



Western Cape  
Government

Agriculture

**FOR YOU**



# Departmental Evaluation and Research Plan

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## FOREWORD BY THE ACCOUNTING OFFICER

The Western Cape Department of Agriculture (WCDoA) embraces South Africa's 7th administrations' comprehensive and forward-thinking approach of promoting good governance at all spheres of government. In the National Government Medium Term Development Plan (MTDP) for the period 2025/26 to 2029/30, the relevancy of this exercise is expressed under priority 3: A capable, ethical and developmental state- wherein, ethical public service is one of the desired outcomes. Flowing from this outcome, improved governance and accountability has been identified as the outcome indicator to be achieved through integrated monitoring and evaluation systems. At the provincial level, the Western Cape Government Strategic Plan (2025-2030) underscores the need to strengthen good governance by inter alia, adopting evidence, intelligence and foresight for future-proof solutions as one of its guiding principles.

This Departmental Evaluation and Research Plan (DERP) for 2025/26 is our key guiding book towards the achievement of National and Provincial government's policy priorities. Furthermore, it is grounded on the insights gained from the 2025-2030 strategic planning process, wherein the Department reviewed through evaluations, institutional interventions and performances over the last 10 years. The review results played a critical role in setting realistic goals and priorities and in the same spirit, identified areas for improvement or further investigation.

The key strategic areas flagged up for further investigation and for the Theory of Change development include:

- a) The need for a capable state, which is in sync to the National Medium term Development Plan
- b) Agricultural support, Food security systems map and nutrition (global convention);
- c) Agri-tourism; Climate Change; Rural economic development and Biosecurity;
- d) The use of Artificial Intelligence to enhance production in the Agricultural Sector and
- e) The role of Ecological infrastructure in the agricultural space.

Flowing from the above list, a system mapping exercise was done to create a foundation for grounding this DERP. It is equally important to note that by using system mapping and theory of change tools, the department managed to consolidate knowledge and created a shared understanding among officials, of important priority areas to conduct evaluations. Delving deeper, the in-depth mapping exercise has eliminated the need for separate concept documents to be developed for each of the evaluated thematic areas. This approach not only saves time but also ensures that the selected focus areas are well-aligned with your strategic outcomes of improving service offerings to stakeholders in both the medium and long term.

  
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DR M SEBOFETSA  
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DATE

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## GLOSSARY

AGOA	African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA)
AU	African Union
APP	Annual Performance Plan
BPS	Business Planning and Strategy
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme
DEC	Departmental Evaluation Committee
DALRRD	Department of Agriculture Land Reform and Rural Development
DERP	Departmental Evaluation and Research Plan
DPME	Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
DG	Director General
EPWP	The Expanded Public Works Programme
GNU	Government of National Unit
GVA	Gross Value Added
HOD	Head of Department for the Western Cape Department of Agriculture
ICG	Innovation, Culture, and Governance
MAP	Market Access Programme
MTDP	Medium Term Development Plan
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MTSF	Medium Term Strategic Framework
MIP	Management Improvement Plan
NDP	National Development Plan
NEP	National Evaluation Plan
NEPF	National Evaluation Policy Framework
NES	National Evaluation System
NICD	National Institute for Communicable Diseases of South Africa
NO	National Outcomes
NPC	National Planning Commission
PALS	Partners in Agri Land Solution
SCM	Supply Chain Management
SP	Strategic Plan
VIP	Vision Inspired Priorities
WCDoA	Western Cape Department of Agriculture
WCG	Western Cape Government

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Departmental Evaluation and Research Plan (DERP) 2025/26 builds on the insights gained from the 2025-2030 Strategic planning process commenced in August 2024 and concluded in early February 2025. During this planning exercise, the Department embarked on a journey towards evaluating its external and internal environment as part of its continuous learning process. The lessons gained from this process were used to make adjustments to its internal environment in order to confront external opportunities and pressures to the benefit of the Agricultural Sector of the Western Cape. It is important to acknowledge that in any planning exercise there is bound to be gaps, often referred to as grey areas which requires further investigation or refinement. At the January 27, 2025, Management meeting, the Department concluded the following areas as "the so called grey areas" and in need of research or evaluation pending the availability of funding:

- a) Diagnostic and design evaluation of use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in agricultural research and training. The primary focus of this intervention is to analyse and understand opportunities and challenges brought by AI on improving production efficiency of agricultural products and commodities, promoting efficiency in the use of finite resources- (land and water); early detection of diseases in animals, plant nutritional deficiencies in order to minimise loss in markets and guarantee the safety of consumers.
- b) Impact evaluation of the WCDoA Ecological infrastructure project. - The purpose of this evaluation is to provide a cost-benefit analysis of this project, focusing on its outcomes, impacts and overall effectiveness in achieving its stated objectives. Specifically, the evaluation aims to assess the efficiency of resource use, the sustainability of impacts, and the extent to which the interventions have contributed to improved water quality and quantity, disaster risk reduction, job creation, and biodiversity protection.
- c) The Garden route Agriculture Development Plan. This is a diagnostic and design research project with the objective of analysing the current farming systems (interrogate available economic information in an integrated and coordinated manner) so as to identify opportunities that can broaden the agriculture economic base of the study area. These recommendations will be packaged into an implementation framework which sets out guidelines as to how existing economic potential can be maximised to generate positive spin-offs for the regional economy, through integrated regional deployment plans.
- d) The Karoo National park research study. This is an analysis of the economic, social and ecological impact of the introduction of lions and brown hyenas into the Karoo National Park (KNP) and adjacent farming areas.
- e) The Diagnostic, implementation and design evaluation of Climate Change. The purpose of this evaluation is to investigate the implementation and uptake of the Smart Agri Plan by agri stakeholders in the Western Cape.
- f) AGOA exit and export diversification strategy of the Western Cape Agricultural Sector: This is a diagnostic evaluation of the potential impact of RSA - USA AGOA exit in the Western Cape Agriculture and Agri-processing Sector and the development of an export diversification strategy with recommendations for the Department.

