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EVALUATING A GOVERNMENTAL  
TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

ANJE COETZER  
(CTZANJ001)

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the  
award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy in Programme Evaluation

Faculty of Commerce

University of Cape Town

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**COMPULSORY DECLARATION:**

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works of other people has been attributed, cited and referenced. The conventions of the American Psychological Association as outlined in the Sixth Edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association was used for referencing.

Signature: .....

Date: .....

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## **Executive summary**

### **Executive summary**

The current study examines the Contractor Development Model (CDM) as used by Working for Water. The overarching goal of the WfW programme is to alleviate poverty by creating short to medium term jobs for unskilled workers through clearing alien vegetation. WfW aims to appoint contractors based on targets from the Expanded Public Works Programme which are 60% women, 20% youth (18 – 36 years) and 2% disabled people. The CDM's main objectives can be seen as:

- the employment of youth, women and people with disabilities;
- skills development through training.

The programme aims to to develop contractors so that they become less dependent on WfW. It aims to develop contractors' alien clearing and business skills to such an extent that contractors eventually exit the CDM in order to pursue more lucrative opportunities outside of WfW.

The study is a formative evaluation and commences with the development of the programme theory of the CDM and subsequently the assessment of this programme theory. Furthermore, the study evaluates the implementation fidelity of the programme. The following specific evaluation questions are addressed:

1. What is the CDM's programme theory?
2. Is the programme theory plausible?
3. Is the implementation of the CDM taking place as intended according to the programme design?

In order to answer the evaluation questions, a number of sources were consulted. Firstly, Donaldson's (2007) five steps for developing a programme theory was used as a guideline for answering the first question. The second

evaluation question necessitated an assessment of the plausibility of the programme theory by investigating whether it is aligned to social science literature and research (Rossi, Lipsey & Freeman, 2009). Finally, implementation related questions were answered by conducting interviews with key programme staff and a thorough review of programme records.

The first step of this study was the development of an explicit programme theory from the CDM's implicit theory. Secondly, a plausibility check revealed that the CDM's programme theory is aligned with other entrepreneurship programmes, but that additional activities such as mentoring and networking may enhance the programme outcomes. In addition, the literature highlighted that the motivation levels of entrepreneurs play a critical role in the likelihood of entrepreneurial success. It is therefore recommended that motivation levels of aspiring entrepreneurs are assessed during the selection phase.

With regards to the implementation evaluation, a number of factors emerged. Firstly, the CDM's target population and its selection criteria are two of the main aspects that are questioned. Only 37.8% of the sample was women, compared to the 60% target. The current selection criteria are inappropriate and unrealistic if the characteristics of the target population are considered as it is unlikely that the poorest segment of society can comply with this set of criteria.

Secondly, entrepreneurial development and other social development aspects are not prioritised by all programme participants.

Thirdly, due to a variety of reasons, contractors have not developed as originally anticipated by the programme developers. The main reasons include inappropriate contractor selection practices, insufficient funding and ineffective management of the CDM.

The evaluator was unable to answer a number of key implementation related questions due to the limited availability of information.

The main programme weaknesses observed was related to the large number of ambitious programme goals and a lack of strategy and adequate planning. Other inhibitors of programme success include the failure to address non performance as well as a lack of record keeping.

The main recommendations from the implementation evaluation include:

- The refinement of contractor selection criteria – the criteria in its current form is not realistic and the programme has been unable to adhere to all the requirements.
- Increase awareness about the social development elements of the programme in order to promote entrepreneurial development for contractors.
- Identify key elements for monitoring and subsequently track these over time. In addition, it is important to start tracking and investigating programme outcomes.
- Streamline communication by putting the relevant processes in place
- Improve planning by putting the relevant processes in place
- Include assessments of training service providers and contractor assessments in the programme.

## Glossary of Terms

Active contractor:	A contractor who undertook a project for Working for Water during the last year
AIDS:	Acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS).
CDM:	Contractor Development Model
Contractor:	An entity which enters into a legally binding agreement to provide a certain quantity of goods or services for a certain price
CV:	Curriculum Vitae
DWAF:	Department of Water Affairs and Forestry
EPWP:	Expanded Public Works Programme
HDI:	Historically disadvantaged individual
HIV:	Human immunodeficiency virus
IAP :	Invasive alien plant
Inactive contractor:	A contractor registered with Working for Water who has not undertaken a project during the last year
Mentor:	A person with business experience who provides advice and guidance to a less experienced person
NGO:	Non-governmental organisation
NQF:	National Qualifications Framework
RDP:	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SMME:	Small, Medium and Micro Enterprise
SPSS:	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
WIMS:	Working for Water Information Management System
WfW:	Working for Water
Worker:	A person who works for a contractor, in terms of an employment contract

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

According to Magadlela and Mdzeke (2004), Working for Water (WfW) is seen as a pioneering and leading conservation initiative which combines ecological concerns as well as social benefits for South Africa's poorest. WfW's ecological aspects have been the main focus of prior research. This dissertation investigates one of the less explored components of the WfW programme, the Contractor Development Model (CDM). The current study aims to assess the theoretical underpinnings as well as the implementation fidelity of the CDM. The CDM aims to develop underprivileged individuals' entrepreneurial skills through training and working as contractors in the WfW programme.

### **Structure of the dissertation**

This dissertation is written in a format that straddles the demands of a research dissertation and a programme evaluation report (as required for this degree programme). This chapter introduces the research conducted for this dissertation by providing the reader with an overview of the programme's contextual factors and descriptions of WfW and the CDM. The second part of the chapter investigates the critical elements of evaluation included in this study and concludes with the evaluation questions.

### **Background**

#### **Alien invasive plants in South Africa.**

According to the Department of Water Affairs (DWA) (2010) invasive alien species are the cause of billions of Rands of damages to South Africa's economy every year and a significant threat to the country's biodiversity. Alien invasive plants (IAPs) are defined as plants that are introduced into countries or regions and then out-compete the indigenous species. DWA views IAPs

as a serious threat to water security, the ecological functioning of natural systems and the productive use of land. It is estimated that between 6 - 7% of South Africa's annual water run-off is consumed by IAPs.

### **The South African economic context and entrepreneurship.**

The introduction of WfW and the CDM is best seen against the backdrop of South Africa's economic context. Despite economic growth in South Africa over the last two decades, unemployment is still high and was estimated at 24% in the first quarter of 2010 (Statistics South Africa, 2010). Growth of the South African labour force is significantly higher than job creation in the formal sector and it is not expected that growth in the formal economy would be able to solve the massive unemployment challenge (Herrington, Kew & Kew, 2009; Nieman, 2001). The promotion of small business development can be seen as one way of addressing the massive unemployment problem. Since democratisation in 1994, the South African government has implemented a number of national support programmes with the intention of assisting entrepreneurship development and upgrading small, medium, and micro enterprises (SMMEs) (Rogerson, 2008).

Entrepreneurship has been given increasing attention in recent years due to economic hardships and the recognition of the potential role of small businesses in economic development (Abor & Quartey, 2010; Garavan & O'Connell, 1994; OECD, 2009). Dynamic SMMEs can be considered an engine of growth and can contribute to economic development by creating employment for both rural and urban populations. Entrepreneurship provides flexibility and innovation, possibly contributing to diversifying economic activity.

South African terms of SMMEs are varied, hereby causing difficulties in the effective targeting of SMMEs (Abor & Quartey, 2010; FinMark Trust, 2006; Herrington et al., 2009; OECD, 2009). Examples of definitions include:

- Survivalist enterprises
- Micro enterprises
- Very small enterprises
- Small enterprises
- Medium enterprises
- Large enterprises

In South Africa, a poor skills base and environmental limitations such as poverty, a lack of active markets, an unfavourable policy environment and poor access to resources are viewed as factors hampering entrepreneurial activity (Devey, Skinner & Valodia, 2006; Herrington et al., 2009). Many South Africans therefore do not view entrepreneurship as a lucrative or feasible career alternative.

From the evidence presented above, one can identify a need for the development of SMMEs in South Africa. This is however a challenging endeavour which requires strong governmental backing. The CDM within the WfW programme is an example of a government initiative that attempts to develop small businesses.

### **Working for Water**

The Working for Water (WfW) programme was initiated in 1995 with the aim of addressing the problem of invasive alien vegetation (DWAF, 2010). A grant of R25 million was received from the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) Fund in 1995 (Common Ground, 2003). The RDP had a broad developmental approach, with objectives of creating large scale employment opportunities and targeting vulnerable groups, especially women. The characteristics of the RDP are said to have influenced the design of WfW and led to the inclusion of poverty alleviation and social development elements in this environmental programme (Sadan, 2008).

The overarching goal of the WfW programme is to alleviate poverty by creating short to medium term jobs for unskilled workers through clearing alien vegetation (Annual Report, 2000/1). WfW aims to enhance water security, improve ecological integrity, restore the productive potential of land, promote sustainable use of natural resources, and to invest in the most marginalised sectors of South African society (Haigh, 2001). Through its processes, the programme aims to build the skills and asset base of workers and prepare them for longer term employment outside of WfW (Sadan, 2008).

The WfW programme is administered by the DWAF. It works in partnership with local communities to whom it provides employment and also with government departments, research foundations and private companies. WfW currently has 302 operational projects (projects with workers in the field) in South Africa (WIMS, 2010). Of these projects, 49 are situated within the Western Cape. Each project consists of between one and eight teams which includes ten to eleven beneficiaries/workers. The map (Figure 1) below provides the geographic locations of the sites across the Western Cape.

