

# **Formative Evaluation on the Implementation of GRPBMEAF**

**Summary report [5 pages]**

**Department of Women, Youth, and Persons with Disabilities (DWYPD)**

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## **1 Introduction**

The Department of Women, Youth, and Persons with Disabilities (DWYPD), with the assistance of the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), conducted a formative evaluation on the implementation of the Gender-Responsive Planning, Budgeting, Monitoring, Evaluation and Auditing Framework (GRPBMEAF). The GRPBMEAF, approved by Cabinet in 2019, aimed to catalyse gender mainstreaming across the state machinery to improve women's empowerment and gender equality in pursuing the country's constitutional vision of a non-sexist society.

## **2 Objectives**

The purpose of this formative evaluation is to assess the implementation progress of the GRPBMEAF and enhance knowledge to contribute to the design and implementation of the Framework in South Africa going forward.

The specific objectives of this formative evaluation are as follows:

- To develop the theory of change with a detailed programme theory to inform the programme's design, implementation, and adaptation.
- Test the components of the theory of change.
- To conduct an evaluability assessment to determine and improve evaluability going forward.
- To assess the implementation of the GRPBMEAF and determine the effectiveness and relevance of implementation to date.

## **3 Evaluation Methodology**

The formative evaluation was undertaken as an implementation evaluation, and it focused on the six evaluation criteria (i.e. relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact (early outcomes), and sustainability). A theory-based mixed methods approach was applied, combining qualitative and quantitative methods for triangulation. The specific methods used included document analysis, key informant interviews, a survey of officials, focus group discussions and a theory of change workshop. A total of 53 knowledgeable participants were

interviewed as key informants. The survey targeted gender-focal persons, planning and finance units across government departments and entities. A total of 137 respondents completed the self-administered online questionnaire. Eighteen (18) community-level focus group discussions were conducted across the nine provinces. The community-level engagements were aimed at providing community members and grassroots organisations an opportunity to provide personal views, experiences and observations on the implementation and results of the GRPBMEAF interventions.

## **4 Evaluation results and findings**

### ***4.1 Testing the components of the theory of change***

Amongst other key objectives of the formative evaluation was a participatory development of the GRPBMEAF's theory of change. Currently, the GRPBMEAF presents a less detailed theory of change, which shows elements that explain how the GRPBMEAF is expected to lead to better outcomes for women and girls, and greater levels of gender equality. A more detailed theory of change was developed in collaboration with key actors who participated in a theory of change workshop. The theory of change was coherent, with a clear and logical pathway from inputs, interventions, outputs, outcomes, and impact. The data analysis indicated that the GRPBMEAF is relevant to all three sectors, i.e. Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities (WYPD). However, youth and persons with disabilities were not included in the initial design of the Framework. The objectives of the GRPBMEAF remain relevant to the current socio-economic climate, and activities and outputs were considered consistent with the desired impact.

### ***4.2 Implementation process and progress***

The implementation of the GRPBMEAF has commenced across most national and provincial departments, and the implementation progress varies across the departments and pillars. The implementation of the GRPBMEAF includes coordination activities led by the centre of government departments and department-specific activities. Significant progress has been made at the coordination level, and several policies and systems have been engendered, guidelines developed, awareness raised, and capacity-building efforts implemented. While awareness levels on the GRPBMEAF are high among the officials interviewed, this has yet to translate to adequate understanding beyond the gender-focal persons.

The results show that progress has been made on pillars related to policy priorities and plans (Pillars 1, 2, 3), which have been implemented effectively across departments. An analysis of the latest strategic plans for 123 departments/ entities found that 23.6% were not WYPD responsive, while 76.4% were at varying levels of WYPD responsiveness. Similar trends apply

to annual performance plans, where 15.7% of the assessed 134 annual performance plans were not responsive, and 84.3% were at different responsiveness levels. However, these priorities have yet to translate to specific interventions that remain non-WYPD responsive. The evaluation found that, of the 123 strategic plans that were assessed, less than half (49.6%, n=61) have clear interventions in their major programmes in the strategic plans that are aimed at the empowerment of WYPD, including in cases where targets are disaggregated according to these three sectors. Capacity gaps were highlighted, suggesting an urgent need for further capacity building to improve efficiency and effectiveness in implementing the Framework.

### 4.3 Institutionalisation of the Framework

Most respondents (86.1%) reported that a gender, youth and disability perspective had become part of routine practices in the department, with a significant proportion (36.9%) stating that it had become part of routine practices at the department to a large extent. More than three quarters (76.2%) reported that the department/entity had established a formal structure/division/unit/task team leading mainstreaming programs/initiatives for gender, youth and disability.

An assessment of the SPs, APPs, evaluation plans, TORs, data collection and analysis approaches was done to gauge the WYPD responsiveness of the departments/ entities. The assessment was done for 143 departments/ entities where some of these documents were successfully sourced, and the results are presented in Figure 1. The results show that most departments (58.7%, 84) were considered to have low levels of WYPD responsiveness, while 9.8% (14) departments/ entities needed to be more responsive. Few departments (7.7%, 11) were highly responsive, while 23.4% (34) were moderately responsive.

