



NDA

National
Development
Agency



RIMANI AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE

CLOSE OUT EVALUATION REPORT

NOVEMBER 2013



RIMANI AGRICULTURAL COOPERATIVE CLOSE OUT EVALUATION

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Date of Evaluation : 15 November 2013

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

i. Introduction

Rimani Agricultural Primary was established in 1998 and main activities included the selling and growing of soft fruit and vegetables. Originally there were four women working on the farm and wished to expand, to increase their household's disposable income.

Since then they registered as a cooperative (2007/000618/24). Rimani Agricultural Primary Cooperative is located at Ezekhaya, near Shilubane village within the Greater Tzaneen Local Municipality. Tzaneen consists of 33 wards, with a high rate of unemployment as the industrial activity is unable to absorb all employable people in the area.

The population in Greater Tzaneen Local Municipality is reliant on child support grants, old age pensions and the selling of fruit and vegetables, owing to the closing down of the large number of factories and the two colleges in Tzaneen. HIV/AIDS and the inability to study further after matric exacerbate unemployment.

Rimani applied for funding from the NDA in 2012 and the total sum of six hundred and seventy-three thousand, six hundred rand only (R673 600) was granted. The project commenced on the 1 September 2012 and was terminated on the 31 August 2013 (12 month duration).

ii. Objectives

a. The overall objective of the project :

The overall objective of the cooperative is to improve the socio-economic status of people in Shilubane village through sustainable agricultural initiatives.

b. Project objectives:

1. To contribute to the local economy of the municipality through the creation of 10 jobs.
2. To train six committee members on project and financial management.
3. To address food security problems in the Shilubane village for approximately 250 households.
4. To create approximately 10 job opportunities for youth in the Greater Tzaneen Municipality.

c. Evaluation objective:

- The National Development Agency (NDA) appointed Integrity Environmental Solutions (Pty) Ltd to conduct a close out evaluation on Rimani Agricultural Primary Cooperative. To date, R 547 740.00 (90% of the transferable amount of R608 600) has been released by the NDA towards project execution.
- To provide a comprehensive performance overview of Rimani Agricultural Primary Cooperative.
- Highlight the lessons learned so that the conclusions and recommendations arrived at can assist the NDA with future projects and ensure sustainability.
- Highlight the project alignment with municipality IDP's.
- Highlight the project alignment with relevant government sector departments programmes.

d. Specific objectives of the assignment

The specific objectives of this study in relation to the funding are:

Relevance: Did the project to address the beneficiary's direct needs?

Effectiveness: Were the right interventions undertaken?

Efficiency: How well were the interventions implemented?

Impact: Did the project have a measurable improvement in the lives of the recipients?

Sustainability: Can the project sustain itself after the NDA funding has stopped?

For the purpose of this study a qualitative approach was utilized, primary data was analyzed using means of Participatory Action Research (PAR). Secondary data was also consulted for this, to further enhance credibility. This includes but is not limited to, internal documents in form of reports, memos, minutes of meetings and reviews.

iii. Successes

- Markets have been established in Johannesburg and Pretoria, whereby the vegetables are transported to.

iv. Challenges

- The due diligence contractor has failed in his duty to conduct, as part of the initial detailed feasibility study which identified key project risks and the necessary mitigation upfront. Such as infertile soil and its impact on the projects livelihood.
- The inadequate Due Diligence study led to flawed Project design.
- Competition from other small vegetable producers and established business in the area.
- Inadequate mentoring and institutional capacity in agriculture.

v. Corrective action

The scope of the due diligence studies conducted should have included assessments on soil for farming as well as climate assessment of the area. From this it would have been easier to ascertain the most suitable crops for harvesting.

Location and market access should have been established prior to commencement of projects. In doing so competitors would have been identified and an appropriate marketing strategy employed.

Assessments on the organisational capacity should be conducted in order to decide on the deliverable objectives. This would have highlighted the deficiencies in institutional capacity and suitable interventions of capacity building by means of training would have been implemented.

Furthermore, a detailed feasibility study on agriculture must be conducted, in order to introduce the most efficient, effective and economical interventions.

vi. Project Recommendations

It is recommended that a compliance audit pertaining to the objectives of the project be conducted and reasons for non-compliance be investigated with the intention of improving performance in future contracts.

It is suggested that a comprehensive due diligences be conducted as this will pave the way forward for the project and indicate whether to test the soil.

Alternatives for production of fruit and vegetables should be studied in detail, taking cognizance of the deficiency in Limpopo, being, infertile land and inadequate water supply. An example of this is Hydroponics Gardening whereby water and soil is not a prerequisite for agriculture.

Adequate leadership and mentoring is required by Rimani Agricultural Primary Cooperative to ensure good governance. The support from a capacitated DM cannot be over emphasised.

Lastly, it is recommended that the remaining funding be suspended up until an accurate due diligence study of the project is conducted.

vii. Sustainability

The sustainability of this project will be improved once a full due diligences is conducted as the study will audit the potential of the investment. It will highlight reasonable care that needs to be taken to ensure project stability.

A sustainability strategy should have been formulated and presented to the NDA prior to project inception. The strategy should have included capacity development of key stakeholders as well as financial and economic mechanisms to be implemented to ensure the ongoing flow of benefits once the assistance ends. This will ensure that a culture of dependency is not created and organisations can be self-sufficient once cessation NDA's support.

Moreover, Rimani should investigate prospects of litchis, inherited from the land and should focus their attention on this as it seems to be yielding crop under the current conditions.

It is in the best interest of the cooperative to form strategic partnerships that will aid in the sustainability of the project. Such networks may include, but are not limited to, Local Economic Development, Department of Agriculture, Limpopo Business Agency (LIBSA) and Tzaneen Municipality.