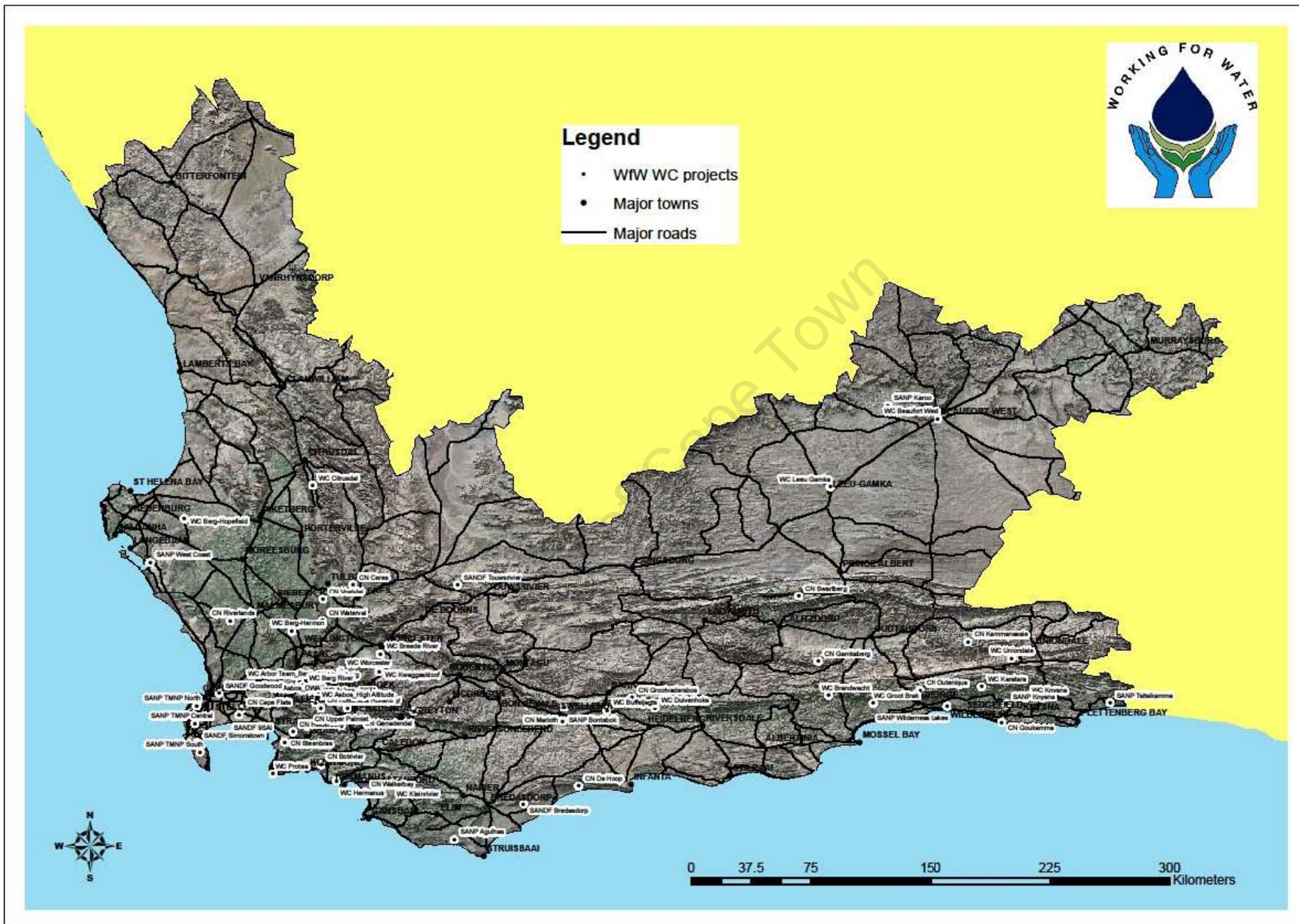


Figure 1. Map of WfW sites in the Western Cape

Situated within WfW is the Contractor Development Model (CDM). The next section provides a detailed description of the CDM and allows the reader to become acquainted with aspects such as the programme objectives, target population, selection criteria, key stakeholders and its location and setting.

### **Description of the Contractor Development Model**

The CDM was initially conceptualised in 2000. WfW uses contractors to manage and conduct work for WfW projects. A contractor refers to an entity which enters into a legally binding agreement to provide a certain quantity of goods or services for a certain price (Contractor Training Manual, 2009). A WfW contractor refers to an individual (or in a few cases, small teams) who has set up his/her own small business and conducts work for WfW. Contractors are not employees of WfW, but have commercial contracts with WfW and are paid for completed quantities of work (Proposal for new Contractor Model, 2009). Workers are employed by contractors who enter into employment contracts with them (Contractor Training Manual, 2009). Contractors are responsible for completing contracts as specified by WfW as well as recruiting and managing their teams and equipment.

All WfW contractors receive a suite of training modules that includes theoretical and business knowledge, alien clearing and social development training (Contractor Development Training Programme, 2009). In addition to training, contractors also receive continuous support from their project managers. All these activities are explained in more detail in Chapter 3.

#### **Programme objectives.**

Currently the CDM does not have its own explicit objectives. Programme staff are however working towards the development of such objectives. The overall objective for WfW is “By the year 2020 the Working for Water Programme will have contributed to a South Africa in which invasive alien species are

sustainably controlled, in order to contribute to economic empowerment, social equity and ecological integrity” (Social Development Business Plan 2006/7, p. 3):

The CDM’s social objectives can be seen as closely aligned to two of WfW’s social development objectives as outlined in the Medium Term Strategic Plan of 2003 – 2007 (2003):

- the employment of youth, women and people with disabilities;
- skills development through training.

The programme aims to develop contractors so that they become less and less dependent on WfW. Whilst junior contractors are completely reliant on WfW, it is intended that intermediate and senior contractors function more independently, specifically in terms of acquiring their own equipment, working under less supervision and taking on larger projects.

Based on staff interviews, the CDM is intended to contribute to these objectives through the training and development of individuals into established contractors. After some time in the programme, these contractors should be able to recognise opportunities outside of WfW, resulting in them pursuing external opportunities. The ultimate aim is therefore to develop individuals into successful entrepreneurs who will be able to run their own businesses. According to the programme stakeholders, these businesses can be in any sector, not necessarily only in alien clearing.

The information above forms a critical component in the development of an explicit programme theory. The process followed to develop this programme theory as well as the result thereof is explained in Chapter 3.

### **Location and setting.**

The CDM is implemented in both rural and urban WfW sites across South Africa (Social Development Business Plan, 2006). The targeted areas are high priority areas as identified by DWAF, usually determined based on high levels of IAPs and/or extreme poverty. These terrains vary greatly, encompassing seven biomes, from fynbos in the Western Cape to open savannah in the Limpopo province.

### **Target population.**

One of the WfW's main objectives is to target the "poorest of the poor" (Social Development Business Plan, 2006). For the CDM specifically, the target population consists of impoverished, unskilled individuals who have had limited success in finding long term employment. These individuals may be resident in rural or urban areas across South Africa.

### **Contractor selection criteria.**

WfW aims to appoint contractors based on targets from the Expanded Public Works Programme which are 60% women, 20% youth (18 – 36 years) and 2% disabled people (Contractor Selection Registration, 2010). The following are further criteria for contractor selection as specified by Working for Water<sup>1</sup> (Contractor Selection Registration, 2010):

#### ***Education and experience requirements.***

- Matric (National Qualifications Framework Level 4, Grade 12)
- Business exposure and experience is an advantage
- Experience in managing a small team of workers is an advantage
- A valid driver's license

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<sup>1</sup> Although most of the selection criteria have been implemented informally since 2004, the full set of selection criteria was only developed and formalised in 2010.

***Asset requirements.***

- Access to appropriate transport (minimum requirement is a short-wheel base vehicle with trailer) which is roadworthy and insured to transport workers
- Possess a cellular phone

***Pre-qualifying criteria.***

- Contractors must have limited other business opportunities or income
- Must be a historically disadvantaged individual (HDI)
- May not be formally employed (i.e. receiving a wage or salary)
- Must not have taken a state voluntary severance package
- May not be financially involved with or from the immediate family of any DWAF or WfW staff member, other contractor, beneficiary or Advisory Committee member
- Must have South African citizenship
- Must be of good character, self motivated, self disciplined and able to insist on good work and strict discipline
- Only persons with no criminal record may apply

***Further requirements.***

- Must be a good leader and people manager
- Must have entrepreneurial potential
- Must be committed to continuous learning and development
- Must have a basic understanding of environmental issues
- Preference will be given to women, youth, single-headed households, disabled persons and households coping with Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and Acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS).
- Good financial track record (i.e. credit worthiness) is recommended
- Contractors must agree to work according to the norms and standards of WFW.

Where possible, prospective contractors have to be members of the local community or live in close proximity to the high priority areas. If local contractors are not available, contractors from neighbouring communities are recruited or exited contractors are used.

### **Funding.**

All information with regards to funding was obtained during an interview with a WfW staff member. The Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) has been the main source of funding for the CDM. Funding is provided in terms of the 3-year Medium Term Economic Framework cycle which is aligned to the presidential goals. Funding for WfW as a whole has been approved for 2010 to 2013 with R667,877,000.00 allocated for the 2010/11 financial year. Only a small proportion of the budget is allocated to the CDM. The reason for this occurrence is that social development is not the core focus of the programme. It is expected that the amount allocated for training and support activities for the 2010/2011 financial year will amount to R500,000.00. In addition, DWAF funds all office administration.