The Department derives its mandate from the National Development Plan (NDP) Chapter 13, and the Department of Planning Monitoring and Evaluation guidelines; the Medium-Term Development Plan for the period 2025/26 to 2029/30; The National Evaluation Policy Framework (NEPF) of 2011 and the Western Cape Government's Strategic Plan (PSP 2025–2030). In all these documents, emphasis is placed on evidence-informed decision-making process and on strengthening the use of data to support prioritisation and anticipated impact of interventions strategies

## DEPARTMENTAL EVALUATION PLAN: 2025/26

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Vision

An inclusive, responsive and prosperous agricultural sector in balance with nature

#### 1.2. Mission

Unlocking the potential of the agricultural value chain to grow the economic, ecological and social wellbeing of all the people of the Western Cape through:

- Encouraging sound stakeholder engagements
- Facilitate investment into the agricultural sector
- Promoting the ethical production of (affordable), nutritious, safe and accessible food and agricultural products
- Supporting sustainable management of natural resources;
- Executing cutting edge, innovative and relevant research and technology development
- Developing, retaining and attracting skills and human capital (youth)
- Providing a competent and professional advisory service
- Enhancing market access for the entire agricultural sector
- Promoting production of affordable and safe products
- Promoting human, animal, plant, and environmental health and wellbeing
- Promoting safety and sustainable development in rural areas
- Contributing towards alleviation of poverty and hunger, and
- Ensuring transparent and effective governance.

#### 1.3. Values

Caring:	We care for those we serve and work with.
Competence:	We will ensure that we have the ability and capability to do the job we were employed to do
Accountability:	We take responsibility
Integrity:	We will be honest and do the right thing
Innovation:	We will be open to new ideas and develop creative solutions to problems in a resourceful way
Responsiveness:	We will serve the needs of our citizens and employees.

#### 1.4. Legislative and other Mandates

These vision and mission statements are derived from Constitutional mandates; largely from Section 104 (1) (b) of the South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996), which conveys the power to provinces to pass legislation on any functionality listed in schedules 4A (concurrent) and 5A (exclusive provincial). Concurrent functions include agriculture, animal and disease control, disaster management, environment, regional planning, soil conservation, trade, tourism as well as urban and rural development. Exclusive provincial mandates include provincial planning, abattoirs, and veterinary services.

The interventions emanating from this mission statement are embedded and reflected through developmental lenses of the National and Provincial Government policy directives, namely:

- a) The South African Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (2020) that outlines the structural reforms required to expedite the recovery of South Africa's economy following sustained low levels of investment and growth and worsened by the Covid-19 pandemic;
- b) The National Planning Commission (NPC) 2011 recommendations;
- c) The National Development Plan (NDP) Chapter 13: 'Building a capable and developmental state', with the intention to ensure good corporate governance, professional and ethical organisation through a process of rigorous and ongoing evaluation at National and provincial level;
- d) The Medium Term Development Plan (MTDP) 2024–2029: Provides a strategic approach to guide the work of the Seventh Administration and to put South Africa on a path of inclusive economic growth and development that can achieve the goals set out in the Statement of Intent of the Government of National Unity (GNU) and the National Development Plan (NDP). Emphasis is placed on evidence-based policy and decision-making, accountability, transparency and community participation in government;
- e) The Western Cape Government: The current Strategic Plan (through the Innovation, Culture, and Governance (ICG) Portfolio) underscores the need to strengthen good governance in the Province by, *inter alia*, being innovative and creating an enabling economy. Conducting performance monitoring and evaluation of the services rendered to citizens is one of the key innovation processes contributing towards the achievement of this goal. As they put it, "Smarter choices and more nuanced decision-making mean that the benefit of new policies, strategies, and programmes must be scrutinised against their costs and ability to prepare the WCG for alternative futures. This raises the importance of robust data and evidence, intelligence, scenario planning, and foresight capabilities. This is supported by predictive analytics, strengthened research and intelligence networks across departments, integrated data ecosystems, and integrating foresight practices more deeply into policymaking and planning".  
This approach enables each department to enquire whether it is doing the right things, and whether the processes are effective, efficient and providing value for money.

### **1.5. The Strategic Goals of the Department**

Based on this vision, as well and taking into account the strategic environment in the various spheres of government, the Provincial Minister of Agriculture, Economic Development and Tourism (term 2025 – 2030) identified five priority areas in which he would like to make a difference during his term in office. These areas can be summarised as:

- a) Agricultural Support
- b) Business Support
- c) Food security and nutrition
- d) Market access
- e) Jobs.

The Department has the responsibility to incorporate evaluations into its management functions as a way to continuously improve its performance in these areas.