IES is in the opinion that Rimani Agricultural Cooperative have failed in the execution of the initiative, owing to poor management, the lack of organisational capacity in agriculture, inadequate mentoring, poor governance and the failure by the DM to take corrective action when it became apparent that objectives were not being fulfilled as expected. Remedial action is required immediately to mitigate further loss.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

There are a number of community development initiatives that require financial input and support in the Province of Limpopo. The National Development Agency (NDA), a public entity listed under the schedule 3A of the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA), is mandated to provide grants for the purpose of eradicating poverty and its causes.

The NDA has funded the recipient, Rimani Agricultural Primary Cooperative, the total sum of six hundred and seventy-three thousand, six hundred rand only (R673 600) for the purpose of improving the socio-economic status of people in Shilubane village through sustainable agricultural initiatives. Inclusive of fifty thousand rand (R50 000) and fifteen thousand rand (R15 000) reserved for evaluation and marketing respectively. A total transferable amount of six hundred and eight thousand, six hundred rand (R608 600) was due to the project. The project commenced on the 1 September 2012 and was terminated on the 31 August 2013 (12 month duration). On the 1 November, the NDA appointed Integrity Environmental Solutions (Pty) Ltd (IES) to conduct a Close out Evaluation of the Project.

Rimani Agricultural Primary was established in 1998 and main activities included the selling and growing of soft fruit and vegetables. Originally there were four women working on the farm and desired to expand to increase their household's disposable income.

The cooperative was established in 2007 (2007/000618/24) and it is located at Ezekhaya, near Shilubane village within the Greater Tzaneen local Municipality. Tzaneen consists of 33 wards with a high rate of unemployment as the industrial activity is unable to absorb all employable people in the area.

The closing down of the large amount of factories and the two colleges in Tzaneen further aggravated unemployment. Coupled with this is the number of youth that have

completed matric but are unable to study further. HIV and AIDS is no exception in this area and are most common in youth and women.

The above mentioned causes left the population reliant on child support grants, old age pensions and the selling of fruit and vegetables. The targeted group for this project are unemployed people that are destitute.

The project has in 2011 received funding of R 30 000 from the Department of Trade and Industry to acquire a tractor-to be utilized in this project.

1.2. Scope of the evaluation

The scope of this assignment is focused on providing a comprehensive performance overview of the entire project; highlighting the lessons learned so that the conclusions and recommendations arrived at assist the NDA in future projects. This is going to be attained by reviewing the success of funding, firstly in terms of its original undertakings and secondly in terms of sustainability of the project interventions. The project is further going to be looked at in alignment with Municipality's IDP and other relevant government sectors departments and programmes. The target audience for the data gathering and evaluation includes (but is not limited to) NDA Development Managers, NDA Provincial Managers, Project Staff and other relevant stakeholders.

Table 1: Previous Funding

Institution	Amount	Objective	Period
Department of Trade and Industry	R30 000	Acquisition of a tractor	2011

1.3. Project Overall Objective:

The overall objective of the cooperative is to improve the socio-economic status of people in Shilubane village through sustainable agricultural initiatives.

1.4 Specific objectives:

- 1) To contribute to the local economy of the municipality through the creation of 10 jobs
- 2) To train six committee members on project and financial management
- 3) To address food security problems in the Shilubane village for approximately 250 households
- 4) To create approximately 10 job opportunities for youth in the Greater Tzaneen Municipality

2 EVALUATION AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the investigation was to assess overall success of the program efficacy in terms of the project life cycle under three broad categories which are:

Program Design (What was planned)

Program Implementation (What was executed)

Resource Management (Efficiency of use)

These overarching criteria were undertaken in the context of:

Relevance: Did the project to address the beneficiary's direct needs?

Effectiveness: Were the right interventions undertaken?

Efficiency: How well were the interventions implemented?

Impact: Did the project have a measurable improvement in the lives of the recipients?

Sustainability: Can the project sustain itself after the NDA funding has stopped?

3 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

In order for the researcher to acquire information on the views of the Rimani Agricultural Primary Cooperative in the Greater Tzaneen Municipality direct contact is needed. Therefore, a qualitative research study was conducted. In this way, the researcher was able to establish two principles for the failure of the project; 1- the project design and 2- project execution. The result of this was in-depth responses that satisfied the objectives of the study. For the purpose of this study, primary data was gathered and analyzed using means of Participatory Action Research (PAR), which is a form of qualitative research. (Morse, 1997)

The researcher was more flexible and better able to manipulate the sample size to fulfil the objectives of the study. Coupled with this, qualitative research allows a relationship to be built whereby the researcher engages more meaningfully with the respondent and

knows them personally. The respondents are in their everyday surroundings therefore their daily struggles were ascertained with real life experiences. In doing so, the activities of the project was interpreted and described in detail by the researcher. Qualitative research is beneficial as the respondent's behaviour and perspectives are kept intact, whereby a context for understanding is established by means of rich detailed data. (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003)

3.1 Research Design

A non-random/probability strategy was employed as participants targeted were from a specific area. In targeting these groups, the researcher was aware that the wider population was not represented and no attempt was made in generalizing findings. (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000). The quota sampling method was utilised, as the sample had relevant visible characteristics based on the purpose of the study. In this way, the researcher was able to determine when enough information was acquired. This method is most suitable as the researcher had easy access to the research environment and was able to utilise subjects within it. The quota sampling method is convenient, considerably less expensive and entails the inclusion of all contexts.

3.2 Sample

The sample of the study included the Head of Executive Committee and employees of the project. Respondents of the study were selected in such a way to improve and strengthen validity and attain a balanced standpoint on the issue.

The Development Manager was initially part of the sample however was unable to participate in the study.

3.3 Sampling strategy

In light of the study, Judgmental sampling was used which falls under the premise of non-probability sampling. Since the key respondents are Committee members and employees, the researcher used their discretion in this regard. This form of sampling is necessary when one wish to place bias when selecting and screening participates. (Cooper and Schindler, 2006)

Taking cognizance of the shortcomings of non-probability sampling as far as possible true cross sections was not represented in the study. Non-probability sampling was still best suited for the furtherance of the study.