### **Stakeholders.**

The CDM is implemented through complex management and operational procedures. A number of role players with diverse functions exists. and are presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1

*A summary of the CDM role players and their main functions*

Role player	Function
Project Managers	On the ground management of WfW projects. Management of contractors and contracts Recruitment and selection of contractors
Contractors	Complete WfW contracts and manage WfW workers
Implementing agents	On the ground management of WfW projects. Recruitment and management of contractors
Regional Training Coordinators	Responsible for scheduling and arranging functional and business training for contractors and workers
Regional Social Development Coordinators	Responsible for scheduling and arranging social development training and initiatives for contractors and workers
Western Cape Assistant Director: Implementation	Oversees the implementation of contracts in the region. Deals directly with project manager
Private Service Providers	Provides training to contractors

Implementing agents are key stakeholders in the CDM. The implementing agents are appointed by WfW and are responsible for running WfW projects on a local level. They are however not responsible for providing training, as all training is conducted by private service providers appointed by WfW. The implementing agents are responsible for ensuring contractors fulfil their responsibilities according to the contractual agreements. They report to WfW regional offices, which in turn report to the provincial head quarters, which eventually report to the national WfW structures. Implementing agents include various institutions or organisations such as the Department of Water Affairs, SANPARKS, the Independent Development Trust, Vuselela and the Western Cape District Municipalities. There are currently ten different implementing agents in the Western Cape.

## **Programme developments.**

The CDM is currently in a period of flux as several changes are being proposed for the programme. A number of modifications has also been implemented in recent years, for example the development of more sophisticated selection criteria and a contract model replacing a daily wage system.

The preceding sections provide a description of the CDM and the context in which it operates. It also highlights the need for SMME development in South Africa. In the next section, the manner in which the study was conceptualised and tailored to suit the needs of the CDM is addressed. Theory and implementation evaluations are discussed in more detail in order to identify the benefits that these type of evaluations may offer the CDM.

## **Evaluation overview**

At the outset of this study, programme staff were at a stage where they were aware of certain gaps and inefficiencies in the CDM. Evaluations can be useful for establishing exactly what areas should be targeted or prioritised for change. It can also provide more details about the causes of problem areas. After initial consultations with key WfW staff, it became apparent that staff were interested in reviewing and assessing the CDM in terms of its programme aims and implementation. The focus was placed on the social development components of the programme and not on compliance with alien clearing requirements. There was a particular interest in the programme's selection process. Due to time and financial resources, it was decided that the evaluator would limit the scope of the implementation evaluation to the Western Cape. It was further decided that it would be more useful to obtain a high level understanding of the functioning of the CDM on a provincial level, as opposed to conducting a number of case studies of specific projects. The evaluator also suggested the development of a programme theory and an

assessment of its plausibility (more information about theory evaluations and their functions are provided below). The initial consultations occurred in the form of meetings at WfW's premises and email correspondence between the programme stakeholders and the evaluator.

### **A background to programme theory**

Programme theory refers to the explicit description of the concepts, assumptions and expectations that constitute the rationale for a programme's structure as well as how it operates (Donaldson, 2007; Rossi et al., 2009). Bickman (1987) defined it as the "construction of a plausible and sensible model of how a program is supposed to work" (p. 5). The role of causality in programme theory is critical as it helps one to look beyond the programme implementation, to how participants react differently to the programme and how change takes place differently (Rogers, 2000).

The development of a programme theory can be a useful exercise as it can form the foundation for evaluation questions, inform the evaluator which questions to prioritise, what research design to use, as well as how to interpret the research findings (Rossi et al., 2009). Donaldson and Gooler (2003) argue that theory evaluations allow evaluators to gain a better understanding of the exact nature of a programme and the true purpose and context of the evaluation. Programme theory therefore allows the evaluator to conduct a rigorous and sensitive evaluation, whilst taking the practical limitations of the programme into consideration.

A programme theory consists of the programme impact theory and process theory (Donaldson, 2007; Rossi et al., 2009). The programme's impact theory consists of the assumptions about the change process that results because of the programme and the improved circumstances that are expected to occur. This impact can occur due to the interaction between the programme targets and the programme and is referred to as the programme-target transactions.

Programme process theory is the description of how a programme is supposed to operate. It consists of a programme's organisational plan and its service utilisation plan. The combination of these two components provides an overall account of the assumptions and expectations about how the programme is intended to operate.

The service utilisation plan refers to the expectations about how the programme will reach the target population and how the target population will use, continue to use and exit the programme (Rossi et al., 2009). It describes the programme-target transactions from the perspective of the programme participants. The organisational plan is the expectations about how the programme will be organised and maintained. It outlines how the programme will perform its required functions and how it will obtain and organise the necessary resources for effective performance from the perspective of the programme management. Together, the organisational plan and the service utilisation plan form the programme process. The assumptions and expectations on which this programme process is based are referred to as the programme process theory.

Rogers (2000) identifies four instances in which programme theory evaluation might be appropriate. Two of these instances are especially applicable in the case of the CDM. Firstly, in cases where a programme's effectiveness depends on the characteristics of participants or on the context in which it is implemented. In this particular case, one requires a way to predict the appropriateness of the CDM in a new setting with different types of beneficiaries. In order to predict the success or establish to what extent the CDM is generalisable, it is important that the nature of the programme, as well as the theory underlying the programme is extracted. Secondly, when one is trying to improve the programme, it is helpful to have more than blind trial and error to guide the programme. By theoretically describing the effects and assumptions of the CDM, it is possible for the evaluator to identify weak areas and to provide corrective measures.

Weiss (1998) argues that theory-driven evaluations may offer benefits to several different individuals or groups. Programme designers may benefit as theory evaluation investigates the underlying logic of a programme. They can subsequently assess whether their logic and expectations are realistic and alter the programme design if required. For managers, theory evaluations may provide information about the likelihood of programme success, potentially assisting them with establishing commitment and support for the programme. For general stakeholders, this type of evaluation provides an opportunity to investigate whether consensus exists about the programme's assumptions. Should differences exist, stakeholders can meet to discuss these differences, which may lead to improvements in the programme plan. Theory evaluations may therefore assist different groups to acquire critical information about a programme, which in turn may inform decision making.

Based on the information above and the evaluator's initial understanding of the CDM, it was evident that a theory evaluation would complement an implementation evaluation and would be a useful endeavour for the programme.

### **Evaluation Approach**

This evaluation is formative in nature. The aims of this type of evaluation are to provide insights for improving the design, implementation, impact or efficiency of a programme (Rossi et al., 2009; Weiss, 1998). Rossi, Lipsey & Freeman (2009), follow a needs or contingency based theory of evaluation, requiring the evaluator to tailor an evaluation according to the needs and context of the organisation. More specifically, they identify three areas for tailoring: questions, methods and relationships.

The CDM is intended to result in an array of outcomes such as a decrease in alien invasive plants, employment provision, poverty alleviation and skills development. However, the ultimate goal of the programme is to develop

contractors to such an extent that they are able to identify and pursue entrepreneurship opportunities outside of WfW. Therefore, the programme aims to develop contractors into independent entrepreneurs in the SMME market. Subsequently, an entrepreneurial perspective or “lens” was used during this evaluation process. Although all the programme activities do not explicitly or directly contribute to entrepreneurship development, the long term outcome of developing into a successful entrepreneur is used to guide the study.

Theory and implementation evaluation components each require specific questions in order to focus the evaluation. The resultant evaluation questions are therefore intended to guide the evaluation. Based on the evaluation questions, a feasible method and procedure can be established.

### **Evaluation questions**

The following questions guide the evaluation:

1. What is the CDM’s programme theory?
2. Is the programme theory plausible?
  - a. Is the programme theory (change process) aligned to social science research and literature?
  - b. Could the programme theory be strengthened by the addition of other programme activities?
3. Is the implementation of the CDM taking place as intended according to the programme design?

## Chapter 2: Method

### Data sources

The following data sources were used during this evaluation:

1. Social science literature on national and international entrepreneurship programmes for the programme theory component
2. Interviews and email correspondence with programme staff for both the theory and implementation components
3. Programme records and documentation for both the theory and implementation components

The different data sources are elaborated on in the sections below.

### Records.

Demographic data was obtained from the Working for Water Information Management System (WIMS).

The table below provides an overview of the programme records that were used during this evaluation in order to develop a comprehensive understanding of the evaluand:

Table 2

*Programme records utilised*

Document name	Date
<b>Internal programme records</b>	
Annual Report	2000/2001, 2002/2003
Contractor Application Form	April 2010
Contractor Development Training Programme	October 2009
Contractor's Manual	2003
Contractor Selection Registration	June 2010
Contractor Training Manual	2003
Emerging Contractor Information	2009
Implementing Agent Contract 2009 – 2010	2009
Medium Term Strategic Plan 2003 - 2007	2003
Revised Contractor Development Training Programme 2009	2009
Social Development Business Plan	September 2006
Proposal for New Contractor Model	February 2009
<b>External reports</b>	
External Evaluation of the Working for Water programme: Synthesis report by Common Ground Consulting	2003
Process evaluation of social development interventions of the Working for Water Programme in Mamathola and Great Letaba Projects by T. Mangoale	2009
Working for Water Programme Evaluation report by the Commission of the European Communities	1997

The documents listed in Table 2 formed a key data source in this evaluation. Existing records refer to data acquired from secondary sources rather than from original data collection efforts (Hatry, 1994). Two broad categories of existing programme records can be identified, those collected as part of an organisation's regular processes of implementation and existing data, such as surveys or reports completed by external sources. For this evaluation, data recorded by WfW as part of its regular processes of implementation were investigated. No survey data was available, but three previous evaluation reports by external service providers were examined.