### **1.6. Department's approach to evaluation (and research)**

The WCDoA views monitoring as inherently a performance management function, whereby managers routinely quantify (verified by external audit) achievements towards targets using pre-set indicators. The process involves continuous collecting, analysing and reporting of data in a way that supports effective management. It provides regular and real-time feedback on progress in implementation, results achieved and early indicators of challenges that need to be corrected.

Evaluations on the other hand are considered as tools of learning to improve the effectiveness and impact of interventions, by reflecting on what is working, what is not working and which

gaps do exist, whilst revising interventions accordingly. Although evaluating is no less rigorous or important, the determination of value (evaluation) is conceived by the WCDoA as being achieved through an intermittent schedule, aimed at addressing particular questions of current and future programmatic significance. This requires specific and generally non-routine processes, often exceeding the skills and responsibilities of programme managers.

It is for this reason that the range of evaluation and implementation processes in service of the Departmental Evaluation Plan (DEP) requires both internal and external resources. Internal requirements involve capacity building, assignment and adoption of new responsibilities, development of a management structure, and commitment of funds.

In addition, external skills and support services are required in service of high quality and independent evaluations. The use of external evaluators and external support is also intended to address the need for impartiality and objectivity. This is done without diluting the responsibilities of Programme managers, who are required to take a leading role in developing terms of reference for evaluations, and in managing evaluation processes, although they are not 'evaluators'.

### **1.7. The National Evaluation System**

The National Evaluation Policy Framework (NEPF) of November 2019, provides minimum standards for evaluations across government. It promotes the implementation of quality evaluations, which can be used for learning to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, and impact of government interventions. It seeks to ensure that credible and objective evidence from evaluations is used in planning, budgeting, organisational improvement, policy review, as well as ongoing programme and project management to improve performance. It provides for the use of various evaluation approaches in addressing complex issues and sets out common language for evaluations in the public service<sup>1</sup>.

A National Evaluation Plan summarises the evaluations to be taken forward as national priorities. Provincial departments are required to develop departmental evaluation plans (DEPs). Some departmental evaluation plans may also be proposed for support under provincial or national evaluation plans.

In all cases, departments are expected to apply the guidelines and minimum standards developed as part of the National Evaluation System (NES). The rest of this section summarises some key elements of the NES.

Following these revised guidelines, evaluations can focus on policies, plans, programmes, projects, or systems. The general term for the subject of an evaluation is 'intervention', which can be any of these. There is considerable emphasis in the guidelines on independence and quality, so that evaluations are credible. This is secured through the use of steering committees, external evaluators, peer reviewers, the role of departmental evaluation staff in ensuring quality and propriety, and independent quality assessment on completion (supported by DPME). Evaluations may be conducted externally through contracted service providers (more credible as distanced from management), or internally through departmental evaluation staff. If done internally it is deemed very important that systems are put in place to ensure evaluations are done as objectively as possible.

Once completed, reports are tabled at management level, and improvement plans are developed and monitored so that there is follow-up and accountability to the need to utilise the findings of evaluations. In principle, evaluations are made public, tabled in the legislature, and published on departmental websites; although in some cases they may be kept

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<sup>1</sup> This information was drawn from the National Evaluation Policy Framework (November, 2019).



confidential. In general, as they use public funds, the reports should be made available to the public.

The main types of evaluation are:

- a) Diagnostic: – to understand the nature of the problems faced by programmes, the root causes and options available which should be conducted prior to designing a new intervention or reviewing challenges facing an existing one;
- b) Evaluation/ research synthesis: - to assess the current situation (what is known about the problem) and emerging trends from a series of studies;
- c) Design evaluation: – to assess whether the design of the intervention is robust and likely to work; with emphasis on assessment of the strength of the theory of change, the log frame, the indicators, and the operational plan;
- d) Implementation: – to understand how the implementation of the intervention is proceeding (often checking whether the programme implementation is supporting its own theory of change and plan), and whether it is likely to reach the intended outcomes;
- e) Impact evaluation: – focusing on whether desired changes have been achieved, and whether outcomes or longer-term impacts can be attributed specifically to the intervention. This is often difficult to do, as it is necessary to separate changes happening due to other factors, and changes that may be attributed to the intervention; i.e. which would not have happened in the absence of the intervention. Both 'Outcome' and 'Impact' evaluations are included under the category of 'Impact Evaluation';
- f) Economic evaluation: – looking at cost-benefits or cost-effectiveness of the action, project or programme. The principle is to understand whether costs equal the benefits and whether value for money is being obtained.