Non-probability sampling is appropriate when “looking only for the range of conditions or for examples of dramatic variations.” (Cooper and Schindler 2006: 455). By targeting the two groups, a range of condition was satisfied which was sought after by the researcher. Hence, for this particular study non-probability sampling was used.

3.4 Data Collection Methods

Personal interviews allow the researcher to “probe more deeply” on questions posed, in saying that the researcher conducted one interview, with the chairperson of the project. The primary reason for this interview was to solicit suggestions for better project implementation, highlight challenges, analysis compliance and investigate sustainability.

The interviewer was unable to ascertain the precise benefit of the project as beneficiaries were out of reach; produce was sold to Johannesburg and Pretoria markets. The predetermined beneficiaries did not gain in any way from this project and interviewing them would be a futile task.

Secondary data was also consulted for this study, as this further enhances the credibility of the evaluation. This includes- but is not limited to-internal documents in form of reports, memos, minutes of meetings and reviews on Rimani Agricultural Cooperation.

Attempts were made to utilise all documentation mandated in the project contract; however this was not made available to the IES consultant upon request.

4 RESULTS

Previous section outlined the methodology that IES followed to answer the key questions of the study. This section summarises the results of planning and reporting.

4.1 Review of Project planning

The proposed project was a good initiative as it aligns itself with the IDP of Government. The Development of the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) in municipalities is manifested in different legislations that govern local government. The legislative framework of the IDP is vastly discussed and includes the Municipal Systems Act of 2001 and the Municipal Structures Act of 1997. Another piece of legislation which has a tremendous impact on the IDP is the Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003 (MFMA) as it outlines the alignment of the budget and IDP.

Integrated development planning is one of the key tools for local government to cope with its new developmental role. In contrast to the role planning has played in the past, integrated development planning is now seen as a function of municipal management, as part of an integrated system of planning and delivery.

The Greater Tzaneen Local Municipality is situated in the eastern quadrant of the Limpopo province within the Mopani District Municipality and covers an area space of 3 243km². It is bordered by Polokwane to the west, Greater Letaba to the north, Ba-Phalaborwa and Maruleng to the east, and Lepelle-Nkumpi to the south. It contains 125 rural villages, with almost 80% of households residing in these villages. It is characterized by extensive and intensive farming activities and considerable untapped tourism potential. The main economic sectors of this district are agriculture, retail and tourism.

Demographic Information:

Population: 390 095

Households: 108 926

Population Growth: 0.38% p.a.

Unemployment Rate: 36.70%

Projects such as Rimani Agricultural Cooperation satisfy the needs of agricultural activity in the area by taking advantage of the fruits of the land. Furthermore, unemployment is reduced and economic activity encouraged.

4.2 Review of Project Documents

The documents gathered from respondents are detailed in Table 3 below. This source of data, while factual, lacked context and justifies the use of other data gathering techniques.

4.2.1 Interim Implementation Reports

In accordance with the contract, the Project Manager is obliged to issue the following reports on the following dates:

Table 2: Project Interim Reports

Type of Report	Date	Achieved	Comment
Interim Project Implementation report and Financial reports	31 Jan 2013	No	A spreadsheet reflecting cheques drawn in January 2013 not compliant to the reporting structure required by NDA.
Interim Project Implementation report and Financial reports	31 May 2013	No	A spreadsheet reflecting cheques drawn in May 2013 not compliant to the reporting structure required by NDA.
Final Project Implementation report and Financial reports	30 Sept 2013	No	No explanation was received for this non- compliance.

It is imperative that these reports are drawn up with the assistance of the DM as it must be remembered that these projects are rural based and may lack the capacity of adequate report writing skills. If these reports are not conducted in an acceptable practice they are futile. Moreover, training should be provided on apt reporting skills.

4.2.2 Mid Term Evaluation Results

The Mid Term evaluation was conducted on the 15 March 2013 by one NDA's approved contractors.

The mid-term evaluation gave recommendations to assist NDA by encouraging them to engage other stakeholders to provide technical support and mentoring of the Project, ensuring sustainability.

If this recommendation was sought after the propensity of the project failing would have diminished as mitigation strategies would have been employed effective immediately. In addition, if recommendations are not considered government resources are used inefficiently.

4.2.3 DM Progress Report

The Development Manager prepared and supplied the IES team two reports prepared after her project evaluation on the 11 December 2012 and 10 January 2013.

The IES team is concerned about the proximity between the DM reports as little progress can be ascertained during a one month period.

4.2.4 Due Diligence

The inadequate due diligence conducted led to a flawed project design. The scope of the due diligence studies conducted should have included assessments on soil for farming as well as climate assessment of the area. From this it would have been easier to ascertain the most suitable crops for harvesting.

4.2.5 Financial Management

Audit cost has been allocated of R15 000 and there is no evidence that an audit was conducted. A service provider must be appointed by the NDA to conduct an audit on the NDA financial records allocated to Rimani.

Table 3: Supplied documents and records

Document Description	Source of Documents and Records			
	NDA Head Office	NDA Limpopo Office	Rimani	Other
Terms of Reference	X			
Due Diligence Report	X			
Grant Application	X			
Financing Agreement	X			
Project Implementation Report			Not available	
Development Manager Progress Report		X		
Project Files	X	X	X	
Training Records			X	

Outstanding Documents:

- 3 Interim Project and Financial Implementation reports
- Audit report
- Proof of any linkages with Department of Agriculture, Limpopo Business Agency (LIBSA) and Tiger Brand

4.2.6 Access to Documents

Most Project documents were not immediately available on request due to them not been loaded on the NDA Share Drive as soon as they were generated by the responsible stakeholders. This includes among others, training records, interim implementation reports, contract amendment requests and approvals.

4.3 Site observation

The purpose of the visit was to conduct verification at representative sampling level. The IES consultant visited the site on 15 November 2013 and met with Mr Nelson Shiluvane, the Chairperson.

