



Sustainable Livelihood Consultants

GTZ supported Mpumalanga Rural Development Programme (MRDP)

Client: GTZ Mpumalanga Rural Development Programme (MRDP)



Consultancy team

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Assignment

Sustainable Livelihood Consultants was commissioned to support the GTZ Mpumalanga Rural Development Programme (MRDP) to develop guidelines to aid local and district municipalities develop 'credible' agricultural chapters as part of their Integrated Development Plans (IDPs). The objective of this assignment was to address the current inadequacy of District Municipality (DM) and Local Municipality (LM) IDPs within the province to integrate agriculture and land reform within their development plans.

Methodology

The consultancy encompassed the following tasks:

1. National protocols and guidelines were assessed to describe the IDP planning process.
2. Relevant literature relating to the IDP process in Mpumalanga, as well as agriculture in the province, was reviewed to contextualize the strategic importance of agro-based LED planning.
3. 21 existing IDPs were identified and reviewed, focusing on the institutional planning process and the IDP outcomes.
4. Key stakeholders were interviewed to identify the practical challenges of improving the integration of agri-based LED planning in the IDP process.
5. The study findings were collectively analysed and discussed with the MRDP technical advisory team. The study findings were presented to key stakeholders from DALA / DARDLA at a workshop. The final report incorporated comments and suggestions made at this workshop.
6. Development of a findings document

While agriculture has an important economic and social function in most districts in Mpumalanga, especially among rural marginalized communities, their IDPs do not specifically address the need for agricultural development. Furthermore, most IDPs do not advance strategies to foster agri-based LED growth and nor do they match projects with budget support. In order to advance the integration of agriculture in IDP planning, the consultant proposed the use of a set of tools and actions to enhance the execution of the existing IDP planning protocols. The effectiveness of these measures will rest, however, on action to overcome institutional blockages.

The consultant advised the MRDP that credible agriculture should not be seen as plans that simply propose a series of agri-based interventions (a 'wish list' or 'nice to have'). Instead the content of the plans must be grounded in a thorough participatory planning process that reconciles people's needs and specific wants with agri-economic opportunities / constraints and available programme support (in other words, the institutional framework conditions).

The consultant further advised that the Local Agriculture Forum mechanism, as it has evolved in the case of Umjindi Local Municipality, has the potential to bridge the planning gap and ensure continuous engagement between the municipality and relevant stakeholders throughout the IDP cycle.