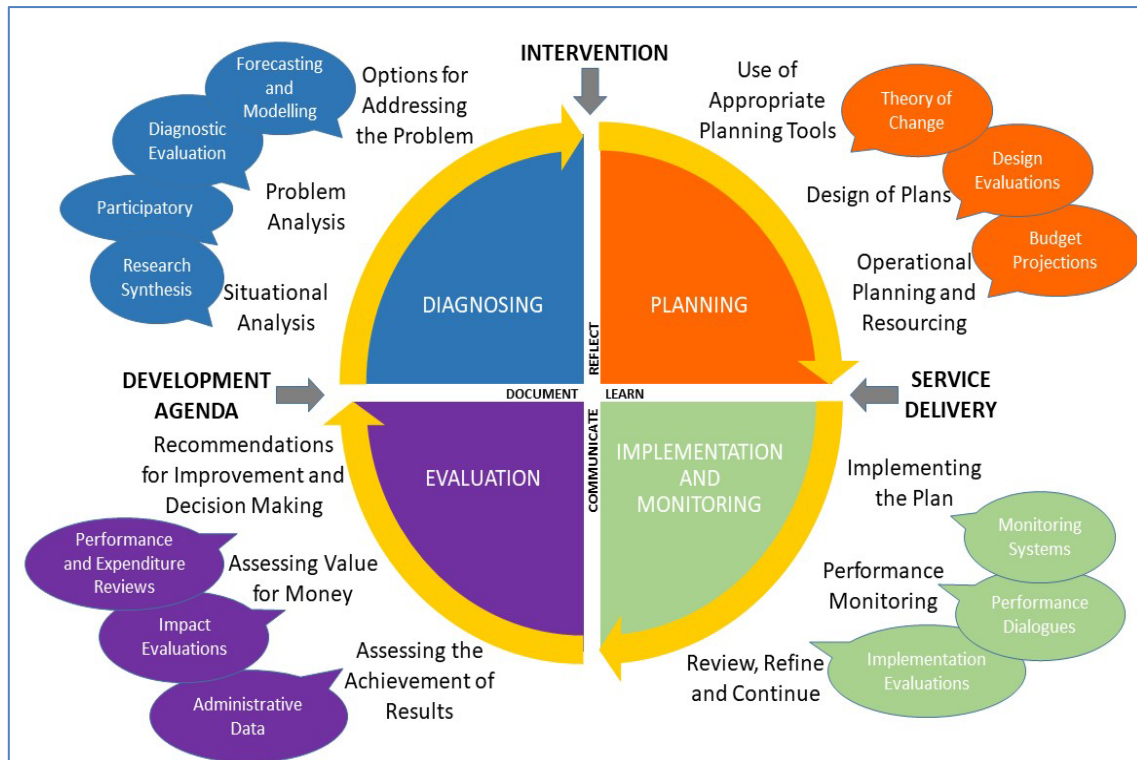
Note that these types can be combined; e.g. a design evaluation element may be incorporated in an impact evaluation to determine what intervention design features should be changed or incorporated in order to optimise cost-benefit ratios or improve cost-effectiveness.

## **1.8 Planning for evaluations**

Evaluations endeavour to provide an objective view using rigorous research methods, and are intended to inform conclusions about performance and suggest recommendations for improvement. To serve these aims, a detailed planning and implementation cycle is required for each evaluation; featuring design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation processes with the ultimate aim of improving the developmental results associated with government policies.

The planning diagram below provides a generic planning and implementation cycle for policies and programmes guided by generated evidence. This diagram was designed by the DPME in the revised NEPF of 2019 and is equally relevant to the WCDoA as it prepares for its 2025/26- 2029/30 Strategic Plan. Using this diagramme as the point of departure, all WCDoA programmes and relevant external industry leaders have been subjected to a rigorous training and capacity building exercise to understand the application of the situational analysis and theory of change tools during the development of the current new strategic plan.

### **Diagram 1: Generic planning and implementation cycle for evaluations**



## 2. PURPOSE OF THE DEPARTMENTAL EVALUATION PLAN (DEP)

The WCDoA Evaluation (and research) Plan (DEP) is designed to provide details of prioritised evaluation(s) approved by the Department for the 2025/26 financial year, and which are linked with the budgeting process. Before discussing the 2025/26 prioritised evaluation(s), it is important to flag the status of the evaluation programme within the Department, to justify the adopted pathway. The WCDoA has over the past decade implemented more than 40 evaluations. The Department has used lessons and recommendations of these evaluations to develop the 2025-2030 Strategic Plan.

Table 1 below presents the Departmental evaluations that influenced the development of the 2025/26- 2029/30 Strategic Plan.

**Table 1: Preparing for the 2025/26 – 2029/30 Strategic Plan: Our evaluation journey**

DATES	Event	Action
2014/15	Completed evaluations	<b>CRDP:</b> Implementation Evaluation of the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme In Dysseldorp, Oudtshoorn; Western Cape
		<b>Land Reform:</b> Performance evaluation of land reform projects supported by the department up to 2014
		<b>Farmer Service Needs:</b> A diagnostic and design evaluation of the service needs of different farmer categories
		<b>Market Access:</b> An Evaluation of Market Access programme
		<b>Learnership:</b> Evaluation of the Impact of the Agricultural Learnership Programme in the Western Cape