It is noted that the appointed part-time administrator (Valoyi Traditional Authority) was unable to supply the required Interim Financial and Implementation Reports. However the following was deduced from the site visit:

The following activities were witnessed on the day:

Figure 1 : Uprooting old mango trees to have more space for farming



Comments:

The Rimani Management team decided to uproot the old mango trees in order to create more space for farming activities.

According to the Project manager, Mr Shiluvane, Tiger Brands showed interest in using part of the land for their production. No evidence was however presented to the IES consultant.

Figure 2 : Tomato crops



Comments:

The current tomato plantation occupied a small portion of the Rimani farm land and the rest was unutilised.

Figure 3 : Litchi Trees



Comments:

The litchi trees were planted prior to the NDA production and they remained on the farm and are still yielding fruit.

There is no evidence of these fruits being sold.

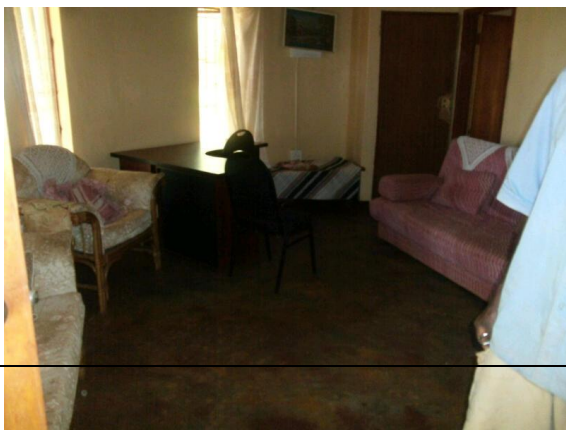


Figure 4 : Rimani Farm Office with old furniture

Comments:

The IES consultant was advised that the computers and project documents were at the Valoyi Traditional Authority Trust offices in Mwamitwa.

They were kept there for security and were also used in the administration of the affairs of the Rimani Project.

Figure 5 : Incomplete Irrigation system Installation



Figure 6 : Exposed Irrigation pipes



Figure 7 : Borehole



Comments:

The irrigation system was installed on a small portion of the farm.

The workmanship on the installation was poor and this is revealed by the exposed irrigation pipes. Some of the exposed pipes were later damaged and leaks were witnessed.

Figure 8 : Idling farming equipment



Comments:

The farming equipment were found idling and it was evident that they have been idling for more than a months.

The activities on the farm were limited to the two employees who were busy with the tomato crops on the farm.

Figure 9 : Poor housekeeping



Comments:

There was poor storage and housekeeping on the farm.

5. SWOT ANALYSIS (WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS)

Table 4: SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Land donated ➤ Litchis crop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Failure to achieve objectives ➤ Control of Records ➤ Poor Corporative Governance ➤ Poor contract compliance ➤ Reporting requirements not adhered to ➤ Lack of financial transparency (no financial statements issued) ➤ Poor enforcement of the contract terms and conditions ➤ Project's lack organisational capacity ➤ Lack of support from the DM and administrator (Valoyi Trust)
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Linkages with Department of Agriculture and other government departments ➤ Sale of Litchis crop ➤ Access to markets, e.g. linkages with corporate retailers like Tiger Brands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Infertile soil ➤ Shortage of water ➤ Access to markets

6 DISCUSSION

Evaluation criteria help focus evaluation objectives by defining the standards against which the initiative will be assessed. The evaluation has to take cognizance of the objectives of the project and determine whether or not it has been fulfilled. These

objectives being to improve the socio-economic status of people in Shilubane village through sustainable agricultural initiatives and more specifically, contribute to the local economy of the municipality through the creation of 10 jobs; train six committee members on project and financial management; address food security problems in the Shilubane village for approximately 250 households and create approximately 10 job opportunities for youth in the Greater Tzaneen Municipality.

6.1 Relevance

Relevance concerns the extent to which a development initiative and its intended outputs or outcomes are consistent with national and local policies and priorities and the needs of intended beneficiaries. Food security and employment remain key issues for the Greater Tzaneen Municipality due to the shortage of water and 98% being rural. The design of the project was appropriate and effective as it spoke directly to the needs of the community. The project sought to provide 10 job opportunities and an additional 10 for the youth as unemployment is high for people within the age bracket of 18-35.250 households were expected to benefit from the produce within the Greater Tzaneen local Municipality.

This project was considered relevant as the initiative was responsive to the NDA's development priorities of eradicating poverty and its causes. The congruency between the perception of what is needed as envisioned by the initiative planners and the reality of what is needed from the perspective of intended beneficiaries, further made the project relevant. It however lacked the concept of responsiveness—that is, the extent to which Rimani Agricultural cooperative was able to respond to changing and emerging development priorities and needs in a responsive manner.

An essential sub-category of relevance is the criteria of appropriateness, which concerns the cultural acceptance as well as feasibility of the activities or method of delivery of a development initiative. This project was relevant in that it addresses a need that intended beneficiaries perceive to be important, but inappropriate because the

method of delivery is incongruent with the culture and not feasible given geographic realities.

The planning and implementation of the project did not take into account the infertile soil and shortage of water in the area. The design fell short during the implementation stage of the project life cycle. The project lacked institutional capacity and the expertise of agriculture and lead to the detriment of the project implementation. In saying this, the community's needs were not met as expected and therefore this project had little value.

To ensure that projects are relevant and appropriate, geotechnical studies should be conducted detailing soil for farming. Although this project had adequate water, other surrounding areas face deficiencies. In saying that water conservation technologies and practices, like hydroponics must be investigated. Climate assessments that analysis rainfall extent, reliability of growing season rainfall, temperature, humidity and solar exposure, likelihood and effect of undesirable weather events (drought, floods, heat waves, frost) must be carried out. A detailed assessment of the organisational capacity should be conducted in order to determine deliverable objectives.

Project implementation can be severely affected if above mentioned assessments are ignored, as is the case in Rimani.

Summary of findings:

- The objectives are null and void since the land is unproductive.
- The selling of the produce is marketed to Johannesburg and Pretoria. The overall goal was to increase food security for local people.

