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**An Evaluation of the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP)**

**September 2011**

# FOREWORD

It gives me great pleasure to release this report on the *Evaluation of the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme* (CASP), which is the fourth in a series of programme evaluations undertaken by the Public Service Commission (PSC). The programme evaluations provide a critical overview of an identified government programme, in the process identifying the key contextual factors influencing programme performance, in order to identify strengths and weaknesses. More specific observations and recommendations have been made in this study, and these seek to support the performance of the programme, and contribute to better decision-making.

CASP is linked to one of Government’s priority areas, namely, Food Security and Agrarian Reform, and it forms an integral part of the Comprehensive Rural Development Strategy (CRDS). Through this evaluation, therefore, the PSC not only contributes to the strengthening of programme implementation, but to the achievement of government’s key priorities as well.

Amongst others, the evaluation found that CASP has not been implemented in an integrated fashion as it was originally designed. Whilst provincial departments have put institutional capacities in place that form a solid foundation for farmer establishment and support, the focus is still too much on immediate deliverables rather than the longer term income generating potential of the farms. With regard to the overall success of the programme, it was noted that if the criterion is the immediate outputs of CASP, namely the infrastructure and the immediate extension services connected with the completion of the CASP project, then the departments themselves rate the projects as very successful. However, as soon as an outcome measure like the production levels of the farm, income levels and longer sustainability is applied then the projects seem less successful.

The PSC wishes to thank the political and administrative leadership, and officials of the relevant departments responsible for the implementation of the programme at national level and four selected provinces, namely, Western Cape, Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga for supporting the process. I hope that this evaluation will add value to your efforts of improving the performance of the programme.

**B.M MTHEMBU**

**CHAIRPERSON**

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

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**LIST OF ACRONYMS**

AgriBEE Agricultural Black Economic Empowerment

ADA Agribusiness Development Agency

BATAT Broadening Access to Agriculture Thrust

BPs Business Plans

CASP Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme

CASIDRA Cape Agency for Sustainable Integrated Development in Rural Areas

CD: FSD Chief Director: Farmer Support and Development

CPA Communal Property Association

CRDP Comprehensive Rural Development Programme

CRDS Comprehensive Rural Development Strategy

DAFF Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

DLA Department of Land Affairs

DoA Department of Agriculture

DPAC Departmental Project Allocation Committee

DSC District Screening Committee (

EPWP Expanded Public Works Programme (

ERP Extension Recovery Plan”

FET Further Education and Training

FSD Farmer Support and Development

FSP Farmer Settlement Programme

GPS Geographical Positioning System

IDC Industrial Development Corporation

IDP Integrated Development Plan

IFSNP Integrated Food Security and Nutrition Programme

KALF Kaap Agri Loan Fund

KITT Information and Knowledge Transfer Triangle

LRAD Land Redistribution for Agricultural

MAFISA Micro Finance Institute of South Africa

MADC Mpumalanga Agricultural Development Corporation

M&E Monitoring and Evaluation

MTEF Medium Term Expenditure Framework

NAP National Assessment Panel

NT National Treasury

PAETA Primary Agriculture Education and Training Authority

PDIs Previously Disadvantaged Individuals

PFMA Public Finance Management Act

PLAS Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy

PSC Public Service Commission

SASA South African Sugarcane Association

SLAG Settlement/ Land Acquisition Grant

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. **INTRODUCTION**

The PSC initiated a series of evaluations of poverty reduction programmes in 2006, which culminated in the publication of four evaluation reports on poverty reduction programmes. The need for the evaluation of the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP) arose from the fact that CASP is an integral part of the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP) and it is linked to one of Government’s priority areas, namely, Food Security and Agrarian Reform.

1. **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The objectives of the evaluation of CASP were:

* To evaluate whether the objectives of the Programme have been achieved / are being achieved.
* To evaluate whether the programme design was appropriate in relation to the set objectives.
* To evaluate whether the programme is being implemented effectively and efficiently (focusing on the implementation strategies).

1. **METHODOLOGY**

A matrix had to be developed prior to the evaluation because CASP does not have a programme logic framework. The matrix indicates some of the objectives of the evaluation and the programme success factors. The following methods were used during the evaluation:

* Archival/Documentary sources,
* Analysis of programme and project administrative records,
* Site-visits (observations), and
* Interviews

1. **SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The study was restricted to four provinces, namely: Western Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and Mpumalanga. A total number of 36 projects were evaluated (9 projects per province).

1. **FINDINGS**

**5.1 CONCEPTUALISATION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT PROGRAMME (CASP)**

It was found that CASP does not have a comprehensive design in terms of the logic framework that establishes a link between goals, objectives, inputs, outputs and outcomes, and assumptions that underlie this relationship, with indicators and means of verification of performance information. Whilst the current six pillar model on which CASP is based makes sense and is needs driven, it lacks clarity on important details such as programme indicators, targets, inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts. Over and above this, CASP does not have a formally approved guiding document that spells out these details. The existing guiding document is still in a draft stage with track changes. As a result of these shortcomings, the interpretation, understanding and implementation of the programme varies in all four provinces that were evaluated.

**5.2 CASP EXPENDITURE PATTERNS**

The Table below shows the CASP expenditure patterns in four selected provinces for the financial years 2007/08 – 2009/10.

Table 1: CASP Expenditure Patterns

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Province** | **2007/08** | | | **2008/09** | | | **2009/10** | | |
|  | **Budget** | **Expend** | **%** | **Budget** | **Expend** | **%** | **Budget** | **Expend** | **%** |
| Mpumalanga | 41 133 | 37 431 | 91 | 43 107 | 43 107 | 100 | 55 504 | 55 504 | 100 |
| Western Cape | 33 426 | 33 326 | 100 | 49 205 | 49 205 | 100 | 57 640 | 57 598 | 100 |
| KwaZulu-Natal | 80 080 | 15 247 | 19 | 165 378 | 107 906 | 65 | 117 762 | 106 197 | 90 |
| Eastern Cape | 69 833 | 63 459 | 91 | 109 053 | 100 053 | 92 | 128 441 | 111 311 | 87 |

The table shows that KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape have been consistently under-spending for the three financial years. In KwaZulu-Natal the under-expenditure was especially huge during 2007/08 and 2008/09. Although the under-expenditure has been narrowing in KwaZulu-Natal, the trend should remain a cause for concern. From the interviews conducted, the PSC established that the under-expending is largely attributed to inefficient procurement processes.[[1]](#footnote-1)

**5.3 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PILLARS (PRIORITY AREAS OF CASP)**

The model on which the programme is based comprises 6 pillars, namely: On- and Off-farm Infrastructure, Technical and Advisory Assistance, Information and Knowledge Management, Training and Capacity Building, Marketing and Business Development and Financing Support. However, since the inception of the programme in 2004 implementation has been biased in favour of the infrastructure pillar. This has been to the detriment of the other pillars and ultimately to the detriment of the integrated and comprehensive approach of the programme.

**5.3.1 Information and Knowledge Management**

This pillar aims at creating the knowledge resources and technical knowhow that is needed to support emerging farmers. The pillar also includes raising awareness in order to ensure that CASP reaches all categories of beneficiaries in all geographic areas of the country. This includes the use of technology and community centres. In addition, this pillar provides for the development of a beneficiary database and farmer register for planning, budgeting and reporting purposes.[[2]](#footnote-2)

The study found that the National and Provincial Departments do not have reliable information management systems for recording project data. Databases of farmer information and their operations are not easy to access. It was difficult for example, for the PSC evaluators to solicit accurate information on the turnaround times for the delivery of CASP projects, and the planned versus achieved outputs per CASP pillar.

* + 1. **Technical and Advisory Assistance**

The purpose of this pillar is to provide technical advice, or extension services, to the farmers on all production and business processes on the farm. [[3]](#footnote-3)

It is important that both the quantity (number of visits to farms) and the quality of extension services are closely monitored. The Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries promotes the use of what is called the “Green Book” as a mechanism to monitor the work of extension officers and to ensure accountability. The purpose of the Green Book is to record the farmer’s daily interactions with Extension Officers and other stakeholders.[[4]](#footnote-4) However, the sampled provinces, with the exception of the Western Cape, had not started using the Green Book and this is a serious deficiency. The Western Cape Department of Agriculture is the first Department in the country to adopt Smart Pen technology (a digital Green Book) in order to strengthen its project management and monitoring capacity.[[5]](#footnote-5) Through this technology, the location of each officer, and the advice he/she provides to the farmer is instantaneously monitored by head office officials.

**5.3.3 Training and Capacity Building**

This pillar includes training and capacity building of the beneficiaries, particularly in practical marketing and financial management.[[6]](#footnote-6)

The study found that departments provided training without any prior skills needs assessment. Training is offered by agricultural colleges and accredited service providers. On average, the duration of courses is five days. In addition, provinces have organised mentorship programmes between experienced commercial farmers and the emerging farmers. Training is also provided in the form of on-the-job training by extension officers. The study also found that seventy two percent (72%) of the beneficiaries in the four sampled provinces have been trained. KwaZulu-Natal reported that all CASP beneficiaries (100%) were trained between the 2007/08 and 2009/10 financial years. Western Cape stated that 50% were trained, followed by Mpumalanga province with 24% and lastly Eastern Cape with 4%. At the time of the evaluation, none of the sampled provinces had conducted an impact assessment of their training activities, which suggests that the value of these activities for farming operations had not been assessed.

* + 1. **On- and Off-farm Infrastructure**

This pillar of the programme involves the provision of enabling infrastructure such as tractors, production inputs such as fertiliser and seeds and marketing/preparation facilities such as sorting, packaging, and storage facilities. The main purpose of this pillar is to ensure that through the infrastructure provided, beneficiaries can use their land productively.

The evaluation found that the bulk of CASP funding is allocated to infrastructural projects. Provincial managers indicated that they received a directive from the national Department that they should concentrate on the infrastructure pillar. However, since 2008 they were informed that other pillars could be implemented as well. Notwithstanding the latest directive, the earlier approach created white elephants, i.e. structures that were erected but not operational either due to, amongst others, lack of production inputs, lack of financial support, failure to access markets and lack of training opportunities. A copy of the directives could not be obtained from the national and sampled provincial departments. The former CASP programme manager also denied knowledge of these directives.[[7]](#footnote-7) However, the trend across all the sampled provinces is that most projects are still supported mainly through infrastructure.

**5.3.5 Marketing and Business Development**

There are various programmes that are targeted to set this pillar in place, namely[[8]](#footnote-8) the provision of marketing services and information to small scale farmers, a focus on specific commodity markets and the promotion of community-private-public partnerships.

In the Western Cape, the department planned to organise access to markets for farmers (facilitate business linkages) for 65 agri-businesses/emerging farmers between 2007/08 and 2009/10 and they managed to achieve facilitation for 61 such agri-businesses/emerging farmers. Emerging farmers who were interviewed acknowledged that they were assisted by the relevant industries.[[9]](#footnote-9)In KwaZulu-Natal, CASP projects specialising in sugar cane were selling their produce to Illovo and Tongaat-Hulett, the two implementing agencies for the province. In Mpumalanga Province beneficiaries in five of the nine projects that were visited stated that the department had assisted them to find their markets and to forge partnerships with private companies that resulted in improving the marketing of produce and business development. Across the sampled provinces, most emerging farmers are making their own arrangements to access markets. However, the guidance of extension officers was generally acknowledged.

**5.3.6 Financing Support/Micro Finance Institute of South Africa (MAFISA)**

The aim of the finance pillar of CASP is to deliver financial services to farmers in order to broaden access to finance.[[10]](#footnote-10) This pillar is implemented through the Micro Finance Institute of South Africa (MAFISA), which aims at providing micro and retail agricultural financial services to economically active rural poor people on a sustainable and affordable basis.

The study found that MAFISA is implemented by eight intermediaries/ agents appointed by the National Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. The agents are said to interact directly with the farmers to the exclusion of the provincial and district offices. Provincial managers stated that the National Department does not directly involve them in the implementation of MAFISA. They could therefore not provide details on the number of beneficiaries and the amount of loans that had been allocated. The PSC’s attempts to verify the above concerns with the responsible directorate at the National Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries failed. Documentation on MAFISA could not be obtained from this directorate.

MAFISA is also generally not well-known at project level. This was evidenced by the fact that all thirty six projects that were visited had not received MAFISA finance and only a few were aware of it.

* 1. **PROGRAMME ACCESS**

The evaluation sought to establish whether the intended services of the programme were indeed delivered to the intended beneficiaries, and whether there were needy but unserved persons the programme was not reaching.

In terms of the number of applications, the Eastern Cape received the most applications (3210) but only approved 671 (21%), followed by Western Cape, which received 1265 but only approved 589 (46%), and lastly KwaZulu-Natal, which received 730 applications and approved 554 (76%). These statistics show that the demand for CASP is clearly higher than the number of funded projects. This low proportion of approved applications is largely due to the limited budget available for this purpose and not because beneficiaries did not meet the qualifying criteria, suggesting that there were needy but unserved persons the programme was not reaching.

**5.5 SUCCESS OF CASP**

The four sampled provinces were requested to rate the performance of CASP projects that were funded between 2007/08 and 2009/10 and to provide reasons for failed projects. On average, the success rate of projects in the departments’ own estimation, which could not be verified and is highly dependent on the definition of success that is applied, is 80%. The following factors characterised successful projects:

* Commitment and hands-on approach of the farm managers,
* Relevant farming experience, business management and farming skills,
* Partnerships with mentors, who were established commercial farmers,
* Formal training in agriculture,
* Record keeping ( including records on production and income levels),
* Access to markets, and
* Affiliation with farmer associations.

These success factors were largely confirmed by interviews that the PSC conducted at the project level. The definition of success that is applied by provinces with regard to CASP projects has important implications for how the programme is managed. Currently the definition of success is largely focused on outputs, for example whether the infrastructure has been completed on the farm and whether the project is rated as viable at grant approval stage. This enabled the departments to rate the projects as 80% successful. It also means that the management of the programme is focused on the delivery of infrastructure and that even extension services are focused on advice on what infrastructure the farm needs and what is needed to qualify for the CASP grant. However, as soon as outcome measures are applied, such as the production levels of the farms, income generated and jobs created, then the projects are less successful. Extension services and other support under CASP should, therefore, not be directed mainly at the completion of the immediate CASP project but on the longer term sustainability of the farm. This means among others, that outcomes such as production levels and farm incomes need to be measured. What is required is thus a balance of effort between the immediate approval of a CASP grant and the longer term success of the farming operations.

**5.6 FACTORS DETERMINING SUCCESS**

The CASP programme was designed around six success factors, as already discussed above (the six pillars of the programme). A number of additional success factors associated, in the minds of programme and project managers, with successful projects, were listed in the previous section. However, this study found that the following four factors can have a significant impact on success:

**5.6.1 Turnaround times for CASP projects**

The Western Cape and Mpumalanga provided details on the turnaround times for their projects. KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape did not provide these details. The Western Cape, which has enlisted the services of the Cape Agency for Sustainable Integrated Development in Rural Areas (CASIDRA), takes on average16 months from date of application for a CASP grant till completion of the infrastructure, whereas Mpumalanga takes 28 months. The long duration for finalising CASP projects in Mpumalanga should be a cause for concern.

Amongst others, the study found that the approval period does not always match the seasonal activities of the farmer and in practice a whole season, or even more than one season, may be lost in the absence of CASP infrastructure support. Conditions of the farm might also have changed drastically in the intervening period such that it might affect the viability of the project.[[11]](#footnote-11)

**5.6.2 Business planning**

The business plan that is submitted for purposes of the application for a CASP grant mainly covers items that assess the need for infrastructure and estimates the cost of the infrastructure. Other items included in the business plan are project description, institutional and technical support, community involvement, governance structure, and implementation strategy. It does not include financial projections for the farming business itself and is, therefore, not a complete business plan but more a plan for the Department’s support of the project.

A proper business plan should include a feasibility study. Feasibility studies are not conducted before approval of the CASP grant. A feasibility study will include an assessment of potential markets, an assessment of the viability of the farming operation itself, detailed financial projections, including projections of the initial capital (buildings, equipment) needed, the money needed to tie the business over until it generates its own cash (working capital) and projections of incomes and expenditures, and an assessment of the associated financial, market and operational risks. The confusion between a CASP project plan (focused on infrastructure) and a proper business plan (or feasibility study) suggests that much of the effort of the CASP programme is directed at the immediate output, namely the immediate support in the form of extension services, infrastructure and the other forms of support provided by CASP, and not the longer term outcome of sustainable farming businesses that provide a livelihood to beneficiaries and jobs for farm workers. This is a serious weakness of the programme in the form that it is currently implemented.

* + 1. **Affiliation to farmers associations**

Successful projects were strongly associated with members of the projects being affiliated to farmer’s associations. Farmers’ organisations/associations can provide services such as technical assistance and advice, facilitation of credit applications, and provision of information on markets to its members. Farmers’ organisations/associations are a good avenue for sharing of lessons learned amongst farmers.

* + 1. **Partnerships**

Successful projects were also strongly associated with partnerships. These include partnerships at two levels: Firstly, between CASP beneficiaries themselves and other established farmers or private companies and industry bodies, or, secondly, between the provincial department and other state agencies, private companies or industry bodies. These partnerships bring benefits like management and agricultural production expertise and support, mentoring of beneficiaries, financial support, and access to markets. However, it is essential that such partnerships are carefully structured so that emerging farmers get the full benefit of progressing to commercial success and that all the partners fulfill their obligations.

**6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the above findings, the following recommendations are made:

**6.1 Development of the logic framework and programme theory for the programme**

In order to ensure a common understanding of CASP, the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries should put in place a clear logic framework for the programme. This will enable the Department logically outline not only **what** the programme is expected to achieve but also **how** it expects to achieve it. This framework of change should, amongst others, depict a sequence linking inputs to activities, activities to outputs, and the results/outcomes to impacts.[[12]](#footnote-12)

**6.2 Monitoring the work of Extension Officers**

Both the quantity and quality of extension services should be closely monitored. This means that the Green Book or equivalent good practice must be fully implemented. Extension officers must also be given the knowledge resources to enable them to provide high value extension services to farmers.

**6.3 Improving the quality of performance information**

The departments must set up the procedures and systems to collect performance information against appropriate outcome indicators on the project level, including for example, the production levels of the farms, incomes and expenditures (net income), the number of jobs created on the farms and the sustainability of the farming operation (producing a livelihood over a number of years).

**6.4 Formation of partnerships**

It is recommended that partnerships should be formed with established farmers, commodity groups, implementing agents, and/or buyers/processors of product. This could happen at two levels, namely, between projects or groups of projects and appropriate partners and between the departments and appropriate partners to leverage the investment of the departments by means of the additional resources that the partner can offer. These partnerships should be carefully structured to ensure that real benefits accrue to emerging farmers and that all parties fulfill their obligations.

1. **CONCLUSION**

With regard to the first objective of this study of whether the objectives of CASP have been achieved, the conclusion depends very much on the criterion for success that is applied. If judged according to the criterion of the immediate outputs of CASP, then the programme has been successful. By and large the infrastructure has been delivered even though there were initially high levels of under-expenditure on the programme. However, the PSC believes this criterion is limited and that more could be achieved through the programme if there could also be a focus on outcome measures like the production levels of the farms, income levels and longer term sustainability.

Regarding the second objective, whether the programme design is appropriate, the six pillars are key determining factors for the success of the programme and make a lot of sense, even though the theory of change of the programme is not spelt out explicitly. In addition, the programme was not implemented in an integrated fashion as it was originally conceptualised and designed.

Lastly, with regard to the third objective of whether the programme has been implemented effectively and efficiently, the provincial departments have put institutional capacities in place that form a solid foundation for farmer establishment and support. However, sometimes the focus is still too much on immediate deliverables like farm infrastructure rather than the longer term income generating potential of the farms. The focus in the next few years should be to improve the efficiency of processes and the quality of all services and to measure such quality against outcome indicators.

# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

One of the Government’s initiatives in its efforts to fight poverty and inequality is the introduction of the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP), which was approved by Cabinet on 12 August 2009. The CRDP is a three-pronged strategy aimed at creating sustainable rural communities throughout the country through agrarian transformation, rural development and land reform[[13]](#footnote-13). A focus on rural development and agricultural support for families is also one of the objectives of the Government’s Draft Anti-Poverty Strategy.[[14]](#footnote-14)

In view of Government’s poverty reduction efforts, the PSC initiated a series of evaluations of poverty reduction programmes in 2005, which culminated in the publication of four evaluation reports. The need for the current evaluation of the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP) arose from the fact that CASP is an integral part of the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP) and it is linked to one of Government’s priority areas, namely, Food Security and Agrarian Reform.

## 1.2 MANDATE OF THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION (PSC)

The mandate of the PSC to undertake evaluations of the success of poverty reduction programmes derives from the following powers and functions of the Commission set out in Sections 196(4)(b) and (c)of the Constitution:

* to investigate, monitor and evaluate the organisation and administration, and the personnel practices of the Public Service;
* to propose measures to ensure effective and efficient performance within the Public Service.

The PSC further promotes the values and principles of public administration as set out in Section 195 of the Constitution. The principle “public administration must be development-oriented” is especially relevant for this project.

## 1.3 AN OVERVIEW OF THE COMPREHENSIVE AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT PROGRAMME (CASP)

CASP was launched on 17 August 2004 in Pietermaritzburg KwaZulu-Natal by the former Minister for Agriculture and Land Affairs.**[[15]](#footnote-15)** In the same year the Minister announced that a provision of R 210 million had been made available for the initial roll-out of a Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme.

### 1.3.1 THE AIM OF CASP

The Primary aim of the CASP is to provide agricultural support services to promote agricultural development, targeting mainly beneficiaries of the land reform programme and other emerging farmers.[[16]](#footnote-16)

The following three strategic objectives were set for this programme:

* strengthening the capacity of the rural working poor and their organisations;
* improving equitable access of the rural working poor and their enterprises to productive natural resources and technology; and
* increasing access of the rural working poor and enterprises to financial assets and markets.

### 1.3.2 EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF CASP

CASP is expected to produce the following outcomes:

• Increased creation of wealth in agriculture and rural areas

• Increased sustainable employment

• Increased incomes and increased foreign exchange earnings

• Reduced poverty and inequalities in land and enterprise ownership

• Improved farming efficiency

• Improved national and household food security

• Stable and safe rural communities, reduced levels of crime and violence, and sustainable rural development

• Improved investor confidence, leading to increased domestic and foreign investment

* Pride and dignity in agriculture as an occupation and sector

### 1.3.3 BASIC TENETS OF CASP

The Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and Provincial Departments of Agriculture (PDAs) identified six pillars for the CASP programme.[[17]](#footnote-17) The Figure below depicts the six pillars.

Figure 1: The Priority Areas of CASP

The six pillars are discussed briefly below:

*Pillar 1. Information and knowledge management*

The primary aim of CASP is to ensure that every targeted beneficiary should know what support is available and how to access it. In this regard, this pillar aims at achieving the following:[[18]](#footnote-18)

* Development of awareness strategies in order to ensure that CASP reaches all categories of beneficiaries in all geographic areas of the country.
* Establishment of community centres to ensure that services are within practical reach of the rural poor communities.
* The use of Information and Knowledge Transfer Triangle (KITT). This refers to the use of extension services, technology and community centres linked to agricultural network (radio, telephones, and printed material) to reach the poor.
* Development of a beneficiary database. Its value is for planning, budgeting and reporting. Addresses are for communication purposes.
* Development of the national Farmer Register. Its value is similar to the beneficiary database.

*Pillar 2. Technical and advisory assistance and regulatory services*

This pillar strives to achieve the following:[[19]](#footnote-19)

* Technology Development for Household Food Production Programmes.
* Development of information Management strategy which deals with information according to the needs of the beneficiaries.
* Website development to provide access to agricultural information that could be of value to the targeted beneficiaries of CASP.

*Pillar 3. Training and capacity building*

This pillar includes training and capacity building of the beneficiaries, particularly in practical marketing and financing capacity building support.[[20]](#footnote-20)

*Pillar 4. On-off farm infrastructure and production inputs*

The main purpose of this pillar is to ensure that beneficiaries produce on their land. Infrastructure is grouped into the following categories:

* *Resource management infrastructure:* This refers to tractors, harvesting infrastructure, transport, and water infrastructure for household food security and food production.
* *Production Inputs:* This includes starter packs for household food producers and inputs like seeds and fertiliser for emerging farmers.
* *Marketing infrastructure*: This includes product preparation facilities such as sorting, cleaning, packaging, storage and delivery to the market.

*Pillar 5. Marketing and business development*

This pillar is important given the fact that the present policies of Government on rural development and land reform necessitate attention to marketing and business development from a small scale farming perspective. There are various programmes that are targeted to achieve this objective namely:[[21]](#footnote-21)

* Provision of marketing services to small scale farmers, including agribusiness investment promotion, market promotion, agribusiness entrepreneurship development, agribusiness product development and technical assistance,
* Provision of marketing information; and
* In order to achieve, amongst others, community-private-public partnership.

*Pillar 6. Finance*/Micro Finance Institute of South Africa (MAFISA)

The aim of the finance pillar of CASP is to deliver rural financial services to the agricultural sector through a comprehensive package so as to achieve amongst others the following:[[22]](#footnote-22)

* Stimulate the broadening of financial markets;
* Promote the development of participating financial intermediaries; and
* Stimulate economic growth through improved access to financial services;

The comprehensive package was envisaged to make provision for savings and lending groups; member-based financial self-help groups; and village banks or financial services cooperatives.[[23]](#footnote-23)

The programme is discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

## 1.4 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

This report consists of eight chapters and is structured as follows:

**Chapter 1** presents the background and context of this study;

**Chapter 2** presents the methodology adopted for evaluation of CASP

**Chapter 3** looks at strategic interventions and policy reforms that have taken place in the agricultural sector since 1994;

**Chapter 4** provides a summary of findings

**Chapter 5** presents the status of CASP in Western Cape Province;

**Chapter 6** presents the status of CASP in Mpumalanga Province;

**Chapter 7** presents the status of CASP in Eastern Cape Province;

**Chapter 8** presents the status of CASP in KwaZulu-Natal Province; and

**Chapter 9** contains recommendations and conclusions.

## CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY

## 2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives a brief exposition of the methodology used in this evaluation. The chapter highlights the process followed by the PSC when conducting programme evaluations, the objectives of this study, the evaluation questions, scope of the study, data collection methods, data analysis and limitations of the study.

## 2.2 AN OVERVIEW OF THE APPROACH TO PROGRAMME EVALUATION

Programme evaluation is defined as the evaluation of the success of a programme and how the design and implementation of the programme contributed to that success. The PSC believes that the effective evaluation of government programmes requires careful analysis of the key factors that are relevant to the successful delivery of the programme, and how these factors relate to each other. The PSC has identified key programme evaluation elements and factors determining programme success. The key elements and factors are listed in **Appendix A**. The PSC uses the list of elements as an analytical checklist.

## 2.3 PROCESS INVOLVED IN CONDUCTING PROGRAMME EVALUATIONS

The PSC emphasises a consultative approach to programme evaluations aimed at promoting collaboration and partnership with the departments responsible for implementing the programme. This starts with the initial meetings with programme staff to gain a thorough understanding of the programme and the issues that affect the successful implementation of the programme.

The PSC informed the Minister and the Director-General of the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and their provincial counterparts in the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, Western Cape and Mpumalanga Provinces about the intention to evaluate CASP. Meetings were held with provincial programme managers to understand how the programme was implemented at provincial level and to gather information about the projects and beneficiaries at provincial level. After engaging with programme managers at provincial level, district programme managers and beneficiaries were engaged in the form of interviews. The draft report with recommendations was presented to the national and provincial departments in order to provide them with the opportunity to comment and give additional input on the draft report before finalising it. The process followed in the evaluation of programmes is captured in **Diagram 1** below.

## 2.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the evaluation of the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP) were:

• To evaluate whether the objectives of the Programme have been achieved/are being achieved.

• To evaluate whether the programme design was appropriate in relation to the set objectives.

• To evaluate whether the programme is being implemented effectively and efficiently (focusing on the implementation strategies).

## 2.5 EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Evaluation questions define the issues the evaluation will investigate and are stated in terms such that they can be answered using methods available to the evaluator in a way useful to stakeholders. An important step in designing an evaluation is determining questions the evaluation must answer. The development of the evaluation questions consisted of four steps:

• Clarifying the goals and objectives of the programme

• Identifying the key stakeholders of the programme

• Listing and prioritising evaluation questions of interest to various stakeholders; and

• Determining which questions can be addressed given the resources and constraints of the evaluation.

The following questions were then identified aimed at addressing the success of the programme, implementation of the programme (assessment of programme process), programme operations and service delivery, financial analysis and sustainability.

Success of the programme

* How successful is the programme as measured against its own objectives?
* Have systems been put in place to collect data on the performance indicators linked to these objectives?
* Is the societal problem the services are intended to address, made better?

Implementation of the programme

* Were the key elements of the programme successfully implemented?
* What are the success factors and were these adhered to?
* Is the programme reaching its targeted beneficiaries?
* Were there any contextual factors affecting the success of the programme and

how were these addressed?

* What are the administrative arrangements for the programme?
* Are administrative and service objectives being met?
* Are the clients satisfied with the services?

Financial Analysis

* Was the budget of the programme spent as intended?

