

South African Institute of Distance Education

Template for policy design evaluation

Section	Key questions	Specific questions and tasks
Diagnostic analysis of status quo		
	Is there a diagnostic analysis?	
	Is the need or problem the policy addresses clearly defined?	
	Is the nature and scale of the problem clear (and substantiated by good evidence)	
	Is the root cause of the problem identified and analysed (and this substantiated by good evidence and logic)?	
	Is there a strong rationale of this is a government priority?	

Section	Subsection	Key questions	Specific questions and tasks
Framework linkages			
	Policy frameworks	Does it link to existing policies and strategies (at governance level) that support youth and adult education?	
		Does it link to general lifelong learning policy (in education white papers).	
		Does it link to specific youth and adult education policies?	Are the policy documents available? Where? How? What coordinated cross-ministry policies exist? Are all actors (government and civil society) involved in policy formation?
		How is adult learning and education defined in these policies (as compared to how it is defined in this policy)?	Are youth included? What are the limitations of the definitions? Is there any confusion between adult education and training, adult basic education and training, literacy and non-formal education
		Does it link to the National Development Plan?	
		Is the current status of existing adult education policies acknowledged?	What blockages to finalisation of policies? Are they communicated well to the citizenry? Are the policies and strategies full of “unfunded mandates”? Is the right to adult education enforceable in any way?
		What are the key policy features of these existing policies?	

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Framework linkages (continued)		Do these and the proposed policy provide for linkages between formal and non-formal education?	
	Legislation	What legislation exists that could relate to the proposed policy, and does it work?	What exists? What should exist?
	Governance	Who governs adult education and do they (can they) govern well?	Who actually runs the show? Are those who govern actually identifiable?
		Does the policy relate to the DHET's strategic plan or outcomes statement or priority list?	
		Does the policy relate to the current minister's performance agreement?	
	Administrative frameworks: institutions, organisation and implementation	Who actually administers adult education?	
		What and who is targeted in implementation?	Why are particular targets chosen and programmes funded and run? How are these decisions made?
		What kinds of programmes are implemented?	
	Financial frameworks	Where does the money come from and how does it get to youth and adult education?	

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		How is adult education funded?	[Need to distinguish between nominal allocations in high level budgets and the actual funds released for actual adult education work.] [What capacity is there in administrative bodies to actually monitor funding flows?]
		What is the source and scale of the funding?	Is it ongoing and sustainable?
		Private sector funding	
		Are there policy benchmarks or targets on financing?	
		What other trends are revealed in the financial data?	

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Have different policy options been properly considered?			
		Are the different options for addressing the root causes made clear and is there evidence presented that these options are appropriate?	
		Have the various policy options in the Ministerial Task team Report on Community Education and Training centres been seriously considered?	
		Are the cost/benefits of the different options made clear and the justification for selection of the preferred policy option convincing?	

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Is there a strong theory of change?			
		Is there an explicit presentation of the DHET's assumptions about how changes are expected to happen within this context and in relation to this policy intervention.	
		Is there a clear and convincing theory of change explaining the causal mechanism(s) for achieving the desired outcomes and impacts of the policy?	
		Where do we think we are going?	
		How do we think we will get there?	
		What will the outcome be if we are successful in our aims?	

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Target group(s)			
		Is a target group (or groups) clearly identified and defined in the policy?	
		Are here clear measures to see who the target group is and how it progresses as a result of the policy?	

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Logical framework for implementation			
	Logframe	Is there a good logframe?	
	Hierarchy of activities	Does the policy envisage a hierarchy of a hierarchy of activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts?	
		Are the impacts clear and appropriate?	
		Are the planned outputs clear, appropriate and important and not just products but the key building blocks needed to achieve the outcomes?	
		Are the outputs sufficient and necessary for achieving the outcomes?	
		Are the activities appropriate, sufficient and necessary for achieving the outputs?	
		Are the assumptions appropriate at each level, can they be managed and is management included in the actions?	
		Are the indicators specific, measurable, appropriate, relevant and time-bound (SMART)?	