The intended impact was to increase food security and create employment and this became unattainable once the infertility of the soil was realized.

6.2 Effectiveness

Effectiveness is a measure of the extent to which the initiative’s intended results (outputs or outcomes) have been achieved or the extent to which progress toward outputs or outcomes has been achieved. The output in this project, fruit, vegetables and employment, would have indefinitely lead to the outcomes of food security and better quality of life (government objective) respectively.

Evaluating effectiveness in project evaluations involves an assessment of cause and effect—that is, attributing observed changes to project activities and outputs. The infertile land that was identified prevented the expansion of the initiative. Thus the failure of objectives 1, 3 and 4.

Assessing effectiveness involves three basic steps:

1. Measuring change in the observed output or outcome.
2. Attributing observed changes or progress toward changes to the initiative (project evaluation) and determining Rimani’s contributions toward observed changes
3. Judging the value of the change (positive or negative)

Table 5: Summary of the achievement of the overall pre-specified objectives

	Pre-specified objectives	Achieved	Comment
1	The overall objective of the cooperative is to improve the socio-economic status of people in Shilubane village through sustainable agricultural initiatives	No	All produce is sold to Johannesburg and Pretoria therefore the people of Shilubane are not benefiting as intended
2	To contribute to the local economy of the municipality through the creation of 10 jobs	No	Infertile soil for expansion of farming activities
3	To train six committee members on project and financial management	Limited Extent	Only 2 members trained
4	To address food security problems in the Shilubane village for approximately 250 households	Limited Extent	No evidence indicating that any amount of households are receiving vegetables from Rimani
5	To create approximately 10 job opportunities for youth in the Greater Tzaneen Municipality	No	A list of 10 employees names were given to the consultant however only 5 were seen on site

Production was slow owing to infertile land. This change can be seen as negative merely because the lives community members were not improved by this project in any way as the produce was sold to the Johannesburg and Pretoria market. Resources allocated were also not used to the maximum potential.

Summary of findings:

- 1, 3 and 5, were not achieved to any degree. Objective 2 was partially achieved as 2 of the expected 6 received two months training.
- The infertile soil produced a poor harvest, catering only for Johannesburg and Pretoria.

6.3 Efficiency

In assessing efficiency, a project evaluation must explore the extent to which resources are being used to produce the intended outputs and how resources could be used more efficiently to achieve the intended results.

The inputs, such as funds, expertise and time were not converted into results and therefore not economically utilized. This is reason for concern as the 3 E's (efficiency, effectiveness and economically) of government must always be chartered when using public funds as mandated in the PFMA.

Resources could have been used more efficiently by first conducting a soil test prior to commencement of project. This would have prevented the 3G's (fruitless, wasteful and

unauthorized) expenditure of government also made provision for in the PFMA. Equipment is left idle and the same funds could have been used to investigate other means of farming. (Refer to section 11)

6.3.1 Management Structure

The IES Consultant met Mr Nelson Shiluvan the Chairperson of Rimani Agricultural Cooperative on 15 November 2013 at Sedan farm, Portion 20, in Shiluvane. The IES Team is in the opinion that this project is inadequately run as it lacks mentoring and institutional capacity. Furthermore, none of the mentioned board or committee members have expertise in agriculture therefore they are not suited for the governing of such projects.

Rimani Agricultural Cooperative lacks the leadership of an adequate DM. The IES Consultant encountered problems in this regard as the DM was not available for the interview in November as well as in February. The consult contacted the DM via telephone and email to no avail. The matter was later reported to Professor Chuenyane, Head of NDA in Limpopo.

6.3.2 Human Resource Management (HRM)

A service orientated culture is lacking in this organization and this stems from poor HRM. Administration is done off site by a part time administrator and this leads consequences.

The IES consultant contacted the administrator via telephone requesting information. The administrator is always busy, never responds to requests promptly as well as incomplete and incorrect records were supplied.

Summary of findings:

- Activities were not cost, as the equipment lay idle
- objectives were not achieved in predetermined timeframes
- The project implemented was not in the most efficient way compared to alternatives, as soil testing should have been conducted prior to project inception
- Other methods of farming could have been investigated.

The IES team believe that resources were used for its intended purpose where possible. However staffs were not capacitated to fulfil the project objectives. The chairperson did indicate that training was provided for by the NDA, however there is no training records to verify this claim. Furthermore, there are no visible mechanisms provided by the NDA to manage finance and human resource management.

6.4 Impact

Impact measures changes in human development and people's well-being that are brought about by development initiatives, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. Evaluating impact generates useful information for decision making and supports accountability for delivering results. However, confirming whether benefits to beneficiaries can be directly attributed to the project can be difficult.

Impact provides a sign for the extent that you have achieved the objectives you were hoping for and the difference it has made. The IES team conclude that the desired results were not attained during the project life cycle; this was a result of infertile soil. Production was expected to increase hence the opportunity to create employment. So no negative or positive impact has occurred as a result of this project for local people.

However an unexpected positive impact occurred for the cooperative members as they gained market access in JHB and PTA, this will indefinitely generate income. The primary objective however was to improve food security for local people.

Summary of findings:

- Economic activity as occurred since produce is sold to the Johannesburg and Pretoria market
- The intended beneficiaries did not gain in any way since produce was not sold locally
- The cooperative has benefited from profit.

- It is Difficult to determine how many people benefited. However, not the anticipated number or intended beneficiaries.

6.5 Sustainability

Sustainability measures the extent to which benefits of initiatives continue after external development assistance has come to an end. Assessing sustainability involves evaluating the extent to which relevant social, economic, political, institutional and other conditions are present and, based on that assessment, making projections about the projects capacity to maintain, manage and ensure the development results in the future.

The IES team is concerned as Rimani Agricultural cooperative will not be able to sustain itself after the cessation of NDA funding as there is currently little to no production. No suitable organizational (public or private sector) arrangements have been made to ensure project longevity. Furthermore, no policy and regulatory frameworks are in place that will support continuation of benefits. The Chairperson has indicated a linkage with the Department of Agriculture for soil testing however this is not sufficient.