Sustainability

* How is it ensured that the benefits derived from the programme are sustained?

## 2.6 METHODOLOGY

After determining the set of evaluation questions the next step involved deciding how each question would be addressed and developing an overall evaluation design. At this point decisions regarding the types and mixture of data collection methodologies, sampling, scheduling of data collection and data analysis were made.

Since CASP does not have a logic framework/theory of change, an evaluation matrix had to be developed prior to the evaluation. The matrix indicates the objectives of the evaluation. In addition, the following success factors were listed against which programme implementation could be assessed:

* Project management and service delivery capacity;
* Sound intergovernmental relations and alignment of CASP with other relevant programmes;
* Implementation of all the CASP pillars to ensure that it achieves its overall goal of providing comprehensive support to small scale and emerging farmers;
* Increased access of CASP support for the targeted group;
* Improved productivity as a result of technological advancement;
* Effectiveness of farming operations;
* Improved productivity and income levels;
* Improved availability of on-farm and off-farm support; and
* Increased access to financial services

Questions were developed to guide the data collection with regard to each of the above elements. The evaluation matrix is attached as **Appendix B**. The matrix also indicates the data collection instruments for the questions.

### 2.6.1 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The following methods were used during the evaluation:

**2.6.1.1 Archival/Documentary Sources**

A systematic review of historical documents, speeches, literary texts, official memoranda, business plans, and annual reports was undertaken and conclusions were drawn from such documents.

**2.6.1.2 Analysis of Programme and Project Administrative Records**

In order to evaluate the effective and efficient implementation of the programme, the project team collected data on the implementation of the programme based on available programme and project administrative records.

**2.6.1.3 Site-visits (observations) and Interviews**

This part of the study was undertaken to supplement the two methods discussed above, to the extent necessary. The project team developed a second instrument to analyse the success of the programme at project level and collected data at project level that could not be extracted from programme and project administrative records. This included visits to project sites and interviews with programme and project managers, members of projects, beneficiaries and other relevant stakeholders.

### 2.6.2 DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis of qualitative data was guided by the success factors in the evaluation matrix at **Appendix B.** In terms of quantitative data, the analysis was based on data tables that were created and supplied to the departments in the four sampled provinces.

## 2.7 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Four Provinces were selected to participate in the evaluation, namely, the Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape. The selection was based on two provinces that are doing relatively well, and two that are not doing that well, in terms of CASP overall expenditure of budget allocated. In addition, suggestions from the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries were taken into consideration during the selection process. Mpumalanga and Western Cape Provinces were selected because they spent 100% of the budget allocated in the 2008/09 financial year, whilst KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape were selected because they spent 73% and 91% of the budget, respectively, and were specifically singled out by the then Director-General for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, during a presentation on the 24th June 2009, as struggling Provinces in terms of implementation of CASP.

A total number of 36 projects were evaluated, i.e. 9 projects per province. The selection criterion for projects at provincial level was “successful” and “struggling projects.” The departments’ officials were of assistance in identifying struggling and successful projects. The PSC selected projects and asked officials to indicate the status of the project. The projects are situated in the following district municipalities: Eden and Overberg in the Western Cape; KwaDukuza, Ugu, Umgungundlovu, Sisonke, and Uthungulu in KwaZulu-Natal; Ehlanzeni, Gert Sibande, and Nkangala in Mpumalanga; and Amathole and Chris Hani in the Eastern Cape.

## 2.8 LIMITATIONS

The limitations of the evaluation included the following:

• Unavailability of records (production, income, invoices etc.).

• Challenges in soliciting quantitative data from KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga and the Eastern Cape. The reason provided by these provinces was that such data was not readily available. Although they eventually submitted, many of the tables were incomplete. Some of the data in some provinces was contradictory and unreliable.

• The Public Service Strike in September 2010, which delayed the field work in the Eastern Cape.

# CHAPTER 3: STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS IN THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR

## 3.1 INTRODUCTION

There has been a long history of state intervention in South African agriculture, which reached its zenith around 1980 with a host of laws, ordinances, statutes and regulations. Deregulation and liberalisation were a fact of life in the agricultural sector of South Africa during the 1980s. The process was characterised by change within an existing institutional structure, as the main role players involved in the sector remained in place despite the general relaxation in State intervention. These affected, and in many cases still affect, all aspects of agriculture, including prices of, access to and use of natural resources, finance, capital, labour, local markets, foreign markets and foreign exchange, etc.[[24]](#footnote-24) Importantly, these measures impacted unequally on different categories of farmers. The two best known outcomes of the complex interaction of social, political and economic factors that characterise South African agriculture are probably the highly skewed distribution of land ownership and food production’s consistent outpacing of population growth rates.[[25]](#footnote-25)

The most important policy initiatives taken subsequent to this time included land reform, the promulgation of new legislation, including the Marketing of Agricultural Products Act (Act no. 47 of 1996) and the Water Act (Act no. 36 of 1998), etc. The purpose of these policy reforms was, amongst others, to correct the injustices of the past, principally through land reform, to get the agricultural sector on a less capital-intensive growth path and to enhance the international competitiveness of the sector. The next sections discuss some of the policy reforms and strategic interventions that have taken place in the agricultural sector.

## 3.2 THE BROADENING OF ACCESS TO AGRICULTURE THRUST (BATAT)

The broader land and agrarian reforms within the agricultural sector have over the past fifteen years laid a solid foundation for policy frameworks ranging from land restitution and redistribution to labour legislation, trade policy, technology transfer and rural development. The Broadening Access to Agriculture Thrust (BATAT) of the mid 1990’s, including farmer support and loans, failed to materialise, and the Farmer Settlement Programme (FSP) responsible for post-transfer agricultural support had no dedicated national budget until 2004.[[26]](#footnote-26) BATAT argued that over many years, some sectors of the population were excluded from the above services and it would therefore be appropriate that access to agricultural services be broadened for these groups.

The BATAT initiative contributed substantially to creating an awareness of the need to transform agriculture, not only in terms of broadening access for the previously excluded groups but in terms of moving it from a white male dominated sector to a sector in which both men and women of all races can participate equally. [[27]](#footnote-27)

## 3.3 THE WHITE PAPER ON AGRICULTURE

In 1995 the Department of Agriculture published a White Paper on Agriculture, based on principles that reflect the opportunities for, as well as the threats to the sector and its role players. The principles formed the basis of agricultural policy and enabled agricultural role-players to formulate their respective strategies. The basic tenet of these principles is that “agriculture is an important component of the national economy and for the community.”[[28]](#footnote-28)

The White Paper envisioned the creation of “A highly efficient and economically viable market directed farming sector, characterised by a wide range of farm sizes, which will be regarded as the economic and social pivot of rural South Africa and which will influence the rest of the economy and society.”[[29]](#footnote-29)

## 3.4 THE STRAUSS COMMISSION REPORT

The Strauss Commission of 1996 comprehensively studied access to financial services by rural people and found supply to be both inadequate and costly. The Commission carried out benchmark surveys in KwaZulu-Natal and Northern Province.[[30]](#footnote-30) Amongst others, the Commission proposed that the following financial `sunrise' subsidies be considered to support land reform beneficiaries:[[31]](#footnote-31)

• Graded repayment

• Flexible repayment

• Discount subsidy

The above recommendations formed the basis for the introduction of CASP.

## 3.5 THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR PLAN

The Agriculture Sector Plan of 2001 envisioned agriculture as a united and prosperous sector. This vision implies sustained profitable participation in the South African agricultural economy by all stakeholders, recognising the need to maintain and increase commercial production, to build international competitiveness and to address the historical legacies and biases that resulted in skewed access and representation.[[32]](#footnote-32)

## 3.6 LAND REFORM IN SOUTH AFRICA

This section gives a background to land reform in South Africa. The government's land reform principal sub-programmes: Land Redistribution, Land Restitution and Land Tenure Reform are also discussed.

Since CASP provides support to beneficiaries of Land Redistribution, this sub-programme is discussed in detail by outlining the redistribution programme, implemented from 1995 up to date, i.e. Settlement/ Land Acquisition Grant (SLAG); Land Redistribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD), and the Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS).

### 3.6.1 Background to land reform in South Africa

According to Statistics South Africa, in 1996 less than 1% of the population owned and controlled over 80% of farm land. This 1% was part of the 10.9% of the population classified as white.[[33]](#footnote-33) The 76.7% of the population that was classified as African, had access to less than 15% of the agricultural land, and even that access was without clear ownership or legally-recognised rights.[[34]](#footnote-34)

The need for land reforms to address the legacy of the past was clearly identified in the South African Constitution (Act 108 of 1996, Section 25). The democratic government opted for a three-pronged land reform policy to redress the historical injustice of land dispossession, denial of access to land and forced removals:

* Land Restitution (to restore land or provide financial compensation for people dispossessed of land after 1913.)
* Land Redistribution
* Land Tenure reform

The following is a brief discussion of the land reform policies in South Africa:

### 3.6.2 Land Restitution

Under the Land Restitution Act of 1994, persons or communities who lost their property as a result of apartheid laws or practices after 1913 were invited to submit claims for restitution (return of land) or compensation (usually financial). The claims are dealt with by the Land Claims Court and Commission established under the Restitution of Land Rights Act, 22 of 1994.

### 3.6.3 Land Tenure Reform

Land Tenure Reform is the most complex area of land reform.[[35]](#footnote-35) It aims to bring all people occupying land under a unitary, legally secure system of landholding. It provides for security of land tenure, helps resolve tenure disputes and makes awards to provide people with secure tenure. Laws were introduced after 1994 to give people (especially farm workers and labour tenants) security of tenure over houses and land where they work and stay.

### 3.6.4 Land Redistribution

Redistribution is the most important component of land reform in South Africa. The purpose of the land redistribution programme is to provide the poor with access to land for residential and productive uses, in order to improve their income and quality of life.[[36]](#footnote-36) The programme was largely based on willing-buyer willing-seller arrangements (government did not expropriate land) and government provided grants for the purchase of land, but was not the buyer or owner. Government made land acquisition grants available and supported and financed the required planning process. In many cases, communities were expected to pool their resources to negotiate, buy and jointly hold land under a formal title deed. The first version of the redistribution programme, implemented from 1995, involved the Department of Land Affairs (DLA) providing a Settlement/ Land Acquisition Grant (SLAG) to assist the poor with land purchases.

Over the years the land redistribution programme assumed different forms as it was adjusted to address perceived weaknesses of the programme. These changes are reflected by the different names for the grants.

**3.6.4.1 The Settlement Land Acquisition Grant (SLAG)**

The objective of the Settlement/Land Acquisition Grant was to improve land tenure security and to extend property ownership and/or access to land to the historically disadvantaged and the poor.[[37]](#footnote-37) This grant was designed to assist those who in the first instance have land needs and security of tenure needs. It was a R15 000 cash grant.[[38]](#footnote-38) The basic grant was supplemented by other grants for planning, for facilitation and for dispute resolution. In most cases, farms financed with land grants and settled by groups (up to 500 households) were far too small to support all of the beneficiaries as full-time farmers. It was only available for the following project types: settlement, tenure, and non-agricultural projects e.g. eco-tourism projects.[[39]](#footnote-39)

By the end of 2000, the Ministry of Agriculture and Land Affairs had approved 484 projects under the SLAG programme, transferring 780,407 hectares to 55 383 people.[[40]](#footnote-40)

**3.6.4.2 Land Re-distribution for Agricultural Development (LRAD)**

Following the slow progress with the implementation of land redistribution in the first five years after 1994, the programme was redesigned. The SLAG programme ended in 2000, and the new Land Reform for Agricultural Development (LRAD) programme was introduced in the same year. LRAD has been designed to expand the range of support measures that will be available to previously disadvantaged South African citizens to access land specifically for agricultural purposes. LRAD’s major difference from SLAG was that beneficiaries did not have to be poor to apply for the minimum of R20 000 land grant, and those who have more savings and can raise bigger loans to finance their farms qualify for larger grants. LRAD has brought an increase in per capita grant levels and encouraged the trend towards smaller group sizes in redistribution projects. The objectives of LRAD were to:*[[41]](#footnote-41)*

* contribute to the redistribution of 30% of the country’s agricultural land over 15 years starting from 2000;
* help black and poor people in rural areas to improve their living standard by enabling them to access and use land productively;
* decongest overcrowded former homeland areas; and
* expand opportunities for women and youth in rural areas.

Applicants (who might be individuals or groups) identify land they wish to buy. The qualifying criterion for applicants was that they must:

* be previously disadvantaged (Black, Coloured or Indian),
* be serious about agricultural production, and
* have the ambition to make a success of their farming operations.

The target for the programme is to ensure the redistribution of 30% of agricultural land to blacks by 2014. [[42]](#footnote-42) The redistribution of 30% of white-owned agricultural land has stood since 1994 as the overall target for the land reform programme, and is generally understood to include both the redistribution and the restitution programmes.

Critics of the LRAD programme claimed it would not meet its targets for redistribution of land nor change the basic structure of the agriculture sector. They claimed it would merely change the racial composition of land owners and would benefit only a small minority of the already privileged.[[43]](#footnote-43) However, despite this criticism, one of the key advantages of LRAD compared to SLAG was that LRAD beneficiaries did not have to be poor to apply for the minimum R20 000 land grant, and those who had more savings and could raise bigger loans to finance their farms, qualified for larger grants. It shifted the focus to bigger, commercially viable units.[[44]](#footnote-44)

**3.6.4.3 Proactive Land Acquisition Strategy (PLAS)**

The implementation of PLAS was envisioned to contribute to the higher path of growth, employment and equity by 2014.[[45]](#footnote-45) The PLAS dealt with two possible approaches: a needs-based approach and a supply-led approach but essentially focusing on the state as the lead driver in land redistribution rather than the former beneficiary-driven redistribution.[[46]](#footnote-46) The two approaches were deemed to be similar (only the state’s entry point was different) as both approaches advocated the dominant role of the state. These approaches have therefore been streamlined into one approach: State-driven Proactive Land Acquisition.

The strategy/approach moves from the premise that there is a need or demand for land, it might either be quantified (through IDPs) or not, but that it is not beneficiary demand driven, but rather state driven. This means that the state will proactively target land and match this with the demand or need for land.

Despite the above interventions, the land reform programme in South Africa has been criticised for failing to reach its targets or deliver on its multiple objectives of historical redress, redistribution of wealth and opportunities and economic growth.[[47]](#footnote-47)

However, the advantage of PLAS compared to the previous strategies is that it is “supply led” in the sense that the state actively uses market opportunities when they arise to proactively buy land and in some instances approach the landowners to sell.[[48]](#footnote-48)

## 3.7 FARMER SUPPORT PROGRAMME IN SOUTH AFRICA

Inadequate support to the beneficiaries of land reform has been a recurring complaint almost since the inception of the programme. The farmer support programmes funded by the Development Bank of Southern Africa before the advent of democracy were intended to provide access to resources and support services to small scale farmers in the homelands, to enable them to use resources more efficiently and to become more business-like. The evaluation of the programme in the early nineties found that the need for credit and more land increased as agricultural support services became more widely available and yields on limited holdings increased. [[49]](#footnote-49)

However, the 2001 agricultural sector strategy noted that support services to farmers in the former homeland areas collapsed after the advent of democracy. While considerable institutional energy and funds were expended on providing access to land for new entrants to farming over, less attention was given to farmer support programmes. Post-land settlement support to participants in the land reform programmes were organised on an *ad hoc* basis, with the result that its impact was partial at best.[[50]](#footnote-50)

The agricultural sector strategy highlighted amongst others, the challenge of improving and expanding the existing support services to meet the needs of all farmers. This includes the continuation of a range of on-going activities such as the strengthening of service delivery institutions for research, financial services, market access and development, training and skills development.[[51]](#footnote-51)

Various studies have shown that beneficiaries experience severe problems accessing services such as credit, training, extension advice, transport, veterinary services, and markets.[[52]](#footnote-52)

### 3.7.1 The Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP)

In an attempt to address some of the challenges identified in the 2001 Agricultural Sector Plan, the Comprehensive Agriculture Support Programme was launched on the 17th August 2004 in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal by the then Minister for Agriculture and Land Affairs. The programme was allocated R750 million over the three-year medium-term expenditure framework. It was envisaged that the programme would address pressing challenges such as ineffective support systems and the gap between progress that the department of Land Affairs has made in providing access to land to the previously disadvantaged, and the provision of agricultural services to these beneficiaries. The programme was founded on the concept of public-private-community cooperation for service delivery. Therefore, the delivery mechanism for CASP is underpinned by three pillars, namely, cooperation between partners and the alignment of strategies, clear definition of roles and responsibilities of the partners and clear analysis of the resources available to fund such a programme.

CASP was designed to promote and facilitate agricultural development by providing support services to the beneficiaries of the land and agrarian reform programmes.

The CASP model provides for the following six areas of support:

• Information and knowledge management;

• Technical and Advisory Assistance, and Regulatory Services;

• Training and Capacity building;

• Financial Assistance;

• Marketing and Business Development; and

• On- and off-farm Infrastructure and Production Inputs.

The expected impact of CASP was the reduced poverty and inequalities in land and enterprise ownership, improved farming efficiency, improved national and household food security, stable and safe rural communities, reduced levels of crime and violence, increased creation of wealth in agricultural and rural areas, and finally, increased pride and dignity in agriculture as an occupation and sector.

CASP is targeted to support the four different levels of clients within the farming continuum and the **Table** **2** below shows the clients and type of support offered.[[53]](#footnote-53)

Table 2: CASP clients and type of support

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Beneficiaries** | **Type of Support** |
| The hungry and vulnerable | Supported through advice and food emergences through the agricultural food packs and dealing with food crises; |
| Household food security and subsistence | Supported through food production and include the special programme on food security (SPFS) and the Integrated Food Security and Nutrition Programme (IFSNP) where the provision of starter pack is made. |
| Farm and business level activity | Supported through farm level support and include the beneficiaries of the LRAD and other strategic programmes e.g. the rehabilitation of the irrigation schemes. |
| Agricultural macro-systems within consumer, economic environment | To ensure that business and the regulatory  environment is conducive to support agricultural development and food safety. |

The following criteria should be followed when allocating a CASP grant:

* Community involvement and ownership
* Target beneficiaries should be from the previously disadvantaged group
* Enhances national and household food security
* One-off grant and not committing the Government to any form of direct recurrent operational or maintenance projects grants
* Long-term sustainability and economic viability
* Project finance support will only be provided for agricultural activities having the required level of institutional and technical support
* Projects that will generate employment opportunities should be given priority

**3.7.1.1 Roles and responsibilities of partners**

The DoA is not the only service provider to the targeted beneficiaries of CASP, other stakeholders include provincial departments of agriculture, Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, District Committee and Council, beneficiaries, the Land Bank and the Primary Agriculture Education and Training Authority (PAETA). The Strategic Plan for South African Agriculture has given effect to the concept of public-private-community cooperation.

**3.7.1.2 The implementation strategies of CASP**

Through the Intergovernmental Fiscal Review process, the parties (Department of Agriculture (DoA) and National Treasury (NT) at Provincial and National Departments) formed a joint technical committee to establish greater coordination between policy development and budgeting for functions that are the joint responsibility of national and provincial government. This committee recommended a three-pronged strategy for implementing CASP and identified the cost drivers and spending pressures. The strategies include alignment of all support services to the six priority areas identified, phasing in basic support services related to on-and-off farm infrastructure and also developing a policy for agricultural financing.

**3.7.1.3 Implementation progress since CASP was launched**

The DoA monitoring teams visited all the nine Provinces in the 2004/2005 financial year to assess the progress that had been made, verify the business plans that had been submitted and to identify any constraints and challenges experienced by provinces and project beneficiaries. The monitoring group observed that although progress had been made by the Provinces in identifying priority projects, there were however six implementation challenges that were identified, and these were:[[54]](#footnote-54)

• Ineffective delivery systems for CASP at the Provincial levels

* Cumbersome procurement and tender system

• Lack of capacity

• Non-compliance to the grant conditions

• Poor mobilisation of civil society

• Unclear financing criteria

The CASP Annual Report for 2008/2009 re-iterated the same implementation challenges.

The Department of Agriculture further contracted Umhlaba Rural Services Pty Ltd in 2006 to carry out a review of CASP. This review was undertaken against the aims and objectives set out for the programme. The review found that the problem with CASP lay with failures in joint implementation by the two core programme stakeholders, namely the departments of Agriculture and Land Affairs.[[55]](#footnote-55) In order to improve the overall efficacy of CASP the reviewers proposed the following:

• There should be a common understanding of CASP

• There should be common and joint structures

• There should be joint planning and budgeting

• Capacity and service provision

### 3.7.2 Other Farmer Support Initiatives

The Department of Agriculture Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) (the new name of the national Department since 2009) has put in place several other programmes to support emerging farmers. The following are some of them:

1. Agricultural Black Economic Empowerment (AgriBEE)

AgriBEE is intended to facilitate broad-based black economic empowerment in the agricultural sector. This is achieved by implementing initiatives that include Black South Africans in all levels of agricultural activity and enterprises along the entire agricultural value chain. Such initiatives are facilitated by DAFF and organised agriculture and implemented jointly between established and emerging black agricultural businesses.

2. Micro Finance Institute of South Africa (MAFISA)

MAFISA, an agency linked to DAFF, is a micro and retail agricultural financial service for economically active rural poor people. MAFISA was created to address the lack of access to financial services by previously disadvantaged individuals (PDIs).

3. Integrated Food Security and Nutrition Programme [[56]](#footnote-56)

This programme aims at reducing the number of food insecure households by half by 2015. The objective is to support farmers in order to increase domestic food production. In addition, DAFF has to support 244 000 food parcel beneficiaries to make use of “starter packs for food production” for their benefit.

4. The National Land Care Programme

The goal of this programme is to promote the sustainable use and management of natural resources.

## 3.8 CONCLUSION

This Chapter provided background on strategic interventions that have taken place in the agricultural sector since 1994, including the land reform programme. The chapter also provided information on farmer support programmes in South Africa focusing, among others, on the contextual information on CASP and its implementation progress since inception. A notable observation is that delivery challenges that were highlighted in the 2004/2005 CASP annual report were repeated in the 2008/2009 CASP annual report, which means that these delivery challenges have not been resolved since the inception of the programme.

Given this background, the PSC sought, through this evaluation, to establish progress that has been made to support emerging farmers in South Africa. The next chapter focuses on the key findings of the evaluation.

# CHAPTER FOUR: KEY FINDINGS

## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This Chapter presents an overview of the key findings of the study. They are based on an analysis of programme and project records, a document analysis, interviews with CASP managers at national, provincial and district levels and site visits, which included interviews with beneficiaries. A further breakdown of these findings per province is presented in Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8.

## 4.2 CONCEPTUALISATION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT PROGRAMME (CASP)

CASP does not have an explicit design in terms of a logic framework[[57]](#footnote-57) that establishes a link between goals, objectives, inputs, outputs and outcomes, and assumptions that underlie this relationship, with indicators and means of verification of performance information. Whilst the design of CASP in terms of the six pillars makes sense and is needs driven, it lacks clarity on important details such as performance indicators, targets, inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts. Consequently, some managers that were interviewed were not conversant with the finer implementation modalities of the programme per pillar. This was evident during the interviews in KwaZulu-Natal when one of the managers admitted that he was not aware that *Financial Assistance* was one of the CASP pillars. The fact that a programme logic framework has not been put in place partly explains this limited understanding of the programme logic framework. In addition, awareness-raising and an explanation of the pillars to all managers involved in the programme needs attention.

A proper programme logic framework should have served as a planning tool for the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries for developing a programme strategy. It should have been used by the department as a roadmap or blueprint for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the programme.[[58]](#footnote-58)

Over and above this, CASP does not have a formally approved National Concept document. The existing guiding document utilised by the Department is still in a draft form with track changes. Although the provincial CASP managers interviewed by the PSC are aware of the document, there are those that still do not have a firm grasp of its content and the PSC could also not find evidence of any dissemination of this document. The concept document also still requires further strengthening. For example, it does not stipulate conditions and criteria for issuing the grant.

As a result of these shortcomings, the interpretation, understanding and implementation of the programme varies in all four provinces that were evaluated. With the exception of Western Cape, the three other provinces that were evaluated, i.e. Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape did not have documented criteria for selecting beneficiaries. This could pose a challenge in terms of the transparency of the selection process.

It is a question whether the CASP programme should be designed as a separate programme or simply as a funding mechanism (by means of a conditional grant) for the existing programmes of the provincial departments. The provincial budget programmes “farmer support and development”, “technology research and development”, “agricultural economics” and “structured agricultural training” (which are fairly standardised budget programmes for all the provincial agriculture departments) have the same objectives as CASP and correspond to a large degree with the CASP pillars. The (more or less similar) objectives of CASP and the provincial programmes are, therefore, funded from two sources, namely from the provincial budget programmes and from the CASP conditional grant. In recognition of this fact the provincial departments have not appointed CASP managers (because some of the pillars of the CASP programme are already the responsibility of the programme managers of the provincial budget programmes) but only CASP “coordinators” (who serve as a link between the provincial department and the national department and ensure that the prescribed processes of CASP are followed and the conditions of the grant are met). This overlap between the provincial budget programmes and the CASP programme should be carefully considered if a new CASP concept document is to be prepared.

## 4.3 CASP EXPENDITURE PATTERNS

**Table 3** below shows the CASP expenditure patterns in four sampled provinces for the financial years 2007/08 – 2009/10.[[59]](#footnote-59)

Table 3: CASP Expenditure Patterns: R ‘000

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Province** | **2007/08** | | | **2008/09** | | | **2009/10** | | |
|  | **Budget** | **Expend** | **%** | **Budget** | **Expend** | **%** | **Budget** | **Expend** | **%** |
| Mpumalanga | 41 133 | 37 431 | 91 | 43 107 | 43 107 | 100 | 55 504 | 55 504 | 100 |
| Western Cape | 33 426 | 33 326 | 100 | 49 205 | 49 205 | 100 | 57 640 | 57 598 | 100 |
| KwaZulu-Natal | 80 080 | 15 247 | 19 | 165 378 | 107 906 | 65 | 117 762 | 106 197 | 90 |
| Eastern Cape | 69 833 | 63 459 | 91 | 109 053 | 100 053 | 92 | 128 441 | 111 311 | 87 |

The table shows that KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape have been consistently under-spending for the three financial years. In KwaZulu-Natal the under-expenditure was especially huge during 2007/08 and 2008/09. Although the under-expenditure has been narrowing in KwaZulu-Natal, the trend should remain a cause for concern. From the interviews conducted, the PSC established that the under-expending is largely attributed to inefficient procurement processes.[[60]](#footnote-60)

Western Cape cited the use of an implementing agent, the Cape Agency for Sustainable Integrated Development in Rural Areas (CASIDRA), which also handles procurement, as one of the reasons for improved procurement processes and reduction of the turnaround times for service delivery.[[61]](#footnote-61) This has also contributed immensely to the full use of the provincial CASP budget.

In KwaZulu-Natal the same happens with regard to sugar cane projects since the province has enlisted the services of Illovo and Tongaat-Hulett as implementing agents. Furthermore, the province’s envisaged partnership with the Agribusiness Development Agency (ADA) as the implementing agent for all provincial post settlement support projects should improve procurement processes and resolve some service delivery challenges.

Mpumalanga indicated that an implementing agent, the Mpumalanga Agricultural Development Corporation (MADC) was used until 2008, when fraudulent activities were discovered. A decision was then taken to terminate the relationship and the Department started implementing the projects with the support of Consulting Engineers that provide professional engineering support on planning, implementation and monitoring of the projects, while looking to appoint internal engineers. Since the appointment of these companies, project performance in the province has improved substantially.

In this regard, the Eastern Cape could consider following the same route in order to create better implementation capacity. The department could, however, also review their own internal processes and capacity. The value of partnerships and alternative implementation arrangements is, however, that the strengths of different departments, agencies and private businesses can complement each other, rather than necessarily building all the capacity in-house.

## 4.4 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CASP PILLARS

When the CASP programme was developed, the intention was that it should offer a comprehensive package of support to emerging farmers. The fact that the programme provided a source of additional funding in the form of a conditional grant, however, tended to shift the focus of the programme to the infrastructure pillar to satisfy a specific need to re-capitalise farms. One respondent stated during the interview that since there was a huge demand for this funding, the idea was to ensure that everyone gets at least a piece of the cake. However, the four sampled provinces did also pay considerable attention to especially the extension services pillar, the information and knowledge management pillar and the training and capacity building pillar. The personnel expenditure associated with these pillars comes from the provincial budgets under the programmes: *Farmer Support and Development, Technology Research and Development* and *Structured Agricultural Training.*

The following is a summary of the status of implementation of the CASP pillars:

### 4.4.1 Information and Knowledge Management

This pillar aims at creating the knowledge resources and technical knowhow that is needed to support emerging farmers. The pillar also includes raising awareness in order to ensure that CASP reaches all categories of beneficiaries in all geographic areas of the country. In addition, this pillar provides for the development of a beneficiary database and farmer register for planning, budgeting and reporting purposes.[[62]](#footnote-62)

The study found that the National and Provincial Departments do not have reliable information management systems for recording project data. Databases of farmer information and their operations are not easy to access. It was difficult for example, for the PSC to solicit accurate information on the turnaround times for the delivery of CASP projects, the planned versus achieved outputs per CASP pillar and data on production and income levels. In this regard, a respondent in KwaZulu-Natal stated that the project data “resides in the officials’ computers and if that particular official leaves the department, all information on what that officer was doing is lost.”[[63]](#footnote-63)

With the exception of Western Cape, provinces did not provide the PSC with clear planned outputs for this pillar. The Western Cape department planned two outputs regarding the implementation of the information and knowledge management pillar, namely the Manstrat Extension Suite Online and the Smart Pen System. The Manstrat Extension Suite Online is a software package loaded onto the extension officers’ laptops, which contains information on various topics on agriculture to better equip extension officers with credible information regarding various crops, production techniques etc.[[64]](#footnote-64) When the farmer requests information and the extension officer cannot provide the answer, he/she searches for the information and advises the farmer accordingly. If the relevant information is unavailable, the officer consults the relevant expert at head office. The Department planned for all advisors and trainers (296) in the Department to be using the tool and by the end of the 2009/10 financial year there were 120 (40%) users.