DATES	Event	Action
2015/16	Completed evaluations	<b>AIU:-</b> Assessment of the Western Cape Agribusiness Investment Unit (AIU)
		<b>Commodity Approach:-</b> Evaluation of the WCDOA's Commodity Approach
		<b>Crop rotation:-</b> Evaluation of the Impact of the Long-Term Crop Rotation Trails at Langgewens research farm
		<b>Farmworker competition:</b> Evaluation of the Western Cape Farm Worker of the year competition
		<b>Food Security programme:-</b> Impact evaluation of the Food Security programme on household food security in the Western Cape
		<b>Legislative Environment:-</b> Diagnostic Evaluation of the Impact of Legislative Environment on Farmers and the Agricultural Sector
2016/17	Completed evaluations	<b>Commodity Approach:-</b> Implementation and impact of Commodity approach
		<b>CRDP:-</b> Impact Evaluation of the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP)
		<b>Agricultural Economic databases:-</b> Evaluation of the availability, extent, and utilization of Agricultural Economic Databases
		<b>Dairy Research:-</b> Evaluation of the research information needs of dairy producers in the Western Cape
		<b>SAET:-</b> Impact Evaluation of the Structured Agricultural Education and Training Programme (SAET),
		<b>AES:-</b> Diagnostic and design evaluation of the Western Cape Department of Agriculture's Programme 6 – "Agricultural Economics services"
		<b>4IR:</b> The future of the Western Cape agricultural sector in the context of the Fourth Industrial Revolution
2018/19	Completed evaluations	<b>Land Reform:</b> Performance evaluation of land reform projects supported by the department (2014-2019)
		<b>Youth Development Programmes:-</b> Design, implementation and impact evaluation of Youth development programmes
		<b>Project Khulisa:</b> -Evaluation of the implementation design and strategy of Project Khulisa Agri-processing
		<b>Landcare:-</b> Evaluation of the SRUM sub programme LandCare
		<b>WIETA CODE:</b> -Evaluation of the Implementation and Impact of the WIETA Code
2019/20	Completed evaluations	
		<b>Meat Safety Evaluation:</b> Impact of abattoir inspections on meat safety and prospects for increasing regulatory compliance of meat safety in the Western Cape province
		<b>Smart Agri:-</b> Diagnostic, design and implementation of Smart Agri plan
		<b>Future of Farming :-</b> Diagnostic and design evaluation of the future of farming in Arid Areas
		<b>Post Covid-19 strategy :-</b> Diagnostic and design of a post Covid-19 Strategy for WC Agric Sector

DATES	Event	Action
		<b>SRUM</b> :-Design and implementation of Sustainable Resource Use and Management services.
2020/22	Completed evaluations	<b>Agri workers:</b> Impact of service delivery to agri workers
		<b>WCDoA's Response to Covid-19 Pandemic:</b> Diagnostic, design & implementation of the WCDoA's Response to Covid-19 Pandemic
		<b>WC African Agricultural Strategy:</b> Diagnostic and design evaluation of a WC African Agricultural Strategy
		<b>Greater Keurbooms</b> Agricultural Development Plan
2022/2023	Completed evaluations	Economic, impact and design evaluation of <b>Fruitlook</b>
		Impact and design evaluation of the employability of <b>Elsenburg Graduates</b>
		Impact, implementation and design evaluation of food gardens
2023/ 2024	Completed evaluations	Diagnostic and design evaluation of services need of farmers.
		Impact, implementation and design evaluation of support to land reform farmers
		Implementation & Impact Evaluation of Market Access interventions
		Impact and implementation evaluation of Witzenberg PALS
		Impact and implementation evaluation of Rural Safety
March 2025	Evaluate key interventions	Consolidation

According to the National Evaluation Policy Framework (NEPF) guidelines, an evaluation is considered completed when a Management Improvement Plan (MIP) has been developed and signed off by the Accounting Officer. The process of signing off the MIP involves a number of steps. These include tabling the report internally and getting an official management response to the recommendations, indicating which issues fall within the responsibility of the programme manager, which recommendations must be addressed beyond the scope of the manager, and the rationale for this. The last stage requires the programme manager to draw up the plan, to be officially signed off by the Accounting Officer for implementation.

To give effect to the NEPF recommendations, the WCDoA Accounting Officer takes stock of evaluations commissioned during the previous financial year and the current situation. In consultation with the management team, a directive was given to pay special attention to specific strategic challenges confronting the Department and the sector at large. In keeping with this, no new evaluations were commissioned in 2024. The rationale was to consolidate work done and use the lessons to develop the next five year strategic plan.

### 3. LINKAGES TO WIDER EVALUATION PLANS AND SYSTEMS

#### 3.1. Linkage to (national or provincial) evaluation plans

This DEP is linked to the national evaluation plans and priorities, by virtue of it being:

- Strategically aligned to the departmental objectives and priorities of Government as articulated in the: National Economic Recovery Plan (NERP); National Evaluation Policy Framework (NEPF); Strategic Framework for Province-wide Monitoring and Evaluation (2015); and National Evaluation Plan (NEP) together with chapter 6 of the National

Development Plan (NDP) that focusses specifically on the development of the rural economy of South Africa;

- b) Aligned to the Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP) 2024- 2029.
- c) Aligned to current Budget Policy Committee engagements and commitments.

### **3.2. Linkage to planning**

Evaluations are used to inform planning and budgeting. This includes the development of the department's strategic plan and annual performance plan. In this instance the Departmental evaluation plan has been included as an 'annual strategic objective' performance indicator, with the number of evaluations completed included as a province specific indicator in the WCDoA annual performance plan.

In as much as the Provincial Strategic Plan remains the guiding policy document for the growth and development of the Province, South Africa needs a capable state to inter alia: implement an economic strategy towards the recovery of our economy, as the country emerges from the Covid-19 pandemic, bio security challenges and extreme weather conditions (e.g. droughts, floods, etc.). Central to the economic recovery strategy will be measures to stimulate demand and supply through interventions such as the speedy implementation of economic reforms, the transformation of our economy, and embarking on all other steps that will ignite inclusive economic growth. This package requires good governance, foresight and accountability, and appropriate evaluations can be key instruments to attain these objective. Hence the current Strategic Plan through the Innovation, Culture, and Governance portfolio, underscores the need to strengthen good governance in the Province by, inter alia, being innovative and creating an enabling economy. This further reinforces the importance of robust data and evidence, intelligence, scenario planning, and foresight capabilities.