A number of risks threatens validity when using existing programme records. Firstly, missing or incomplete data may affect the overall accuracy of the information (Hatry, 1994). In the current evaluation, obvious omissions in the data extracted from WIMS were observed. These omissions were however not problematic and the missing information could be obtained from other records stored on WIMS.

Secondly, certain information required for an evaluation may not be available due to the programme staff not collecting or recording it (McKenzie & Smeltzer, 1997). A lack of available data was specifically problematic during the implementation evaluation component of this study. No records of training completed by contractors, assessments of training, contractor levels of advancement in the programme or the number of dropouts among others were available. Other critical information that was not available pertained to what contractors do when they exit the programme. In addition, limited formally documented information on the CDM itself was available. This lack of availability of information can be seen as one of the biggest challenges of this study.

As a result of these limitations, the evaluator had no choice but to only rely on data obtained from staff interviews, except for the demographic information, for the implementation evaluation component of this study. The evaluator did however attempt to establish whether consensus exists among the different interviewees where possible.

### **Interviews.**

Four semi-structured interviews were conducted with WfW staff in order to obtain information about the programme. Three of the interviews were structured around a set of questions (see Appendix 1 for all interview schedules), which were flexibly adjusted based on the answers provided by

the interviewees during the interviews. One of the interviewees was provided with a list of interview questions via email, and responded to these via email.

The following WfW staff members were included in the study:

- WfW National Acting Deputy Director: Social Development
- WfW National Training Coordinator
- WfW Regional Western Cape Assistant Director: Implementation
- WfW National Assistant Director: Monitoring and Evaluation.

The following paragraphs present information on the various interviewees, hereby contributing to the reader's understanding of the nature of their roles and involvement in the CDM.

The National Acting Deputy Director: Social Development is responsible for WfW's social development components across South Africa. She was interviewed in order to obtain a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the CDM as well as the appropriateness and usefulness of the current set of training that contractors receive. This interview was conducted via email.

The National Training Coordinator is responsible for training and other implementation related aspects across South Africa. He was interviewed in order to obtain information about on-the-ground activities, arrangements within the CDM, training related matters, as well strengths and weaknesses of the programme.

The Regional Western Cape Assistant Director: Implementation has been intricately involved in the CDM since its conception. He has both practical and theoretical knowledge of the programme. His interview centered on the history and development of the CDM, issues of implementation as well as a discussion of strengths and weaknesses of the programme.

The National Assistant Director: Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is responsible for tracking and evaluating the social development aspects of the WfW programme across South Africa. She was interviewed in order to obtain the perspective of a staff member not purely involved in the implementation of the programme. The interview addressed matters such as M&E in the programme, challenges, strengths and weaknesses of the CDM.

## **Procedure**

### **Initial consultations.**

Prior to the formal data collection phase commencing, the evaluator had several meetings with WfW staff in order to establish their evaluation needs, specific areas of interest as well as the support that would be available if an evaluation was to take place. Specific information about the CDM that was not documented was also obtained. As a result of these discussions the evaluator was granted permission to conduct an evaluation of the CDM and developed the scope of this evaluation. The evaluator also obtained critical information about the CDM that was not formally documented during these consultations.

### **Information collection.**

The information collection process started in February 2010 and continued until September 2010. The majority of programme records were emailed to the evaluator. Further materials such as a training manual, hard copies of certain documents and a training CD were collected from WfW's Cape Town offices.

Due to the complexity of the electronic information management system, the evaluator was unable to extract the information directly. Specific information was requested and subsequently provided to the evaluator in Excel format. This data was cleaned and exported into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 18 for analysis purposes.

### **Review of information.**

The documents listed in Table 2 were used to develop a programme description as well as a programme theory. Each document or report was carefully examined and analysed. Relevant information was subsequently summarised and incorporated into the appropriate sections. To assess the contractor demographic data, descriptive statistics were utilised in SPSS 18.

### **Interview procedure.**

Face to face interviews were conducted at WfW's offices in Cape Town and Bellville and were scheduled at times suitable for programme staff in July 2010. The duration of interviews varied between 45 minutes and 120 minutes. Three interviews were recorded and transcribed. Transcriptions were thematically analysed in order to extract the information most relevant to answering the evaluation questions. Due to limited availability, one of the interviews was conducted via email. Answers from this interview were also thematically analysed.

### **Follow-up communication.**

The evaluator was in the fortunate position that programme staff could address questions and elaborate on their interview answers subsequent to their interviews in July. This correspondence took place via email and was helpful in clarifying matters and obtaining additional information.

### **Procedure followed for each evaluation question.**

The procedure followed to address each evaluation question is explained in an integrated manner in the results and discussion section in Chapter 3.

## **Study approval**

Consent to conduct the study was obtained from the Ethics Board of the Faculty of Commerce of the University of Cape Town. Consent from WfW was obtained from the National Assistant Director: M&E. Informed and voluntary oral consent were secured from each interviewee prior to conducting the interviews.

## **Ethical guidelines**

Ethical guidelines were upheld throughout this evaluation process. Participants were treated in a professional manner with respect, consideration and courtesy. Contractor details will be held in the strictest confidence and will not be divulged to any other party.

University of Cape Town

### **Chapter 3: Results and discussion**

The results and discussion of this formative evaluation are presented in terms of the evaluation questions.

#### **Evaluation question 1: What is the CDM's programme theory?**

As mentioned before, the CDM did not have an established programme theory, but an implicit or tacit theory at the outset of this study. The first "result" of this evaluation was therefore the development of such a theory (Figure 2). The programme theory was developed based on guidelines provided by Donaldson (2007) as well as Rossi et al. (2009).

Prior to developing the programme theory, a careful document analysis of programme records took place. Developing the theory was complicated by the fact that WfW had limited programme documentation describing the details of how the programme is supposed to work. This resulted in the time-consuming process of discussing the programme's history, implementation and development with WfW staff members during the initial consultations.

After these consultations, one of the first steps completed for clarification purposes was the development of a flow chart outlining the different processes within the CDM. The flow chart (Figure 2) provides a visual illustration of the sequence of the main processes within the CDM. The programme can be conceptualised in three phases, with different types of training taking place during each phase and continuous support and social development training throughout all three phases. The flow chart was shown to programme staff who agreed that it was correct.

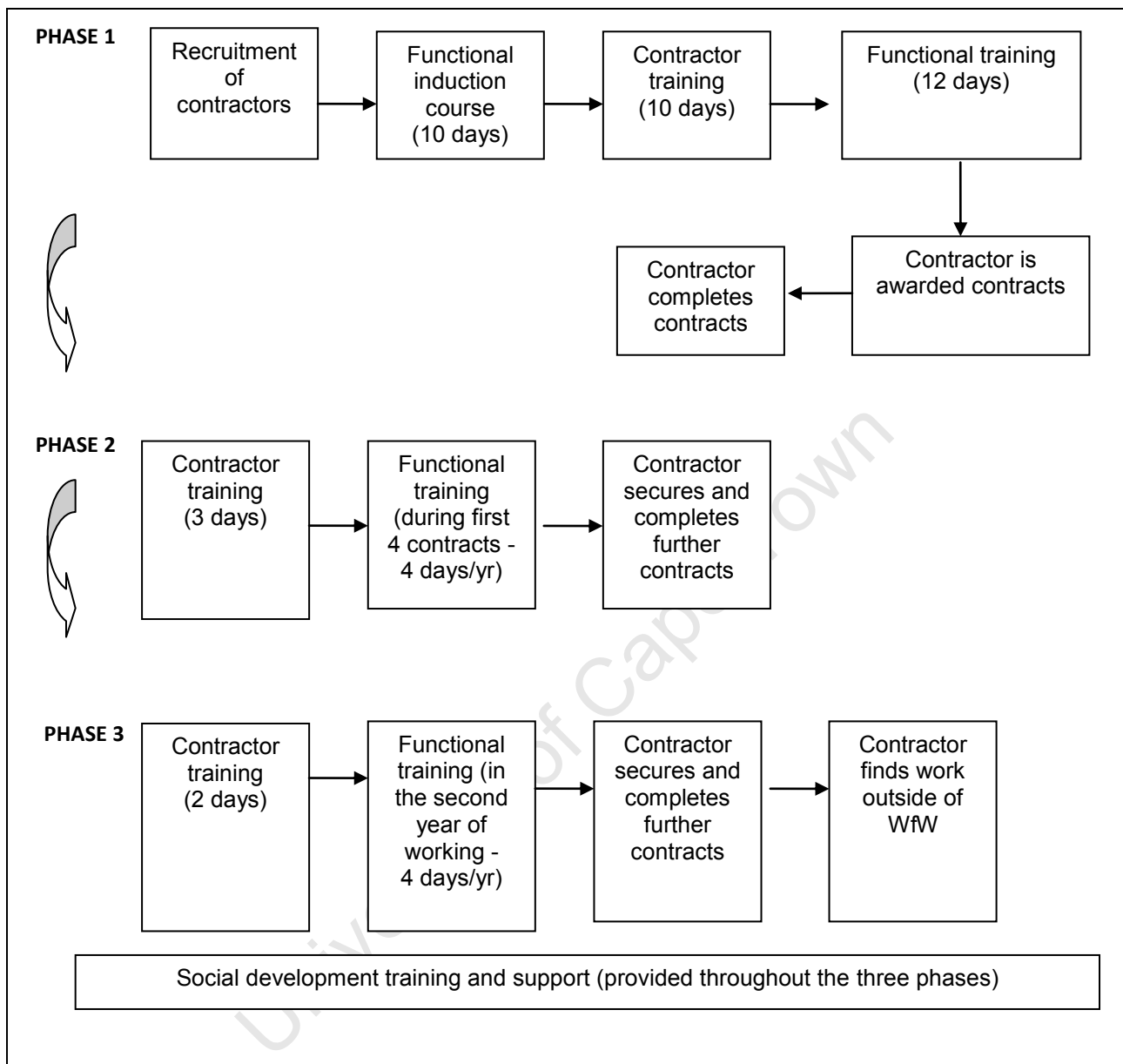


Figure 2. Programme process flow

With the flow chart as guide to the sequence of the programme activities, the different types of activities are explained below. These activities form part of the CDM's organisational plan. It is explained in more detail in order to enhance the reader's understanding of how the programme is intended to develop contractors through the programme-target transactions.