The study found that extension officers inform people about the services and grants available under CASP and their eligibility for it. This was confirmed by most beneficiaries that were interviewed. Mpumalanga has put in place a communication strategy, which includes awareness raising, project launches, group contacts and meetings. In all provinces the general feeling was that departmental offices were accessible to people.

### 4.4.2 Technical and Advisory Assistance (extension services)

The purpose of this pillar is to provide technical advice, or extension services, to the farmers on all production and business processes on the farm.[[65]](#footnote-65) Extension Officers are expected to conduct the following functions:[[66]](#footnote-66)

* Assist farmers to form commodity groups;
* Assist farmers to find buyers;
* Obtain and use market information;
* Assist farmers as to the quantities and time to sell;
* Advise farmers on production issues;
* Train farmers in groups.

Extension officers generally visit the farms on invitation/request, over and above planned regular visits. In the Western Cape the extension officers are required to visit the projects at least once a month. Usually, farmers who need assistance would approach the extension officers.

Respondents indicated that the work of extension officers also includes advising farmers other than farmers supported under CASP. According to the Western Cape Department of Agriculture requests received for technical assistance and engineering services in relation to the implementation of CASP projects placed the limited staff under tremendous pressure.[[67]](#footnote-67) This suggests that the CASP programme brought an additional work load that was not properly planned for. Over and above this, managers in the Amathole District in the Eastern Cape Province stated that some extension officers may be responsible for ten (10) units whilst others may be responsible for a hundred (100) units. This suggests that there is no specific farmer-extension officer ratio and no equal distribution of workload.[[68]](#footnote-68)

It is important that both the quantity (number of visits to farms) and the quality of extension services are closely monitored. The Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries promotes the use of what is called the “Green Book” as a mechanism to monitor the work of extension officers and to ensure accountability. The purpose of the Green Book is to record the farmer’s daily interactions with extension officers and other stakeholders.[[69]](#footnote-69) The contents of the green book, amongst others, include the following:[[70]](#footnote-70)

* Farmer’s details;
* Advisor’s records;
* Service delivery point;
* Daily interaction with farmer;
* Farmer’s monthly activity plan;
* Notes and follow-up issues; and
* Calendar

However, the sampled provinces, with the exception of the Western Cape, had not started using the Green Book and this is a serious deficiency. The Western Cape Department of Agriculture is the first Department in the country to adopt Smart Pen technology (a digital Green Book) in order to strengthen its project management and monitoring capacity.[[71]](#footnote-71) Through this technology, the location of each officer, and the advice he/she provides to the farmer is instantaneously monitored by head office officials.

The Department maintains that since the introduction of the Smart Pen the visits to projects went up and the number of dormant projects was reduced. The monitoring of the activities of extension officers, number of visits per project and response time of extension staff has improved due to the implementation of the smart pen monitoring system.[[72]](#footnote-72)

The Department manages the process in the following way: [[73]](#footnote-73)

* Registration forms are given to the responsible officer for the relevant projects.
* The data of each project is then loaded, edited and validated.
* After the projects have been validated, pre-printed site visit forms are provided to the responsible officer. All forms are pre-printed at the District Offices and Managers, Administrators and Extension Officers manage this process in the following way:[[74]](#footnote-74)
  1. The Extension Officers (Eos) plan and identify the projects which they would like to visit and then inform the District Office in order to have the forms pre-printed.
  2. The Eos arrange with the District Office Administrator to collect/send the printed forms ahead of the visits.
  3. Forms are only printed for the planned visits.
* A completed form will not be accepted if any of the following information is absent: GPS coordinates, file number, CASP number, size of the farm, indication of the FSD contribution on the Project Registration Form, beneficiary profile, contact details, project finance, and project involvement.[[75]](#footnote-75)

Extension officers are not necessarily fully capacitated to deal with the needs of farmers. However, an “Extension Recovery Plan” (ERP) has been implemented across the provinces to improve the image of extension services in the country and to provide on-going training and support to extension. The ERP strategy is based on the findings of a report on the profile of extension and advisory services, the norms and standards for extension work issued by the national department and the outcomes of the Minister’s Extension Indaba.[[76]](#footnote-76) In this regard, the department requested a funding allocation from National Treasury for the implementation of this plan in October 2007. National Treasury approved an amount of R500 million over the MTEF period.[[77]](#footnote-77) Although this study did not assess the impact of this plan, judging from the interviews with the managers and beneficiaries, and the state of the farms that were visited, the plan is yet to make a difference.

### 4.4.3 Training and Capacity Building

This pillar covers training and capacity building of the beneficiaries, particularly in practical marketing and financial management.[[78]](#footnote-78)

The study found that departments provided training without any prior skills needs assessment. Training is offered by Agricultural Colleges and accredited service providers. On average, the duration of courses is five days. In addition to accredited courses, provinces have organised mentorship programmes between experienced commercial farmers and the emerging farmers. However, in some instances emerging farmers who acquired land through LRAD have entered into voluntary joint ventures with established commercial farmers. The Silwanentuthuko Trust/ Donovale Farming Company Pty Ltd in KwaZulu-Natal is a good example. This partnership model has ensured that the already-existing infrastructure and expertise of commercial farmers benefitted the emerging farmers. The partnership model of this joint training in the form of on-the-farm-training is also provided by extension officers.

The **Table** below provides details supplied by the four provinces on the number of beneficiaries trained between 2007/08 and 2009/10.

**Table 4: Training of CASP Beneficiaries in Study Provinces (2007/08 - 2009/10)[[79]](#footnote-79)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Province** | **2007/08 - 2009/10** | | |
| **No. of Beneficiaries** | **No. trained** | **Percentage** |
| Mpumalanga | 2 871 (08/09-09/10) | 701 | 24% |
| Western Cape | 16 714 | 7 850 | 50% |
| KwaZulu-Natal | 12 167 | 12 167 | 100% |
| Eastern Cape | 9 615 | 411 | 4% |
| **Total** | **29 200** | **21 129** | **72%** |

The above table shows that on average, 72% of the beneficiaries in the four sampled provinces have been trained. KwaZulu-Natal reported that all CASP beneficiaries (100%) were trained for this three-year period. Western Cape stated that 50% were trained, followed by Mpumalanga province with 24% and lastly the Eastern Cape with 4%. None of the provinces have conducted an impact assessment of their training activities.

In the Eastern Cape the managers stated that due to financial constraints, the department provided training mainly on technical and soft skills (business management, etc.) but this is often not guided by the actual training needs. However, skills development coordinators have been appointed since 2009 and they have been conducting a skills audit.

### 4.4.4 On- and Off-farm Infrastructure

This pillar of the programme involves the provision of enabling infrastructure such as tractors, production inputs such as fertiliser and seeds and marketing/preparation facilities such as sorting, packaging, and storage facilities. The main purpose of this pillar is to ensure that through the infrastructure provided, beneficiaries can use their land productively.

The evaluation found that the bulk of CASP funding is allocated to infrastructural projects. Provincial managers indicated that they received a directive from the national Department that they should concentrate on the infrastructure pillar. However, since 2008 they were informed that other pillars could be implemented as well. Notwithstanding the latest directive, the earlier approach created white elephants, i.e. structures that were erected but not operational either due to, amongst others, lack of production inputs, lack of financial support, failure to access markets and lack of training opportunities. A copy of the directives could not be obtained from the national and sampled provincial departments. The former CASP programme manager also denied knowledge of these directives.[[80]](#footnote-80) However, the trend across all the sampled provinces is that most projects are still supported mainly through infrastructure.

### 4.4.5 Marketing and Business Development

The main purpose of this pillar is to provide marketing services and information to small-scale farmers.[[81]](#footnote-81)

In the Western Cape, the department planned to organise access to markets for farmers (facilitate business linkages) for 65 agri-businesses/ emerging farmers between 2007/08 and 2009/10 and they managed to achieve facilitation for 61 such agri-businesses/ emerging farmers. In addition to the above achievements, the Directorate: Agricultural Economics in the Western Cape was assisting farmers to obtain compliance certificates for exporting their produce. In addition, the department has been using the Extension Suite Online system since September 2009 to access markets for the benefit of the farmers.[[82]](#footnote-82) Marketing details are available on this software package.

Emerging farmers who were interviewed acknowledged that they were assisted by the relevant industries.[[83]](#footnote-83) In KwaZulu-Natal, CASP projects specialising in sugar cane were selling their produce to Illovo and Tongaat-Hulett, the two mills that have entered into a partnership with the Provincial Department.

Most beneficiaries that were interviewed generally made their own arrangements for accessing markets. However, the role of the extension officers in providing advice on marketing related matters was also acknowledged. Beneficiaries in five of the nine projects visited in the Mpumalanga Province stated that the department had assisted them to find their markets and some forged partnerships with private companies that resulted in improving the marketing of produce and business development. At the time of the visits, projects such as Coromandel, Sinamuva broiler, Mathebula CPA, Rietkuil-Intsimbi and SukumaMswati had markets in place to buy their produce.

In the Eastern Cape Districts have economists that advise farmers on markets and on contract marketing. Extension Officers also advise farmers on marketing. However, the beneficiaries in projects that were visited disagreed with the Department’s view. The intervention of the Department was hardly mentioned, with the exception of a few respondents who indicated that they received advice from the Extension Officers on marketing. Information collected by the PSC at project level shows that most projects sell their farming produce to local people. However, Blumendal Farm sells tomatoes to the local municipal market, Dunvagen sells goats to initiation schools and sheep to 7 shops in Transkei and Mbewu Family Project supplies meat to East London Abattoirs.

### 4.4.6 Financing Support

Financing support is provided through the Micro Finance Institute of South Africa (MAFISA). MAFISA is implemented by eight intermediaries/ agents appointed by the National Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. The agents interact directly with the farmers to the exclusion of the provincial and district offices. With the exception of the Western Cape, provincial managers stated the National Department did not directly involve them in the implementation of MAFISA. In this regard, they could not provide details of the number of beneficiaries and the amount of loans that have been allocated.

In the Western Cape, the funds are advanced under KALF (Kaap Agri Loan Fund) to support activities directed at commercially viable micro and medium agricultural enterprises (with turn-over of R1 million per annum).[[84]](#footnote-84) Funding is for production inputs, equipment, livestock, etc. This agency is responsible for the selection of borrowers, credit control, administration, appropriate bookkeeping systems, risk management, and adherence to all legal requirements regarding funding and credit provision. To date MAFISA loans to the value of R3 million have been granted to eight successful candidates in the province; R1.5 million, to benefit another 12 applicants, was under consideration.[[85]](#footnote-85)

MAFISA is also generally not known at project level. This was evidenced by the fact that all thirty six projects that were visited had not received MAFISA finance and only a few were aware of it. The national programme manager for CASP also confirmed during the interview that the performance of MAFISA intermediaries in terms of the percentage of the capital amounts allocated that is issued as loans, is very poor.[[86]](#footnote-86) This should be a cause for concern to the Department considering the fact that the majority of CASP beneficiaries, both in successful and failing projects expressed a need for MAFISA loan.

## 4.5 PROGRAMME ACCESS

The **Table** below shows the number of applications for the CASP grant considered and the number of approved projects. Mpumalanga provided incomplete data and was therefore excluded from this assessment.

**Table 5: CASP applications versus number of Funded Projects (2007/08 -2009/10)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Province** | **Total no. requests/applications** | **No of funded projects** |
| Mpumalanga | Incomplete data | Incomplete data |
| Western Cape | 1 265 | 589 (46%) |
| KwaZulu-Natal | 730 | 554 (76%) |
| Eastern Cape | 3 210 | 671 (21%) |
| **Total** | **5 205** | **1 814 (35%)** |

As the **table** above indicates, the Eastern Cape received the most applications (3 210) but only approved 671 (21%), followed by the Western Cape, which received the second largest number, namely, 1 265 but only approved 589 (46%), and lastly KwaZulu-Natal, which received 730 applications and approved 554 (76%).

The above statistics indicate that there is a huge demand for CASP funding and that there is a huge backlog. Provinces cited budgetary constraints as the main reason for the backlog. However, it is strange that KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape have been under-spending between the 2007/08 and the 2009/10 financial years, yet the number of funded projects against the applications /requests made during the same period, were 76% and 21% respectively. This suggests that budgetary constraints were not the only challenge, but that there were other contributing factors such as protracted procurement processes as discussed in section 4.3.

## 4.6 SUCCESS OF CASP

The four sampled provinces were requested to rate the performance of CASP projects that were funded between 2007/08 and 2009/10 and to provide reasons for failed projects. On average, the success rate of projects in the departments’ own estimation, which could not be verified and is highly dependent on the definition of success that is applied, is 80%. The following factors characterised successful projects:

* Commitment/hands on approach of the farm managers;
* Relevant farming experience, business management and farming skills;
* Partnerships with mentors, who were established commercial farmers;
* Formal training in agriculture;
* Record keeping ( including records on production and income levels);
* Access to markets; and
* Affiliation with farmer associations.

These success factors were largely confirmed by interviews that the PSC conducted at the project level.

The following table depicts a summary of the success rate of the projects (as viewed by the Departments).

**Table 6: CASP Project Performance in Selected Provinces (2007/08 - 2009/10)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Province** | **2009/10** | | **2008/09** | | **200708** | |
| **No. of Successful projects** | **No. of failed/ failing projects** | **No. of Successful projects** | **No. of failed/ failing projects** | **No. of Successful projects** | **No. of failed/ failing projects** |
| Mpumalanga | 18 | 3 | 11 | 11 | 6 | 5 |
| Western Cape | 90 | 11 | 172 | 12 | 79 | 14 |
| KwaZulu-Natal | 74 | 38 | 30 | 49 | 13 | 16 |
| Eastern Cape | 56 | 3 | 91 | 8 | 103 | 14 |
| **Total (927)** | **238 (81%)** | **55 (19%)** | **304 (79%)** | **80 (21%)** | **201 (80%)** | **49 (20%)** |

As reflected above, on average, the success rate of projects from 2007/08 to 2009/10 is 80%. The following factors characterised successful projects:

* Commitment and hands on approach of the farm managers/ effective management of farms;
* Relevant farming experience;
* Partnerships with mentors, who were established commercial farmers;
* Formal training in agriculture and/ business management;
* Record keeping (including records on production and income levels);
* Access to markets; and
* Beneficiaries affiliate with farmer associations.

The definition of success that is applied by provinces with regard to CASP projects has important implications for how the programme is managed. Currently the definition of success is largely focused on outputs, for example whether the infrastructure has been completed on the farm and whether the project is rated as viable at grant approval stage. This enabled the departments to rate the projects as 80% successful. It also means that the management of the programme is focused on the delivery of infrastructure and that even extension services are focused on advice on what infrastructure the farm needs and what is needed to qualify for the CASP grant. However, as soon as outcome measures are applied, such as the production levels of the farms, income generated and jobs created, then the projects are less successful. Extension services and other support under CASP should, therefore, not be directed mainly to the completion of the immediate CASP project but on the longer term sustainability of the farm. This means firstly that outcomes such as production levels and farm incomes need to be measured and it requires a sustained focus on the above success factors. It needs a balance of effort between the immediate approval of a CASP grant and longer term success of farming operations.

Of the four sampled provinces only the Western Cape had documented criteria for a viable project that are used for selection purposes. However, according to managers at the Amathole District in Eastern Cape, the District has a clear criterion, although not documented. They stated that for a dipping tank there must be a herd of 500 cattle, or fencing and proof of title deed.[[87]](#footnote-87) In KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga, there was no single and clear definition of viability amongst the districts that were visited. During the interviews, provinces recognized a need for documented criteria of a viable project both for project selection and assessment purposes. According to the Western Cape Department of Agriculture, a viable project has the following characteristics:[[88]](#footnote-88)

* It has to be a land or agrarian reform project;
* It has to contribute to food security;
* The project must have the potential to create and sustain jobs – to contribute to the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP);
* The project must have the potential to become economically viable and sustainable;
* The application or production plan must show that the allocation/reallocation will have a significant positive impact on the viability of the initiative; and
* Previous government funding or support will also be considered.

The above criteria are used by the Departmental Project Allocation Committee for the selection of CASP projects. These criteria include aspects of economic viability and sustainability, job creation and food production against which the success of projects should in future be measured. On the other hand, a criterion like when beneficiaries qualify for a dipping tank is more focused on the immediate output than the outcome of longer term farming success. As emphasised earlier, success should, in addition to output measures, also be measured against outcomes.

## 4.7 FACTORS DETERMINING SUCCESS

The CASP programme was designed around six success factors, namely the six pillars of the programme. A number of additional success factors associated, in the minds of programme and project managers, with successful projects, were listed in the previous section. However, this study found that the following four factors can have a significant impact on success:

### 4.7.1 Turnaround times for CASP projects

Western Cape and Mpumalanga provided details on the turnaround times for their projects, whereas KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape did not provide these details. Western Cape, which has enlisted the services of the Cape Agency for Sustainable Integrated Development in Rural Areas (CASIDRA), takes on average16 months from date of application for a CASP grant till completion of the infrastructure, whereas Mpumalanga takes 28 months. The long duration for finalising CASP projects in Mpumalanga should be a cause for concern.

Table 7: Average number of days to finalise a CASP Project from date of application for the grant to date of delivery of the infrastructure

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Province** | **Average number of Days to finalise a project** | **Average number of Weeks to finalise a project** | **Average number of months to finalise a project** |
| Mpumalanga | 7149 | 113 | 28 |
| Western Cape | 450 | 64 | 16 |
| KwaZulu-Natal | Information not supplied | Information not supplied | Information not supplied |
| Eastern Cape | Information not supplied | Information not supplied | Information not supplied |

On average, the Western Cape finalises CASP projects within 16 months, whereas, Mpumalanga takes 28 months. The long duration for finalising CASP projects in Mpumalanga should be a cause for concern.

Amongst others, the study found that the approval period does not always match the seasonal activities of the farmers and in practice a whole season, or even more than one season, may be lost in the absence of CASP infrastructure support. If for example, the approval for the CASP grant happens after the suitable ploughing period, the farmer may be forced to wait for the following year to start ploughing. Conditions of the farm might also have changed drastically in the intervening period such that it might affect the viability of the project.[[89]](#footnote-89)

A feasible turnaround time could only be established on the basis of a thorough review of the process. Certainly, the 28 months in Mpumalanga compared with the 16 months in the Western Cape shows that much shorter turnaround times can be achieved. Another aspect is not the waiting time as such but the predictability of the process. If applicants have a good idea of the timelines, they can at least plan around this. This will also help to synchronise the CASP support with the seasonal activities on the farms. If an applicant knows that infrastructure will be delivered during the course of a season, he/she can at least plan the activities of the next season with some measure of certainty that some support will be available. In this regard, this situation should not be a problem in the four sampled provinces considering the fact that they generally communicate regularly with applicants to keep them abreast of progress with their applications.

### 4.7.2 Business planning

Consultation with beneficiaries usually happens across all provinces during the business plan development phase, although there were a few beneficiaries who indicated that they were either not properly consulted or not consulted at all. Feasibility studies and risks assessment form part of the process. Departmental agricultural economists provide support in the development of business plans and engineers assist with the design of infrastructure. However, some of the failed/ failing projects indicated that a feasibility study was not conducted.

The business plan that is submitted as part of an application for a CASP grant mainly covers items that assess the need for infrastructure and estimate the cost of the infrastructure. Other items included in the business plan are a project description, institutional and technical support, community involvement, governance structure, and implementation strategy. It does not include financial projections for the farming business itself and is, therefore, not a complete business plan but more a plan for the Department’s support of the project (that is, the department’s own project plan).

A proper business plan should include a feasibility study. Feasibility studies are not conducted before approval of the CASP grant. A feasibility study will include an assessment of potential markets, an assessment of the viability of the farming operation itself, detailed financial projections, including projections of the initial capital (buildings, equipment) needed, the money needed to tie the business over until it generates its own cash (working capital) and projections of incomes and expenditures, and an assessment of the associated financial, market and operational risks. The confusion between a CASP project plan (focused on infrastructure) and a proper business plan (or feasibility study) suggests that much of the effort of the CASP programme is directed at the immediate output, namely the immediate support in the form of extension services, infrastructure and the other forms of support provided by CASP, and not the longer term outcome of sustainable farming businesses that provide a livelihood to beneficiaries and jobs for farm workers. This is a serious weakness of the programme in the form that it is currently implemented.

### 4.7.3 Affiliation to farmers associations

Successful projects were strongly associated with members of the projects being affiliated to farmer’s associations. Farmers’ organisations/associations can provide services such as technical assistance and advice, facilitation of credit applications, and provision of information on markets to its members. Farmers’ organisations/associations are a good avenue for sharing of lessons learned amongst farmers.

### 4.7.4 Partnerships

Successful projects were also strongly associated with partnerships. These include partnerships at two levels: firstly, between CASP beneficiaries themselves and other established farmers or private companies and industry bodies, or, secondly, between the provincial department and other state agencies, private companies or industry bodies. These partnerships bring benefits like management and agricultural production expertise and support, mentoring of beneficiaries, financial support, and access to markets. In the case where the partnership is between the provincial department and another body, the other body is many times also an implementing agent for the programme, like in the case of CASIDRA in the Western Cape and Illovo and Tongaat-Hulett in KwaZulu/Natal. The partnerships on the farmer level range from simple mentorship agreements to marketing agreements to full joint ventures.

The Western Cape is also introducing a commodity approach to farmer support. Commodity specific extension will focus on commercial or export crops, which are linked to established markets, firms or farmer associations. The Department argues that by locking in commodity-based resources in the private sector, government funds are leveraged to provide more output per unit of input. It is an unavoidable fact that government does not have all the expertise and resources needed for a programme that aims to establish successful farmers available in-house. It, therefore, makes sense if partnerships are entered into.

It is, however, essential that such partnerships be carefully structured so that emerging farmers get the full benefit of progressing to commercial success and that all the partners fulfil their obligations. There are examples where joint ventures resulted in one partner taking over the full management responsibility and reducing the members of CASP projects to labourers.

# CHAPTER FIVE: THE STATUS OF CASP IN THE WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE

## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The Western Cape Province was selected as one of the four provinces for the evaluation of the comprehensive agricultural support programme, because it spent 100% of the budget allocated in the 2008/09 financial year. This chapter presents details on the implementation of CASP in the Western Cape Province.

## 5.2 OVERVIEW OF CASP IN THE WESTERN CAPE

This section describes the following details about CASP in the Western Cape Province:

* the number of farms and black farmers in the province;
* the use of CASP resources;
* the number of CASP applications versus the number of funded projects;
* the number of land reform projects in the province; and
* the number of CASP beneficiaries in the province.

### 5.2.1 Number of farms and black farmers

At the time of the evaluation there were nearly 9 700 farms in the province.[[90]](#footnote-90) In terms of the findings of a survey of all black farmers in the province commissioned by the Department (**Table 8**), there were 5660 black farmers in 2007 and that the number had increased by 4184 to 9844 in 2010. The survey further indicated that of the 9844 black farmers in 2010, 681 were individual farmers and 9163 members of groups who co-own the farming business. Thirty three percent of the 9844 black farmers were female.

Table 8: Number of black farmers per district municipality in the province

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 2007 | 2010 | | |
| **District** | **Total** | **Total** | **Individual Farmers** | **Members of a group co-owning the farming business** |
| **Cape Metro Area** | 186 | 291 | 163 | 128 |
| **Cape Winelands** | 1 606 | 4 601 | 142 | 4 459 |
| **Central Karoo** | 384 | 414 | 13 | 401 |
| **Eden** | 952 | 854 | 110 | 744 |
| **Overberg** | 654 | 960 | 80 | 880 |
| **West Coast** | 1 878 | 2 724 | 173 | 2 551 |
| **Total** | **5 660** | **9 844** | **681** | **9 163** |

The survey further indicated that while in 2007 60% of these farmers were part-time, by 2010 the percentage of part-time farmers had declined to 27%. Part-time farmers are those farmers that are also involved in ventures other than farming, whereas full-time farmers focus solely on farming and derive their income mainly from farming operations.

The findings of this survey are being used to guide the Department’s policy development and resource allocation to support Black farmers and determine the extent of Black farmers’ contribution to the agricultural sector.[[91]](#footnote-91)

### 5.2.2 Use of CASP resources

As indicated in **Table 9** the province made full use of its CASP budget and no material under-expenditure occurred.

Table 9: CASP Expenditure Patterns for 2007/08 – 2009/10: R’000

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2007/08** | | **2008/09** | | **2009/10** | |
| **Budget** | **Expenditure** | **Budget** | **Expenditure** | **Budget** | **Expenditure** |
| R33,426 | R33,326 | R49,205 | R49,205 | R57,640 | R57,598 |

From interviews the PSC established that the Department of Agriculture, Western Cape (the Department in the rest of the chapter) views the provision of sufficient funds for land purchases as important. However, the Department also advised that without providing adequate human, institutional, and financial support to new beneficiaries, the success of the Land Reform Programme would be jeopardised. The Department argued that for every one rand spent on land purchase two additional rands should be spent on providing the appropriate support. The PSC agrees that adequate funds should be allocated to post settlement support because most land reform beneficiaries do not necessarily have farming experience.

### 5.2.3 Number of applications and funded projects

**Table 10** below shows the number of CASP applications and the number of funded projects between the 2007/08 and 2009/10 financial years.

Table 10: Number of CASP applications versus number of funded/ approved Projects in the Western Cape Province

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2007/08** | | **2008/09** | | **2009/10** | |  |  |
| **No. of applications** | **Funded projects** | **No. of applications** | **Funded projects** | **No. of applications** | **Funded projects** | **Total applications** | **Total**  **Funded** |
| 324 | 107  (33%) | 338 | 165 (49%) | 251 | 118 (47%) | 913 | 390  (43%) |

The **Table** shows that only 43% of CASP applications have been funded from the 2007/08 to the 2009/10 financial year.[[92]](#footnote-92) The demand for CASP funding is clearly much higher than the number of funded projects. The number of projects that can be funded is, however, dependent on the CASP budget allocated to the Department and the merits of the project applications.

### 5.2.4 Number of land reform projects

Since one of the specific aims of CASP is to support land reform beneficiaries to make a success of farming, it is important to reflect on how CASP was supported this group of beneficiaries. As reflected in **Table 11**, the province has funded 143 out of 171 land reform projects through CASP, which is 83.6%.

Table 11: Number of Land Reform Projects versus number of CASP funded Land Reform Projects as at 30 March 2010 in the Western Cape Province

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Total number of Land Reform Projects** | **Total number of CASP funded Land Reform Projects** | **% of Land Reform Projects funded through CASP** | **% Backlog** |
| 171 | 143 | 83,6 | 16,4 |

### 5.2.5 Number of beneficiaries

**Table 12[[93]](#footnote-93)** indicates the number and type of CASP project beneficiaries for the 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2009/10 financial years. The **Table** shows that 5478, 5301 and 6023 people benefitted from CASP in each of the financial years respectively. In the 2007/08 financial year 59% of those who benefitted were land reform beneficiaries, and 39% were household food security and subsistence beneficiaries. In the 2009/10 financial year 65% of those who benefitted were land reform beneficiaries, 2% were private land owners, 13% were household food security and subsistence beneficiaries, whilst 20% were classified as other. The Department clearly focused on the provision of on-farm and off-farm infrastructure to land reform beneficiaries and to households for food security and subsistence purposes.

Table 12: Number and type of targeted beneficiaries for the 2007/08 to 2009/10 financial years

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Land Reform Projects** | **Private land ownership** | **Household food security and subsistence** | **Other** | **Total Beneficiaries** |
| 2007/08 | 3236 (59%) | No data | 2154 (39%) | 88 (1.6%) | 5478 |
| 2008/09 | 2545 (48%) | No data | 1726 (32%) | 1030 (19%) | 5301 |
| 2009/10 | 3909 (65%) | 140 (2%) | 759 (13%) | 1215(20%) | 6023 |

The next section presents institutional mechanisms for the implementation of CASP in the Western Cape Province.

## 5.3 INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CASP

This section assesses whether administrative, organisational and coordination functions for the implementation of CASP were handled well.

### 5.3.1 Management Structures

The Head of Department is responsible for the implementation of CASP and has delegated this function to the Chief Director: Farmer Support and Development (FSD).[[94]](#footnote-94) The Department has appointed the Director: Farmer Support as the Provincial Coordinator for the programme. The programme is further supported by three directors within FSD, six district managers and a team of agricultural advisors and support staff across the Province.

