEN INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Institutional arrangements should be strengthened so that each site combines their planning processes and has effective local institutions, particularly stakeholder councils. Agreements on how programmes should be carried out need to be drawn up between the DRDLR and other national departments, provincial governments, and municipalities (this should form part of all rural development programmes, not only the CRDP). These should include agreements regarding operational and maintenance plans for all funded infrastructure.

GUIDELINES AND GOAL-SETTING

The programme's community mobilisation and empowerment unit should be revised and the outreach to key groups (including the youth, the unemployed, women, the elderly, and people living with HIV and AIDS) should be improved through better guidelines and goal-setting.

IMPROVE JOB CREATION

Jobs should be created for local people by improving access to markets through a food buying programme or marketing contracts. This will improve the CRDP's rural job-creation model and its efforts to improve economic livelihoods.

VALUE FOR MONEY AND SUSTAINABILITY

The programme's value for money and sustainability will be improved by:

- Finalising the development of national norms and standards for the delivery of infrastructure in rural areas (where appropriate) in partnership with national departments and key stakeholders.
- Developing a CRDP procurement strategy using cost-effective technologies that are simple to maintain in rural areas.
- Improving monitoring and evaluation systems.



ACTION TAKEN ON THE EVALUATION FINDINGS

The improvement plan was developed in 2014 and aims to:

- Strengthen institutional arrangements to improve work processes and progress.
- Achieve more of the goals and objectives.
- Increase the size of the programme (upscale) and its value for money.

As at September 2015, the DRDLR had:

- Started a process to integrate planning in the 27 priority districts.
- Started to review service norms and standards for rural areas with other national departments.

- Introduced a local community-driven development model, which will be used at all CRDP sites. This model will serve as a guide on which to base other policies that aim to achieve overall rural development, including the Comprehensive Farmer Support Policy, which the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries is finalising.
- Reviewed the NARYSEC policy.
- Made agreements with research institutions to support work on market access and develop a policy on value chains (best steps to follow) to get the most value from the least possible money. The agri-parks initiative will contribute to this in some instances.
- Started a smallholder farmer policy evaluation, in partnership with the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, that will give information on a united approach to supporting small holders, bringing together the findings from a range of programme evaluations.



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Disclaimer

This policy brief is drawn from the evaluation findings and recommendations and does not necessarily represent the views of the departments concerned.

The detailed evaluation report may be accessed at:

<http://www.dpme.gov.za/keyfocusareas/evaluationsSite/Pages/Publications.aspx>

or:

www.ruraldevelopment.gov.za/publications/evaluation-reports



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