## **Programme organisational plan**

### **Training.**

The different training suites of the CDM are not intended to only provide contractors with new information, but it also includes education, training and development processes specifically designed to help participants develop the skills they need (Contractor Training Manual, 2003). The training days in the flow chart are the recommended number of days for training, although the maximum number of days are not always utilised depending on whether contractors already possess the necessary knowledge and/or skills.

### ***Functional training.***

Functional training refers to the technical training contractors receive in order to remove alien vegetation. It includes chain saw and brush cutter usage as well as herbicide application. The functional training includes practical components at each phase. During these practical sessions, contractors are given opportunities to practice clearing different types of invasive plants using different techniques. Currently no formal assessments of contractor skills take place. The training is delivered according to the following phases:

- Induction course: Before the first training course (ideally)
- Phase 1: Before contractors begin their first contract
- Phase 2: During the contractor's first four contracts
- Phase 3: In the second year of working as a contractor or thereafter

Contractors receive annual refresher training on specific courses that amounts to approximately four days per year.

### ***Contractor training.***

Contractor training is provided during all the contractor phases and includes aspects such as: business principles, business finance, HR training, obtaining future work, legal matters around business, marketing, health and safety and first aid. Of particular importance here is the management component of the course. Contractors are trained on how to manage a team, about good management practices and conflict management. No formal assessments of the Contractor training takes place.

### ***Social development training.***

Social development training is provided throughout all the different phases of the CDM. This specialised training component consists of a range of unique training areas as prescribed by the EPWP and is provided by external service providers. The topics include: HIV/AIDS and health, diversity management and personal financial management.

#### *HIV/AIDS and health.*

These sessions focus on how one can stay healthy. It also covers the nature, transmission routes and how to minimise the risk and effects of HIV/AIDS. A session is dedicated to discussing attitudes towards HIV/AIDS in the work place. The number of sessions is not prescribed and takes place on an ad hoc basis.

#### *Diversity management.*

This course comprises a discussion on the different aspects of diversity in South Africa. It covers the role of diversity knowledge in maintaining good relationships, the individual's role and responsibility in relationships as well as techniques for forming positive relationships.

### *Personal financial management.*

In this course, contractors are trained in areas around personal financial management. Topics include how to save, open a savings account and how to budget.

### **Support from project managers.**

Contractors receive ongoing support from their project managers during all the project phases. Project managers are supposed to be experienced individuals, able to provide guidance and support to contractors. The support usually entails guidance on developing WfW quotations, checking compliance with clearing requirements, health and safety standards as well as minimum conditions of employment for workers. Contractors are expected to require less support from project managers as they mature, gain more experience and move through the CDM's three levels.

In terms of programme theory, the programme assumes that if all the above mentioned activities are implemented as intended, the CDM will achieve its outcomes. As explained in Chapter 1, the outcome component of the programme theory is also called the impact theory. The next section provides the reader with more insight into the CDM's impact theory.

### **Impact theory**

As explained previously, the CDM aims to develop individuals into skilled contractors to such an extent that after completing several WfW contracts, they are able to identify and pursue entrepreneurship opportunities outside of WfW. Essentially, the suite of training and support provided to contractors is intended to result in contractors becoming successful entrepreneurs in the SMME sector.

From the flow chart, one can represent the outcome component of the CDM's impact theory in a simple diagram as seen in Figure 3 below. The original version of this diagram was shown to programme staff identified for involvement in the evaluation. These individuals provided input via personal contact sessions and emails. Their comments were incorporated by the evaluator and the amended version was subsequently sent out for review and approved.

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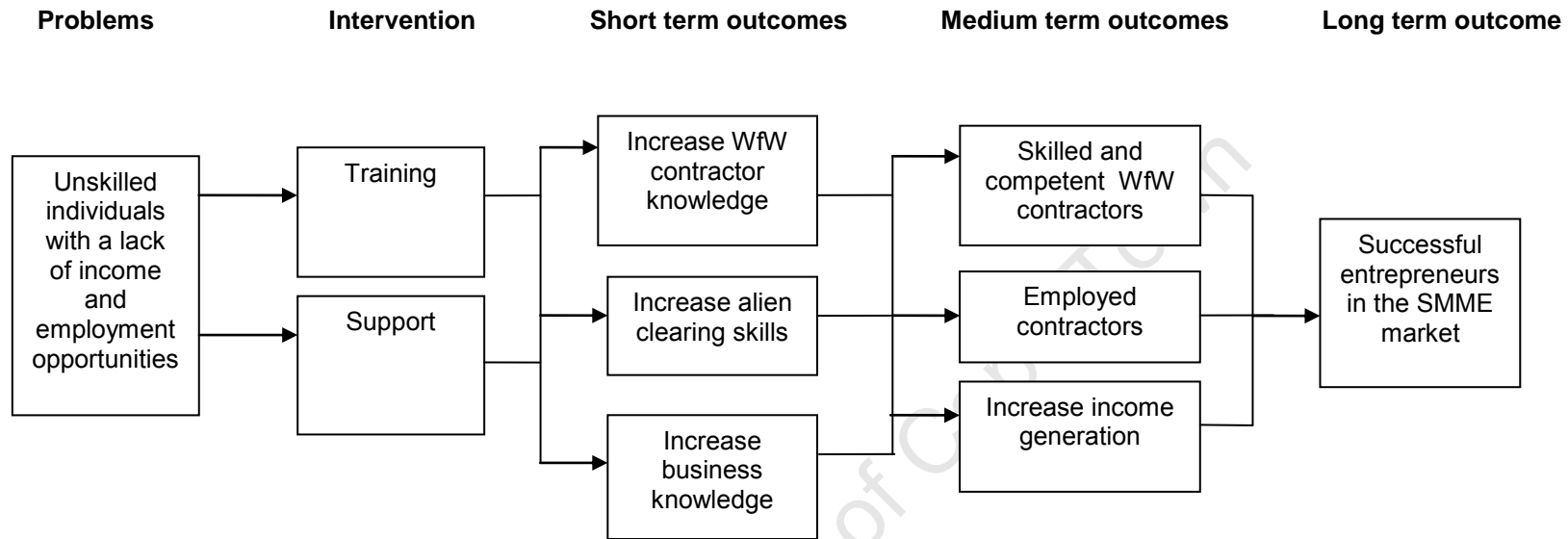


Figure 3. Simplified version of the CDM's programme theory

Should the individual programme activities be explored in more detail, the activities and related short, medium and long term outcomes can be summarised in the table below:

*Table 3*

Programme components with outcomes.

Activity	Short term outcome	Medium term outcome	Long term outcome
Functional training	Increase IAPs removal knowledge and skills	Effective application of technical knowledge and skills in contracting work	Effective application of technical knowledge and skills in private business
Contractor training	Increase business knowledge	Effective application of business knowledge and skills in contracting work	Effective application of business knowledge and skills in private business
HIV/AIDS & Health training	Increase comprehensive and correct knowledge about HIV/AIDS & health	Increase awareness regarding the spreads of HIV/AIDS and other illnesses	Effective personal management of HIV/AIDS and improved health
Diversity Management training	Increase diversity management knowledge	Effective diversity management in WfW teams	Effective diversity management in private business
Personal Financial Management	Increase personal financial management knowledge	Improved personal financial management skills	Improved personal financial status
Support	Increase knowledge and understanding about WfW contracting work	High quality WfW Contracting work	Well-informed and independent business owners

Figure 3 and table 3 above are the result of the creation of an explicit programme theory from the CDM's original implicit programme theory. The limited availability of documentation presented a challenge, but through a participatory and iterative process, the relevant stakeholders reached agreement in terms of the CDM's process flow and impact theory.

## **Evaluation question 2: Is the programme theory plausible?**

### **a) Is the programme theory (change process) aligned to social science research and literature?**

After a programme theory has been developed, it is necessary to assess its plausibility. This plausibility check entails investigating whether the programme's change processes are aligned to social science research and literature. As mentioned earlier, an entrepreneurial lens was used for assessing the plausibility of the CDM's programme theory. The main motivation behind this decision was that despite the CDM's operational activities being focused on alien vegetation removal, its ultimate goal is the development of independent entrepreneurs. It was therefore decided that investigating elements of successful entrepreneurship programmes would be most appropriate.