The cooperative should immediately ascertain proximity to markets as this will increase the likelihood of the imitative been sustainable.

Summary of findings:

- The projects benefits did not continue and the cooperative is waiting upon the last tranche for survival (As advised by the chairperson)
- Non-achievement was a result of infertile soil, as agriculture is the core to this project

In general, applying the following most commonly applied criteria—relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact—ensure that the IES team’s evaluation covers the most critical areas of the project and improves accountability.

7 CHALLENGES

Rimani was not able to meet all the objectives as agreed in the contract. This is attributed mainly to the inadequate design by the NDA.

The lack of documents on request from both the NDA and Rimani management was common.

The failure to act on the recommendations noted in the Due Diligence makes evaluation and monitoring futile and a waste of government resources.

The intended beneficiaries did not benefit from the execution of the Rimani/NDA Project. Food security and unemployment were not the outcome as anticipated owing to infertile soil.

8 FULFILMENT OF OBJECTIVES

8.1 To contribute to the local economy of the municipality through the creation of 10 jobs

Activities to attain this objective can be seen in the uprooting of the Mango trees to provide more space for agricultural initiatives (as depicted in picture 1), which would

have in turn required the staffing of additional employees. However, the unfertile soil has brought expansion of production to a halt.

The IES consultant was informed on the following during an interview

- The land was donated by the tribal authority
- Soil is infertile and is therefore not able to meet NDA objectives
- Rimani has partnered with Department of Agriculture to conduct soil tests
- Farming was done at the beginning but had to be discontinued due to low production – poor soil condition

Rimani Agricultural cooperation has failed to deliver on the objective to create 10 jobs.

8.2 To train six committee members on project and financial management

The IES Consultant was informed that 2 staff members were away on a two months training programme organised by NDA. However, there is no evidence that prove this.

The IES Consultant has requested NDA training records in November 2012. To date no communication regarding this document has been made.

8.3 To address food security problems in Shiluvane village for approximately 250 households

No local business has been established due to competition from the local retailers, e.g. Fruit and Vegetable outlet, Spar, Boxer and Pick and Pay. Markets have been established in Johannesburg and Pretoria but logistics costs prove too high for Rimani, as the fresh produce is transported to the agent who then transport to Pretoria and Johannesburg.

Attempts have been made by LIBSA to link the project to Tiger Brand. TB wants to utilise 16ha for their production and also train the co-operative in best production processes. (No evidences to substantiate this.)

Figure 10 : Tomato farming in progress (little farming activity was observed on the farm)



8.4 To create approximately 10 jobs for youth in the Greater Tzaneen Municipality

The same reasons cite in section 9.1 of this assignment was given for the failure of objective 4, to create 10 opportunities for youth.

9 UNEXPECTED RESULTS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS

Rimani inherited litchis with the donation of the land and the potential to grow and sell the crop should be examined as it seems to be growing under the current condition that other crops are not surviving in.

10 RECOMMENDATIONS

The contract document signed by the NDA and the Recipient is critical as it includes the promises by both parties to deliver on set objectives at agreed time frames. Reasons for any non-compliance to the terms and conditions need to be investigated with the intention of improving performance in future contracts.

It is recommended that reporting times are adhered to as this sets appropriate intervals of review for both parties. The DM conducted two reports in proximity of a month; the remaining months were left un-monitored and evaluated. This may have contributed to the failure of the project as the DM was unaware of the poor performance of the project to fulfil objectives. Therefore, the project objectives could not have been amended.

The DM being a government official should uphold Batho Pele Principles as it is White Paper Transformation Framework which is an initiative to get public servants to be service orientated, to strive for excellence in service delivery and to commit to continuous service delivery improvement. It is a simple, transparent mechanism, which allows customers to hold public servants accountable for the type of services they deliver. The lack of documentation infringes on the principles of Information, Openness and Transparency. The IES team encountered problems with the DM. DM's should be encouraged to cooperate with consultants to ensure evaluations are fruitful.

Soil testing should have been conducted prior to administration of funds. This would have been highlighted if experts in agriculture were utilized from inception of project. An

accurate due diligences needs to be conducted immediately and this will lead to the project being restructured.

Rimani should investigate prospects of litchis inherited from the land that did not follow under this project objective. The litchis trees are yielding crop under unfavorable conditions.

An alternative for production of fruit and vegetables should be studied, that does not require soil and water, since there is a deficiency in Limpopo. An example is Hydroponics Gardening whereby produce is grown in a greenhouse arena.

It is in the best interest of the cooperative to form strategic partnerships that will aid in the sustainability of the project. Such networks may include, but are not limited to, Local Economic Development and Tzaneen Municipality.

A sustainability strategy should be formulated prior to project inception, including capacity development of key stakeholders and be presented to the NDA. This should also include financial and economic mechanisms to be implemented, to ensure the ongoing flow of benefits once the assistance ends.

Lastly, it is recommended that the remaining funding be suspended up until an accurate due diligence study of the project is conducted as well as the change of management structure internally and externally as currently the project lacks capacity.