## **4. DEPARTMENTAL EVALUATION SYSTEM**

### **4.1. Resources & structure of the department to support evaluation**

The following components and resources have been instituted to support the Departmental Evaluation Plan:

#### **a) Significant and visible support from National and Provincial Government:**

The first layer of support comes from the DPME. By initiating an audit of government evaluations, DPME accelerated the realisation of value gained through the evaluation of projects and processes at sub-national level.

The second layer of support came in 2022 wherein the DPME convened a Theory of Change Training on the Revision of the Framework for Strategic Plans and Annual Performance Plans facilitated by NSG in Centurion

The third layer of support came during the 9th Biennial DPME SAMEA Conference 2024, wherein the DPME – inter alia: reviewed the RSA 30 years of democracy; engaged on decolonising evaluations and flagged up issues impeding the inclusion of M&E in decision making

### **4.2. Departmental evaluation cycle**

The approved annual cycle for developing the WCDoA evaluation plan is presented in Table 2 and 3 below. It is important to note that in keeping with its cost containment strategy, the Department does not have a stand-alone M&E unit to coordinate evaluations. This function was allocated to the Business Planning and Strategy Directorate (BPS) and it is the same unit that will support the evaluations to be conducted in the 2025/26 financial year. For this reason,



some of the processes, such as workshops to design concept notes, concept notes development are not applicable. Instead, the BPS and DEC will provide individual guidance to Managers leading specific evaluations.

**Table 2: Phase 1: Preparing the Departmental Evaluation Plan**

Action	Responsibility	Timeline <sup>2</sup>
Call for proposals	Business Planning and Strategy Directorate (BPS)	January 2025
Meet with Management to agree	BPS Programme manager	FEB 2025
Departmental evaluation plan drafted	BPS Programme Manager	FEB 2025
DEP submitted to DEC and EXCO for input	BPS Programme manager	March 2025
Evaluation included in budgets	BPS Programme manager	March 2025
DEP finalisation for approval	BPS Programme manager	April 2025
DEP signed off by HOD	HOD	April 2025

**Table 3: Phase 2: Preparing the DEP**

	Action	Responsibility	Timeline
	Terms of Reference completed	Business Planning and Strategy (BP&S); Participating Programmes and Dept. Eval Com* (DEC)	March - April 2025
External SPs	Publication of call for proposals from service providers	Dir: BPS & Participating Programmes incl. SCM	March - April 2025
	Bidders briefing	Dir: BPS & Participating Programmes incl. SCM	March - April 2025
	Bids received	Dir: BPS & Participating Programmes incl. SCM	March - April 2025
	Shortlisting	Dir: BPS & Participating Programmes, DEC incl. SCM	March - April 2025
	Bidders presentation	Dir: BPS & Participating Programmes, DEC incl. SCM	March - April 2025
	Service provider selected	Dir: BPS & Participating Programmes, DEC incl. SCM	March - April 2025
	Service provider appointed	HOD and Legal Services	April – May 2025
	Inception report submitted	Evaluator; DEC, Participating programme and BPS Programme managers	April – May 2025
	Literature review	Evaluator; DEC, Participating programme and BPS Programme managers	July - August 2025
	Draft report	Evaluator	August – September 2025
	Stakeholder validation workshop	Evaluator; DEC, Participating programme and BPS Programme managers	September – October 2025
	Draft Final report	Evaluator	September– October 2025

<sup>2</sup> Due to the thorough procurement process, some of the timelines would be adjusted

	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
	Final report approved	Evaluator; DEC, Participating programme and BPS Programme managers	October 2025 - January 2026
	Programme Improvement Plan	HOD & Dir: BPS, Participating programme & DEC	February – March 2026

\*Dept. Evaluation Committee comprises representatives from the Supply Chain Management and 8 Programme Managers or their secundas

## 5. DEPARTMENTAL EVALUATIONS (AND RESEARCH) UNDERTAKEN IN THE LAST 3 YEARS

Table 4 below presents salient aspects of some of the external evaluations commissioned by the WCDoA during the last 3 years.

**Table 4: Departmental evaluations undertaken in the last 3 years**

Departmental programme	Title	Focus (purpose) of evaluation/ research	Status	Date of completion	Implementation of findings (progress)
Programme 1	The Service Needs of different farmer categories	The primary focus of this intervention is to analyse and understand the nature of challenges and opportunities emerging from the farming landscape since the last evaluation was done in 2014. This information will guide the development of the new strategic plan 2025/26 to 2029/30.	Completed	2024	A process is underway to consider the key policy recommendations presented in the final report.
Programme 1	The Witzenburg PALS: A design, implementation and impact evaluation	The land reform programme cannot be a sole responsibility of government. The private sector has a critical role to play. Evidence on the ground shows that the private sector has models that have proved successful and lessons could be drawn from. One such project is the Witzenburg Partners in Agri Land Solution (PALS). The PALS model is based on sound business principles, solid legal structures,	Completed	2024	The MIP has identified a number of interventions that can improve government land reform programme