An important factor to consider during this plausibility assessment is the unique nature of the CDM. This programme is specifically aimed at individuals with limited opportunities and formal education, whilst it has a focus on the clearing of alien plants in a developing country setting. The majority of entrepreneurship research has been conducted in developed countries and in tertiary institutional settings. Some of these studies may therefore have limited relevance for comparison purposes with the CDM. The evaluator did however consult studies that were conducted locally or in other developing countries (Botha, Nieman & van Vuuren, 2006; Graaf, 2007; Brink, 1996; FinMark Trust,

2006; Herrington et al., 2009; Ormond, 1993; Phaladi & Twala, 2008; Pretorius, Niemand & van Vuuren, 2005; Smith & Perks, 2006).

The CDM was compared to other programmes in terms of its theory and activities. Any similarities with successful programmes were noted, gaps were identified and the inclusion of components that has proven less successful in other programmes was assessed.

The extent to which entrepreneurship is teachable or even worth teaching is a matter of debate among scholars. Faris (1999) and Henry, Hill and Leitch (2003) argue that despite a growing body of literature in the SMME field, there is still uncertainty about whether training can in fact contribute to individuals becoming successful entrepreneurs. Many experts however argue that entrepreneurs can be developed through appropriate training (Blanchflower & Oswald, 1998; Charney & Libecap, 2000; Commission of the European Communities, 2006; Price & Monroe, 1992; Vor der Bruegge, Dickey & Dunford, 1999). The evidence from the above mentioned studies is convincing as it shows that individuals can be developed through training. For the purposes of this evaluation, it is therefore assumed that entrepreneurship can be taught.

Based on empirical studies and research, the main outcomes associated with effective entrepreneurship programmes are the following:

- Increased knowledge about running a business (Friedrich, Glaub, Gramberg & Frese, 2003; Garavan & O’Cinneide, 1994; Henry, Hill & Leitch, 2003, Johannisson, 1991; Solomon, Duffy & Tarabishy, 2002)
- Improved skills for running a business (Friedrich et al., 2003; Garavan & O’Cinneide, 1994; Henry et al., 2003; Johannisson, 1991; Solomon et al., 2002)
- Increased likelihood of entrepreneurs starting their first business (Botha et al., 2006; Charney & Libecap, 2000; Garavan & O’Cinneide, 1994; Garnier, Gasse & Raynal, 1991; Lee & Wong, 2003)

- Increased likelihood of entrepreneurs starting multiple businesses (Botha et al., 2006; Garavan & O’Cinneide, 1994; Garnier et al., 1991; Lee & Wong, 2003)
- Improved business performance (Friedrich et al., 2003; Ronstadt, 1985; Sexton & Upton, 1987; Solomon, et al., 2002)
- Increased motivation required for entrepreneurship (Graaf, 2007; Johannisson, 1991; Timmons & Spinelli, 2007).
- Increased positive entrepreneurial attitude (Donckels, 1991; Graaf, 2007; Kantor, 1988; Lee & Wong, 2003)
- Improved skills for developing and utilising networks (Aldrich & Elam, 1997; Johannisson, (check bibliography) 1991; Klyver, Hindle & Meyer, 2008; Thorgren & Wincent, 2009).

These documented outcomes provide evidence supporting the assumption that implementing an entrepreneurship programme can bring about positive effects and/or results. All but the last three of these outcomes are included in the CDM’s programme theory, and therefore the CDM’s impact theory can be seen as plausible and in line with social science research.

The next section compares the CDM’s elements to those of other entrepreneurship development programmes.

### ***Approaches to training.***

Politis (2005) argues that entrepreneurial learning is affected by the context in which learning occurs, the content of what is learned as well as the processes through which learning takes place. Gorman, Hanlon and King (1997) as well as Hjorth and Johannisson (2006) argue that the art of entrepreneurship is mainly learned in the business environment through inductive, practical and social experience and not in an educational setting.

Smith and Perks (2006) investigated the training intervention needs for black micro entrepreneurs in South Africa. They argue that various traditional training approaches may not be appropriate for these entrepreneurs due to their limited educational qualifications. Furthermore, the authors see the experiential learning approach, where experience precedes learning, as appropriate for aspiring entrepreneurs with limited levels of education. They explain that it is important to focus on allowing individuals to learn by doing and to encourage participants to solve problems from a multidisciplinary viewpoint. Exercises such as role play, management simulations, structured exercises and focused learning feedback sessions may be beneficial for the entrepreneur. Shepherd and Douglas (1997) argue that an individual will only really be able to learn when the skill that he/she is trying to acquire, can be performed in an environment as close to real life as possible.

The CDM includes a number of experiential learning elements which may facilitate contractors' entrepreneurial development. The programme is designed in such a way that contractors receive initial training, and then they start working on their own contracts, whilst receiving further training and ongoing support. Contractors are therefore given the opportunity to work in a relatively sheltered, but "real life" environment, before moving on to more independent contracting work for WfW and potentially outside of WfW. One can conclude that the CDM uses appropriate approaches to entrepreneurial training, hereby improving the likelihood of achieving the intended outcomes.

### ***Access to finance.***

The most common problem reported by South African SMMEs is a lack of access to finance (Herrington et al., 2009; Rogerson, 2000; FinMark Trust, 2006). Youth and people from rural areas are particularly unlikely to have start-up capital (Herrington et al., 2009).

As far as the CDM is concerned, finance is not provided to contractors. The CDM does however provide contractors with tools and equipment to start their contracting businesses. Contractors are expected to repay the equipment at no interest and at a depreciation value. They are also allowed to add up to 20% of the labour costs to their total contract prices for capital build-up purposes or profit for developing their business. By removing the responsibility of aspiring contractors to provide all the necessary start-up capital, the CDM addresses a serious obstacle that many aspiring entrepreneurs face. Nevertheless, the intervention does not remove the obstacle of finance completely; it only alleviates the effects to some extent by making equipment available to the would-be entrepreneurs. Many aspiring contractors may therefore still struggle to start their own alien clearing businesses.

#### ***Development of personal skills.***

Van Aardt and van Aardt (1997) compiled a list of the most pertinent personal skills documented in entrepreneurial literature (these skills are distinguished from business operation skills for the purposes of this study). It includes good organisation skills, problem-solving skills, communication skills, stress management skills, good leadership qualities and negotiation skills. Similar skills were identified by Bridge, O'Neil and Cromie (2003).

The CDM Contractor training includes elements that develop organisation, problem-solving, communication and stress management skills as well as good leadership qualities and negotiation skills. Although these are skills that may not be acquired through a relatively short course, in the opinion of the evaluator, the course can be seen as sufficient for making contractors aware of the importance of these skills and its role in business.

### ***Business operations skills.***

According to Van Dyk, Nel, Loedolff, Van Zyl, and Haasbroek (2001) business operations skills are key ingredients to entrepreneurial success. Theorists (Hisrich & Peters, 1998; Solomon et al., 2002; Van Dyk, Nel, Loedolff, Van Zyl & Haasbroek, 2001) explain that these operational or technical business skills can include: general business management, budgeting, safety and security, financial management, handling employees and customer relations.

Graaf (2007) distinguishes entrepreneurship skills from other business skills. She argues that entrepreneurship skills include management skills, the identification of entrepreneurship opportunities as well as the development of networking abilities required for learning.

The Contractor training component of the CDM covers a broad range of business operating elements as well as entrepreneurship elements. These include general management (Phase 2, one-day session), financial management (Phase 1, two day session), human resource management (Phase 2, one-day session), legalities of having a business (Phase 1, one-day session), business plan development (Phase 3, half-day session), marketing (Phase 3, half-day session), budgeting, health and safety (Phase 1, one-day session). Although many of these sessions may only have a short duration, the CDM does cover the main business operating skills documented in the literature, hereby enhancing the likelihood of business success for contractors. Assessing the effects of the Contractor training course would be an interesting and important exercise for the CDM and possibly a worthwhile topic for an evaluation.

### ***HIV/AIDS component.***

South Africa has one of highest AIDS rates in the world with approximately 7.6 million people that are HIV positive (Herrington et al., 2009). With the vast

majority of these individuals in the economically active proportion of society, AIDS may have a serious effect on economic growth. South Africa's inability to manage the AIDS pandemic was mentioned as a serious inhibitor of running a business in the 2008 Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (Herrington, et al., 2009). It is therefore important for contractors to know how to effectively manage HIV/AIDS in the workplace.

During the Contractor training, only a small section is dedicated to HIV/AIDS. It provides contractors with a brief overview of how HIV/AIDS can affect a contracting team's work and how contractors can practically support individuals who are HIV positive. It also indicates that contractors have a "special responsibility" to ensure that people with HIV/AIDS are not victimised or discriminated against (Contractor's Manual, 2003, p. 258). In each contracting team, an HIV/AIDS peer educator is appointed (Contractor's Manual, 2003). The manual also stipulates that where possible, the contractor should provide the peer educator opportunities to address the team.

The main HIV/AIDS training for contractors occurs during the social development interventions, where external service providers provide training to the contracting teams. Contractors attend these sessions with their workers. The focus of these sessions is the transmission routes of the HIV virus and how one can stay healthy. Therefore it does not address how contractors can manage the virus within their teams.

From the above interventions, one can expect that contractors' knowledge about HIV/AIDS may increase and greater awareness may therefore be an outcome. Managing HIV/AIDS in contracting teams may be a more challenging and longer term goal, specifically due to the sensitivity and stigma surrounding the virus. Offering the HIV/AIDS peer educators opportunities to address the teams, can however be seen as a less challenging outcome and may lead to an increase in the teams' awareness of HIV/AIDS and potentially less high risk sexual behaviour.

### ***Training material.***

In addition to appropriate activities, Brink, Cant and Ligthelm (2003) argue that entrepreneurship training material is an important component of entrepreneurial learning. They explain that course material should be focused on the practical application of concepts and procedures and by developing training material according to the levels of education of participants, the programme is more likely to achieve its goals.