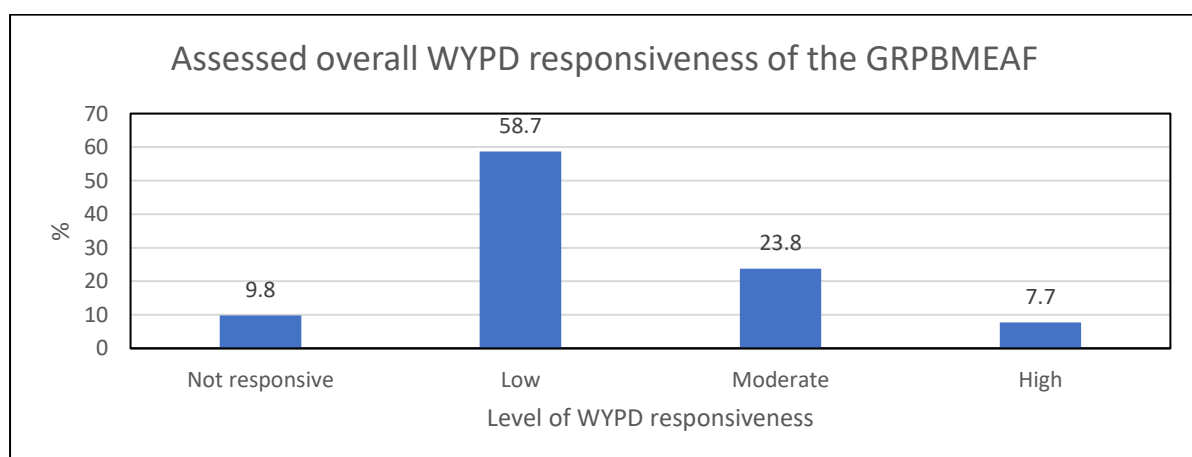


Figure 1. Assessed overall WYPD responsiveness of the GRPBMEAF

### 4.4 What results have been achieved?

The DWYPD has produced several outputs listed as targets in the Framework's implementation plan (DWYPD, 2019), which include the development of the Country Gender

Indicator Framework (CGIF), GRPBMEAF implementation guideline (with templates on how to implement interventions per pillar) and completing a 25-year review. A guideline aimed at assisting departments in implementing the Framework was developed. The National School of Government have developed a revised curriculum to assist in capacitating officials in gender mainstreaming. The departments have developed APPs and SPs following the guidelines, which set the tone regarding WYPD mainstreaming in departments.

Even though it is too early to make firm conclusions or to attribute these to the Framework, the overall results have shown that the outcomes of the GRPBMEAF are progressing in the right direction, with evidence of improvements in the outcomes for marginalised groups such as women, youth and persons with disabilities. According to the respondents, the GRPBMEAF has resulted in access to WYPD's services, productive resources, empowerment, and equitable implementation of interventions. There has been a better understanding of the rights of WYPD among stakeholders and society, changing attitudes and a better capacity to implement WYPD-responsive interventions. However, the results have yet to be homogenous across the three sectors. Overall, women have achieved better outcomes, followed by youth and persons with disabilities.

## **5 Conclusions and policy recommendations**

The implementation of the GRPBMEAF has started across most national and provincial departments, and the progress, efficiency and effectiveness vary across the departments and pillars. While awareness levels on the GRPBMEAF are high among the officials interviewed, there are capacity gaps, suggesting the urgent need for further capacity building to improve efficiency in implementing the Framework. Even though it is too early to make firm conclusions, the results have shown that the outcomes of the GRPBMEAF are trending in the right direction, with evidence of improvements in the outcomes for marginalised groups such as women, youth and persons with disabilities. However, challenges remain in ensuring that the Framework achieves its noble objectives.

Based on the findings of this evaluation, the following recommendations are made:

- Further communication and awareness initiatives should continue, targeting officials at the provincial levels and other departmental units, such as finance. Further, awareness initiatives should target actors outside government, who are essential players in ensuring that government departments deliver on targets for women, youth and persons with disabilities.
- Targeted capacity-building activities should be implemented. While many officials indicated the commitment to the cause of the marginalised actors, it was clear that there

are capacity gaps in translating some GRPBMEAF proposals into concrete interventions that can benefit the marginalised groups.

- Incentives for implementing the GRPBMEAF should target all levels of government officials, including front-level officials.
- Existing legislative tools should be used to find ways of making compliance in GRPBMEAF implementation to be enforceable. While the Framework identified the need for strong legal requirements for GRB integration into budgets to support implementation and institutionalisation across government, its suggested approach is voluntary, limiting compliance enforcement.
- Maintain the focus of the GRPBMEAF to ensure effective implementation.

## **6 Limitations of the evaluation**

- Poor response rate: Few officials responded to the self-administered questionnaire. Efforts to increase the number of responses could have been more successful.
- Subjective views: The evaluation depends on the subjective views of the respondents on various aspects. These views may not be representative of the department concerned.
- Attributing early outcomes to the GRPBMEAF: The report has highlighted progress towards achieving better outcomes for women, youth and persons with disabilities. However, the extent to which this trend can be attributed to the GRPBMEAF has yet to be causally analysed.