Departmental programme	Title	Focus (purpose) of evaluation/ research	Status	Date of completion	Implementation of findings (progress)
		mentorship and training of emerging black farmers to become successful commercial farmers. The PALS evaluation was done to draw up lessons to augment government programmes.			
Programme 2	Fruitlook: An evaluation study	An evaluation of FruitLook as a support mechanism to help irrigation farmers better conserve water. Beyond an assessment of the efficacy of the initiative, the evaluation was also to consider alternative funding mechanisms that would be appropriate for its further continuance.	Completed	2024	A process is underway to consider the key policy recommendations presented in the MIP
Programme 3	WCDOA Food Garden Programme	Evaluating the diagnostic (extent of the problem of food security), design, implementation and impact of the WCDOA Food Garden Programme.	Completed	2023	A process is underway to consider the key policy recommendations presented in the MIP
Programme 5	SmartAgri Plan	The Western Cape Department of Agriculture (WC-DOA) commissioned a diagnostic, design and implementation evaluation of the Western Cape Climate Change Response Framework and Implementation Plan for the Agricultural Sector	Completed	2021	As part of the MIP, the Programme manager embarked on the following: a) Appointed Climate Change and Risk Scientist, to assist with the implementation of the SmartAgri Plan. b) A review and update of the climatic information and related refinements to response strategies

Departmental programme	Title	Focus (purpose) of evaluation/ research	Status	Date of completion	Implementation of findings (progress)
		(SmartAgri). The purpose of the evaluation was to assess the SmartAgri Plan in terms of its relevance and design; the extent to which its stated outcomes have been achieved to date; whether the sector is demonstrating greater resilience as a result of the plan's implementation; and, how the plan and its implementation can be strengthened going forward.			<p>that underpin the SmartAgri Plan – particularly at the downscaled level.</p> <p>c) Conducted an internal review of the projects and activities defined in the SmartAgri Plan to assess relevance and any updating needs.</p> <p>d) Institute, mandate, and resource a formalised SmartAgri Plan management/oversight structure.</p> <p>e) Adopted mechanisms to identify, promote and share farm-level innovation, learning and change towards greater adaptation and mitigation of climate change impacts.</p>
Programme 6	Performance evaluation of the Market Access Programme	The focus of this evaluation is to assess achievements attained since 2013 and to utilise the findings to optimise the design of the programme to enhance its effectiveness in the new strategic plan.	Completed	2024	A process is underway to consider the key policy recommendations presented in the final report.
Programme 7	The employability of B.Agric graduates of the Elsenburg Agricultural Training Institute (EATI)	Evaluation of employability of graduates of Elsenburg Agricultural Training Institute. The evaluation will have aspects of implementation and impact evaluation.	Completed	2023	A process is underway to consider the key policy recommendations presented in the MIP



Departmental programme	Title	Focus (purpose) of evaluation/ research	Status	Date of completion	Implementation of findings (progress)
Programme 8	Rural Safety: Implementation and impact evaluation of Rural Safety Interventions	The key focus of this evaluation is to provide a comprehensive framework for addressing safety and security challenges in rural areas of the Western Cape. It seeks to align efforts across government departments, law enforcement agencies, and communities to create a coordinated and effective approach to rural safety.	Completed	2024	A process is underway to consider the key policy recommendations and strategy presented in the final report.

## 6. SUMMARY OF EVALUATION(S) (AND RESEARCH) TO BE COMPLETED IN 2025

### 6.1. Criteria and process used for selection for the Departmental Evaluation Plan

The Department assesses a number of criteria in selecting interventions (programmes) that need to be evaluated, as listed below:

- a) Interventions are of strategic nature linked to departmental and provincial priorities or the national outcomes;
- b) Interventions are innovative, enhance in-house efficiencies, could bring value for money, and fostering learning is deemed important;
- c) Interventions are from an area where there is a lot of public interest;
- d) Interventions have not been evaluated recently and the project is over 3 years in implementation;
- e) The programme or context is at a critical stage where decisions are to be taken for which an evaluation is needed, and so it is important that it is evaluated at this point in time;
- f) There is a need to develop baseline data or monitoring data that can be used, including background and previous documented performance, and the current programme situation;
- g) There are budget considerations that require evaluation to guide decision-making.

## 6.2 Summary of evaluations to be completed in the Departmental Evaluation Plan in 2025/26

Table 5 summarises evaluations to be commissioned during the 2025/26 financial year covered by this Plan. No new evaluations were proposed for the 2024/25 financial year.

**Table5: Summary of evaluations (and research) to be completed in 2025/26**

	Intervention evaluated	Title and type of evaluation	Methodology	DEP	Commissioned / internal	Years of implementation			Key motivation for this evaluation including scale (e.g. budget, beneficiaries)	Linkages to other evaluations
						2024	2025	2026		
Dr Dirk Troskie: Business Planning and Strategy	Artificial Intelligence in Agriculture	Use of Artificial Intelligence in agricultural research and training  Diagnostic and design evaluation	This research work will be guided by specific Terms of Reference approved by the DEC	yes	yes		Yes	Yes	The primary focus of this intervention is to analyse and understand opportunities and challenges brought by AI on improving production efficiency of agricultural products and commodities, promoting efficiency in the use of finite resources- (land and water); early detection of diseases in animals , plant nutritional deficiencies in order to minimise loss; markets and guarantee the safety of consumers	Yes
Mr Shelton Mandondo: Business Planning and Strategy	Impact of AGOA exit and export diversification- Agric WC	Diagnostic and design evaluation on the impact of AGOA exit and export diversification on strategy	This research work will be guided by specific Terms of Reference approved by the DEC	yes	yes		Yes	Yes	The department (without discarding the other risk factors) is very concerned about the potential impact of increased global political fragmentation on South Africa's agricultural exports. For this reason, an in depth analysis of the potential	yes