The Department is operating on a decentralised model with 52 Offices across the province. At district level, each CASP project has a project leader who can enlist the services of other departmental experts depending on the needs of the project. **Table 13** depicts the number of officials in the FSD for 2009/10 (including extension recovery programme contract workers).[[95]](#footnote-95)

**Table 13: Number of Officials in the FSD Chief Directorate**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Officials** | **Number** |
| Administrative support | 44 |
| Agricultural Community Workers | 21 |
| Agricultural Development Officers | 26 |
| Subject Matter Specialists | 21 |
| District Managers | 6 |
| Sub-programme Managers | 4 |
| Programme Manager | 1 |
| Total | **122** |

The Department had 17 extension recovery plan (ERP) contract appointees in the 2009/10 financial year. These included six administrators, ten agricultural advisors and one specialist.

The sub-programme: Farmer Support is responsible for:

* Providing information and advisory services
* Facilitating training of commercial and emerging farmers
* Organisational development and capacity building of rural farmer groups, and
* Coordinating rural agricultural projects.

The implementation of CASP is said to be fully supported by the other programmes and sub-programmes within the Department i.e. Administration, Structured Agricultural Training, Agricultural Economics, Engineering Services, LandCare and the Department’s implementing agent, Casidra.[[96]](#footnote-96)

### 5.3.2 CASP Implementing Agency in the Western Cape: The Cape Agency for

### Sustainable Integrated Development in Rural Areas (Casidra) Pty Ltd

Casidra was established with a share capital of R25 million with the State as the only shareholder.[[97]](#footnote-97) The organisation is listed as a Schedule 3D Public Entity (provincial business entity) in terms of the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) and has a Board of Directors as the accounting authority. The department provides transfer funding to Casidra in terms of the PFMA. Casidra provides support in the form of the design of the infrastructure by engineers[[98]](#footnote-98) and procurement of the on- and off-farm infrastructure for CASP.

According to the Department, the involvement of Casidra has improved service delivery. The benefits include its ability to purchase in bulk, reduction of the time it took for applicants to receive infrastructure, procurement from local suppliers in rural areas and the provision of after-care[[99]](#footnote-99) to farmers by the suppliers.

### 5.3.3 Committees established to consider applications for CASP grants

Different committees have been established at district and provincial level to assess applications for CASP grants. All the committees use the following criteria to select projects:[[100]](#footnote-100)

* It has to be a land or agrarian reform project
* It has to contribute to food security
* The project must have the potential to create and sustain jobs – to contribute to the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP)
* The project must have the potential to become economically viable and sustainable
* The application or production plan must show that the allocation/reallocation will have a significant positive impact on the viability of the initiative; and
* Previous government funding or support will also be considered

**District Screening Committee (DSC)**

The district screening committee (DSC) comprises Farmer Support and Development District Manager, officials from the Departments of Water Affairs, Rural Development and Land Reform, and a director from the Department of Agriculture Provincial Office, and sometimes the CASP Secretariat from the National Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. The DSC scores and prioritises applications based on the criteria used.

**Departmental Project Allocation Committee (DPAC)**

The Departmental Project Allocation Committee (DPAC) is a formally established structure to consider, consult and make recommendations in terms of the allocation and reallocation of project funds to enable new farmers to achieve their goals.[[101]](#footnote-101) The DPAC ensures that recommended projects comply with the applicable selection criteria and that the allocations are prioritised in terms of the key deliverables of the Department. The appointment of members of the Committee is done in writing by the Head of Department. The committee consists of:[[102]](#footnote-102)

* The Chief Director: Farmer Support and Development (Chairperson)
* Two senior managers: Farmer Support and Development
* The Chief Financial Officer of the Department (Vice Chairperson)
* Two senior managers: Casidra
* One senior manager: Sustainable Resource Management
* District managers (on invitation)

A similar structure exists in Mpumalanga, Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. The difference between Western Cape and the other provinces is that the implementing agency is represented at this committee. However, the PSC is of the view that farmer unions should also be represented in order to articulate the views and aspirations of the farmers and to ensure that the selection process is transparent.

The next section presents the application and approval process for a CASP grant.

## 5.4 APPLICATION AND APPROVAL PROCESS FOR A CASP GRANT

The Department informs the public about CASP through advertising in local newspapers and radio around the month of June for people to start applying for CASP for the following financial year. The application and approval process is as follows:

1. The extension officers assist farmers to write their business plans (BPs) and complete the application forms.
2. Applications are received by the local and district offices of the Department of Agriculture.
3. The DSC then scores and prioritises applications based on the criteria used.
4. District extension officers develop funding proposals for the prioritised projects and send the applications to the Provincial Department of Agriculture.
5. The DSC gives feedback to short-listed applicants and also prepares letters to inform the unsuccessful applicants about the outcome of their application.
6. Casidra’s screening unit then screens the business plans and make recommendations to the Departmental Project Allocation Committee (DPAC).
7. The DPAC selects suitable applications.
8. The Provincial Department prepares a provincial business plan and sends it to the National Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries for assessment by the National Assessment Panel (NAP).
9. After assessment by the NAP, the provincial business plan is forwarded to the minister for approval, in March/April.
10. Following the approval of the provincial business plan by the Minister, letters are sent to applicants informing them of the outcome of their applications.

The concern about the application and the approval process is the time taken to approve the applications. The province prepares a business which includes all the projects that have been selected by the different committees and then send to the national assessment panel for approval. The PSC is of the view that sending business plans for approval by the NAP and the minister further prolongs the approval process. The process can be reduced by giving the province powers to approve the applications without sending them to NAP and the Minister for approval.

After approval, the projects are normally implemented through Casidra as the implementing agent for the on-farm off farm infrastructure and production inputs. The implementation of this pillar by Casidra has helped to reduce the time taken before the beneficiaries receive the infrastructure. The beneficiaries sign an acknowledgement of receipt for all items received within 30 days of completion of the project. This process is working well and ensures that infrastructure is kept at the project at all times. The next section describes how CASP projects are monitored.

## 5.5 PROGRESS MONITORING

The management of project implementation and the progress of individual projects is conducted on a monthly basis by project leaders. Project leaders compile contact reports and monthly narrative reports.[[103]](#footnote-103) The Agricultural Advisors and Specialists from Districts are responsible for reporting the progress of projects to the District Manager. District Managers then compile monthly expenditure reports per project and a summary of activity progress compiled per district based on district project meetings. The district managers then report to the Sub-Programme Manager: Farmer Support as the Provincial Coordinator, who then report to the Programme Manager: Farmer Support and Development.[[104]](#footnote-104)The monitoring process is mapped in the Figure below.[[105]](#footnote-105)

**Figure 2: Map of the Monitoring Process**

The programme has no appointed M&E Officer. According to the Department, all M&E Officer posts are vacant. All three positions within the programme: Farmer Support and Development have undergone job evaluation as the post levels have been deemed to be too low. The vacancy of M&E posts explains why the province does not have success indicators for CASP projects as will be demonstrated in the section below.

## 5.6 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CASP PILLARS

The rationale of the CASP intervention was that there was absence of post-settlement support for land reform beneficiaries and other targeted beneficiaries. To address this issue, the programme would enhance the transfer of information between extension officers and farmers, provide technical and advisory assistance, provide training and capacity building, help existing markets work smoothly and tap new market opportunities, provide on-and off-farm infrastructure and production inputs, and provide financing support to the beneficiaries of the programme. The implementation of CASP pillars forms the basis for this evaluation. This section answers the following evaluation questions: what services are provided by CASP? Are the intended services being delivered to the intended clientele? Are the clients satisfied with the services? Do services have beneficial and adverse side effects on the recipients?

A short discussion of the Department’s implementation of each of the pillars follows below.

### 5.6.1 INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

The Department planned two outputs regarding the implementation of the information and knowledge management pillar, namely Extension Suite Online and Smart Pen Technology (**Table 14**). The Department planned that all advisors and trainers (296) in the Department would be using the Extension Suite Online but by the end of the 2009/10 financial year there were only 120 (40%) users. Extension Suite Online is an internet based application developed by Manstrat Agricultural Intelligence Solutions (Pty) Ltd to provide a linkage and information transfer mechanism between Agricultural Research and Extension services, and the farmers they serve.[[106]](#footnote-106) The system facilitates and enhances the transfer of information between these parties by collecting, collating, interpreting and transforming scientific agricultural related data into useful and user friendly formats for use by extension officers and farmers.

Table 14: Implementation of the information and knowledge management pillar

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Planned output( 2009/10)** | **Indicator** | **Target** | **Actual** |
| Extension Suite Online | Quality of advice given | All Advisors and Trainers in the Department (296 Registered Users) | 120 Active Users |
| Smart Pen Technology | Monitoring and Evaluation | 100 Officials | 85 Officials |

Regarding the Smart Pen Technology, the plan was to provide 100 officers with the technology and it was eventually provided to 85 officers. The Department is the first department in the country to adopt Smart Pen Technology. This real-time Geographical Positioning System (GPS) technology is helping the Department to monitor and improve the level of service the Department can offer to people in remote rural settings. The Smart Pen is used to capture project data and details of the extension officers’ visits to a project and the services provided to the farmer during such a visit, in order to monitor the quantity, and also the quality, of extension services. [[107]](#footnote-107)

Extension Officers are trained in the operation of the Smart Pen so that information is captured, stored and analysed in order to:

* Ensure reliable data on projects;
* Enhance project reporting;
* Improve extension delivery; and
* Ensure that extension officers’ report on highly indebted projects sooner rather than later.

The Smart Pen Technology is used for project registration and form completion. The registration forms are given to the officer responsible for the relevant projects. The data of each project is then loaded, edited and validated. After the projects have been validated, pre-printed site visit forms are provided to the responsible officer. Managers, Administrators and Extension Officers manage this process in the following way:

* The Extension Officers plan and identify the projects which they would like to visit and then inform the District Office in order to arrange for the pre-printing of the forms.
* The EOs arrange with the District Office Administrator to collect/send the printed forms ahead of the visits.
* Forms are only printed for the planned visits.

A completed form will not be accepted if any of the following information is absent: GPS coordinates, file number, CASP number, size of the farm, beneficiary profile, contact details, and project finance.[[108]](#footnote-108)

The extension officers are required to visit the projects at least once a month. Since the introduction of the Smart Pen, the rate at which projects were visited went up and the number of dormant projects declined. The monitoring of the extension officers’ activities, number of visits per project and the response time of the extension staff has improved due to the extension recovery plan appointments and the implementation of the smart pen technology.[[109]](#footnote-109) The use of Extension Suite Online has improved the quality of advice given to the farmers by the extension officers. The fact the Western Cape Department of Agriculture is the first department in the country to adopt Smart Pen Technology shows that the province is doing its best to implement this pillar.

### 5.6.2 TECHNICAL AND ADVISORY ASSISTANCE, AND REGULATORY SERVICES

Details on the performance of the Department in the area of extension services for the 2007/08, 2008/9 and 2009/10 financial years is depicted in **Table 15**.

Table 15: Performance of the Extension Services Unit between 2007/8 -2009/10

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Number of Extension Officers** | **Target** | **Total output of all extension officers** |
| 2007/08 | 52 | 107 Projects Implemented | 102 (95%) Projects Implemented  130 Projects (After-Care) previous years |
| 2008/09 | 69 | 166 Projects Implemented | 121 (73%) Projects Completed  253 Projects (After-Care)  From previous 2 years |
| 2009/10 | 85 | 79 Projects Implemented | 56 (71%) Projects Completed  223 Projects (After-Care)  From previous 2 years |

As reflected above, from 2007/08 to 2009/10, the Department implemented 95%, 73% and 71% of its projects. Considering the number of new projects together with the after-care for projects from previous years, and the fact that sustained support is needed to make a success of farming operations over the longer term, the above is fairly good performance. However, even though on an activity and output level the performance of the extension officers is monitored, no data is available on the value or impact of this work. Much more data should be collected on the profitability/sustainability of these farming operations and the link made between the role of the extension officer and profitability/sustainability of farms.

With the exception of the project leader of Blue Mountain Berries Farm, beneficiaries in eight of the nine projects indicated that they were getting regular assistance from the Department through its Extension Officers. The leader for Blue Mountain Berries Farm no longer relies on the support of the extension officer due to his vast experience and knowledge of farming blue berries.

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### 5.6.3 TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

As shown in **Table 16** below, CASP beneficiaries are trained through the Department’s own Further Education and Training (FET) College and other private service providers.

Table 16: Training provided to CASP beneficiaries

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Financial year /Nature training programme or course** | **Trainer**  **(Provider)** | **Accredited (Yes/No)** | **No of CASP beneficiaries** | **No. of participating beneficiaries** | **Content** | **Duration training days** |
| 2007/08  Short courses | FET College & Private Service Providers | No | 5390 | 2390 (44%) | Hands on practical training | Average 3 Days per course |
| 2008/09  Soft skills & technical short courses | FET College & Private Service Providers | No | 5301 | 1386 (26%) | Hands on practical training | Average 3 days per course |
| 2009/10  Soft skills & technical short courses / | FET College | No | 6023 | 4074 (68%) | Hands on practical training | Average 3 days per course |

The Department trained 44%, 26% and 68% of CASP beneficiaries in the 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2009/10 financial years respectively (**Table 16**). This implies that the department is implementing the training pillar of CASP but there is still room for improvement in this regard.

According to the Department, the 4047 beneficiaries in the 2009/10 financial year benefitted from six accredited skills training courses and 41 non accredited skills training courses.[[110]](#footnote-110) The types of courses provided in all years included: veld and pasture management; vineyard and orchard pruning, vegetable, animal and crop production, animal husbandry, pest and disease control, marketing, and soil preparation.

The above statistics are confirmed by the results of a survey of black farmers undertaken by consultants commissioned by the Department from November 2009 to March 2010.[[111]](#footnote-111) The results of the survey showed the percentage of farmers who indicated that they needed training in a certain aspect (livestock, crops, financial management, administration and infrastructure) and the percentages of farmers who actually received training.[[112]](#footnote-112) In all cases, except training in livestock management, there were huge backlogs.

All the beneficiaries of projects visited except the Vuki Trust believed that the training provided by the Department was effective. When asked whether they were sufficiently equipped to run farming operations independently, three projects indicated that they are equipped with skills to run farms as they have managed a farm before or have worked on the farm before owning the farm.

The Department did not provide evidence of skills needs assessment; however, it has recently appointed a skills auditor to conduct skills needs assessment at project level. When a CASP project is registered by the extension officer, a form on training needs at project level has to be completed. An impact assessment of the training was not done.

### 5.6.4 ON- AND OFF-FARM INFRASTRUCTURE AND PRODUCTION INPUTS

The biggest part of the CASP budget is allocated to on-and off-farm infrastructure.[[113]](#footnote-113) The assumption is that funding is only provided for infrastructure and provincial departments are expected to provide the other inputs.[[114]](#footnote-114) **Table 17** shows that in the 2007/08 financial year 86% of the provincial CASP allocation was channelled towards the on- and off-farm infrastructure pillar. The allocation declined to 60% in 2008/09 and increased slightly to 65% in the 2009/10 financial year.

Table 17: Western Cape CASP allocation for the on/off farm infrastructure pillar

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2007/08** | | **2008/09** | | **2009/10** | |
| **Budget** | **Expenditure** | **Budget** | **Expenditure** | **Budget** | **Expenditure** |
| Provincial CASP Expenditure patters | R33,426,000 | R33,326,000 | R49,205,000 | R49,205,000 | R57,640,000 | R57,598,311 |
| On and off farm Infrastructure Pillar Expenditure patters | R28,59,200 (86%) | 28,537,200 | R29,636,579 (60%) | R29,636,579 | R37,450, 000 (65%) | R37,408,311 |

The farmers believe that the support has impacted positively on their farming operations and has solved some of the problems they had. At Buisplaas Food Security Gardens, farmers indicated that in the past they relied on horses for ploughing, but with CASP support they use a tractor. In addition, the installation of the irrigation scheme has benefitted them during the drought period.[[115]](#footnote-115) The infrastructure provided through CASP was visible in all projects visited.

### 5.6.5 MARKETING AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The performance of the Department with regard to the implementation of the Marketing and Business Development Pillar for the 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2009/10 financial years is depicted in **Table 18** below.

Table 18: Performance of the Department in the Marketing and Development Pillar

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Planned output** | **Indicator** | **Target** | **Actual** |
| 2007/08 | Facilitate business linkages for 35 agri-businesses/ emerging and/ or groups of farmers | Number of Agri-Businesses supported to access markets | 35 | 35 |
| 2008/09 | Facilitate business linkages for 15 agri-businesses/ emerging and/ or groups of farmers and Fair Trade Accreditation and Mentorship Support | Number of Agri-Businesses supported to access markets | 15 | 13 |
| 2009/10 | Facilitate business linkages for 15 agri-businesses/ emerging and/ or groups of farmers and Fair Trade Accreditation and Mentorship Support | Number of Agri-Businesses supported to access markets | 15 | 13 |

The marketing division of the Department focuses on helping emerging farmers to gain access to markets. The process of linking farmers with markets involves searching for contracting parties, facilitation of contract negotiations, supporting projects to meet the required quality and quantity requirements, facilitating the enforcement of contract, and monitoring the relationship between the parties.[[116]](#footnote-116)

The Department planned to facilitate business linkages for 65 agri-businesses/ emerging and/ or groups of farmers between 2007/08 and 2009/10 and managed to facilitate linkages for 61 agri-businesses and farmers.

In addition to the above achievements, the Directorate: Agricultural Economics assisted farmers to get compliance certificates for exporting their produce.[[117]](#footnote-117)

Most of the projects visited made their own arrangements to access markets, without the intervention of the department. Some beneficiaries do receive advice on marketing from the department but most of the time the quantity required is more than what the project can supply. Some projects have mentors who advise them on marketing issues. There were two projects were beneficiaries had pigs and chickens that were ready for sale but they did not have markets. This produces adverse side effects on the beneficiaries since they have to feed the animals instead of making money from their sale.

### 5.6.6 FINANCING SUPPORT

Kaap Agri signed an agreement with the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (DAFF) to administer the provision of MAFISA funds in the Western Cape and Northern Cape provinces.[[118]](#footnote-118) The funds are advanced under Kaap Agri Loan Fund (KALF) to support activities directed at commercially viable micro and medium agricultural enterprises (with turn-over of R1 million per annum).[[119]](#footnote-119) Funding is for production inputs, equipment, livestock, etc. This agency is responsible for the selection of borrowers, credit control, administration, bookkeeping systems, risk management, and the adherence to all required legal requirements regarding funding and credit provision. Kaap Agri is compensated from the interest earned from loans disbursed and recovered. Each institution charges 8% interest on the loans it grants to qualifying applicants, the institution keeps 7% of the interest earned by the loan and the remaining 1% goes back to the Mafisa fund.[[120]](#footnote-120) This implies that the institution that disburses and recovers more loans will earn more and all interest earned by the money not yet given as loans accrue to Mafisa fund and not to the institution. An amount of 50 million has been approved to be disbursed by Kaap-Agri between 2009/10 and 2013/14.[[121]](#footnote-121) During the 2009/1020 million was transferred to Kaap-Agri and only 2.9 million (14%) was disbursed as loans to 29 beneficiaries.[[122]](#footnote-122) This implies that the disbursement rate is slow.

The Chief Director: Farmer Support and Development (CD: FSD) could not respond to the question on how many farmers have benefitted from the financing support pillar of CASP, and he was not aware of the qualifying criteria for MAFISA. It transpired during the interview that the Department was not involved in disbursing MAFISA funds.

The CD: FSD mentioned that there is a need for a financial system for farmers because the current financial assistance mechanisms do not meet the needs of farmers due to high interest rates compared to the farm rate of return and inappropriate repayment structuring – farmers are expected to repay a loan one month after receiving the loan.[[123]](#footnote-123) In this regard, he argued that the old credit lending board system should be brought back.

Five of the nine projects indicated that they were not aware of MAFISA. This finding implies those farmers are not aware of MAFISA, and therefore, there is a need to create awareness, especially amongst land reform beneficiaries. One farmer mentioned that “MAFISA is not helpful because I applied for a loan and I was told that I cannot get the loan because my production was going down and that I will not be able to pay back the loan”. It is a condition of a Mafisa loan that applicants should have a turnover of at least R1 million. Most land reform beneficiaries do not have a turnover of R1 million (most do not even keep production and income records) and, therefore, do not qualify for these loans.

## 5.7 SUCCESS OF CASP IN THE WESTERN CAPE PROVINCE

The Department regards the management of the projects, support structure for the project, group dynamics, markets and overall status of the project as key success indicators of the projects. The Department does not use production and profit levels of projects as indicators because farmers do not keep data of production and income levels. However, the Department indicated that it would ensure that farmers start doing the basic record keeping.

Since the inception of CASP in 2004 up to the 2009/10 financial year, the Department has funded a total of 589 projects.[[124]](#footnote-124) The Department was requested to rate the performance of CASP projects that were funded in the past three financial years, i.e. 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2009/10 and to provide reasons for failures where they existed. “Success” in this context does not necessarily mean sustainability or improvement of production or income levels. Those are critical measures of success, but records on such information were unavailable from the Department. The **Table** below therefore is based simply on the fact that planned infrastructure was delivered as well as the Department’s impression of the viability of the project.

Table 19: CASP Project Performance in Western Cape (200708 – 2009/10) as rated by the department

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2007/08** | | **2008/09** | | **2009/10** | |
| **No. of Successful projects** | **No. of failed/failing projects** | **No. of Successful projects** | **No. of failed/ failing projects** | **No. of Successful projects** | **No. of failed / failing projects** |
| 79 | 14 | 172 | 12 | 90 | 11 |
| 85% | 15% | 93% | 7% | 89% | 11% |

During the 2007/08 financial year, 93 projects were funded of which 79 (85%) were regarded as successful. During the 2008/09 financial year, 184 projects were funded of which 172 (93%) were regarded as successful. During the 2009/10 financial year, 101 projects were funded of which 90 (89%) were regarded as successful.

Most projects do not have data on income and expenditure. The absence of this data made it impossible to establish whether the expected outcome of CASP to increase income was achieved or not. Only in a few instances was income and expenditure data available. Using the Romans Flora project as an example, the project’s expenses are higher than the income received, which indicates that the project is not performing well financially, but it is still regarded as a successful project by the Department based on the fact that it delivered on the planned infrastructure.

The reasons provided for the unsuccessful projects are as follows:

* Property or business was sold
* Negative group dynamics (conflict between beneficiaries and conflict in farmers association)
* Land use issues
* Legal issues e.g. court case between the Co-operative and the Church (owner of property)
* Theft
* Vandalism
* Management (poor management, lack of interest and/or no commitment from beneficiaries)
* Lack of markets
* Water issues (severe drought, water shortage, poor quality of water)
* Financial issues (lack of capital for purchasing inputs, high debt)
* Moratorium placed on equity share projects from the Department of Rural Development and Land Affairs

Since delivery programmes should be designed in such a manner that these failures are avoided the next two sections turn to the features of the programme that were designed to ensure the success of CASP projects and the achievement of the objectives of the programme. The pillars of CASP are intended to provide a comprehensive support package to emerging farmers that will ensure the success of their farming operations. These pillars and how they were applied in the Western Cape are discussed first and then related success factors are discussed in the next section.

## 5.8 SUCCESS FACTORS

In this section contextual factors that are associated with the success of projects are discussed. The factors are based on interviews with members of the nine projects visited by the evaluation team.

### 5.8.1 Management of the projects

From the side of the Department the projects are managed by extension officers allocated to them. Members of the projects also appoint managers to manage the farming operation. In three projects, the managers had experience in managing a farming operation/ business.

The operation of Vuki is managed by using a consultative management forum comprising six managers in respective fields of expertise assisted by a business consultant and a technical production consultant.[[125]](#footnote-125) The management staff has a combined experience of over 100 years in agriculture.[[126]](#footnote-126) Lebaka Pig Farmers and Sandfontein Poverty Fighters are fully operated by the beneficiaries themselves with technical assistance from the Department of Agriculture.

### 5**.8.2 Duration for approval of the application and waiting period before receiving infrastructure after approval of the business plan**

Generally beneficiaries were not happy with the time taken to approve CASP applications and receiving the infrastructure. Table 20 summarises the time taken from application for a CASP grant to handing over of the 9 selected projects within the province.

Table 20: Turnaround times for the 9 sampled CASP projects in the Western Cape Province

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name of the Project** | **Date of Application** | **Date for the District Assessment Committee meeting** | **Date for the DPAC meeting** | **Date for the National Assessment Committee Panel** | **Procurement**  **(starting date)** | **Service delivery date** | **Handing over date** | **Total no. of working days** |
| 1. Matjiesrivier   (Eden) | 15/08/08 | 13/10/08 | 30/10/08 | 28/11/08 | 26/10/09 | October 2009 | 28/06/10 |  |
| 2. Africa Flowers  (Eden) | 15/08/08 | 13/10/08 | 30/10/08 | 28/11/08 | 24/03/10 | June 2010 |  | 465 |
| 3. Blue Mountain Berries (Eden) | 17/07/07 | 31/07/07 | 13/09/07 | 21/11/07 | 18/08/08 | August 2008 | 22/01/09 | 383 |
| 4. Buisplaas (Eden) | 05/08/08 | 13/10/08 | 30/10/08 | 28/11/08 | 21/08/09 | November 2009 | 14/07/10 | 481 |
| 5. Vuki Trust  (Overberg) | 3/06/05 | 16/08/05 | 8/12/05 | **N/A** | 30/04/06 | 15/07/06 | 31/03/07 | 450 |
| 6. Sandfontein Poverty Fighters (Overberg) | 15/06/05 | 30/10/05 | 8/12/05 | **N/A** | 30/04/06 | 15/07/06 | 31/03/07 | 442 |
| 7. Lebaka Piggery (Overberg) | 03/06/07 | 22/08/07 | 20/10/07 | 28/11/07 | 1/04/08 | 13/07/08 | 23/03/09 | 453 |
| 8.Smithville Women Vegetable project(Overberg) | 3/06/05 | 16/08/05 | 8/12/05 | **N/A** | 30/04/06 | 15/07/06 | 31/03/07 | 450 |
| 9. Roman’s Flora (Overberg) | 3/06/07 | 30/07/07 | 30/10/2007 | 28/11/07 | 1/04/08 | 23/07/08 | 31/03/09 | 459 |
| TOTAL NUMBER OF DAYS | | | **4048** |
| AVERAGE NUMBER OF DAYS | | | **450** |
| AVERAGE NUMBER OF WEEKS | | | **64** |
| AVERAGE NUMBER OF MONTHS | | | **16** |

Based on the information contained in the above Table, it takes the Department an average of 450 days (64 weeks) to hand over CASP funded infrastructure. The delivery of infrastructure is further seldom synchronised with the start of the season, which may further delay the initiation of farming operations. The Department should be able to predict how long the application process will take and inform the applicants accordingly. As mentioned before, beneficiaries expressed dissatisfaction with the amount of time taken before infrastructure is received, hence the need to explain upfront the process to applicants. Another option for reducing the time is to alter the application approval process by removing the step of approval by the Minister.

All projects visited indicated that they received a regular update on the progress with their application from the Department.

### 5.8.3 Participation in the development of the business plan

All project beneficiaries except for Sandfontein were involved in the drafting of business plans, with the assistance of the extension officers. The Sandfontein beneficiary stated that the business plan was prepared by the extension officer without involving him. The Department noted that the challenge with this arrangement is that extension officers are not advising the farmers on whether the plans are feasible or not.[[127]](#footnote-127) The business plans that are submitted for purposes of the application for a CASP grant mainly cover items that assess the need for infrastructure and estimate the cost of the infrastructure. Other items included in the business plan are project description, institutional and technical support, community involvement, governance structure, implementation strategy, etc. It does not include financial projections for the farming business itself and is therefore not proper business plan but more a CASP project plan, that is a plan for the Department’s support of the project.

### 5.8.4 Department conducts feasibility studies

Feasibility studies are not conducted before approval of the CASP grant. A feasibility study will include an assessment of potential markets, an assessment of the viability of the farming operation itself, detailed financial projections (including projections of the initial capital (buildings, equipment) needed, the money needed to tie the business over until it generates its own cash (working capital) and projections of incomes and expenditures), and an assessment of the associated financial, market and operational risks. The reason that was provided by the Department for not conducting feasibility studies was that the Department does not want to create an impression that projects will be funded by asking for additional information from the applicants.[[128]](#footnote-128) The other challenge with some LRAD projects is that the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform did not carry out feasibility studies before purchasing the farms.[[129]](#footnote-129) This omission suggests that much of the effort of the CASP programme is directed at the immediate output, namely the immediate support in the form of extension services, infrastructure and the other forms of support provided by CASP, and not the longer turn outcome of sustainable farming businesses that provide a livelihood to beneficiaries and jobs for farm workers. This is a serious weakness of the programme, in the form that it is currently implemented.

However, seven of the nine projects indicated that the Department did conduct feasibility studies (but of limited scope). For example, a soil survey was done for the farm Lemoenshoek, which assessed the suitability of the soils for the planned farming activity and made recommendations to improve the soil.