In the opinion of the evaluator, the CDM's manual for contractors is user-friendly and practical. It includes various exercises, illustrations and practical examples. It is written in a simple, but clear style. The content follows a logical sequence, commencing with an introductory section providing a brief overview of the contents of the manual and provides information in a per phase format. An index facilitates the location of specific information. Contractors can use the manual during the training course, but it can also serve as a reference document that can guide them in the field. The manual is however only available in English, which may present a challenge for contractors with limited English abilities.

### ***b) Could the programme theory be strengthened by the addition of other programme activities?***

Through a comprehensive literature review, two distinct activities that are currently not included in the CDM were identified. These activities include mentoring and networking.

### ***Mentoring.***

Personal guidance through mentoring is said to enhance entrepreneurial learning (St-Jean & Audet, 2009). Smith and Perks (2006) argue that mentorship is a key component in entrepreneurial development and requires a

supportive relationship between the inexperienced entrepreneur and an expert. Phaladi and Twala (2008) also view poor mentoring as a severe limiting factor for emerging entrepreneurs in South Africa.

The CDM currently does not include a mentorship component. Ongoing support is however offered by project managers through assistance and guidance. Project managers however do not have dedicated time that they are supposed to spend with contractors. Their main responsibility is overseeing the contractors' projects and ensuring that the contract is completed according to the specified requirements. Brinkerhoff and Montesino (1995) argue that support by supervisors before, during and after training can lead to a greater transfer in the workplace. The support provided by project managers is however more on an operational level and cannot be classified as mentorship.

Despite the costly nature of mentoring, including an element of further support in the CDM may greatly enhance the effects of the intervention. If one-to-one mentoring is not an option due to budgetary constraints, it may be worthwhile to investigate less expensive support options such as group sessions or referring contractors to non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that specialise in business support.

### ***Networking.***

Significant research has been conducted on the importance of networks and networking for entrepreneurs (Aldrich & Elam, 1997; Bergh, Thorgren & Wincent, 2009; Klyver et al., 2008; Smith & Perks, 2006). In an Irish longitudinal study, interaction with other entrepreneurs was identified as one of the key benefits of involvement in a one-year entrepreneurial programme (Henry et al., 2003).

Currently, the CDM does provide informal opportunities for contractors to network with other contractors as well as with project managers. No other

networking opportunities are however offered. The lack of opportunities to interact with other entrepreneurs, potential clients as well as partners can be seen as a weakness of the CDM. Providing contractors with networking opportunities becomes even more important in rural or low-income areas where limited potential business opportunities exist. It may therefore be worthwhile for CDM programme staff to further investigate this element.

In addition to these two activities, another factor that may affect entrepreneurial development was observed in the literature, entrepreneurial motivation.

### ***Motivation.***

Theorists argue that knowledge and skills are required for entrepreneurial success, but that motivation can play a critical role in the likelihood of achieving this success (Pretorius, et al., 2005; Scott, Locke & Collins, 2003). The most general aspects associated with entrepreneurial motivation include the concept of the need for achievement (nAch), risk taking, self efficacy and drive and can also be seen as the willingness to put forth effort (Scott et al., 2003; Vijaya & Kamalanabhan, 1998). Pretorius, Niemand & van Vuuren, (2005) argue that human motivations influence the decisions and variance across people in terms of how they pursue entrepreneurial opportunities and the way they undertake the entrepreneurial process.

By assessing motivation related characteristics during the selection phase of contractors, and selecting individuals with high levels of motivation, WfW may be able to select individuals who are more likely to develop into successful entrepreneurs. Motivation can therefore be seen as a moderator variable with the ability to affect or strengthen the likelihood of achieving the programme outcomes. The amended programme theory that includes the moderator variable is presented in Figure 4:

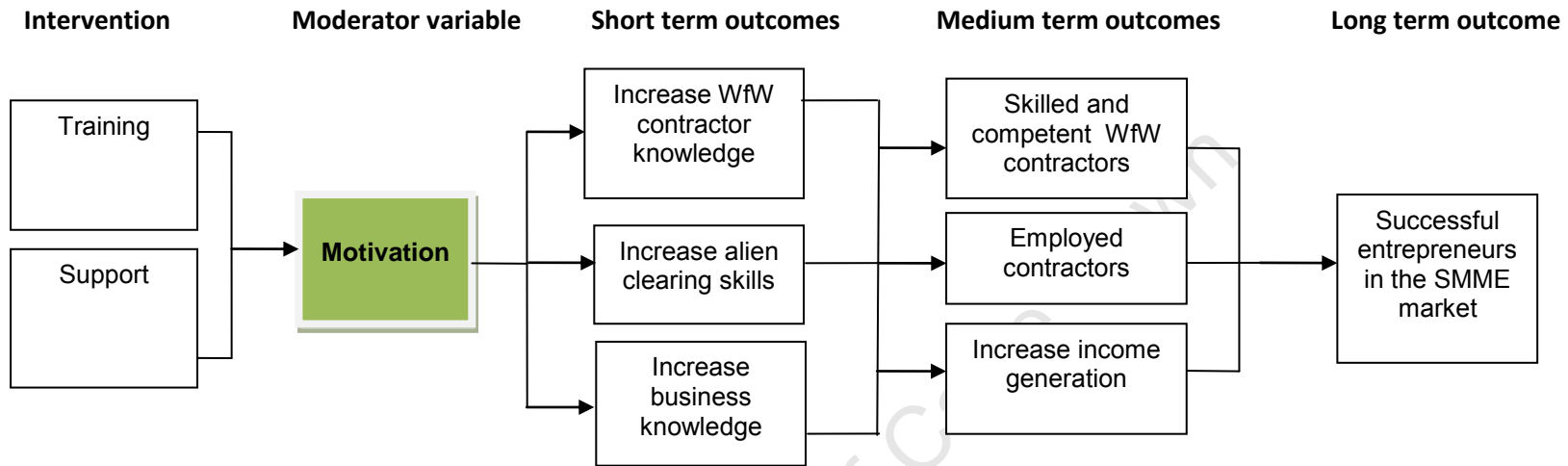


Figure 4. Amended programme theory with moderator variable

## **Conclusion from plausibility analysis**

From this plausibility analysis it is evident entrepreneurship development programmes have been reported to result in positive entrepreneurial outcomes. Overall, the CDM includes almost all the critical entrepreneurship programme components reported in the literature. These areas include: appropriate approaches to training, appropriate course material, it provides access to finance through the provision of loans for equipment, the development of personal skills as well as business operation skills. These components are all thought to contribute to the development of entrepreneurs. HIV/AIDS awareness is an additional training element thought to be appropriate for the South African labour market.

Two areas that are not currently addressed in the training are mentoring and networking. The addition of these two activities may enhance the ability of contractors to develop into entrepreneurs and should therefore be considered for inclusion. In addition, motivation is a well-documented element thought to affect entrepreneurial development and the likelihood of entrepreneurial success. For programme theory purposes, motivation can be seen as a moderator variable that may strengthen the intended programme outcomes.

In conclusion of this section, the impact theory of the CDM assumes that contractors will be able to find further employment or entrepreneurial opportunities based on their new skills (Mangoale, 2009). Experts (Bhorat, Lundall & Rospabe, 2002; McCord, 2003) however argue that the sustainability of training is largely dependent on an individual's ability to find work. Tobias (1999) indicates that it may not be a lack of skills or credentials that prohibit economic advancement, but a lack of economic prospects or opportunities. Nevertheless, the consideration of the CDM's programme theory can contribute to the programme's functioning. It does however remain an open question whether these outcomes will in fact materialise.

A plausibility check of this nature does not necessarily allow one to make judgements about the likelihood of the programme activities bringing about the required change. It therefore remains an open question as to whether the strength, duration and intensity of the training are sufficient to result in the intended outcomes.

Well known evaluators such as Chen (2005) and Rossi et al. (2009) argue that it is important to investigate the implementation of a programme before its effectiveness is considered. The extent to which programme activities are being implemented, or if in fact the intended activities are taking place, play a central role in achieving programme outcomes. Evaluation question 3 investigates the implementation related aspects of the CDM in more detail.

**Question 3: Is the implementation of the CDM taking place as intended according to the programme design?**

In order to address the implementation related matters of the CDM, three key domains were utilised. These three domains include coverage, process and support (Rossi et al., 2009). A series of questions was used in order to assess each domain thoroughly:

- Coverage:
  - Is the target population aware of the programme?
  - What are the demographic characteristics of the programme participants and are these in compliance with the selection criteria?
  - Who dropped out and why?
  
- Process:
  - How do participants find out about the programme?
  - Is it difficult to apply to become a contractor?
  - Is the selection process adequate?
  - Do all contractors receive training in the same manner?

- Is training appropriate for contractors?
- Is the training being performed adequately by service providers?
- Do participants engage in the application of activities when they leave the programme?
- Support:
  - Is the programme well-organised?

## Coverage

### **Is the target population aware of the programme?**

Only a key informant interview served as evidence to answer this particular question as other techniques such as questioning the target population was not feasible in this study due to time and financial constraints.

The interviewee indicated that general awareness of the CDM is not as good as it can be. In areas in close proximity to existing WfW projects, people seem to be aware of the CDM, but in areas where WfW has not implemented projects in the past, people are often not aware of the programme. For most WfW projects, more than one contract is completed in one specific area. It seems that in most cases, after the initial contract is completed, awareness about the CDM increases.