	Intervention evaluated	Title and type of evaluation	Methodology	DEP	Commissioned / internal	Years of implementation			Key motivation for this evaluation including scale (e.g. budget, beneficiaries)	Linkages to other evaluations
						2024	2025	2026		
		of the Western Cape Agricultural Sector							impact of RSA - USA AGOA exit in the Western Cape Agriculture and Agri-processing Sector and development of an export diversification strategy with recommendations for the Department is needed .	
Ms Ashia Petersen: Sustainable Resource Use and Management	Ecological Infrastructure projects	Impact evaluation of the Western Cape Department of Agriculture's (WCDoA) Ecological Infrastructure project	The Evaluation will be guided by specific Terms of reference approved by the DEC	yes	yes		yes	Yes	The focus is on the cost-benefit analysis of this project, its outcomes, impacts and overall effectiveness in achieving its stated objectives. These include the efficiency of resource use, the sustainability of impacts, and the extent to which the interventions have contributed to improved water quality and quantity, disaster risk reduction, job creation, and biodiversity protection	yes
Dr Dirk Troskie: Business Planning and Strategy	Garden route Agriculture	The Garden route Agriculture Development Plan	This research work will be guided by specific Terms of Reference	yes	yes		yes	yes	The objective is analysing the current farming systems in the study area. By interrogating available economic information in an	yes

	Intervention evaluated	Title and type of evaluation	Methodology	DEP	Commissioned / internal	Years of implementation			Key motivation for this evaluation including scale (e.g. budget, beneficiaries)	Linkages to other evaluations
						2024	2025	2026		
		Research evaluation	approved by the DEC						integrated and coordinated manner so as to identify opportunities that can broaden the agriculture economic base of the region	
Dr Dirk Troskie: Business Planning and Strategy	The Karoo National park	The Karoo National park research study ( Research study)	This research work will be guided by specific Terms of Reference approved by the DEC	yes	yes		yes	Yes	The Karoo National park research study. Is focused on the economic, social and ecological impact of the introduction of lions and brown hyenas into the Karoo National Park (KNP) and adjacent farming areas.	
Dr Ilse Trautmann: Research and Technology Development Services (RTDS)	Climate Change Strategy	Climate Change Strategy- Design and Implementation plan	This work will be guided by specific Terms of Reference approved by the DEC and Sector stakeholders	yes	no		yes	yes	The slow uptake of the Climate Change implementation strategy by Agricultural stakeholders need to be investigated to determine its fit for purpose, Challenges and required improvements must flagged out to ensure sustainability of the sector.	

## 7. CAPACITY TO UNDERTAKE THE EVALUATIONS AND RESEARCH

WCDa has learned through experience that a successful evaluation process requires getting the fundamental pillars of support right, including the recruitment of external expert evaluators to conduct the study. For this reason, a range of internal processes were put in place to boost capacity. These include assignment of responsibilities to Senior Managers, development of a management structure to report and monitor progress on a monthly basis and the commitment of funds

### 7.1. Institutional arrangements

A Departmental Evaluation Committee (DEC) was established in 2015 comprising all relevant Programme managers in the department to support evaluations commissioned. This Committee is mandated to oversee and ensure synergy between the various Programmes conducting evaluations of the Department's activities, to interrogate the specifications for evaluation studies, and have oversight on evaluation management to ensure optimal value from evaluation processes. The Committee is also mandated to evaluate all formal proposals received through formal tenders advertised in the Government Tender Bulletin, as per procurement prescripts. This Committee is chaired by the Director for Business Planning and strategy. The same directorate houses the Departmental M&E activities.

In addition to the DEC, Steering Committees comprising external stakeholders, relevant to the field of study will be established for this evaluation. These are people with sufficient social networks, knowledge, and experience of the units of analysis; to supervise the process. The Business Planning and Strategy Directorate will chair this evaluation.

### 7.2. Funding of the evaluations and research in the Plan

As indicated in the earlier section, the budget estimates of these evaluations are presented in table 7 below.

**Table 7: Evaluation and Research budget**

Name of intervention	Title of evaluation or Research	Budget (R)	Source of funds		
			Dept.	Dept. DPME/ Province	Other (specify who)
Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in agricultural research and training.	Diagnostic and design evaluation of use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in agricultural research and training.	R1 000 000	Yes	n/a	n/a
WCDa Ecological infrastructure project	Impact evaluation of the WCDa Ecological infrastructure project	R1 000 000	Yes	n/a	n/a
The Garden Route Agriculture	The Garden Route Agriculture Development	R800 000	Yes	n/a	n/a



Name of intervention	Title of evaluation or Research	Budget (R)	Source of funds		
			Dept.	Dept. DPME/ Province	Other (specify who)
Development Plan	Plan				
The Karoo National park research study	The Karoo National park research study	R500 000	Yes	n/a	n/a
Agric Export Market Strategy	Western Cape Agric Export Market Diversification Strategy	R1000 000	yes	n/a	n/a
Climate Change	The Diagnostic, implementation and design evaluation of Climate Change	To be confirmed	To be confirmed	To be confirmed	To be confirmed

### 7.3. Follow-up to the evaluations

All evaluations will be registered as complete when a Management Improvement Plan (MIP) has been developed and signed by the accounting officer. The process of signing off involves several steps such as: getting an official management response to the recommendations before an improvement plan is drawn up, developing a Management Improvement plan, and having it officially signed off by the HOD (the accounting officer) for implementation. Monthly progress reports (in the form of a template) are submitted to Management.

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