11 LESSONS LEARNT

The objectives of PPPs are public sector leveraging private finance to strengthen the public sector, sharing of scarce resources between the sectors to maximise benefits for the broader population, improvement in the quality of services rendered and promoting equitable allocation of resources. Public private partnerships require outputs and service level standards to be specified clearly and transparently thus making efficient, effective and economical. Together with identification of costs and risks, efficiencies can also arise from the integration of the design, building, financing and operation of assets. The private sector tends to bring higher levels of innovation to planning and project delivery and has more engagement with technology. The introduction of management skill into public service deliver through the PPP process is considered beneficial in service quality and effectiveness. Lastly, the contractual assurances of specified service standards and affordability of PPP agreements bring about a stricter and more effective management of risk. (Trevor Manuel)

There are key features of PPPs that make them inherently excellent for achieving BEE objectives; this is attained by providing significant subcontracting opportunities for black enterprises, where early cash-flow benefits can be derived as delivery commences. The long-term nature of PPPs provides an opportune instrument to grow black equity and black management over time. Risk is identified in PPPs, costed and appropriately allocated, so black participants know in advance, what they are committing to. The formation of private consortia in the form of special purpose vehicles (SPVs) for many PPPs facilitates long-term beneficial partnerships between new enterprises ,experienced and resourced companies as equity partners. Where government is the buyer of a service and the service is provided to the agreed standards, there is a steady revenue stream to the private party, reducing the risk. Through the subcontracting and procurement mechanisms PPP's involve a full spectrum of large, medium and small enterprises and bring local economic development benefits to targeted groups of people through developing skills and creating jobs.

In saying this, the NDA should establish Public Private Partnerships were they partner with organisations like TechnoServe. TechnoServe is an international non-profit organisation that empowers entrepreneurs and has experience in linking small businesses and farmers to commercial markets. This will assist in breaking the cycle of poverty by building sustainable projects which will assist in a eradicating poverty in their communities.

Clear objectives, targets and success indicators for the project should be negotiated, set and communicated to all stakeholders at the signing of the contract. This will ensure that periodic evaluations can be done with ease to measure the success of the project. Regular monitoring and periodic evaluation of the project should be undertaken to ensure that the objectives and benefits of the partnership accrue as per the contract agreement. An effective and supportive institutional framework is necessary to support the implementation phase of the PPP. Effective capacity and skills need to be developed in the public sector to successfully negotiate and manage PPP contracts. Both the public and private sector partners should be prepared to take calculated risks when entering into PPPs. PPPs should be viewed as long-term initiatives as the real value of the partnership is delivered over time.

Two approaches:

There are two broad approaches to the emergence of PPP regimes. On the one hand, there are regimes directed by an ideology that opposes the Public Sector with the Private Sector, where outsourcing is pursued with the aim of increased efficiency. These regimes seek to impose institutional structures that mimic international best-practice, with the hope of attaining similar success.

On the other hand, there are cases where the underlying ideology builds on a greater trust between Private and Public actors in the form of collaborative delivery. For this reason, these regimes place less emphasis on institutional rules and structures and rather pursue a customized and holistic approach, which includes the development of capacity in both the public and private spheres.

It is in the team's opinion that the latter approach leads to more successful and enduring PPP regimes.

Furthermore there is a need to have a section which specializes with all Agricultural projects in the province. This will ensure that:

- Due Diligence studies would be easier and cheaper
- Objectives would be standardized
- This will enable the DM to acquire specialized knowledge in the Agricultural business, legislation, markets
- Support offered by the NDA DM will be improved
- Lessons learned can be communicated must faster between projects

A collaborative approach should be under taken whereby more than one DM in this division should be able to intervene and assist all stakeholders on any project in this portfolio if the head DM is unavailable.

Lastly, it was noted that the importance of reports are undervalued by both parties. The NDA should establish a separate Monitoring and Evaluation department who are mandated to ensure reporting is conducted in the predetermined times as well as been uploaded on the NDA's database.

12 CONCLUSION

The IES team deduced that Rimani Agricultural Cooperative did not attain their overall objective to improve the socio-economic status of people in Shilubane village through

sustainable agricultural initiatives. Furthermore, the specific objectives to, contribute to the local economy of the municipality through the creation of 10 jobs; train six committee members on project and financial management; address food security problems in the Shilubane village for approximately 250 households and create approximately 10 job opportunities for youth in the Greater Tzaneen Municipality, were also not fulfilled.

It is in the team's opinion that the project was unsuccessful in its implementation.

13 REFERENCES

Rimani Cashbook

DM Monitoring Report, December 2011 and January 2013

Due Diligence Report

Mid Term Evaluation Report, 2013

NDA SLA Agreement:
Payroll document

14 ANNEXURE A : Evaluation Questionnaires

Table 6: Project Evaluation Questionnaire

1. PROJECT DESIGN PHASE	
<i>The following 10 questions are intended to assist us to determine the effectiveness of the MATHS CENTRE Project design.</i>	Interview Results (Rimani)
1. Were the key PROJECT BENEFICIARIES clearly identified ?	Exceeded Expectation
2. Was there sufficient CONSULTATION with the key beneficiaries ?	Met Expectation
3. Were the Project OBJECTIVES clearly outlined ?	Exceeded Expectation
4. Was each PROJECT ACTIVITY & SEQUENCE clearly explained and practically achievable ?	Exceeded Expectation
5. Was the initial CAPACITY of the recipient organisation taken into consideration in contributing to	Met to some degree

the achievement of the stated objectives ?	
6. Was the commitment to the agreed TIME FRAMES clearly explained ?	Exceeded Expectation
7. Were the Financial, Human and Material RESOURCES appropriately allocated to the project ?	Met to some degree
8. Was the recipient made aware of the REPORTING and MONITORING requirements ?	Exceeded Expectation
9. Was the recipient made aware of the SUPPORT available to them ?	Met Expectation
10. Were the project DELIVERABLES clearly defined ?	Exceeded Expectation
2. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION	
<i>The following 10 questions are intended to assist us to determine how effective the MATHS CENTRE PROJECT was implemented.</i>	
11. Did the intended BENEFICIARIES benefit from the Project ?	Met to some degree
12. Did the key beneficiaries demonstrate a better UNDERSTANDING of the Project ?	Met Expectation
13. Were the Project Objectives achieved ?	Met to some degree
14. Were the Project ACTIVITIES achieved in the SEQUENCE intended?	Met to some degree
15. Was the recipient organisational CAPACITY initially identified sufficient to achieve the stated objectives ?	Met Expectation
16. Are the agreed TIME FRAMES milestones being achieved ?	Met to some degree
17. Were there any shortcomings in the FINANCIAL, HUMAN or MATERIAL RESOURCES allocated to the Project ?	Met to some degree
18. Were the Project MONITORING and REPORTING milestones achieved ?	Met to some degree
19. Did the Project Management Staff receive ancillary SUPPORT, DIRECTION and ADVICE from the NDA?	Met Expectation
20. Were the Project deliverables met ?	Met to some degree
3.RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	
<i>The following 2 questions are intended to assist us to determine if the necessary RESOURCES were allocated and efficiently applied to the MATHS CENTRE PROJECT. Resources means Financial, Human and Material Resources.</i>	
21. Were the allocated resources PRUDENTLY managed ?	Met to some degree
22. Were the resources used according to the AGREED plan ?	Met to some degree