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		If needed, are component projects clear, and who is responsible for them identified?	
		What is proposed?	
		Why is it proposed?	
		Does what is proposed contradict or duplicate any existing institutional arrangements and roles and responsibilities in government?	
		How will any contradictions or duplications be addressed?	
		If the policy envisages a number of similar programmes or projects, are potential economies of scale of the common aspects or components identified as well as the human and financial resources required for supply measures to achieve them?	
		Does the design consider any upscaling or replication needs?	
		Is the design scaleable or replicable?	

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Provision for an implementation plan			
		Does the policy envisage development of an implementation plan?	
		Is there an appropriate activity schedule (such as a GANTT chart) for the activities?	
		Are the human resources required to implement the policy clear, realistic and available?	
		Are the finances well planned and the link to the activities to be undertaken clear?	
		Are there (plans and commitments for) appropriate management arrangements within the DHET for running the intervention?	
		Are there roles that have to be played by other roleplayers in or outside government and are all of the roles envisaged funded mandates and do the roleplayers have the capacity to perform them?	

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		Is there a commitment from partners in or outside government to play these roles?	
		If needed is there a coordination mechanism established to link with partners?	
		Is there a monitoring and evaluation capacity established including a budget for evaluations and have these been programmed?	
		Is there plan for life-cycle evaluation for the programme (potentially baseline evaluation, implementation evaluation, impact evaluation, depending on the size of the programme).	
	Pilots	Are pilots adequately conceptualised and planned for?	
		Are the pilots genuinely scaleable?	

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Costing			
		Is there a cost estimate?	
		Are cost estimates provided for the achievement of the targets described in the logframe?	
		Is there a policy on the use of open-source software?	

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Programmes outline			
	Data on programmes and participation		
		Is there reliable statistical data on programme participation rates and trends that would inform policy implementation?	
		Where is the data, who has it, who processes it?	
		Is this collecting and processing of participation data ongoing and sustainable?	
		Who collects it?	
		Who analyses it?	
		Who disseminates it?	
		Is there research capacity to verify and evaluate it?	
		What templates are there to assist in the data capture, dissemination and comparison process.?	

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		Have the programme participation trends (shown in the data) informed the policy?	
	Programme mix	Is there are coherent policy on the types of provision in the programme mix?	
		Literacy	Does literacy promote and develop national languages and build supportive environments?
			Are different forms of literacy provision described?
			Is “literacy” clearly defined??
			Are literacy benchmarks used?
		Post literacy	
		Adult Basic Education	
		Equivalency, ‘Second chance’ or alternative schooling Equivalency programmes	
		NASCA	
		Higher Education (Certificates)	
		Degree credits	

Section	Subsection	Key questions	Specific questions and tasks
		Continuing Education and Professional Development	
		Early Childhood Education and care	
		Technical, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Education and Training	
		ICT training	
		Life skills and community development	
		Income generation programmes	
		Religious, Cultural and Political Education	
		Non-formal education	
		Provision for special needs	

Section	Subsection	Key questions	Specific questions and tasks
Curriculum and materials development			
		Is there a plan for curriculum development?	
		Is there a plan for materials development?	
		Is there a policy on creative commons licensing for materials?	

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Qualifications framework			
		Are developments required in relation to the NQF, SAQA and the Qualifications Councils noted?	

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Quality Assurance			
	The assessment of learning outcomes	Are plans specified?	
	The Monitoring of adult learning and education	Are plans specified?	Methods of assessment
			Certification of assessment
	The evaluation of programmes	Are plans specified?	

Section	Subsection	Key questions	Specific questions and tasks
Professional development			
	The situation and status of practitioners		
	The issue of professionalisation	Are there plans for the professionalisation of adult educators?	
	The number and qualifications of practitioners	Is there data on:	
	The Training institutions	Are there plans for:	

Section	Subsection	Key questions	Specific questions and tasks
Research			
	Data production	Who is doing it?	
	Research capacity and institutionalisation	Are there plans for this.	

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Risk Management			
		Is there an appropriate risk management plan and measures to mitigate the identified risks?	
		Are all likely risks, their probability and impact, identified in a matrix?	
		Are the risks of unintended consequences of the programme identified?	
		Does it take into consideration the assumptions in the logframe and the risks of these assumptions not holding?	

Summary: will it work?

Based on the theory of change, logframe, and implementation arrangements, does it look like the policy intervention is likely to work?

Decision on whether minor or major changes or a total rethink needed (and what degree of reviewing and evaluation needed)