### 5.8.5 Involvement in Local Farmer Organisations/Associations

The common trend in the province is that farmers group themselves into farmers’ organisations/associations and apply for CASP support. All farmers except the Sandfontein Poverty Fighters belong to organised groups of farmers, for example, the Vyeboom Farmers Organisation and Matjiesrivier Small Farmers’ Association. Farmers’ organisations provide services such as technical assistance and advice, facilitation for credit, information on markets and processing of produce to the members. They are also a good avenue for sharing of lessons learned amongst the farmers.

### 5.8.6 Formation of public-private-partnerships

At the time of the visit, the Blue Mountain Berries had a partnership with the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC). The project leader, Mr. Botha, was approached by the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) with an idea of producing Blue Berries. He decided to mobilise his workers and established the Buisplaas Werkers Trust and empowered them by giving them a 33% share in the business; his trust Sinksisa, is the major shareholder, with 34% of the shares; and the IDC holds the remaining 33% of the shares.[[130]](#footnote-130) Similar partnerships were not reported in other projects.

## 5.9 DEPARTMENT’S PLAN TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE OF THE PROGRAMME

Apart from the success factors discussed in the previous section, the relatively low success rates of smallholder and subsistence farmers could be attributed to the fact that most smallholder farmers do not have networks and do not have access to markets. These farmers are not yet in a position to enter the formal economy. A specific set of services is required and conditions need to be created in order to support beneficiaries of land reform and other emerging farmers to enter the formal economy. In order to address the challenges faced by smallholder farmers, the Department has developed a plan that will differentiate between categories of farmers, e.g., subsistence farmers, smallholders and commercial famers. A key feature of the plan is to change the approach to extension services from the traditional, or generic, approach to a commodity-based approach.

**Commodity approach**

In order to improve the impact of extension services the provincial department decided to work with commodity groups for different products identified by the Department:[[131]](#footnote-131)

* Milk
* Vegetables
* Animal Production
* Citrus fruit
* Deciduous fruit
* Viticulture (wine and grape production)
* Ostrich feathers and products, and
* Rooibos (including Honeybush)

These commodities were selected based on the attractiveness, competitiveness, and the current economic importance and geographical distribution of various commodities in the province. Commodity Committees have been formed consisting of commercial farmers, smallholder farmers and departmental officials. The role of the Department in these committees is to ensure that these structures are established and that the government agenda for transformation in the agriculture sector is realised. Commodity specific extension will focus on commercial or export crops, which are linked to established markets, firms or farmer associations. The Department argues that by locking in commodity-based resources, government funds are leveraged to provide more output per unit of input.

The envisaged advantages of the commodity approach include the following:

* Farms will graduate to commercial farms
* The department will be able to differentiate between the 3 categories of farmers
* Research will be provided by the private sector

Some project beneficiaries have raised concerns about the commodity approach. They complain that the agents require a lot of information from farmers, some of which they do not have. The farmers have the fear that only organised farmers will benefit from this approach.

## 5.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter gave an overview of the implementation of CASP in the Western Cape Province. The general observation is that the Department utilises its CASP budget effectively and has put in place effective institutional mechanisms for implementing CASP. In addition, the CASP implementation process is well coordinated.

Regarding the success of CASP, the impact of CASP on productivity and profit could not be established because neither the farmers, nor the department, keep data for production and income levels. It is of concern that success in this context did not necessarily mean sustainability or improvement/ decline of production or income levels. Some projects were regarded as successful; meanwhile their production costs per month were higher than income. The Department can improve in this regard by ensuring that clear success indicators are set. The emphasis of the success indicators should change from the immediate outputs of the CASP programme, such as providing infrastructure and extension services, to the longer term sustainability of the projects in terms of providing a livelihood to its beneficiaries.

Regarding the implementation of the CASP pillars at provincial level, the department has done well with the implementation of the on- and off-farm infrastructure pillar through their agency CASIDRA. Regarding the information and knowledge management and extension services pillar, the Department introduced interesting innovations as aids to improve the monitoring and quality of extension services. The Department must, however, also ensure that there is data available on the quality of the work of extension officers. This would mean that the work of extension officers should more and more be judged on the economic sustainability of the farming operations for which they acted as advisors.

The Department continues to improve the implementation of the training pillar; this is shown by the increase in the number of CASP beneficiaries trained. The department also appointed a skills auditor but the Department did not undertake an impact assessment of their training. The marketing and business development pillar is also well implemented according to the information provided by the department but this is inconsistent with the findings at project level, where projects were left much to their own devices with regard to the marketing of their products. The financial support pillar is implemented through Mafisa and the Department is not involved. This points to poor coordination of this process, whereas the Department should serve as the single entry point for farmers to access a comprehensive package of support. The effect of this poor coordination is also that different criteria from those applied by CASP, are applied to support under Mafisa.

With regards to success factors, the department has confirmed that it does not undertake any feasibility studies and risk assessments but business plans are prepared, which do consider feasibility and risk to some extent. The business plans are, however, more CASP project plans than business plans that consider the longer term viability of the farming operation and the business as a financial entity.

The Department is striving to improve the performance of CASP in the province and to address challenges, such as access to markets, by adopting new initiatives such as the point plan and the commodity approach.

# CHAPTER SIX: THE STATUS OF CASP IN MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

## 6.1 INTRODUCTION

The Mpumalanga Provincial Department of Agriculture and Land Administration has been implementing CASP since its inception in the 2004/5 financial year.[[132]](#footnote-132) Although the poor were included in the CASP programme, they have also been benefitting from other related initiatives such as the Agricultural Rural Development Fund, the LandCare Conditional Grant, and the Masibuyele eMasimini (Food Security Programme). Amongst others, this multi-dimensional approach was “in support of the Ilima Letsema Campaign and a response to the food crisis in the province and the country at large.”[[133]](#footnote-133) The purpose of the Ilima Letsema Campaign is to mobilise communities to utilise the ploughing fields to ensure that no land lies fallow and all land available is used productively to ensure food security.

This chapter provides details on the status of implementation of CASP in the Mpumalanga Province.

## 6.2 OVERVIEW OF CASP IN THE MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

This section covers the following details about CASP in the Mpumalanga Province:

* the number of farms and the number of black farmers in the province;
* the use of CASP resources;
* the number of CASP applications versus the number of funded projects;
* the number of land reform projects in the province; and
* the number of CASP beneficiaries in the province.

### 6.2.1 Number of farms and emerging farmers

At the time of the evaluation, the Department did not have a database for emerging farmers and farms but indicated that a baseline survey is planned to ensure that the department obtains relevant and up to date information regarding the state of agriculture within the province. However, according to a 2007 report on the profiling of extension services, Mpumalanga had at least 168 717 farmers and 189 extension officers.[[134]](#footnote-134) The report does not indicate the number of farms and the number of emerging farmers.

### 6.2.2 Use of CASP Resources

The **Table** below shows the expenditure patterns between the 2007/08 and 2009/10 financial years.

Table 21: CASP Expenditure Patterns: R’000

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Performance Year** | **Budget Allocation** | **Expenditure** | **Percentage Spent** | **% Variance** |
| 2007/08 | 41,133 | 37,431 | 91 | 9% |
| 2008/09 | 43,107 | 43,107 | 100 | 0% |
| 2009/10 | 55,504 | 55,504 | 100 | 0% |

According to the above expenditure trends, during the 2007/08 financial year the Department of Agriculture, Rural Development and Land Administration (the Department in the rest of the chapter) had an under-expenditure of 9%. However, during the 2008/09 and the 2009/10 financial years, the Department fully spent its budget with a 0% variance.

### 6.2.3 Number of applications and number of funded projects

The Department could not provide the total number of applications for CASP funding, which demonstrates the lack of proper records in the Department. However, the Department supplied the PSC with a list of 64 projects that were funded between the 2007/08 and the 2009/10 financial years.

### 6.2.4 Number of land reform projects

The Department submitted a list of funded projects, the number of land reform projects for the 2007/2008 was 8; 2008/2009 was 6; and 2009/2010 was 8.

### 6.2.5 Number of Beneficiaries

Table 22: CASP Beneficiary Profile in Mpumalanga Province for the 2008/09 and 2009/10 financial years

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Financial Year** | **Total number of beneficiaries** | **Male** | **Female** | **Youth** | **Disabled** |
| 2008/09 | 220 | 103 | 117 | 64 | 7 |
| 2009/10 | 2671 | 1876 | 795 | 210 | 15 |

**Note: The Department did not give a gender breakdown for the youth and disabled categories.**

During the 2008/09 financial year, the Department received an amount of R43 million that benefited a total number of 220 beneficiaries.[[135]](#footnote-135) During the 2009/10 financial year, the Department received an amount of R55 million that benefited 2671 beneficiaries.[[136]](#footnote-136) As shown in **Table 22** above, it is encouraging that women were adequately represented. Women representation even exceeded male representation in both years. However, much still needs to be done in terms of increasing the representation of young people in CASP projects in the Province.

## 6.3 INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS

This section assesses whether administrative, organizational and coordination functions for the implementation of CASP were adequate.

### 6.3.1 Management Structure

The CASP programme resorts under a Chief Directorate: Farmer Support Services. The Chief Director reports directly to the Head of Department and works closely with the Chief Financial Officer and a Provincial CASP Coordinator. Under him are the three District Senior Managers for the Ehlanzeni, Nkangala and Gert Sibande Districts. Each District has a Coordinator who reports to the Provincial Coordinator. Managers of the Department based at the local municipal level report to the District Coordinators. Extension officers provide services to the farmers.

Mpumalanga differs from the Western Cape and the Eastern Cape, in that its provincial coordinator for CASP is at a Deputy Director level and reports directly to the Chief Director: Farmer Support Services. However, this should not be a problem due to the existence of coordinators at district and local municipality level, who are located closer to the projects.

Amongst others, the Provincial CASP Team performs the following functions: [[137]](#footnote-137)

* Assists farmers to prepare and implement business plans that qualify for support by assisting with the evaluation and prioritization of projects/applications within the principles and criteria stipulated;
* Prepares submissions of the provincially approved projects/ business plans to the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries for ratification;
* Identifies service providers and intermediaries to provide support and capacity to applicants;
* Provides general agricultural information, technical support and provision of capacity to applicants to implement the projects;
* Monitors the implementation of projects and effect remedial action when necessary;
* Keeps record of the number of beneficiaries; and
* Devises a financial management system which would inter alia, facilitate disbursement of funds to the local level.

### 6.3.2 District Coordinators

Managers of the Department based at the local municipal level play the role of project managers and work hand in hand with District Coordinators and a number of experts located at the district office such as an economist, agricultural scientist and agricultural technicians. The District Coordinators work closely with local extension officers/ project leaders

### 6.3.3 Extension (Project) officers

Projects are supported and monitored by extension officers. Monitoring is based on site visits and regular reports. The main role of extension officers is to provide technical support and advice to farmers on basic business development and agricultural skills.

During the interview with the Provincial CASP Management Team, it transpired that the Department is experiencing capacity constraints at the extension officer level because of the large number of beneficiaries, resulting in a high extension officer: beneficiary ratio.[[138]](#footnote-138) It is envisaged that a team to be established in the Premier’s Office will soon be involved in the monitoring and evaluation of CASP projects. [[139]](#footnote-139)

## 6.4. COMMITTEES ESTABLISHED TO CONSIDER APPLICATIONS FOR CASP GRANTS

The Province has not established any committees to consider applications for CASP grants.

## 6.5 APPLICATION AND APPROVAL PROCESS

The Department informs the public about CASP through monthly meetings, radio advertisements, workshops, friends, colleagues or communal meetings. According to the Department, area wide planning has assisted in identifying anchor and mega projects that will be supported through CASP. The identified anchor and mega projects cover the whole spectrum of land and agrarian reform in the Province.[[140]](#footnote-140) Area wide planning seems to be a rational approach that could be considered by other provinces as well.

The Department outlined the application and approval process as follows:[[141]](#footnote-141)

1. The process starts at the local level where communities and farmers are advised by extension officers to submit proposals for CASP support. Others approach the Department directly because they might have heard of CASP.
2. Applications are submitted to the municipalities where prioritization takes place.
3. The projects, listed by order of priority, are submitted to the district municipality.
4. Districts convene a meeting consisting of agricultural municipal managers and other relevant staff, to screen and selects projects submitted for funding, in order to compile a prioritized list of projects for the relevant district.
5. The lists submitted by the Districts are then consolidated at head office. At a meeting of Senior Managers and the HOD (MANCOM), the project list is interrogated, motivated, trade offs made and a final list compiled to remain within the allocated budget.
6. A final consolidated business plan is then forwarded to NAP.
7. A consolidated business plan, consisting of all the projects is prepared by the province for submission to the National Assessment Panel (NAP).
8. The NAP makes a final recommendation to the National Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries who takes the final decision for approval.
9. Procurement is done by the Supply Chain Management unit in the Department.
10. District Managers liaise with the appointed service providers and engineers to ensure that the projects are completed as specified.

The Department did not produce written criteria for selecting projects. However, priority is given to the following projects:

* land or agrarian reform projects;
* projects that contribute to food security; and
* projects that have the potential to create and sustain jobs and are economically viable.

## 6.6 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CASP PILLARS

Although CASP was designed to provide comprehensive support in terms of all its six pillars, the CASP budget is distributed according to the identified needs of farmers for support and not proportionally according to the six pillars. The Province indicated that although the support is supposed to be comprehensive, more focus was placed on infrastructure development mainly due to a directive from the National Department at the inception of the programme. Other pillars are funded from the provincial budget.

The following section covers the status of implementation of the CASP per pillar in the Province.

### 6.6.1 INFORMATION & KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Farmers received information about the programme through meetings facilitated by the Department. As shown in **Table** **23** below, the Department has put in place a communication strategy in order to market its programmes.

Table 23: Communication Strategy of the Department

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **METHOD** | **BY WHOM** | **HOW OFTEN** |
| 1. Meetings | Coordinators | Monthly (subject to emergencies) |
| Extension Officers (Project Officers) | Weekly |
| Project Managers | Bi-weekly |
|  |  |  |
| 1. Reports | Coordinators | Monthly, Quarterly & annually |
| Extension Officers (Project Officers) | Weekly |
| Project Managers | Bi-weekly |
|  |  |  |
| 1. Individual/group contacts | Coordinators | Monthly |
| Extension Officers (Project Officers) | Weekly |
| Project Managers | Bi-weekly |
|  |  |  |
| 1. Awareness/ project launches | Communication officers (H/O) | Monthly |
| Project officers | Weekly |
| Project managers | Bi-weekly |

The **table** above shows that methods of engagement adopted by the Department include meetings, reports, individual/ group contacts, awareness campaigns and project launches. A weakness of the above strategy is that the target group for each category is not specified. Whilst the Department should be commended for putting in place this strategy, it could not provide evidence to the PSC to prove that such engagements were taking place.

### 6.6.2 TECHNICAL AND ADVISORY ASSISTANCE, AND REGULATORY SERVICES

The Department is implementing the Extension Recovery Plan (ERP) and an allocation of R9m was received from the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. The ERP is a plan to empower departmental personnel towards acquiring advanced training in order to ensure accountability and visibility of the extension and advisory service of the Department[[142]](#footnote-142). It is hoped that the plan will improve service delivery and address the needs of emerging farmers. In order to acquire specialized expertise the Department is looking at enrolling extension officers at universities and technical institutions.[[143]](#footnote-143)

The extension officers are based at the local offices of the Department to offer technical and business skills support to farmers, including CASP beneficiaries. The work of extension officers is monitored by managers at local level. However, the Department did not produce data on the outputs of extension officers and the impact or value of their work.

When asked about the capacity of extension officers to provide technical support especially in terms of the latest advanced technology, beneficiaries indicated that they did get support from the extension officers in this regard. However, there was a mixed reaction on the extent to which this service had improved the income levels of farms. This further underscores a need for collecting data on profitability/sustainability of farming operations.

### 6.6.3 TRAINING & CAPACITY BUILDING

The allocation for training is done through the provincial budget and not from CASP funding. While extension officers offer on-the-job training, some formal training is also offered by service providers of the Department.

Table 24: Training provided to CASP beneficiaries in the 2008/09 financial year

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name of training programme / course** | **Trainer**  **(Provider)** | **Accredited (Yes/No)** | **No. of participating beneficiaries** | **Duration training days** |
| Taxation | Shando Kandaba | Yes | 300 | 3 |
| Book keeping | Phakama Consulting | Yes | 300 | 2 |
| Broiler Production (on-farm) | Roomes | No | 30 | 46 |
| Total no. of participating beneficiaries: 330 |

As shown in **Table 24** above, during the 2008/09 financial year, the Department indicated that it conducted training in taxation, book keeping and broiler production and that 330 beneficiaries benefited from the training.

Table 25: Training provided to CASP beneficiaries in the 2009/10 financial year

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name of training programme / course** | **Trainer**  **(Provider)** | **Accredited (Yes/No)** | **No. of participating beneficiaries** | **Duration training days** |
| Cotton Skills Programme | Cotton SA | Yes | 45 | 5 |
| Poultry Production | FET College | No | 8 | 2 |
| Sugarcane Production | TSB | No | 247 | 5 |
| Spraying programme for apples | Bayer | No | 11 | 1 |
| Vegetable production | FET College | No | 60 | 2 |
| Total no. of participating beneficiaries: 371 |

During the financial year 2009/10 the Department trained CASP beneficiaries on cotton farming, poultry production, sugarcane production, spraying programme for apples, and vegetable production. An area for improvement is that only one of the five training providers used by the Department was accredited.

According to the Department (**Table 25**) 371 CASP beneficiaries benefited from these training opportunities, compared to the total number of CASP beneficiaries in that year of 1362 (**Table 22**). This should be a cause for concern for the Department, considering the importance of farming skills. The Department should therefore pay more attention to the training and capacity building pillar. However, at project level, beneficiaries from eight of the nine projects visited indicated that they had received training. Furthermore, the Department did not provide evidence to prove that an assessment of the impact or value of the training was conducted.

The mentorship of emerging farmers by more experienced farmers is encouraged by the Department. However, beneficiaries tend to be very dependent on mentors, to such an extent that projects are only in operation when the mentor is around, but collapse on his/her departure. It was for example established from the mentor at the Sinamuva broiler project that beneficiaries were still not ready to run the farm due to low literacy levels and lack of confidence. When asked whether they were sufficiently equipped to manage their farming operations independently, most beneficiaries indicated that they were not. In this regard, the Department should ensure that an exit strategy is put in place to ensure that emerging farmers are capable of running projects independently after completion of the mentorship programme.

### 6.6.4 ON- AND OFF-FARM INFRASTRUCTURE AND PRODUCTION INPUTS

Since the inception of CASP in the 2004/05 financial year the biggest proportion of the CASP budget was allocated to infrastructure support. According to the 2010/11 CASP Business Plan, the programme has enabled the Province to invest in rural infrastructure that stimulates and sustains agricultural production and rural economic activity. The investment was done with the ultimate aim of contributing to sustainable agricultural production. [[144]](#footnote-144)

At project level, all projects visited received CASP assistance in the form of infrastructure. However, out of the nine projects that received infrastructure 4 were operational while the rest were not operational at the time of the visit. The operational projects were Barolong Bapedi Goats, Mathebula Community Property Association (CPA), Sinamuva KweZolimo Poultry and Coromandel.

The inoperative projects cited lack of inputs, loans, feasibility studies and theft as reasons for not starting or discontinuing farming operations. So, despite the fact that infrastructure was provided farming was not taking place.

### 6.6.5 MARKETING AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Extension Officers provide support to farmers with marketing and business development.

Through the Department’s intervention, some projects had accessed markets and forged partnerships with private companies that resulted in improved business development. Projects such as Coromandel, Sinamuva broiler, Mathebula CPA, Rietkuil Intsimbi and Sukuma Mswati had markets in place to buy their produce. Vegetable produce was usually sold at local markets, and to local people, vendors, supermarkets and restaurants. The Barolong Bapedi project targeted the local community to sell goats, although at the time of the visit they had not yet started selling the goats. When asked about price determination, most farmers compared prices with the supermarkets. They also base their price on production and distribution cost.

Despite the above achievements, the Department should strengthen the training of beneficiaries in marketing and business development, in order to ensure the sustainability of projects.

### 6.6.6 FINANCING SUPPORT

MAFISA is implemented in the province by two agencies, namely the Mpumalanga Agricultural Development Cooperation (MADC) and Hlanganani. According to the CASP managers, sometimes this financial assistance is provided to farmers without the knowledge and involvement of the Department.[[145]](#footnote-145) However, interviews with beneficiaries suggest that although a few beneficiaries were aware of MAFISA, it was not accessible to them. All the three districts (Ehlanzeni, Gert Sibande and Nkangala) indicated that MAFISA was not visible in the Province. At project level, Siyaphambili beneficiaries said that they had been waiting for a long time for MADC (the implementing agency) without any clear update on the outcome of their loan application.[[146]](#footnote-146) In this regard, a proper roll out of MAFISA is critical to rescue failing projects. It is also critical that beneficiaries must be educated on how to access loans and manage related risks.

## 6.7 SUCCESS OF CASP IN MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

The Provincial Department was requested to rate the performance of CASP projects that were funded in the past three financial years, i.e. 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2009/10 and to provide reasons for those that had failed. Like in other provinces that were selected for this evaluation, the evaluation team could not verify the Department’s rating. “Success” in this context does not necessarily mean sustainability or improvement/ decline of production or income levels because such records were unavailable from the Department. The success rate is therefore not based on defined indicators, but on the fact that the service was delivered and a general impression that the project is viable. The following **table** depicts a summary of the success rate of the projects (as rated by the Department).

Table 26: CASP Project Performance (200708 – 2009/10) in Mpumalanga Province as rated by the Department

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2007/08** | | | **2008/09** | | | **2009/10** | | |
| **No. of successful projects** | **No. of failed/ failing projects** | **In progress** | **No. of successful projects** | **No. of failed/ failing projects** | **In progress** | **No. of successful projects** | **No. of failed/ failing projects** | **In progress** |
| 6 | 5 | 2 | 11 | 11 | 2 | 18 | 6 | 3 |
| 46.1% | 38.4% | 15.3% | 46% | 46% | 8% | 67% | 22% | 11% |

The Department funded 13 projects in 2007/08 of which 6 (46%) were successful, 5 (38%) failed and 2 (15%) were still in progress. In 2008/09 the Department funded 24 projects of which 11 (46%) were successful, 11 (46%) failed and 2 (15.3%) were still in progress. In 2009/10 the Department funded 27 projects of which 18 (67%) were successful, 6 (22%) failed and 3 (11%) were still in progress.

The reasons cited for the failure of the projects were the following:

* Delays in planting
* Water not sufficient for irrigation
* Infrastructure not completed awaiting approval of Mafisa loan
* Lack of access to the market
* Lack of funds for maintenance of the infrastructure
* Disputes among beneficiaries
* Lack of commitment among members
* Land under land claim, because development cannot commence until the claim is completed.
* Lack of access to loans such as MAFISA and MADC finance
* Lack of continued support from financial institutions and the Department.

During the interview with the provincial CASP management, it transpired that the Department does not have records of production and profit levels because farmers do not keep such records.[[147]](#footnote-147) It was therefore difficult to assess the success rate of the projects in quantitative terms.

## 6.8 SUCCESS FACTORS

This section covers success factors associated with CASP. The factors are based on interviews with members of the nine projects visited by the evaluation team.

### 6.8.1 Management of projects

Most projects had project leaders who were beneficiaries of the projects, while others were dependent on mentors, for example the Sinamuva project.

At the time of the evaluation, it was found that two of the nine projects were not formally registered as business entities and had not yet opened banking accounts. Seven other projects were registered as trusts or cooperatives. Registration of business entities provides a legal structure although this does not necessarily guarantee success of the project. The LRAD Review report found that projects belonging to individuals or families were more successful than trusts or cooperatives.

In some projects such as Rietkuil Intsimbi, infighting among beneficiaries and lack of trust has led to disintegration of the management structure. In this regard, it is suggested that extension officers should assist beneficiaries in establishing proper management structures, allocation of roles and responsibilities to members and providing guidance on issues such as meeting skills, record keeping and financial management.

### 6.8.2 Waiting period from application to receiving infrastructure

The turnaround time for approval of applications ranged from 6 months to two years – **Table 27**.

Table 27: Turnaround Times for CASP in Mpumalanga Province

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name of the Project | Date of Application | Date of the District Allocation Committee meeting | Date for the Provincial Allocation Committee meeting | Date for the National Assessment Panel | Project Approval date | Service delivery date | Handing over date | Total no. of days |
| 1. Apple Orchard, Droogvalei | April 2007 | Aug 2007 | Sept 2007 | Oct 2007 | Feb 2008 | 4 Dec 2008 | March 2010 | 1050 |
| 1. Sukuma Mswati | April 2005 | Aug 2005 | Sept 2005 | Oct 2005 | Feb 2006 | Oct 2006 | Feb 2007 | 780 |
| 1. Sinamuva Kwezolimo | April 2006 | Aug 2006 | Sept 2006 | Oct 2006 | Feb 2007 | 19 Sep 2008 | March 2009 | 1050 |
| 4. Rietkuil | April 2006 | Aug 2006 | Sept 2006 | Oct 2006 | Feb 2007 | Oct 2007 | Feb 2008 | 690 |
| 5 Siyaphambili | April 2008 | Aug 2008 | Sept 2008 | Oct 2009 | Feb 2009 | 23 Sept 2009 | March 2010 | 690 |
| 6. Sinqobile | April 2007 | Aug 2007 | Sept 2007 | Oct 2007 | Feb 2008 | 11 Sept 2009 | Feb 2010 | 1020 |
| 7. Barolong Bapedi | April 2007 | Aug 2007 | Sept 2007 | Oct 2007 | Feb 2008 | 13 Oct 2008 | 20 March 2009 | 390 |
| 8. Mathebula CPA | April 2005 | Aug 2005 | Sept 2005 | Oct 2005 | Feb 2006 | Sept 2006 | March 2007 | 660 |
| 9. Corroman-del | April 2008 | Aug 2008 | Sept 2008 | Oct 2009 | Feb 2009 | Feb 2010 | Jul 2010 | 810 |
| **Total no. of days to finalise a CASP project**  **7140** | | | |
| **Average number of days (total no. of days :- 9 projects) 793** | | | |
| **Average weeks 113** | | | |
| **Average months 28** | | | |

It took the Department an average of 28 months to finalise the projects. Challenges with regard to the Departmental procurement processes and lack of correlation between agricultural land delivered by the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform were cited as the main causes for the delay and backlog.

In the Western Cape it took an average of 16 months to deliver CASP funded infrastructure. This seems to suggest that much shorter turnaround times are possible. The Western Cape has enlisted the services of an implementing agency (CASIDRA) but whether this institutional model is emulated or not, programme implementation can benefit from a review of implementation processes and capacity.

### 6.8.3 Update on application from the Department

With the exception of beneficiaries from the Sinamuva Broiler and the Rietkuil Soya Bean projects, beneficiaries indicated that they received regular updates on progress with their applications. Information on progress with applications provide a measure of certainty to beneficiaries and allow them to plan based on an expected date of delivery of the infrastructure.

### 6.8.4 Participation in the development of the business plan

Beneficiaries in all nine projects indicated that they participated in the drafting of the business plan. The success factor is that beneficiaries were part of the design of their own projects. Therefore they had full ownership of the projects. In seven of the projects they were assisted by extension officers, whereas in two of the projects (Siyaphambili and Coromandel) they enlisted the services of consultants.

### 6.8.5 The Department conducts feasibility studies and risk assessment

The District Managers indicated that a project plan is developed as part of the business plan for each project. The project plan includes, amongst others, project milestones, budget, and monitoring, evaluation and reporting arrangements. These project plans, however, focus on the activities of the Department (the delivery of the infrastructure) rather than the farming enterprise to ensure that a viable business is created. However, beneficiaries in eight projects indicated that departmental economists conducted feasibility studies for the farming business.

The Department has also conducted a risk assessment. **Table** **28** below shows that the Department has identified five categories of risks.

Table 28: CASP Programme risks Identified by the Department[[148]](#footnote-148)

| **RISK** | **LOW RISKS** | **MEDIUM RISKS** | **HIGH RISKS** | **RESPONSE** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| - **Technical:** Capacity of field officials  - Knowledge & experience of farmers  - Staff turn-over | X | X  X |  | -In-service training  -Needs based training  -Retention strategy |
| * + - Scheduled carryover of projects to next fiscal year | X |  |  | -Implement projects in phases |
| * + - **Financial:** Procurement & expenditure patterns |  |  | X | -Project expenditure patterns with regards to conditional grants |
| - **Environmental** (Natural hazards): Hail-storms, Floods, Veld-fires, Drought, Cold spells  - Disease breakout | X  X | X  X | X  X | -Early warning & capacity building  -Fire breaks & capacity building  -Inspections & control  measures |
| - **Social:** Conflict among project members  - Theft |  | X | X | -Capacity building in financial, project, and conflict management.  -Community mobilization |

The department has put in place responses to all four categories of identified risks, although it is not clear whether they have been implemented. Again, a clear distinction is not made between the risks faced by the Department and the business risks of the enterprise.