15 ANNEXURE B : Results of contract Review

Table 7: Results detailing the degree to which NDA mandate is met (document review)

ITEM	KPI	COMPLIANCE				COMMENTS
		0	1	2	3	
PRIMARY	Strengthen Institutional Capacity		X			
	Implement Development Projects			X		

ITEM	KPI	COMPLIANCE				COMMENTS
		0	1	2	3	
SECONDARY	Promote Consultation dialogue and sharing of development experience between civil society and state organisation		X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community based operation.providing food for community;
FUNDING	R673 600		X			90% of the funds have been transferred to Rimani
TIME	Start Date : 01 September 2012		X			.
	Completion Date : 31 August 2013	X				Non-Compliant. Project still in progress (November 2013)
	Project Period : 12 Months	X				Has been running for 14 months as at 15 November 2013
	Reports delivered on time	X				Non-Compliant
LEGEND : 0 = Non – Compliant 1 = Met to some degree 2 = Met Expectations 3 = Exceeded Expectations						

Table 8: Financial Administration by Recipient

ITEM	PARTY	COMPLIANCE				COMMENTS
		0	1	2	3	
Administer the Contribution according to the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles			X			Only 1 report was available.
Annual financial Statement 3 months after contract expiry (30 November 2013)		X				Non- Compliance

Table 9: Results detailing degree to which recipient is meeting additional obligations?

ITEM	PARTY	COMPLIANCE				COMMENTS
		0	1	2	3	
Act without written consent			X			Cannot be confirmed as deviations records could not be located by IES
Purchase Immovable Property				X		

ITEM	PARTY	COMPLIANCE				COMMENTS
		0	1	2	3	
Disposal of movable or immovable property				X		No evidence of such activity (To be confirmed by Financial audit)
Issue of loans				X		No evidence of such activity
Purchase over R 2000 not budgeted for			X			To be established at financial audit stage
Postpone or Suspend project		X				Objectives were not met and there are no farming activities
Deviate from approved program and budget		X				Observed deviations not approved by NDA
3 rd Party cession				X		No evidence of non-compliance.
Contribute part of grant to third party			X			No evidence of non-compliance. Financial audit report not available on evaluation
Entertainment, Fines, Penalties			X			Financial audit report not available on evaluation
Expenditure prior to commencement date			X			Financial audit report not available on evaluation
Deviation in spending		X				Financial audit report not available on evaluation
Written notification to NDA		X				Records missing
Business contractual obligations		x				Records missing
Project end date		X				31 August 2013 – Non Compliance
Final report at the end of project		X				No Reports have been received to date
Excess funds at end of project paid to NDA			X			No excess funds will be available to be refunded to NDA
Employment of family			X			No evidence of non-compliance
LEGEND : 0 = Non – Compliant 1 = Met to some degree 2 = Met Expectations 3 = Exceeded Expectations						

Table 10: Results Detailing Procedure for Payment Issues

ITEM	KPI	PARTY	COMPLIANCE				COMMENTS
			0	1	2	3	

ITEM	KPI	PARTY	COMPLIANCE				COMMENTS
			0	1	2	3	
NDA Payment by due date	As per contract Annexure	NDA		X			Payments were not made as per the contract agreement
Notification for Non – Payment		NDA			X		No evidence of such records
Contractual Obligations		NDA/Rimani	X				Both parties failed to comply with the contract terms and conditions
LEGEND : 0 = Non – Compliant 1 = Met to some degree 2 = Met Expectations 3 = Exceeded Expectations							

Table 11: Result Detailing Issues Relating to Remedies for Non-conformance

ITEM	PART Y	COMPLIANCE				COMMENTS
		0	1	2	3	
WITHHOLDING OF FUNDS	NDA			X		10% of the funding has not been released but there are no records implying that the funds have been withheld.
FURTHER ACTION TAKEN FOR NON-COMPLIANCE	NDA	X				No consequence for non-compliance from both the project and non-performing DM's.
LEGEND : 0 = Non – Compliant 1 = Met to some degree 2 = Met Expectations 3 = Exceeded Expectations						

Table 12: Results Detailing Claims against 3rd Parties

ITEM	PART Y	COMPLIANCE				COMMENTS
		0	1	2	3	
CLAIMS AGAINST 3 RD PARTY	NDA			X		No claims reported
LEGEND : 0 = Non – Compliant 1 = Met to some degree 2 = Met Expectations 3 = Exceeded Expectations						

Table 13: Results detailing Cession issues

ITEM	PARTY	COMPLIANCE				COMMENTS
		0	1	2	3	
Ceding, Delegation, Assignment of RIGHTS or OBLIGATIONS with other party	NDA/Rimani			X		
LEGEND : 0 = Non – Compliant 1 = Met to some degree 2 = Met Expectations 3 = Exceeded Expectations						

Table 14: Results Detailing Force Majeure Issues

ITEM	PARTY	COMPLIANCE				COMMENTS
		0	1	2	3	
FORCE MAJEURE EVENT	NDA & MCPT			x		
LEGEND : 0 = Non – Compliant 1 = Met to some degree 2 = Met Expectations 3 = Exceeded Expectations						

16 ANNEXURE C : SITE PICTURES

Figure 11 : Unutilised part of the 3 hectare stand donated by the tribal authority



Figure 12 : Tank and stand procured for the farm





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