An inspection by the Consulting Engineers takes place before the handing over of the project. An engineering certificate is issued and signed by four relevant officials. In addition, site hand-over meetings are held before the formal handing over and minutes are kept in project files. The representatives of the Department, the Contractor, the Consulting Engineer and the beneficiaries attend these meetings. Payment is made once the above formalities have been completed.[[149]](#footnote-149)

### 6.8.6 Involvement in Local Farmer Organisations/Associations

Beneficiaries said they were involved in programmes such as Masibuyele eMasimini and Agricultural Development Committees where farmers meet once a month to share ideas and challenges. Masibuyele EMasimini was initiated by the Department of Agriculture and Land Administration to fight poverty in rural areas by providing assistance to peasant farmers and poor households. The project supported people with mechanization, production input, technical and advisory support and basic infrastructure. Beneficiaries of the Siyaphambili project stated that some of their members were affiliated to local agricultural organisations, namely, *Women in Agricultural Development* and *Youth in Agriculture and Rural Development*. They indicated that their involvement had benefitted them in terms of skills development, capacity building and information sharing.

### 6.8.7 Formation of public-private-partnerships

Some projects had formed partnerships with relevant organisations. The Sinamuva Broiler and Sukuma Mswati projects indicated that they had formed partnerships with private companies. The Sinamuva Broiler project has formed a partnership with Daybreak Farms. It was reported that the partnership was effective. The agreement was that Daybreak Farms would provide assistance with management and mentoring of staff while beneficiaries were employed on the farms as labourers. Daybreak farms also then markets the chickens. Coromandel Farm beneficiaries said they had formed a partnership with the FNB Foundation to revamp the dairy infrastructure. Sukuma Mswati/ Siqaba Endlala project reported that the project had formed a partnership with Nkomati mine, the municipality, the Department of Public Works and MRDP. Through the partnership a processing plant was installed by Nkomati mine and a water canal was built by the Department of Public Works. Beneficiaries of the Apple Orchard project stated that the Department tried to arrange a partnership with a fresh produce market, but it did not materialize because of a disagreement in the change of land use between beneficiaries and the Department.

The Department should ensure that partnerships are structured in such a way that they benefit all partners and that partners fulfill their obligations.

## 6.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter has highlighted issues around the implementation of CASP both at a departmental and project level. At departmental level the Province has generally shown an improvement in delivery of the programme. In terms of expenditure trends, the province has spent 100% of its CASP budget in the 2008/09 and 2009/10 financial years.

At project level, the planned immediate outputs of CASP in terms of delivery of infrastructure have generally been achieved. In terms of the self-rating done by the Department, the project performance has improved from 46% in the 2008/09 to 67% in 2009/10 financial year. However, the support has not been comprehensive. Amongst others, beneficiaries indicated that they still needed support in terms of inputs, technical skills, training, and access to markets and start-up loans. As a result of the lack of this support, five of the nine sampled infrastructure projects evaluated by the PSC were dysfunctional. The Department did not measure its success at the outcome level in terms of the sustainability and profitability of the farming enterprises.

# CHAPTER SEVEN: THE STATUS OF CASP IN THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE

## 7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents details on the implementation of CASP in Eastern Cape, including key findings emerging from interviews with the officials of the Provincial Department of Agriculture and the CASP beneficiaries. The Eastern Cape was selected for evaluation because it has been consistently under-spending between the 2007/08 and 2009/10 financial years, and it was regarded as one of the struggling provinces in terms of implementation of CASP.[[150]](#footnote-150)

## 7**.2 OVERVIEW OF CASP IN THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE**

This section describes the following details about CASP in the Eastern Cape Province:

* the number of farms and emerging farmers in the province;
* the use of CASP resources;
* the number of CASP applications versus the number of funded projects;
* the number of land reform projects in the province; and
* the number of CASP beneficiaries in the province.

### 7.2.1 Number of farms and emerging farmers in the province

At the time of the evaluation, the Department of Agriculture in the Eastern Cape did not have a database on farms and emerging farmers. However, according to the profiling of extension services by the National Department in 2007 the Eastern Cape had at least 296 614 farmers and 623 extension officers.[[151]](#footnote-151)

### 7.2.2 Use of CASP resources

**Table 29** below gives details of the budget and expenditure patterns of the Department between the 2007/08 and 2009/10 financial years.

Table 29: Budget allocation for CASP during the 2008/09 financial year ( R’000)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2007/08** | | | **2008/09** | | | **2009/10** | | |
| **Budget** | **Expend** | **%** | **Budget** | **Expend** | **%** | **Budget** | **Expend** | **%** |
| 69, 833 | 63,459 | 91 | 109,053 | 100, 053 | 92 | 128,441 | 111,311 | 87 |

According to the expenditure trends shown above, the under-expenditure between the 2007/08 and 2009/10 financial years was between 8 and 13%. However, the Department performed better than KwaZulu-Natal, which only spent 67% of its budget during the 2009/10 financial year. The Western Cape and Mpumalanga provinces had no material under-expenditure. Overall, the expenditure trends show that the Department is not utilizing the allocated budget in an effective and efficient manner.

### 7.2.3 Number of applications and funded projects

According to the figures supplied by the Department in **Table 30** below, between the 2007/08 and 2009/10 financial years, 1921 requests for CASP funding were received by the Department and only 315 (16%) were funded. This is an indication that only a small fraction of the CASP applicants end up receiving the support they requested.

Table 30: Number of CASP Requests and Number of funded projects

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2007/08** | | | **2008/09** | | **2009/10** | |  |  |
| **No. of applications** | | **Funded projects** | **No. of applications** | **Funded projects** | **No. of applications** | **Funded projects** | **Total applications** | **Total**  **Funded** |
| 455 | 120 (26%) | | 870 | 124 (14%) | 596 | 71 (12%) | 1921 | 315 (16%) |

The fact that only 16% of the applicants have received CASP funding since 2007/08 is an indication of a huge backlog in the Province and that the demand for CASP funding is huge. The Department confirmed that the backlog is due to budget constraints and not that applicants did not meet the minimum eligibility criteria.

### 7.2.4 Number of land reform projects

One of the key objectives of CASP is to support land reform beneficiaries in order to ensure success of their farming operations. **Table 31** below shows the progress made in this regard.

Table 31: Number of Land Reform Projects versus number of CASP funded Land Reform Projects as at 30 March 2010 in the Eastern Cape

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Total number of Land Reform Projects** | **Total number of CASP funded Land Reform Projects** | **% of Land Reform Projects funded through CASP** | **% Backlog** |
| **215** | **141** | **72%** | **28%** |

According to the figures supplied by the Department in **Table 31** above, out of 215 land reform projects, 141 (72%) were funded through CASP. This shows that CASP is achieving its objective of supporting land reform beneficiaries.

### 7.2.5 Number of beneficiaries

According to the figures supplied by the Department in **Table 32** below, the profile of the CASP beneficiaries in the province is as follows:

Table 32: CASP Beneficiary Profile for the 2007/8 – 2009/10 financial years

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Financial Year** | **Total number of beneficiaries** | **Male** | **Female** | **Youth** | **Disabled** |
| 2007/08 | 359 707 | 164 826 | 196 084 | 527 | 30 |
| 2008/09 | 564 243 | 201 493 | 360 545 | 1 045 | 32 |
| 2009/10 | 700 888 | 246 583 | 435 621 | 4 760 | 60 |
| **Total** | **1 624 838** | **612 902**  **(38%)** | **992 250**  **(61%)** | **6 332**  **(0.3897)** | **122**  **(0.0075)** |

**Note:** The split between male, female, youth and disabled is approximate.

As shown in **Table 32** above, a total of 1 624 838 people have benefited from CASP in the Eastern Cape. Sixty-one percent (61%) of these beneficiaries were females and 38% were males. The youth and the disabled were under-represented, at less than 1%. Whilst the representation of women in CASP projects is encouraging, involvement of other vulnerable groups (youth and disabled) is disappointing. The Department should therefore ensure that the representation of these groups is increased in future CASP funded projects. It is also clear from the above numbers that the Department applies a very wide definition of “beneficiary” and that the definition goes far beyond members of projects.

## 7.3 INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS

This section assesses whether administrative, organizational and coordination functions for the implementation of CASP were handled well.

### 7.3.1 Management Structures

At Provincial level management of CASP consists of a Chief Director: Farmer Support and a Provincial Coordinator at a Director level. Their role includes overseeing the overall management of CASP in the province. District and local offices of the Department (areas corresponding with municipal boundaries) have CASP coordinators as well responsible for coordinating CASP at district and local levels respectively. Extension officers are responsible for the day to day monitoring of CASP projects at the project level.

### 7.3.2 Committees established to consider applications for CASP Grants

Different committees have been established at district and provincial levels to assess applications for CASP grants.

**District Screening Committee**

Screening of applications happen at district level and the Department has put in place a committee comprising of departmental officials and relevant role players.

**Provincial Technical Committee**

All districts submit applications to a Provincial Technical Committee for selection. They are given an opportunity to present their consolidated business plans at the Provincial Technical Committee. This committee in turn prepares a consolidated business plan which is submitted to the National Assessment Panel, where a final recommendation for approval to the National Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries is made.

## 7.4 APPLICATION AND APPROVAL PROCESS

The Department does not have a document outlining the CASP implementation process. The criterion for selection of projects is also not documented. This finding implies that the selection criteria are not transparent and could be open to different interpretations and manipulation.

The Provincial CASP managers stated that a general criterion of the viability of a project is normally used. However, the criteria in two districts that were visited vary. At Amathole District the managers stated that the District has clear criteria although these were not documented. They stated for example that 500 herd of cattle qualify for a dipping tank. Farming units that apply for a CASP grant must be fenced and have proof of title deed.[[152]](#footnote-152)

At Chris Hani Municipality the district liaises with an organised farmers’ union.[[153]](#footnote-153) If a community of farmers, for example, requests assistance for a piggery or a poultry project, the local Councilor would call a meeting to confirm the request and the meeting takes a decision about the proposed project.[[154]](#footnote-154) Applications are then forwarded to the local municipality. The approval of applications requires a resolution of the community. In addition, the local traditional leader’s or Councilor’s approval is necessary for the Department to approve the application.[[155]](#footnote-155) However, managers also reported that at times there is political interference in the selection of projects. Politicians would approach the district for funding of projects in their constituencies.[[156]](#footnote-156) Since the Department does not have documented criteria for the selection of projects, officials are more vulnerable to pressure from the politicians.

The district has also adopted an approach whereby it identifies the potential of the area for which an application for a project has been made.[[157]](#footnote-157) A feasibility study is done and officials interact with the beneficiaries to establish if they will succeed or not and whether they are directly involved in developing their business plans. Those that have a potential to succeed are assisted by extension officers and economists to develop business plans to that are in line with the CASP guidelines.

## 7.5. PROGRESS MONITORING OF CASP

The Department does not have an M&E framework for CASP. However, it was established that the Department monitors the implementation of projects in accordance with the project implementation plan. It was also confirmed that the Department conducts inspections of infrastructure, goods and services before a final payment is made.

## 7.6 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CASP PILLARS

The following is the status of implementation of the CASP pillars

### 7.6.1 INFORMATION & KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

At the time of the assessment, the Department did not have an information management strategy. The study also found that there was no provincial database of all farmers serviced by the Department. However, managers at Amathole District stated that they had put in place ward plans and data on farmers serviced by each extension officer, although it was not comprehensive.[[158]](#footnote-158) Chris Hani District indicated that it had put in place a database although it had not been captured on software.[[159]](#footnote-159)

The departmental manager based at Amahlathi municipality stated that they have developed a Project Tracking System. This system provides information on successful and unsuccessful applications. She stated that the results are communicated to the applicants in writing.[[160]](#footnote-160) It could not be established whether the rest of the district and local offices or the Department has adopted this tracking system.

### 7.6.2 TECHNICAL AND ADVISORY ASSISTANCE, AND REGULATORY SERVICES

Technical and advisory assistance to farmers is provided by extension officers. The Department stated that the development of these officers through training was such that they were able to provide the necessary information to the beneficiaries and assist them in their farming activities. It was stated that extension officers have access to information through laptops with a 3G card or cell phone. Although the PSC could not confirm the use of laptops, it did confirm from the beneficiaries that the Department was accessible for help should a need arise, although one beneficiary stated that this was not as prompt as expected.

There is no specific extension officer: farmer ratio for the Province. Managers at Amathole District stated that some extension officers may be responsible for ten (10) units whilst others may be responsible for hundred (100) units.[[161]](#footnote-161) This is partly due to the fact that extension service in the Province generally depends on the demand. Usually, farmers who need assistance would approach the extension officers. This was confirmed by beneficiaries. In one project it was stated that the extension officer visits the farm twice a week, whereas in another project beneficiaries said that the visits happened twice a month.

Whilst the extension officers are supposed to sign a Green Book (a diary system to monitor their activities) some do not adhere to this practice. Managers at Amathole stated that extension officers submit itineraries.[[162]](#footnote-162) At Chris Hani District, the Regional Manager visits projects in all the areas and get feedback from farmers. Following his visits, he gets “everybody together to identify the gaps and later attends to them with the extension officers.”[[163]](#footnote-163)

### 7.6.3 TRAINING & CAPACITY BUILDING

Due to financial constraints, the Department stated that it provides training mainly on technical and soft skills (business management, etc.) despite what the need is. It further stated that skills development coordinators have been appointed since 2009 and they have been conducting a skills audit.

The following **Table** supplied by the Provincial Department gives details of training provided by the province to CASP beneficiaries between the 2007/08 and 2009/2010 financial years.

Table 33: Training provided to CASP beneficiaries between the 2007/08 -2009/2010 financial year

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name of training programme / course** | **Trainer**  **(Provider)** | **Accredited (Yes/No)** | **No. of participating beneficiaries** | **Content** | **Duration training days** |
| 1. Agri Business | STC | Yes | 10 | Agri Business | 5 |
| 1. Agri Business | Khululekani training centre | Yes | 12 | Agri Business | 5 |
| 1. Agri Business | Sinelizwi development | Yes | 12 | Agri Business | 5 |
| 1. Agri business skills | Sinelizwi Development | Yes | 14 | Agri-Business skills | 5 |
| 1. Agri business skills | Siyasanga Training centre | Yes | 12 | Agri-Business skills | 5 |
| 1. Agri-business | Khululekani training centre | Yes | 12 | Agri-business | 5 |
| 1. Agri-business | Uluntu skills development | Yes | 9 | Agri-business | 5 |
| 1. Animal Disease Management | Take note trading 205cc | Yes | 12 | Animal Disease Management | 5 |
| 1. Animal Diseases | STC | Yes | 9 | Animal Diseases | 5 |
| 1. Artificial Insemination | Taurus | Yes | 9 | Artificial Insemination | 5 |
| 1. Basic Financial Management | Take note Trading | Yes | 13 | Basic Financial Management | 5 |
| 1. Broiler Production | Khululekani training centre | Yes | 8 | Broiler production | 5 |
| 1. Broiler Production | Khululekani training centre | Yes | 15 | Broiler Production | 5 |
| 1. Crop Management | Take note trading 205cc | Yes | 8 | Crop Management | 5 |
| 1. Cultivation of Vegetable | Take note trading 205 cc | Yes | 12 | Cultivation of Vegetable | 5 |
| 1. Cultivation of Vegetable | Khululekani training centre | Yes | 10 | Cultivation of Vegetable | 5 |
| 1. Farm Management | Uluntu skills development | Yes | 8 | Farm Management | 5 |
| 1. Hatchery | ARC | Yes | 6 | Hatchery | 5 |
| 1. Intro to maize production | Grain SA | Yes | 14 | Intro to maize production | 5 |
| 1. Intro to maize production | Fort Cox rural development | Yes | 24 | Intro to maize production | 5 |
| 1. Livestock Management | Uluntu skills development | Yes | 12 | Livestock Management | 5 |
| 1. Livestock Management | Take note 205 cc | Yes | 8 | Livestock Management | 5 |
| 1. Livestock Management | Uluntu skills development | Yes | 12 | Livestock Management | 5 |
| 1. Livestock Management | Uluntu skills development | Yes | 7 | Livestock Management | 5 |
| 1. Livestock Management | Mthonyama | Yes | 23 | Livestock Management | 5 |
| 1. Mechanisation | Grain SA | Yes | 23 | Mechanization | 5 |
| 1. Mechanisation | Grain SA | Yes | 24 | Mechanization | 5 |
| 1. Pig production | Phezukomkhono Train Centre | Yes | 12 | Pig production | 5 |
| 1. Piggery Production | Khululekani | Yes | 21 | Piggery Production | 5 |
| 1. Poultry Production | Uluntu Skills Development | Yes | 12 | Poultry production | 5 |
| 1. Poultry production | Sinelizwi development | Yes | 10 | Poultry production | 5 |
| 1. Poultry production | Khululekani training centre | Yes | 10 | Poultry production | 5 |
| 1. Vegetable Production | Khululekani training centre | Yes | 8 | Vegetable production | 5 |
| **Total no. of trained beneficiaries: 411** |
| **Total no. beneficiaries: 9615** |

As shown in **Table 33** above, according to the Eastern Cape Provincial Department, 411 out of 9615 (4%) of CASP beneficiaries have benefitted from the training supplied by accredited service providers. The fact that 96% of the beneficiaries have not been trained should be a cause for concern for the Department in view of the importance of farming skills. The low percentage of trained beneficiaries effectively means that this pillar has not been implemented successfully.

The **table** further indicates that the duration for training is 5 days and that the number of participants ranged from 6 to 24. The Department stated that it had started to conduct a skills impact assessment although no documentary proof was provided to support this statement. Beneficiaries in five projects evaluated by the PSC stated that training took place without any skills need assessment, whereas in two projects training was based on needs assessment.

### 7.6.4 ON AND OFF FARM INFRASTRUCTURE AND PRODUCTION INPUTS

The biggest part of the CASP budget is allocated to the Infrastructure pillar. Managers stated that until two years ago, the national Department issued an instruction that funding for CASP projects should be set aside for infrastructure only. However, the other pillars have been funded through the departmental budget.

### MARKETING AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The Department stated that marketing support is given for all its programmes including CASP. In terms of equipping farmers with marketing skills, districts have economists that advise farmers on markets and on contract marketing. Extension officers also advise farmers on marketing strategies.

The implementation of this pillar at project level shows that most projects sell their farming produce to local people. However, Blumendal Farm sells tomatoes to the local municipal market, Dunvagen sells goats to initiation schools and sheep to 7 shops in Transkei and Mbewu Family Project supplies meat to East London Abattoirs.

The Department should strive to improve the implementation of this pillar and organize business linkages in order to ensure that emerging farmers graduate to become commercial farmers.

### 7.6.6 FINANCING SUPPORT (MAFISA)

MAFISA is implemented through various agencies operating in the province. The Department could not provide a list of farmers who had benefited from MAFISA loans because applications were not made via the Department. At Chris Hani District, managers confirmed that farmers were benefiting from MAFISA loans, although the Department was not directly involved in the application process.

The PSC found that MAFISA was not visible at project level. Beneficiaries in five projects indicated that they had heard about MAFISA, but they did not have details. In four other projects they said that they were completely unaware of MAFISA. This finding implies that there is a need for an awareness campaign in the Province about MAFISA.

## 7.7 SUCCESS OF CASP IN THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE

The Department was requested to rate the performance of CASP projects that were funded in the past three financial years, i.e. 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2009/10 and to provide reasons for those that had failed.

“Success” in this context does not necessary mean sustainability or improvement/ decline of production or income levels because such records were unavailable from the Department. The success indicator is based on the fact that the service (mainly infrastructure) was delivered and not on sustainability of the farms. The following **Table** gives a summary of the success rate of the projects (as viewed by the Department).

Table 34: CASP Project Performance in Eastern Cape (2007/08 – 2009/10)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2007/08** | | **2008/09** | | **2009/10** | |
| **No. of Successful projects** | **No. of failed/ failing projects** | **No. of Successful projects** | **No. of failed/ failing projects** | **No. of Successful projects** | **No. of failed / failing projects** |
| 103 | 14 | 91  (Dept. did not rate 8 projects) | 8 | 56 | 3 |
| 86% | 14% | 91% | 9% | 95% | 5% |

As shown in **Table 34** above, 103 out of 117 projects undertaken in 2007/08 were rated by the Department as successful. In the 2008/09 financial year, 91 out of 107 were rated as successful. In 2009/10 financial year, 56 of the 59 projects were rated as successful. Although the success rate at output level looks good, the results would have been different if the projects were to be measured at outcome/ impact level (for instance if success should be measured by the profitability of the farms).

## 7.8 SUCCESS FACTORS

The PSC established that thefollowing factors were contributing to the successful implementation of CASP.

### 7.8.1 Management Structures

Management of family /privately owned projects was generally efficient and effective and no conflicts were reported. Compared to community-based projects, project managers were qualified in agriculture, which contributed to the overall success of the projects. Furthermore, the PSC found that the trend among successful projects was that the project managers displayed good project management/ business management ability and agricultural skills. The success of the Blumendal Family Project, for example, could be attributed to the skills of the production manager who is formally trained in hydroponics production. As a result of his skills, production levels had been steadily increasing since the project’s inception.

Although governance structures were in place, it was clear from the interviews that financial management needs to be strengthened, especially in communal projects. Some of these projects did not have banking accounts at the initial stages. In one project beneficiaries indicated that they were using their personal accounts. However, most beneficiaries recognized this shortcoming.

### 7.8.2 Time it takes to approve an application and waiting period before receiving Infrastructure after approval of the business plan

Most beneficiaries stated that the period for approval was too long. Although the beneficiaries could not cite the accurate dates, they stated that the waiting periods for approval of applications ranged from one year to two years. In terms of the waiting period for delivery of the infrastructure after approval of the business plan, they also cited the same period (one to two years). This finding implies that the Department should review the approval process to ensure that the projects are delivered more speedily. However, it was encouraging to note that despite the protracted approval process, applicants were kept abreast of progress with their applications.

### 7.8.3 Participation in the development of the business plan

With the exception of one project (Rooipoort), beneficiaries in eight other projects stated that they participated in the compilation of business plans for their projects. Such participation ensures ownership of the projects by the beneficiaries.

### 7.8.4 Department conducts feasibility studies

With the exception of beneficiaries of Elam Farm who stated that they were not aware of a feasibility study for their project and the project manager of Blumendal Farm who could not provide the answer because he was not part of the project at its inception, the rest of the beneficiaries confirmed that feasibility studies were conducted. However, the failure of some projects such as Letyangwe raises questions about whether they were viable even at the conceptualization phase.

### 7.8.5 Involvement in Local Farmer Organisations/ Associations

The PSC found that beneficiaries in six projects, four of which were struggling, did not affiliate to farmer associations where they could have shared information, lessons and concerns with their peers. This could have contributed in the improvement of their farming operations.

Managers of three projects participated in famer associations. The manager of Koyo CPA (Alopol) affiliated to Tsomo Valley Farmers’ Association and the owner of Rooipoort Farm to the Tembuland Farmers Association, both situated at the Chris Hani District.

### 7.8.6 Involvement in public-private partnerships

Public-private partnerships are entered into in the province in some instances. In a project called Ezanyokwe, SA Potato was reported to be coming on board. Such partnerships should be encouraged to complement the Department’s efforts to support emerging farmers.

## 7.9 FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE FAILURE OF THE PROJECTS

The following characteristics were identified from the failed/failing projects.

* Funded for infrastructure only
* Electricity problem
* Construction not finished
* Still trying to secure funding for production inputs
* Plumbing problem
* Community conflict(2)
* Poor management
* Tunnel structure vandalized (2)
* Social problems and a lot of debt liabilities
* Farm manager not well
* Source of water for irrigation
* Lack of commitment from the farmer
* Lack of capacity of contractor
* Dip tank leak
* Stock theft
* Land bank debt
* Rejected by community
* Structure was destroyed by wind

The nature of the challenges shows that skills development, farm security and comprehensive support of projects would be critical to resolve the listed problems. In this regard, the Departmental turnaround strategy for CASP should take the above issues into cognizance.

## 7.10 CONCLUSION

At Departmental level, the Province has not utilized its budget fully in the 2008/09 and 2009/10 financial years, despite the fact that 28% of the land reform beneficiaries had not received CASP support. In terms of project performance, the self-rating done by the Department shows that a success rate of 91% was achieved in the 2008/09 financial year and 95% in the 2009/10 financial year. The rating was based on the delivery of projects at output level and it would have been different if issues such as sustainability and other outcome level issues were considered.

It is evident from this Chapter that the Department should pay attention to four CASP pillars, namely, Training, MAFISA, Marketing and Information and Knowledge Management. In terms of training, the figures supplied by the Department shows that only 4% of the beneficiaries have been trained. With regard to MAFISA, there is a need for an awareness campaign and the involvement of the Department in the application and approval process. With regard to Marketing, the Department should organize more business linkages for emerging farmers. Furthermore, the Department should also strive to put in place an effective information and knowledge management system to ensure that basic data such as the turnaround times for the projects and the number of famers is readily available.

**CHAPTER EIGHT: THE STATUS OF CASP IN KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE**

## 8.1 INTRODUCTION

KwaZulu-Natal Province was selected for evaluation because it has been under-spending from the 2007/08 to 2009/10 financial years and it was regarded as one of the struggling provinces in terms of the implementation of CASP.[[164]](#footnote-164) As a result of the failure of the land reform projects in the Province, the Provincial Cabinet resolved in 2009 to establish a public entity trading as Agribusiness Development Agency (ADA) as an implementing agency for the post settlement support of projects.[[165]](#footnote-165) The Agency will be jointly funded by the Department of Agriculture, Environmental Affairs and Rural Development and the Department of Economic Development and Tourism. It was scheduled to start implementing CASP projects in the 2010/11 financial year, although at the time of the evaluation it was not yet operational.

## 8.2 OVERVIEW OF THE CASP IN KWAZULU-NATAL

This section describes the following details about CASP in KwaZulu-Natal Province:

* the number of farms and emerging farmers in the province;
* the number of CASP applications versus the number of funded projects;
* the use of CASP resources; and
* the number of land reform projects in the province.

### 8.2.1 Number of farms and emerging farmers

At the time of the evaluation, the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Agriculture and Environmental Affairs did not have a database of farms and emerging farmers, which is an indication of ineffective information management.

### 8.2.2 Number of applications and funded projects

The following **table** presents details on the number of CASP applications considered and the number of funded projects.

Table 35: Number of CASP Requests and Funded Projects

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2007/08** | | **2008/09** | | **2009/10** | |  | |
| **No. of applications** | **Funded projects** | **No. of applications** | **Funded projects** | **No. of applications** | **Funded projects** | **Total of applications** | **Total**  **Funded** |
| 82 | 77  (94%) | 124 | 124  (100%) | 237 | 159 (67%) | 443 | 360  (81%) |

The demand for CASP funding is clearly much higher than the number of funded projects. The Department confirmed that the number of projects that can be funded is dependent on the allocated CASP budget and that the main reason for rejecting applications is not ineligibility of beneficiaries.

According to the Department, between the 2007/08 and 2009/10 financial years, 443 projects were considered for funding and 360 (81%) were funded. However, as reflected in the expenditure patterns below, it is strange that despite the high number of funded projects, the Department has been consistently under-spending during the same period. In 2008/09 all 124 applications were funded, yet the Department spent only 65% of the budget. This could be an indication of a disjuncture between the planning and the budgeting process.

### 8.2.3 Use of CASP resources

The province has been consistently under-spending since the 2007/08 financial year (see **Table** below).

Table 36: CASP Expenditure Patterns for 2007/08 – 2009/10 (R’ 000)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2007/08** | | | **2008/09** | | | **2009/10** | | |
| **Budget** | **Expenditure** | **%** | **Budget** | **Expenditure** | **%** | **Budget** | **Expenditure** | **%** |
| 80,080 | 15,247 | 19 | 165,378 | 107,906 | 65 | 117.762 | 106.197 | 90 |

In the 2007/08 financial year, the province under-spent by R65 million, in 2008/09, the under-expenditure was R57 million and in 2009/10, R11.million. Although the under-expenditure has been narrowing down, the trend still remains a cause for concern. The under-expenditure was caused mainly by slow procurement processes. It was suggested that either more staff be employed at head office or the procurement of goods above R200 000 should be devolved to the districts.

### 8.2.4 Number of land reform projects

**Table 37** below shows the findings in terms of the number of land reform projects funded by the province.

Table 37: Land Reform Projects Supported through CASP (2004/05 – 2009/10)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Total number of Land Reform Projects** | **Total number of CASP funded Land Reform Projects** | **% of Land Reform Projects funded through CASP** | **% Backlog** |
| **645** | **554** | **86%** | **14%** |

Since the inception of CASP, KwaZulu-Natal has been funding mainly the land reform projects. As reflected in **Table 37** the Province had funded 554 out of 645 land reform projects (86%). Despite the focus on land reform projects, the province still has a backlog of 14%.

## 8.3 INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CASP

At the Provincial level the management of CASP consists of a Chief Director: Farmer Support who is the overall CASP manager and a CASP coordinator. Districts and local offices have CASP coordinators as well. At project level, extension officers are responsible for the day to day management of CASP. The CASP coordinator is the only official who is fully dedicated to CASP. Officials reporting to him on CASP have other responsibilities on their work plans besides CASP.

Like in the Western Cape, Eastern Cape and Mpumalanga, different committees have been established at district and provincial levels to assess applications for CASP grants.

At District level a District Grant Approval Committee has been establishedcomprising departmental officials and relevant role players and at provincial level a Provincial Technical Committee, comprising District Officials and other role players. The functions of these committees are discussed below.

## APPLICATION AND APPROVAL PROCESS

Currently, the process starts when the Department receives a list of LRAD projects from the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform in the province. The selection criterion is based on “first come first serve”, although the viability of the project is also considered. All the funded projects are LRAD projects. The District Grant Approval Committee screens the applications and produces a consolidated business plan for the district. The next step is to take the applications to the Provincial Technical Committee where the various Districts present their projects. This committee, in turn, prepares a consolidated business plan, which is submitted to the National Assessment Panel where a final recommendation for approval to the National Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries is made.

## 8.5 PROGRESS MONITORING

Since the implementation happens at district level, the districts are responsible for monitoring the implementation of projects, including the supply of goods and services.[[166]](#footnote-166) This excludes sugar cane projects, which are managed through a partnership with the sugar cane companies, namely, Tongaat-Hulett and Illovo.

At programme level the Department indicated that it has put in place a project implementation plan with clear milestones. This assists the Department to monitor progress against the planned milestones. However, at project level there is no monitoring and evaluation template for individual projects. The template designed by the National CASP Secretariat was not used by the extension officers in the projects that were visited.

## 8.6 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CASP PILLARS

This section describes the status of implementation of the six CASP pillars in the province.

### 8.6.1 INFORMATION & KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

The study found that the Department does not have an effective information management system for CASP. In addition, the Department lacks an electronic project tracking system for CASP projects. As a result of this deficiency, it is not easy to track the status of implementation of individual projects, to locate project files and to determine the turnaround times for individual projects.

It was also found that the Department does not have a database of farmers in the Province. At Uthungulu District, extension officers stated that they keep a list and contact details of the farmers in their cell phones.[[167]](#footnote-167) Managers at this district also recognized a need for a database of farmers. This finding implies that the details of the Department’s clients are not properly kept, which could compromise programme planning.

Furthermore, the Department does not have a communication strategy for CASP. Provincial management indicated that the presence of a communication strategy would translate into an influx of unnecessary requests for funding. They argued that given the fact that the Department mainly targets LRAD beneficiaries for CASP, it would be unnecessary to advertise the programme.

### 8.6.2 TECHNICAL AND ADVISORY ASSISTANCE AND REGULATORY SERVICES

Extension officers are not necessarily fully capacitated to deal with the needs of the farmers. However, the Extension Recovery Plan (ERP) has been implemented to provide ongoing training and support of extension officers so that they have the necessary skills to assist farmers. Also, there are technological packages on computer with access to web-based resources that are being introduced to equip officers with technological know-how related to farming activities.

Extension officers assess the performance of the projects based on their general impression. There are no clear indicators for assessing individual project performance both at output and outcome levels. In this regard, there is a need for data collection on the production and profit levels of farms and to make a link between the role of the extension officers and the profitability of farms.

In all four districts that were visited, namely Uthungulu, Ugu, Ilembe and Umgungundlovu, it was found that managers use itineraries prepared by extension officers to monitor their work.

### 8.6.3. TRAINING & CAPACITY BUILDING

The following table depicts details of training activities between the 2007/08 and 2009/10 financial years supplied by the Department.

Table 38: Training provided to CASP beneficiaries between 2007/08 and 2009/10 financial years

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Financial Year** | **Name of training programme / course** | **Trainer**  **(Provider)** | **Accredited (Yes/No)** | **No. of participating beneficiaries** | **Duration training days** |
| 2007/08 | 1. Crop production 2. Cooperative management 3. Livestock production 4. Mechanisation 5. Value adding 6. Institutional capacity development 7. Agribusiness skills 8. Tunnel management | Cedara College, Owen Sithole College and other Accredited training service providers | Accredited and Non-Accredited training | 3398 (100%) | **5-10 days** |
| 1. 2008/09 | 1. Crop production 2. Cooperative management 3. Livestock production 4. Mechanisation 5. Value adding 6. Institutional capacity development 7. Agribusiness skills 8. Tunnel management | Cedara College, Owen Sithole College and other Accredited training service providers | Accredited and Non-Accredited training | 3149 (100%) |  |
| 1. 2009/10 | 1. Crop production 2. Cooperative management 3. Livestock production 4. Mechanisation 5. Value adding 6. Leadership and conflict management 7. Vegetable production 8. Agribusiness skills 9. Tunnel production | Cedara College, Owen Sithole College and other Accredited training service providers | Accredited and Non-accredited | 5620 (100%) | 5-10 days |

As shown in **Table** **38** above, during the 2007/08 financial year, the Department indicated that it offered eight courses to 3398 beneficiaries. Since the total number of beneficiaries was 3398, (100%) all of them were trained. The courses were offered by the Agricultural Colleges (Cedara and Owen Sithole) and other accredited training providers. In 2008/09 the Department trained all 3149 CASP beneficiaries and all 5620 in the 2009/10 financial year.

At the time of the assessment, the Department had not conducted an impact assessment of the training.

### 8.6.4 ON AND OFF- FARM INFRASTRUCTURE

The bulk of the funding for CASP has been allocated to the infrastructure pillar, yet most projects that had received infrastructure support were struggling. Amongst the struggling projects were the Dubazane Family Project, Nogwaja Nemvelo Farm and Thembekile Farm. Dubazane Family Project, which was funded for poultry infrastructure was not operational. At the time of the visit the two poultry buildings were standing empty because 800 chickens that were also funded through CASP had died of a chicken’s disease. The farm is however doing well in cattle farming. At Nogwaja Nemvelo Farm, CASP support in the form of fencing, manure, seeds and feeds had also not been sufficient to ensure efficient functioning of the farm. At Thembekile Farm, CASP support came in the form of dips for chickens but the farm owner claimed that this support was not sufficient as it did not include support to access markets. The failure of infrastructure projects shows that there is a need for the Department to extend its support to other priority areas, such as loans and access to markets.

However, despite the poor performance of most infrastructure projects that were visited, the PSC found that there were a few pockets of excellence. It was found that projects such as Silwanentuthuko Trust/Donovale Farming Company and Nofisa Farm were performing well due to CASP infrastructure support. Lessons from these projects should be applied to other projects.

### 8.6.5 MARKETING AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The Department has a directorate responsible for marketing and business support. It provides support to farmers including CASP beneficiaries. This was in addition to routine work of the extension officers who also assist farmers with marketing. However, during the interview, one of the managers was not aware of the existence of this unit in the Department, which explains one of the reasons for the challenges experienced by some CASP beneficiaries in accessing markets.

The findings show that the emerging farmers have not received sufficient support in marketing and business support and that more effort should be put into supporting emerging farmers in this area. All beneficiaries expressed a need for support in terms of business linkages and access to markets.

### 8.6.6 FINANCING SUPPORT

Officials at provincial and district offices indicated that the Department was not involved in the roll out of MAFISA. One of the managers was even not aware that financial assistance was one of the pillars of CASP, which explains one of the reasons for the challenges experienced by some CASP beneficiaries in accessing MAFISA loans. Beneficiaries in nine projects that were visited indicated that they were either not aware of this support or they were aware but they had not benefited from it. This finding implies that an awareness campaign should be initiated and that the Department should be involved in the application and approval process.

## 8.7 SUCCESS OF CASP IN KWAZULU-NATAL PROVINCE

The Provincial Department was requested to rate the performance of CASP projects that were funded in the past three financial years, i.e. 2007/08, 2008/09 and 2009/10 and to provide reasons for those that had failed. Like in other provinces that were selected for this evaluation, the PSC did not verify the Department’s rating. “Success” in this context does not necessarily mean sustainability or improvement in production or income levels because such records were unavailable from the Department. In this regard, there were no clear success indicators. The classification is based on loose indicators, either on the fact that the infrastructure was delivered or the Department’s impression on the viability of the project.

**Table 39** depicts a summary of the success rate of the projects (as viewed by the Department).

Table 39: CASP Project Performance (2007/08 – 2009/10) in KwaZulu-Natal

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **2007/08** | | **2008/09** | | **2009/10** | |
| **No. of Successful projects** | **No. of failed/failing projects** | **No. of Successful projects** | **No. of failed/ failing projects** | **No. of Successful projects** | **No. of failed / failing projects** |
| 13 | 16 | 30 | 49 | 74 | 38 |
| 45% | 55% | 38% | 62% | 66% | 34% |

The main reason for the huge improvement of 28% between the last two financial years was the partnership between the Department and the sugar companies (Illovo and Tongaat-Hulett). Fifty (50) of the fifty one (51) projects supported by these companies were rated as successful. These projects constituted 45% of the successful projects. The assumption here is that if all the projects were to be supported by suitable partners, the success rate of all the projects could improve in the province.

With the exception of the sugar cane projects managed by Illovo and Tongaat-Hulett (on behalf of the Department) the Department does not keep project records on production and income levels. Farmers have not been trained on record management either. The departmental managers in uThungulu District stated that when the Extension Officers visit the farms they provide guidance to famers based on their general impressions of the farm. There are no indicators and set targets for individual projects. The department could consequently not produce details on the performance of individual projects.

The evaluation team visited 10 CASP projects in KwaZulu-Natal Province, consisting of 6 successful projects/ projects with a potential to succeed and 4 failed/failing projects. The following key findings emerged from the visits. (The Consolidated Overview Report for site visits is attached as **Appendix C**.)

The success factors identified from four successful projects were:

* commitment of the farm managers
* relevant farming experience
* they entered into partnerships with mentors (established commercial farmers)

In the same vein, the failed projects had the following features:

* lack of commitment of the farm managers
* they were not supported comprehensively (focus was on infrastructure only)
* lack of relevant skills and experience
* death of livestock due to diseases
* inability to pay Land Bank loans

## 8.8 SUCCESS FACTORS

The following section describes the CASP success factors, namely management of projects, waiting period for approval, participation in the development of business plans, conducting feasibility studies, and public-private-partnerships.

### 8.8.1 Management of projects

The study found that the governance of projects managed by the industries Tongaat-Hulett and Illovo were generally better compared to other projects. The self-rating of projects by the Department also confirmed this finding (See section **8.7 Success of CASP in KwaZulu-Natal** above). The industries produced records to the PSC on the income and productivity of farms. There was generally no evidence of such records in other CASP projects.

### 8.8.2 Waiting period for receiving infrastructure after approval of the business plan

The Department could not provide information on what the turnaround times for processing applications is. However, the Department stated that the main problem is that the approval period does not always match the seasonal activities of the farmer. Sometimes services and products such as the supply of seasonal inputs are delivered late when they are no longer required.[[168]](#footnote-168) According to the Department, at the planning stage, the cost of a project might be estimated at a certain amount but since “the implementation might happen 6 months later, the condition of the farm might have collapsed completely such that the planned activity might add no value towards economic revival of the project.”[[169]](#footnote-169) In addition, the Department contends that in most cases the prices quoted by the service providers are above industry benchmarks, which result in projects being dropped because of insufficient budget.

At project level the beneficiaries stated that the duration for approval of business plans ranged from 6 months to 3 years. At Nogwaja Nemvelo, the approval of the business plan took place in 2006, three years after the farm was bought. At Thembekile Farm, it took approximately 6 months from the date of submission for the application to be approved. However, it was encouraging that beneficiaries confirmed that they were receiving updates from the Department on progress with their applications.

### 8.8.3 Participation in the development of the business plan and conducting feasibility studies

Beneficiaries are involved in this process of developing business plans and conducting feasibility studies. The extension officers and economists assist in the development of business plans. With the exception of the beneficiaries of Nogwaja Nemvelo Farm who stated that they had not been part of the development of the business plan, all other beneficiaries confirmed that they were consulted. However, in two projects beneficiaries stated that whilst they were consulted, the CASP support was not in terms of their priority needs.

With the exception of two projects, namely: Nogwaja Nemvelo and Thembekile farm, feasibility studies were conducted in the other projects that were visited. At Nogwaja Nemvelo project, the beneficiaries indicated that there was no need to have conducted a risk analysis prior to farming because they were all clear about what the farming operations entailed (because they had been workers on the farm).[[170]](#footnote-170) However, if the Department of Land Affairs and/or Agriculture had done the feasibility study, it would have come to light that dams were not included in the sale of the farm which possibly made the farm unsuitable. Since the livestock was excluded from the sale of the farm, the business plan would have made projections how the loan (to buy livestock) will be repaid through cash generated by farming operations.

The PSC is of the view that beneficiaries should participate in the development of business plans and feasibility studies for their projects. This will not only ensure ownership of the projects, but will also contribute to the overall success of the projects.

### 8.8.4 Involvement in Local Farmer Associations

Most beneficiaries are involved in farmer associations. Sugarcane farmers are members of the South African Sugarcane Association (SASA). The owner of Shusha Enterprises also affiliated to the Mistone Cane Growers Association, whereas, beneficiaries of Silwanentuthuko stated that they were members of the Citrus Growers Association, over and above SASA. A benefit provided by SASA is that emerging farmers are provided with mentors to support them with technical skills. Beneficiaries of KwaHlaza Farm are affiliated to Nkwalini Farmers’ Association, where they discuss a wide range of issues, including farm security.

Beneficiaries of the two struggling projects, namely, Nogwaja Nemvelo and KwaZamani projects stated that they were not affiliated to any farmer association. The affiliation of beneficiaries of these two projects to farmer associations could have helped to improve their farming operations. The PSC is of the view that affiliation in farmers association could benefit the emerging farmers and should be encouraged.

### 8.8.5 Formation of Partnerships

The Department has formed partnerships with two sugar cane companies, namely Tongaat-Hulett and Illovo. CASP funds are transferred to these companies to facilitate the procurement process by identifying and paying the service providers once the service has been delivered according to the stipulated specifications. According to the contract, these companies act as implementing agents for CASP. The Department was of the view that the beneficiaries were getting value for money for the services provided since the companies were not charging the Department according to the partnership agreement.[[171]](#footnote-171) The PSC also established that the success rate of sugar cane projects was higher than other projects, which further suggests that both the Department and the beneficiaries were getting value for money from these partnerships.

At project level, farmers have entered into various forms of partnerships. Silwanentuthuko-Donnovale Farming Company Pty Ltd is a collaborative effort between the LRAD beneficiaries and an existing farm. Other partnerships are entered into between emerging farmers and established commercial farmers who provide mentorship in terms of technical skills and training. It was established that if managed properly, partnerships at project level could also benefit the emerging farmers.

## 8.9 DEPARTMENT’S PLANS TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE OF THE PROGRAMME

As stated in the introduction, the Provincial Cabinet resolved in 2009 to establish a public entity trading as Agribusiness Development Agency (ADA) as an implementing agency for post settlement support projects.[[172]](#footnote-172) The Agency will be jointly funded by the Department of Agriculture, Environmental Affairs and Rural Development and the Department of Economic Development and Tourism.[[173]](#footnote-173) It is hoped that this partnership will improve the success rate of CASP projects.

## 8.10 CONCLUSION

The foregoing chapter has highlighted some of the challenges experienced by the KwaZulu-Natal Province in implementing CASP. At management level, both at head Office and District level, a notable challenge was information management and record keeping. Furthermore, a firm grasp /understanding of the programme seems to be lacking amongst some managers (for example, one of the managers was unaware that financing support is part of CASP).

However, the good practice identified in this study was the formation of a partnership between the Department and the sugar mills (Tongaat-Hullett and Illovo), which appears to be bearing fruits. Forty five percent (45%) of the successful projects in the 2009/10 financial year were supported by the mills. The assumption is that if all the projects were to be supported by commodity groups/ implementing agents, the success rate of the projects could improve in the province.

# CHAPTER NINE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 9.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter 1 it was stated that the objectives of this study were:

* To evaluate whether the objectives of the Comprehensive Agriculture Support Programme (CASP), have been achieved/ are being achieved.
* To evaluate whether the programme design was appropriate in relation to the set objectives.
* To evaluate whether the programme is being implemented effectively and

efficiently (focusing on the implementation strategies of CASP).

This Chapter draws conclusions and provides recommendations.

## 9.2 CONCLUSION

With regard to the first objective of this study of whether the objectives of CASP have been achieved, the conclusion depends very much on the criterion for success that is applied. If judged according to the criterion of the immediate outputs of CASP, then the programme has been successful. By and large the infrastructure has been delivered even though there were initially high levels of under-expenditure on the programme. However, the PSC believes this criterion is limited and that more could be achieved through the programme if there could also be a focus on outcome measures like the production levels of the farms, income levels and longer term sustainability.

Regarding the second objective, whether the programme design is appropriate, the six pillars are key determining factors for the success of the programme and make a lot of sense, even though the theory of change of the programme is not spelt out explicitly. In addition, the programme was not implemented in an integrated fashion as it was originally conceptualised and designed.

Lastly, with regard to the third objective of whether the programme has been implemented effectively and efficiently, the provincial departments have put institutional capacities in place that form a solid foundation for farmer establishment and support. However, sometimes the focus is still too much on immediate deliverables like farm infrastructure rather than the longer term income generating potential of the farms. The focus in the next few years should be to improve the efficiency of processes and the quality of all services and to measure such quality against outcome indicators.

Based on the findings on the successful projects that were visited, it can be concluded that successful implementation is dependent on factors such as proper project planning (conducting a feasibility and risk assessment), project management ability, relevant experience, the commitment of all involved, a hands on approach and comprehensive support in terms of all the CASP pillars. The failing/failed projects had the opposite characteristics. It is essential that the output (quantity of visits to farms and other activities) and quality of the work of extension officers are closely monitored and the good practices that are available to achieve this should be emulated. The same apply to the knowledge resources that are at the disposal of extension officers. Success factors that seem to have a big impact on the success of CASP projects are the quality of the initial business planning – it should be geared to the longer term success of the farming operation and not the immediate CASP project, the affiliation of emerging farmers to farmers’ associations and partnerships. Partnerships can be entered into between the farmer and appropriate bodies to provide technical, business and marketing support, and between the department and bodies that can serve as implementing agents or otherwise utilise the resources of the private sector to leverage the departments’ own efforts and investment. It was found that the success rate of projects operating under the implementing agents is higher than those under the direct supervision of the department.

## 9.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above conclusions, the following recommendations are made:

### 9.3.1 Development of the logic framework and programme theory for the programme

In order to ensure a common understanding of CASP, the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries should put in place a clear logic framework for the programme. This will enable the Department logically outline not only **what** the programme is expected to achieve but also **how** it expects to achieve it. This framework of change should, amongst others, depict a sequence linking inputs to activities, activities to outputs, and the results/outcomes to impacts.[[174]](#footnote-174)

### 9.3.2 Monitoring the work of Extension Officers

Both the quantity and quality of extension services should be closely monitored. This means that the Green Book or equivalent good practice must be fully implemented. Extension officers must also be given the knowledge resources to enable them to provide high value extension services to farmers.

### 9.3.3 Improving the quality of performance information

The departments must set up the procedures and systems to collect performance information against appropriate outcome indicators on the project level, including for example, the production levels of the farms, incomes and expenditures (net income), the number of jobs created on the farms and the sustainability of the farming operation (producing a livelihood over a number of years).

### 9.3.4 Formation of partnerships

It is recommended that partnerships should be formed with established farmers, commodity groups, implementing agents, and/or buyers/processors of product. This could happen at two levels, namely, between projects or groups of projects and appropriate partners and between the departments and appropriate partners to leverage the investment of the departments by means of the additional resources that the partner can offer. These partnerships should be carefully structured to ensure that real benefits accrue to emerging farmers and that all parties fulfill their obligations.

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# APPENDICES

# APPENDIX A: LIST OF KEY ELEMENTS DETERMINING PROGRAMME SUCCESS

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| **Box 6. Programme evaluation**  **Programme evaluation elements**   1. Success of the programme. 2. Needs of citizens. 3. The societal problem the programme is supposed to address (for example, poverty, crime, environmental degradation). 4. The environment or context in which the programme will be implemented (for example, the political, social, economic environment). 5. Programme design:    1. 5.1 Objectives of the programme.    2. 5.2 The target population the programme is intended to benefit.    3. 5.3 The course of action government intends to take to address the identified needs or societal problems. Alternative courses of action can also be viewed as alternative strategies, means or instruments to achieve desired ends. Instruments that may be used include a service, a financial grant, regulation of an activity, funding or subsidisation of an activity, or the provision of infrastructure. Some theory explaining why it is expected that the chosen instrument will work, and under what conditions, may be used to justify the choice of instrument. The conditions determining success can also be called critical success factors. For instance, the success of regulation may depend on the capacity to enforce the regulation. The comparative cost and benefits of alternative courses of action may also be considered.    4. 5.4 The risks associated with the course of action.    5. 5.5 Legal enablement of the course of action (should a law be enacted or changed?).    6. 5.6 Control over or governance of bodies empowered to take a course of action, especially if it affects the rights of citizens.    7. 5.7 The scale of the programme. Scale includes the proportion of the population that will benefit from the programme (its reach) and the level of service. The scale will depend on the level of funding that the programme can attract.    8. 5.8 The institutional arrangements for delivery of the programme. This may include government departments, public entities, private institutions and institutions in the national, provincial, or local sphere of government.    9. 5.9 Procedures for implementing the chosen course of action.    10. 5.10 The human resource capacity available to implement the chosen course of action.    11. 5.11 Effective leadership and management of the programme.    12. 5.12 Government policy with regard to all of the above elements. 6. Implementation of the programme. |
| **Factors determining programme success**  A programme evaluation will assess –   * the success of the programme; * the success of the programme in relation to the needs of citizens and the societal problem the programme is supposed to address; * contextual factors that may have influenced the success of the programme; * how the design of the programme determined its success; and * how the implementation of the programme determined its success.   Programmes are complex and not all elements are pre-designed or are implemented as planned. The form that many of the elements take may emerge as the programme is implemented and adjustments are made based on experience. M&E provides the evidence for decisions on what adjustments to make. |
| **Related concepts**  Sometimes the concept of “service delivery model” is used to capture the elements of programme design. When designing a delivery programme several institutional models or delivery strategies are possible. For instance, to ensure food security, government can give income support, bake bread, buy and distribute bread, subsidise the price of bread, regulate the prices of flower or other inputs in the value chain, or promote the establishment of vegetable gardens. The service delivery model, or the programme design, entails the creative combination or mix of all the design options to deliver the best outcomes or value for money. |

# APPENDIX B: SUCCESS FACTORS IN THE EVALUATION MATRIX

**APPENDIX B 1: PROGRAMME EVALUATION MATRIX SUCCESS FACTORS**



**An Evaluation of the Comprehensive Agricultural Support Programme (CASP)**

**Programme Evaluation Matrix**

**[For DAFF Managers and Officials at National, Provincial and District Offices]**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Objective** | **Indicator** | **Question(s)** | **Evaluation instrument (s)** |
| To evaluate whether the programme is being implemented effectively and efficiently. | Improved project management and service delivery capacity. | Project Management capacity   * Do you have a project implementation plan? (As a follow-up question, the respondent should be asked to map out the plan i.e. the CASP project life cycle/ implementation process even if it is not formally documented.) * Do you conduct a feasibility study before administering the grant? * To what extent are activities carried out as planned? (Are planned outputs achieved? Is expenditure according to budget? Are projects completed within set time frames?).   (Specific references could be made to deviations reflected in the Annual & quarterly reports & explanation thereof).   * How do you monitor the implementation of projects? how often? (The quality of the M&E Framework should be reviewed and the extent to which the Department adheres to it.) To what extent do you conduct monitoring to determine whether procured items/services are delivered in accordance with required specifications and expenditure? * Have you conducted project risk assessment? Have you put in place control/preventive measures based on risk assessment? * Is there any form of sharing of good practices and learning from challenges? - Do you take corrective measures? (Organisational learning)   [Respondents should describe both the good practices and the challenges experienced – for example, why are some projects failing /not completed?].   * Do you prioritise vulnerable groups in your projects? (i.e. youth, women and people with disabilities) If so, provide the Departmental targets for the past three years and performance against these targets.   Service Delivery Capacity   * Are you dedicated to CASP or do you have other additional responsibilities? (Follow-up questions would be to determine whether they had been properly oriented on the programme, whether they have any formal training in Agriculture and whether staff is sufficient to carry out CASP responsibilities). * What is the turnaround time for CASP grant approval? (i.e. approval of business plans?) what is the target period? Are you adhering to it, if not, what are the bottlenecks? – provide evidence * Is there any feedback mechanism for the applicants? (basic application tracking system)? * Do you inform unsuccessful applicants of the outcome? Are the reasons provided? * What is the turnaround time for the procurement process of farming infrastructure? what is the target period? Are you adhering to it, if not, what are the bottlenecks? – provide evidence * Does the Department have mechanisms in place to deal with fraud and corruption with regard to CASP and other famer support programmes? If available, are they effective? elaborate | * Document analysis * Interviews |
|  | Accelerated service delivery due to  sound intergovernmental relations and alignment of CASP with other relevant programmes. | * Does CASP form part of Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) and sector/area based plans? * How does the Department of Agriculture collaborate with the Department of Rural Development and Land Affairs in ensuring that beneficiaries of land distribution benefit from CASP? Describe institutional mechanisms, procedures and systems that have been put in place to achieve this. Are they effective? * Are the roles and responsibilities of various institutional mechanisms responsible for the implementation of CASP (for all three spheres of government) clearly defined? Are there any tensions? elaborate * Does the Department have any formal structure aimed at synchronising the activities of various spheres of government (district, provincial and national?) If it exists, is it effective in achieving coordination and integration of CASP functions? (Minutes of meetings should be requested to determine the effectiveness of this structure.) * Is there any formal structure comprising the representatives of farmers and the Department? – is it effective? (Minutes of meetings should be requested to determine the effectiveness of this structure.) * To what extent does the Department synchronise the functions of various farmer support programmes to ensure that support is provided in an integrated and coherent manner? elaborate * Have you forged any public-private partnerships? If yes, elaborate and describe the benefits of the partnership. | * Document analysis * Interviews * Site visits |
| To evaluate whether the objectives of CASP have been achieved / are being achieved. (focusing on implementation strategies of CASP). | Impact of CASP operations | * What are the key indicators for the success of the programme? (Is it sustainability, improved income level or improved productivity? - elaborate) * Have production levels and farm profits improved after the intervention i.e. implementation of CASP support? (What were production &profit levels prior to intervention and what are the current levels? Are the farms sustainable? – (In addition to the responses, business plans and reports of ten randomly selected projects per province should be reviewed). * How many small-scale farmers have received CASP support since its inception? (i.e. evidence of project statistics should be provided to determine whether the programme has benefitted a significant number of small-scale farmers or is it a drop in the ocean? – these figures should also be viewed against the total number of farmers in a district and province, if such statistics are available). * Do you have an exit strategy to ensure that projects are sustainable? | * Document analysis * Interviews |
|  | Implementation of all CASP pillars to ensure that it achieves its overall goal of providing comprehensive support to small scale & emerging farmers. | General implementation patterns   * Which pillars of CASP have been implemented? * What are the reasons for the variations in the implementation? Is there a specific focus to some pillars? If so, why? * Why is CASP budget not distributed equally across the pillars to ensure equal implementation of the pillars? | * Document analysis * Interviews * Site visits |
|  | Increased Access of CASP support to the targeted group. | Pillar 1: Information and knowledge Management   * Describe the information management strategy/ system used for this programme (CASP)? * Do you keep a database/ register for all farmers in your province / district? * Who are the primary beneficiaries (subsistence, small-scale, emerging or commercial farmers? and who are the secondary beneficiaries? * Do you have any marketing/ communication strategy aimed at reaching out/ informing the target group about CASP? Explain how does the Department inform ordinary farmers in remote areas about CASP? Do they know the contact person(s)? * Are the District and Local Offices accessible to famers? (comment on the number and geographic spread of these offices – are they adequate?) | * Document analysis * Interviews * Site visits |
|  | Improved productivity as a result of technological advancement | Pillar 2: Technical, Advisory Assistance and Regulatory Services   * What is the current “Extension Officer/ Farmer ratio?” – how many farmers are serviced by each Extension Officer? On average, how often do extension officers visit farms? Provide supporting documents. * What kind of support do they provide to famers? * Are they sufficiently capacitated to provide technical support in terms of the latest advanced technological equipment? * To what extent has the Extension Recovery Plan contributed to improving the performance of extension services? * To what extent has the Department provided technological requirements for small-scale farmers?, if yes, to what extent has this improved productivity and income levels in affected farms? | * Document analysis * Interviews * Site visits |
|  | Effectiveness of farming operations | Pillar 3: Training and capacity building   * Have you done skills needs assessment / audit for small scale farmers? Is the skills development plan in place? * Describe areas in which training has been provided to farmers? Explain the training methodology. * Have you done impact assessment on training activities?   [ Note that the training budget for CASP has been targeting Departmental officials and not farmers – the respondents should also provide reasons for this] | * Document analysis * Interviews * Site visits |
|  | Improved Productivity and income levels | Pillar 4: Marketing and Business Development   * Do you provide farmers with marketing information? Explain how? Have you put in place a marketing information database? * What other forms of support have you provided in this area? How many farmers have graduated from small scale to commercial farmers as a result of this intervention? | * Document analysis * Interviews * Site visits |
|  | Improved availability of on-farm and off-farm support. | Pillar 5: On-farm and off-farm Infrastructure and Production Inputs   * How many farmers have benefitted for the past three years from the infrastructure support (provide the distribution of type of infrastructure i.e. production inputs, resource management, water storage etc – why certain type of infrastructure is in demand than others? * What is the impact of this support? | * Document analysis * Interviews * Site visits |
|  | Increased access to financial services | Pillar 6: Financing Support   * Describe forms of financing support provided through CASP. Is it accessible to beneficiaries? If not, what are the bottlenecks? * Provide figures of farmers who have benefitted over the past three years. Are they capable of servicing the debt? Has this support resulted in increased income and productivity levels? (What was the situation before and what is the current situation after the financial support?) | * Document analysis * Interviews * Site visits |

**APPENDIX B 2: PROGRAMME EVALUATION MATRIX: CASP BENEFICIARY**



**CASP BENEFICIARY QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Date:**

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| Name of Project | Local Municipality | District Municipality |
| Project Owner | Type of beneficiary | How did you access the land? |
| Number of beneficiaries | Number of beneficiaries actively involved in farming operation?  Male \_\_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_\_\_  Youth \_\_\_\_\_\_ Disabled \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | |
| Size of the Farm |
| Please describe your farming operations: (How long have you been in farming? Describe the management structure, What is your commodity? How many employees do have?) | | |

**SERVICE DELIVERY CAPACITY**

How long did it take for your application to be approved? What were the bottlenecks?

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After approval of the application, how long did you wait to receive the infrastructure?

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Did you receive any update on your application from the department?

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Did you participate in the development of the business plan for your project? If not, who developed the business plan for you?

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Did the Department conduct a feasibility study?

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Do you know of any fraud and corruption related to CASP?

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If you suspect fraud and corruption, where would you report such incidents?

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Is there any formal structure comprising the representatives of farmers and the Department? – is it effective?

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Have you forged any public-private partnerships? If yes, elaborate and describe the benefits of the partnership.

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**PILLAR 1: INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT**

How did you receive information about CASP?

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Do you have an organised group for farmers in your District?

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Is there any form of sharing of good practices and lessons from challenges among farmers?

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**PILLAR 2: TECHNICAL, ADVISORY ASSISTANCE AND REGULATORY SERVICES**

Are Departmental services accessible to you?

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How often does an extension officer visit your farm? Provide supporting documents.

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What kind of support do they provide to you? (is it general crop production, new seed varieties, fertiliser use or irrigation?)

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Are they sufficiently capacitated to provide technical support in terms of the latest advanced technological equipment?

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If yes, to what extent has this improved productivity and income levels in your farm? Has it contributed to developing knowledge and capacity at local and beneficiary level?

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**PILLAR 3: TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING**

Are you aware of any skills needs assessment for farmers undertaken by the DAFF?

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Describe areas in which training has been provided to you? Explain the training methodology. Was it effective?

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Are you sufficiently trained to run farming operations independently (Are you equipped with technical, Financial and administrative skills to run farming operations independently?)

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Are there any improvements in your farming operations as a result of the training?

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**PILLAR 4: MARKETING AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

Who is the target market?

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How is your product distributed?

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How do you determine your prices?

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Do you receive advice from an extension officer on marketing?

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**PILLAR 5: ON-FARM AND OFF-FARM INFRASTRUCTURE AND PRODUCTION INPUTS**

Have you received CASP assistance with infrastructure?

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If yes, describe the type of infrastructure. …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

To what extent has this kind of support impacted on your farming operations?

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**Pillar 6: Financing Support**

Do you know about MAFISA? …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

If yes, what are your views about MAFISA?

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**Impact of CASP operations**

Have production levels and farm profits improved after the intervention i.e. implementation of CASP support? (What were production &profit levels prior to intervention and what are the current levels? …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

What is the likelihood that you will continue to use the assistance provided in a sustainable manner once grant funding ends? …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

**THANK THE RESPONDENT FOR HIS/HER CONTRIBUTION**

# APPENDIX C: CONSOLIDATED OVERVIEW REPORT ON CASP SITE VISITS IN SELECTED PROVINCES, I.E. WESTERN CAPE, KWAZULU-NATAL, EASTERN CAPE & MPUMALANGA

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| **Name of the Province** | **Name of project** | **Location** | **Nature of Farm** | **Date of visit & PSC Team** | **Interviews** | **Key Observations** |
| **WESTERN CAPE** | **Blue Mountain Berries** | George, Eden District Municipality | Nine-five (95) hectares of Blue Berries under shade cloth.  The project leader, Mr Chisleo Botha was approached by the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC) with an idea of producing Blue Berries. He decided to mobilise his workers to establish the Bessieplaas Werkers Trust and empowered them by giving them 33% shares in the business. His trust Sinksisa is the major shareholder, with 34% shares and IDC has 33% shares. | 16/08/2010  Jabu Mathe | Interviewed the project leader, Mr Chisleo Botha and the representative of the Workers’ Trust, Mr Adams. | The project is generally performing well. Ninety-five percent (95%) of the farm produce is exported to Europe and 5% to Spar and Pick and Pay Retail Stores in Eastern Cape.  Amongst others, the success can be attributed to good project management capacity. The project leader has accumulated vast experience and knowledge in farming especially Blue Berries farming consequently he does not rely on the Local Extension Officer for guidance. In addition, the project has adopted and implemented several policies such as the Fraud and Corruption Prevention Policy. |
|  | **Africa Flowers** | Uniondale, Eden District Municipality | Protea production farm acquired through LRAD. The project is owned and run by the Suraya Family Trust. | 17/08/ 2010  Jabu Mathe | Interviewed the project leader, Ms Suraya | The project has not been implemented successfully due to a disease in water that kills the flowers. A contract that had been secured by the project leader to export Proteas to China had to be temporarily put on hold. In its attempt to support the project, the Department solicited the assistance of Dr Malan from Stellenbosch University whose expert opinion was that nothing can be done to cure this disease.    Failing Project: Africa Flowers in Uniondale, Western Cape |
|  | **Buisplaas Food Security Gardens** | Mosselbay, Eden District Municipality | Food Security  Eighteen (18) emerging farmers in Buisplaas area established the Buisplaas Small Farmers’ Union in 1999. Their farming operations include vegetables, sheep and lucerne. | 17/08/ 2010  Jabu Mathe | Interviewed 4 members of the Buisplaas Small farmers’ Union. | The project is performing well. Beneficiaries sell their produce to the local community and to the local store. They indicated that in the past, they relied on horses for ploughing, but with CASP support, they use a tractor, which saves time. In addition, the installation of the irrigation scheme has benefitted them during draught period.    Mr. Jabu Mathe (right) interviewing Buisplaas beneficiaries in Mosselbay, Western Cape |
|  | **Mantiesrivier Kleinboere**  **Vuki Trust Farming** | Oudtshoorn, Eden District Municipality  Grabouw, Overberg District Municipality | Vegetables and small stock.  In the year 2000, 18 emerging farmers in Matjiesrivier established the Matjiesrivier small Farmers’ Association. They concentrate on the following farming operations:   * dairy * cattle farming * pigs * sheep * lucerne * tobacco   The farm is 30,75 ha with 35 beneficiaries. Currently 144,19 ha is utilised for the production of apples, Pears and Wine Grapes.  Vuki emerged after the liquidation of the White Hall Farming Joint Venture (JV) in November 2001 where the employees of the JV were retained by the liquidator to run the operation. In 2002 the workers formed Vuki Trust and made an offer to purchase the farm from the liquidators and the transfer of ownership was registered on 8 December 2005. | 18/08/ 2010  Jabu Mathe  16/08/ 2010  Thoko Masangu | Interviewed members of the Matjiesrivier Small Farmers Association  Interviewed Mr Eliot Tshabile, the project leader, Mr Jan Witbooi, Production Management, and Mr Thomas Mudzingwa, Financial Administrator | The project is functional. Beneficiaries sell their pigs and sheep at auction. They also supply milk to Klein Karoo Dairy.  Farmers reported that support received through CASP has improved their farming operations. This includes the trailer, which they use for transporting livestock to auction, the tractor, the soil preparation machine and the tiller, which have helped them in their vegetable gardens.  They store the farming equipment in the shed which was also built through CASP grant. Members of the Association agreed to pay a nominal fee to hire the equipment and they use the money for maintenance.  The main challenge is that beneficiaries are still embroiled in problems surrounding the irrigation scheme which were caused by the dismissed Departmental engineer, Marthinus Rabe.  The project is successful. Most of the farm produce is exported to Europe.  Amongst others, the success can be attributed to good project management capacity. The project members have accumulated vast experience and knowledge in farming while working in the farm and they hire their own technical consultants consequently, they do not rely on the Local Extension Officer for guidance. In addition, the project has appointed a management consultant for mentorship, guidance and training. |
|  | **Smithville Women Vegetable Project** | Barrydale, Overberg District Municipality | Food Security project with forty five (45) women in Barrydale leasing municipal land (3ha), their farming operation involves vegetable production. | 18/08/ 2010  Thoko Masangu | Interviewed 1 member of the Smithville Women Vegetable Project, the other member was attending training offered by the Department of Agriculture. | The project is not performing well. Beneficiaries have left the project and only two women are active in the project. The last production was in 2006 and they were able to sell their produce to the local community and Cape Town.  The project faced the following challenges:  Due to floods in 2007 just before harvesting all the produce was lost.  The project depends on rain and currently nothing is planted on the land due to water shortages. |
|  | **Lebaka Pig Farmer** | Swellendam, Overberg District Municipality | Piggery with two beneficiaries. The beneficiaries have been farming for 16 years in Swellendam. Lease land from the municipality. | 18/08/ 2010  Thoko Masangu | Interviewed Ms Elizabeth Lebaka, one of the two beneficiaries. | The project is functional and the farmer was nominated female farmer of the year in 2009. Access to markets seems to be a challenge. Beneficiaries sell their pigs at auction, and reported that the last sale was last year November. Farmers reported that support received through CASP has improved their farming operations because their pigs now have a proper housing with water, electricity and fencing.  They store the feeds provided by the Department in the container/shed which was also bought through CASP grant. |
|  | **Sandfontein Poverty Fighters,** | Napier, Overberg District Municipality | Poultry Farm on municipal commonage land. Food security project. | 17/08/ 2010  Thoko Masangu | Interviewed Mr Lionel Arendse | The project is functional but access to markets seems to be a challenge. The chickens are sold to farm workers in other farms around the area. There were lots of chickens ready for sale but there is a problem with the transportation of the chickens to the market. |
|  | **Roman’s Flora** | Barrydale, Overberg District Municipality | Dairy Farming, the four beneficiaries are leasing the farm of 42 hectares from the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform. | 19/08/ 2010  Thoko Masangu | Interviewed Mr. Krisjan Ruiters, one of the beneficiaries. | The project is not performing well. Beneficiaries sell their milk to Parmalat but they are not getting a good price for the milk due to high content of salts in the water used to irrigate the Lucerne that feeds the dairy cattle. The project’s monthly expenses are higher than the income. |
| **KWAZULU-NATAL** | **Pencerrow (Sweet dreams)** | Ilembe, KwaDukuza District | Sugar cane | 3/08/2010  Mr Indran Naidoo  Mr Jabu Mathe | Interviewed the  farm manager,  Mr. T. Reddy.  Escorted tour of the farm. | The project is struggling. The implementing agent or the KZN Department of Agriculture, (Tongaat Hulett) has not released the entire grant of R875 000. 00 Amongst others, the reason for withholding the money is that soil preparation has not been done, hence planting cannot proceed. The farmer will be supported with fertiliser and labour costs once soil preparation has been completed.  The production levels of the farm have dropped drastically partly due to draught in the area. |
|  | **Shusha Business Enterprises** | Ilembe, KwaDukuza District | Sugar cane. | 3/08/2010  Mr Indran Naidoo  Mr Jabu Mathe | Interviewed the  farm manager,  Mr. T. Shusha  Escorted tour of  the farm. | Although the production levels have decreased slightly ( from 4800 tons to 400 000 tons) due to draught in the area, the project is generally performing well. The farm manager is hopeful that the production level will increase soon due to the intervention provided by his mentors. (Mentors are provided by SASA- South African Sugar Association to support emerging farmers). The farm loan has been settled. At the time of the evaluation, the farm employed 30 temporary workers and 12 full –time workers. |
|  | **KwaZamani** | Hibiscus, Ugu District | Sugar cane, Banana  Timber and Macademia | 4/08/2010  Jabu Mathe | Interviewed 5  beneficiaries.  Escorted tour of  the farm. | The farm is struggling. It is now effectively run by the mentor, who also leases a portion of the farm. The lease amount is R17 000 00 per month. Beneficiaries indicated that they feel excluded, because the mentor takes decisions with the implementing agent (Illovu) without consulting them. |
|  | **Dubazana Family Project** | Mthonjaneni, Uthungulu District | Poultry | 5/08/2010  Jabu Mathe | Interviewed the  farm manager,  manager, Mr  Dubazana and  his son (the  beneficiaries)  Escorted tour  of the farm. | At the time of the evaluation, the Poultry project was not operational because all chickens had died of a chickens’ disease. The poultry infrastructure (built through CASP) was therefore empty. |
|  | **Johnies Park** | Mthonjaneni, Uthungulu District | The farm is 64.8 hectares. When the farm was acquired through LRAD, there were 10 beneficiaries, but currently there are only two left. Mr Dlamini is the Farm manager. The main farming operation is Poultry. | 5/08/2010  Jabu Mathe | Interviewed the  farm manager,  manager, Mr  Dlamini  Escorted tour of  the farm. | The farm is fully functional and the farm loan has been settled.  CASP support has made a difference in the farming operations. Local community, including local schools buys chickens from the farm. |
|  | **Nogwaja Nemvelo** | Impendle at Umgungundlovu District Municipality, KwaZulu-Natal | Mixed livestock in the form of cows, sheep and goats- all for meat. Also does crop farming of potatoes and red& white mealies | 26 July 2010  Noqobo Gcwabe and Bheki Phoswa | Interviewed 3 of the 30 beneficiaries of the farm. Farm bought through LRAD for (then) farm workers from their (then) employer. | Farm not sustainable because of lack of business management skills. Moreover, loan owed to Land bank which was used to buy livestock has put the project in heavy debt that the beneficiaries are struggling to pay off. CASP support in the form of fencing, manure, seeds and feeds has also not been sufficient to ensure efficient functioning of the farm. This farm will not make it and will most likely be re-possessed.  C:\Documents and Settings\jabum\My Documents\My Pictures\CASP site vist\DSCN0188.jpg  Successful Project: Nogwaja Nemvelo in Mpendle, KZN. |
|  | **Thembekile** | Umshwati at Umgungundlovu District Municipality, KwaZulu-Natal | Piggery and Poultry  The farm was bought privately. | 27 July 2010  Noqobo Gcwabe and Bheki Phoswa | Interviewed the farm owner, and his two sons who assist with the bookkeeping and logistics. | Farm not sustainable and on the verge of being repossessed by Land Bank because it is not operational and therefore bankrupt. CASP support not comprehensive and lacks other crucial business-functioning elements in its support. Infrastructure on the farm needs rehabilitation and there is a dire need for stock (chickens and pigs) and all the support that goes in management thereof. |
|  | **Silwanentuthuko Land Trust co-owned with Donnovale farming company Pty Ltd** | Umshwati at Umgungundlovu District Municipality, KwaZulu-Natal | Sugarcane as the principal business. There is also citrus and soon, avocados. | 27 July 2010  Noqobo Gcwabe and Bheki Phoswa | Interviewed one of the 60 beneficiaries of the land (attained through LRAD) and the co-owner of the project. | Farm fully sustainable and needs very little support from Department of Agriculture in terms of CASP. Success of this farm rests on the fact that it’s a joint venture between already well-established farmers and the community who have full land ownership of the farm.  C:\Documents and Settings\jabum\My Documents\My Pictures\CASP site vist\DSCN0196.jpg  Successful Project: Beneficiaries packing oranges in Mshwathi, KwaZulu-Natal |
|  | **Nofisa Dairy** | Ingwe at Sisonke District Municipality, KwaZulu-Natal | Dairy | 28 July 2010  Noqobo Gcwabe | Interviewed the owner of the farm who leases the farm through PLAS (to which he pays annual rental fees | Sustainable farm and this can be attributed to the support that this farm continues to receive from the Department of Agriculture. Continuous funding is a positive factor for this farm and it is coupled by the zest and commitment that the farmer has towards his farming. |
| **MPUMALANGA PROVINCE** | **Coromandel Farmers’ Trust** | Thaba Chweu in Ehlanzeni District | The size of the Farm is 5 852.4188 hectares, consisting of 21 portions of land**.**  It was previously owned by the late Mr Sydney Press (Founder of the Edgar's and Sales House stores). The property was then purchased with the assistance of LRAD grant by the Coromandel Farm Workers Trust on the 21st November 2002. The grant amount was R11.5 million and they also sourced an extra R11.million (Loan) from Land bank which amounted to R22.5 million as a total project cost.  Farming operations include blue berries, dairy, vegetables, soya, peaches and maize.  In 2009/10 financial year, the project received R1, 412,787 CASP grant for the installation of centre pivot (irrigation scheme) | 27/07/2010  Jabu Mathe | Held a discussion with 32 trustees of the Coromandel Farm Workers Trust.  Interviewed 7 members of the Managing Board  Sight-seeing / escorted tour of the farm. | The farm is operational. It supplies blue berries to Woolworths and Johannesburg Fresh Produce Market via Bio select, which is responsible for packaging. Milk is supplied to Moorsdrift Dairy. Maize and Soya is supplied to AFGRI.  In order to generate better income for the farm, trustees acceded to a request from the local commercial farmers to lease a portion of the farm. However, the commercial farmers, in consultation with the beneficiaries, are also using the centre pivots, despite the fact that these pivots have not been formally handed over to the beneficiaries. At the time of the evaluation, the local extension officer had no knowledge of this arrangement.  Beneficiaries indicated that they do not think they will use the pivots in the near future because they are struggling to raise capital to buy seeds and to repay the 9 million loan from Land bank. |
|  | **Siyaphambili Agricultural Project** | Mkhondo (Piet Retief)  in Gert Sibande District | The size of the farm is 8 hectares of industrial land obtained from the uMkhondo Municipality. The main farming operation is broiler production. Beneficiaries indicated that they are also planning to plough vegetables, depending on the outcome of the feasibility study by the Departmental engineer and the availability of the fertiliser. | 28/07/2010  Jabu Mathe | Interviewed 4 of the 10 beneficiaries.  Sight-seeing/ escorted tour of the farm. | The project is not yet functional. The broiler infrastructure was completed on 18 January 2010. CASP support also included building of a small office and erection of the fence  The following key challenges emerged during the evaluation:   * Beneficiaries are still in the process of being registered as a corporative and they currently do not have a banking account. * They are struggling to secure a loan for a starter pack i.e. chickens & feeds. They have applied to MADC (agent for MAFISA) and they were promised that the decision on their application will be made in September 2010. * They are still waiting for the Department to supply them with fertiliser in order to start ploughing vegetables. * Two office doors and shower curtains were stolen as a result of burglary early this year. * All 10 of them are still unemployed. |
|  | **Sinqobile** | Dipaliseng (Balfour) in Gert Sibande District | The farm is only 1 hectare. The main farming operation is mushroom production.  Beneficiaries were assisted by the local councilor, Mr M.D. Khanye to acquire this land. At the moment they have not obtained the title deed, but Mr Khanye has issued a letter confirming the proof of residence.  Support received through CASP grant comprises:  Three (3) buildings – the main one for housing mushroom, the second one for packaging and the third is a block consisting of 4 toilets. | 29/07/2010  Jabu Mathe | Interviewed 3 of the 9 beneficiaries.  Sight-seeing/ escorted tour of the farm. | The project is currently not functional. Beneficiaries indicated that they are struggling to raise the start- up capital to buy mushroom seeds, mushroom bags, refrigerator, furniture and fence.  Other challenges include the following:   * Two different names for the project are reflected in projects records, which could raise audit queries. These names are:  1. Nompumelelo 2. Sinqobile  * Different amounts for the project budget are reflected in project records i.e. R168, 000 and R843,536.85. Beneficiaries informed the evaluator that the actual expenditure was approximately R700 000. At the time of writing this report, the Department provided the PSC with the invoices and the actual expenditure was R799,466.64. |
|  | **Barolong Bapedi goat** | Nokaneng in Nkangala District | The farm area is 15 hectares. It is situated in the nokaneng communal area. Beneficiaries were allocated this land by the local Traditional leader, but they have not yet received the PTO (Permission to Occupy).  This is a goat’s project. A budget of R1,744, 000 CASP grant was spent to buy 103 goats and for the following infrastructure:   * Overnight home for goats, * Kidding pens, * Ramp, * Sorting pens, * Deep tank, and * Borehole. | 30/07/2010  Jabu Mathe | Interviewed all 11beneficiaries.  Sight-seeing/ escorted tour of the farm. | Whilst the farm is operational, it is experiencing several challenges. These are:   * Beneficiaries have not started selling the goats. Out of the initial 103 goats twenty six (26) goats have died of “hartwater” disease. They are left with 77 goats and 8 lambs. They indicated that they will start selling as soon as they have exceeded the initial number of 103 goats. * Beneficiaries are not formally and legally registered as an organization and they do not have a banking account. They have also not been trained in business management. This raises doubts on their capacity to manage the project. |
|  | **Mathebula CPA is a project** | Mbombela Municipality (White River) under  Ehlanzeni District | Revitalization of Broiler, Abattoir and Boreholes.  The land was bought through LRAD.  The project received CASP funding of R276000.00. | 27 July 2010  Florence Mathoma | Interviewed the project manager who is one of the 15 beneficiaries. | The farm is operational, although the beneficiaries indicated that the funding was not enough. The broilers were not operational due to the fact that they were destroyed by the storms. At the moment the famers are utilizing the land for vegetable garden, and piggery. Vegetables are sold to the local markets and restaurants. |
|  | **Sukuma Mswati**. | Badplaas, Albert Luthuli Municipality. | The farm was purchased through SLAG program in 1998.  The project received funding of  R1, 500 000 for the planting of Geranium Flower which produces  Geranium oil referred to as Essential Oils in the Business plan. | 28 July 2010  Florence Mathoma | Interviewed 9 of the 20 beneficiaries. | The project is not active at the moment. The plan is to start preparing soil in August 2010 with the intention to plant 200000 seedlings. The soil preparation started on the 3rd  August 2010. |
|  | **Apple Orchard Ithemba Droogvallei** | Albert Luthuli Municipality in Gert Sibande District. | Apple orchard project. The farm was bought though SLAG. The project was funded with R4, 689,853.00. | 28 July 2010  Florence Mathoma | Interviewed 2 of the 24 beneficiaries | The farm is not operational due to land use change. The farm was meant for Apple Orchards but due to the unavailability of the trees to plant land use was changed to a vegetable garden. Out of 425 hectors 5 was allocated for vegetable garden. Some of the funding was used for erection of the fence, electricity and the pump house to pump water from the river nearby. The non-functionality of the farm is also due to the fact that only two out of 24 beneficiaries are left in the farm, aged between 70 and 80 years. All the other beneficiaries have left the farm to work in the cities like Nelspruit, Johannesburg, and Pretoria.    Failing Project: Apple Orchard Ithemba, in Albert Luthuli Municipality, Mpumalanga Province |
|  | **Sinamuva kwezilimo Poultry project is situated in Delmas.** | Delmas municipality in Nkangala District. | The project involves the erection of three Environmentally Controlled Broilers and the revitalization of two existing broilers.  The farm was bought through SLAG. The project received R13, 200,000. 00 funding. | 29July 2010  Florence Mathoma | Interviewed one beneficiary and a mentor out of 11 beneficiaries. | The three environmentally Controlled Broilers are operational and each has 40000 capacity of chicken every three weeks. The project established partnership with Daybreak to assist in mentoring and buying of all the chicken once harvested. The project is making R242 951,12 per cycle after deductions of maintenance, feed, vaccine etc. |
|  | **Rietkuil Intsimbi, Commonage project** | EMalahleni  In Nkangala District | Soya Bean Project  This is a commonage project, and the beneficiaries have signed a 5 year contract with the Department of Land Affairs.  The project received R400, 000.00 funding the erection of fence. | 30 July 2010  Florence Mathoma | Interviewed all 9 beneficiaries.  Extension officer was present to assist with the language barrier. | The project is not operational. The funding included the erection of a fence. The farm suffered theft tremendously in the sense that after one harvest the fence was stolen. Vegetable garden failed due to lack of water. The transformers as well as windmills were stolen. |
| **EASTERN CAPE** | **Blumendal Family Project** | Amathole District Municipality | Tomato Production. The farm is 63 hectares. The owners are Mr and Mrs Chimoso. They bought this farm in 2003. | 13/09/2010  Mr J Mathe  Mr N Fumba | Interviewed the farm manager, Mr Chimoso | This is a successful project . The project manager produced records to prove that the production levels have increased since the project’s inception. Tomatoes are sold at the local municipal market. |
|  | **Elam Farm** | Amathole District Municipality | Fencing and livestock farming project (goats and cattle). The farm was acquired through LRAD in 2005 by 14 beneficiaries. Currently the project has ten (10) beneficiaries. | 13/09/2010  Mr J Mathe  Mr N Fumba | Interviewed 7 beneficiaries. | The project is failing. Immediately after the CASP assistance on the fencing and goats, the goats were stolen. A section of the fence was also stolen. Most beneficiaries are unemployed and rely on pension. |
|  | **Mount Pleasant** | Amathole District Municipality | This is a 17 hectares livestock farming project.  CASP assisted the beneficiaries with the following livestock:  52 Goats in 2007;  10 Pigs in 1999 and 5 more in 2010. The farm was acquired through LRAD in 2004. There are seventeen (17) beneficiaries on the project. | 14/09/2010  Mr J Mathe  Mr N Fumba |  | The project is a success in respect of goats and cattle farming. The number of both cattle and goats has been s increasing over the years. Beneficiaries sell livestock to members of the local community. The pigs project is however, struggling. |
|  | **Latyangwe** | Amathole District Municipality | Fencing of 72 hectare of grazing land in 2009. This is a communal project specializing in cattle farming. The project has thirty one (31) beneficiaries. | 14/09/2010  Mr J. Mathe  Mr N. Fumba | interviewed the project manager, Mr. D. Nabe. | The project has failed to meet its objectives. The project manager indicated that farmers have not brought their livestock onto the fenced grazing area because the dam within this area is dry as a result of draught. Although they have applied to the Department of Agriculture for draught relief, they have not yet received assistance. The fenced grazing land is therefore vacant. |
|  | **Dunvagen** | Chris Hani District Municipality | The farm is 459 hectares. The main beneficiaries are two members of the Madasa Family Trust. There are seven (7) employees on the project.  This is a livestock farming project, specializing in goats and sheep. CASP supported with fencing of the farm in 2006. | 15/09/2010  Mr J Mathe  Mr N Fumba | Interviewed the project manager, Mr. GC Madasa | The project is performing well. The project manager, Mr. G.C. Madasa submitted records indicating that livestock has increased over the years. He sells goats to initiation schools and sheep to 7 shops. |
|  | **Koyo CPA**  **( Alopol)** | Chris Hani District Municipality | This is a Family Trust livestock farming project, acquired through LRAD in 2004. The farm is 836 hectares. There are fourteen (14)beneficiaries. CASP assisted with ;Fencing;Irrigation; and Stock water. | 15/09/2010  Mr J Mathe  Mr N Fumba | Interviewed the project manager, Mr. Mxolisi Koyo | The project has a potential to succeed. Livestock has increased over the years, however, the project manager indicated that the family trust is struggling to settle the Land Bank Loan. |
|  | **Rooipoort Farm** | Chris Hani District Municipality | The farm is 375 hectares. This is a livestock farming project. Currently, there are 37 sheep, 90 goats and 70 cattle. The farm owner, Mr Sandile Matshoba, is the only beneficiary. He bought the farm in 1996. CASP assisted the beneficiary with:  Fencing;  Stock Water; and  Shed. | 15/09/2010  Mr J Mathe  Mr N Fumba | Interviewed the farm owner, Mr. Sandile Matshoba | The project is struggling. The livestock has declined drastically. The farm owner cited draught and theft as reasons for the decline. The shed is a white elephant. The stock water is not functioning. |
|  | **Kwa Mbewu Family Project** | Chris Hani District Municipality | This is a family project. The farm is 329 hectares. There are four (4) beneficiaries on the project. CASP assisted with:  Fencing in 2009;  2 Tanks in 2005; and  “Kreps” in 2005. | 16/09/2010  Mr. J Mathe  Mr. N Fumba | Interviewed the project manager, Mr. Daniel Mbewu and his wife, Mrs Mbewu (one of the 4 beneficiaries). | The project is failing. Out of the +- 200 Doper Sheep stock, only four (4) sheep is left. Some parts of the fence were stolen. Approximately 200 sheep was stolen on the farm. |
|  | **Mbulu Farm** | Chris Hani District Municipality | Dipping Tank. This is a communal project. | 16/09/2010  Mr. J Mathe  Mr. N Fumba | Interviewed beneficiaries. | The project is dysfunctional. The dipping tank became operational only for twelve (12) months only in 2008. It started to leak in 2009 and it is currently not functional. |

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