For a programme such as the CDM, it is crucial to establish whether the pathway into the programme works. It can be concluded that although individuals may not be aware of the CDM at the outset of the first project in a particular area, awareness levels are sufficient upon completion of the first contract. It may be interesting to establish how people are drawn into the programme and further studies can address this matter.

**What are the demographic characteristics of the programme participants and are these in compliance with the selection criteria?**

By analysing information from the Working for Water Information Management System (WIMS) from 2002 to 2010, the following demographic information about contractors was extracted. Due to the manner in which data is stored on WIMS, it was not possible to provide an annual breakdown.

Table 4

*Contractor demographic information*

	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
<i>Race</i>						
African	114	18.5%	87	14.1%	201	32.6%
Coloured	262	42.5%	144	23.4%	406	65.9%
Asian	1	0.2%	1	0.2%	2	0.3%
White	5	0.8%	1	0.2%	6	1.0%
Other <sup>2</sup>	1	0.2%	0	0.0%	1	0.2%
Total	383	62.2%	233	37.8%	616	100.0%
<i>Age</i>						
18-36	92	14.9%	85	13.8%	177	28.7%
37-45	144	23.4%	82	13.3%	226	36.7%
46-60	126	20.5%	60	9.7%	186	30.2%
60+	21	3.4%	6	1.0%	27	4.4%
Total	383	62.2%	233	37.8%	616	100.0%

WfW aims to comply with the EPWP's transformation targets which are 60% women, 20% youth (between 18 and 36 years) and 2% disabled workers, all from historically disadvantaged groups. There are currently no consequences

<sup>2</sup> Other refers to Asians/Oriental people, also unidentifiable people who are not Coloured, Indian, Black or White

for not complying with the EPWP's criteria. From the data, more than 99% of contractors are from previously disadvantaged groups.

In terms of the percentage of female contractors, WfW still has some ground to cover in terms of reaching its target. Only 37.8% of the sample was women, compared to the 60% target. According to an interviewee, the number of female contractors has however increased in recent years. Motloung and Mears (2002) argue that the poorest segments of South Africa's population live in households headed by women. One can argue that the lack of compliance to this target limits the opportunity for women to become contractors. Mangoale (2009) argues that the low percentage of female contractors perpetuates the inequalities that contribute to poverty. It is important for WfW to actively recruit female contractors. Compared to men, women in South Africa's poorest segment of society are often seen as better caregivers for their families as well as able to manage their finances better. It is therefore important to provide opportunities to women as their wages may have a broader welfare effect than their male counterparts.

It is difficult to assess exactly what percentage of contractors was classified as youth during the implementation of their contracts since 2002. Currently, 28% of contractors can be classified as "youth". The CDM is therefore eight percent over its target of 20%. As with women, youth in South Africa have limited opportunities and it is therefore important for WfW to actively attempt to recruit contractors below 36 years of age.

Disability is not captured on the WIMS system, but an interviewee reported that it is difficult to appoint contractors with disabilities due to the physical responsibilities of contractors. Should WfW establish that disabled contractors cannot ensure compliance with health and safety standards, it may have to reconsider the appropriateness of this target.

Based on the limited information captured on WIMS, it is not possible to establish compliance with selection criteria other than gender, race and youth status. Other items such as matric qualifications, previous experience, references, possession of a valid driver's licence, access to a vehicle and South African citizenship must be reviewed during the Curriculum Vitae (CV) check or the interview process.

One of the challenges of working with WIMS data is that it is not easily extractable on a per contractor level. It may be worthwhile for WfW to amend the database in order to extract data in a more detailed and user-friendly manner. There were also several spelling errors and obvious data capturing errors or omissions that were identified and corrected during the data cleaning phase. One of the interviewees reported that this is due to inaccurate data capturing by the project managers. No data quality checks are currently undertaken.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the CDM's selection criteria have not been formally implemented. Interviewees report that it has been used more as a "guide" and implemented where possible. One interviewee elaborates:

*"WfW's initial contractor selection criteria were not consistently applied throughout the programme. The result being that many contractors have been appointed who does not possess business interest, interest in environmental and conservation issues and people management skills."*

According to two of the interviewees, the main reason for not complying with the selection criteria is a lack of aspiring contractors who meet the educational criteria of the CDM. One of these interviewees reported that this occurrence has been especially prevalent in rural areas. In these cases, the programme has been forced to compromise the selection criteria and has subsequently selected contractors who did not comply with all the selection requirements. The interviewee further mentioned that complying with the criteria is the ideal,

but not realistic in all regions and that it may be necessary to lower the standards in these areas.

Although it was not possible to assess what percentage of contractors possessed a matric qualification, interviewees did report that individuals without matric qualifications have been selected in the past. The main problem arising from this occurrence was that these contractors did not meet the minimum entry requirements for certain CDM courses. This resulted in the need for bridging courses, whilst some contractors simply did not attend these courses. Consequences of not complying with the matric qualification criterion is therefore problematic. If programme staff cannot recruit contractors with a matric qualification, it is important to ensure that the necessary bridging courses are made available to contractors and that they attend all the necessary training courses. Assessing whether contractors without a matric qualification perform worse than those with a matric may be another worthwhile investigation. If it is found that contractors without a matric do not perform worse, a matric qualification may be an unnecessary criterion.

A prerequisite for becoming a contractor is having access to a vehicle. One of the interviewees explained that this requirement entails that the vehicle must be on-site while workers are in the field. Interviewees reported that in recent years, all contractors have had access to a vehicle. There have however been cases where this vehicle was only available to drop and collect workers and not on-site during working hours. In disadvantaged communities, access to a vehicle may present a serious obstacle to becoming a contractor, especially if taking WfW's objective of working with the poorest of the poor into consideration. One interviewee mentioned that:

*“The vehicle may be a limitation in terms of selection. You are already narrowing yourself down to people who have a car... It is almost a bit contradicting.”*

Another interviewee indicated that:

*“This [access to a vehicle] is especially difficult in rural communities. Sometimes there are only taxis, and they are not willing to wait at the site for the whole day.”*

From WfW’s perspective, it is practical to expect contractors to have access to a vehicle, as WfW cannot provide vehicles for all its projects. However, it may be a difficult requirement to meet, especially for youth, or for those individuals who do not know someone from who they can borrow or rent a vehicle. On the other hand, one can argue that it offers an opportunity for a potential contractor to creatively find a solution to this matter. It does however appear unrealistic to target “the poorest of the poor”, and not “formally employed” individuals and expect these individuals to have access to vehicles, especially to a “short-wheel base bakkie with trailer” (Contractor Selection Registration, 2010, p. 4)

It appears that although participants may fulfil all selection criteria, they may still not be suitable candidates for contractors. The interviewee comment below illustrates this point and also hints at the importance of selecting contractors who are motivated:

*“They should be selecting people with aptitude, and the way you find out if they have aptitude is to look at their track record, for instance people that have been running a spaza shop or that have been involved in the community. Go getters. There are people that have been in the programme for ten years, with still no aptitude. We need to have people that can take the programme forward, people that will be self-sustainable. Sometimes the past is a good reflection of what will happen.”*

From the above it is evident that due to various limitations, it is often not possible to comply with the CDM’s selection guidelines. Finding people that comply with all the selection criteria in the poorest segment of society may not

be a realistic expectation. It may be necessary for the CDM to amend its selection criteria in order to represent a more realistic picture of the individuals that will be selected as contractors. By revisiting the CDM's programme theory, programme staff may be able to develop more appropriate selection criteria. More realistic criteria may result in higher compliance in terms of selection. In addition, it may also be necessary to focus more on characteristics, such as motivation and previous business experience of aspiring contractors in order to select those individuals who are most likely to be successful contractors.

### **Who dropped out and why?**

Unfortunately WfW does not record whether contractors drop out, exit the CDM or what the reasons are for these occurrences. Based on staff interviews, the majority of dropouts occur because contractors' expectations are different from what they experience when they join as contractors. The interviewee's sentiments below illustrate this point:

*"People leave when things do not happen as they are told. Although WfW tells them that they will probably work nine to ten months in a year, this often doesn't happen, they plan their lives accordingly... They are then disappointed with the plan then being different from the actual situation. They go and look for greener pastures, try their hand at something else."*

Two interviewees indicated that some contractors prefer to do other work at certain times of the year, especially during the fruit harvesting season. According to an external evaluation by Common Ground in 2003, transporting seasonal workers for example, may be more lucrative than working on a WfW contract.

Some contractors leave the programme as it does not prove profitable, as pointed out by this interviewee:

*“Some people leave because they actually get into more debt by doing contracting work for WfW. When you are being told that a certain amount of money will be coming your way, they start making debt... counting your chickens before they are hatched.”*

The Common Ground report also mentions that contractors around the country indicated that there have been “increasing spirals of debt which have served to undermine some of the positive impacts of the Programme” (2003, p. 42).

If contractors leave the CDM to pursue more profitable opportunities outside of WfW, the CDM has essentially reached its goal. If contractors however exit the programme, remain unemployed and become more indebted, it may be worthwhile to explore what particular factors are hindering the achievement of the intended outcomes.

From an evaluation perspective, knowing why participants drop out of a programme is critical information. It is suggested that WfW considers recording this information on its database. By investigating these reasons, programme staff may be able to make changes to the programme which may decrease the likelihood of contractors dropping out or exiting the programme prematurely.

## **Process**

### **How do participants find out about the programme?**

According to the interviewees, in most cases WfW raises awareness of contractor opportunities through ward councillors, advertisements in local newspapers, pamphlets and community notice boards. In many areas, potential contractors find out through word of mouth. It does however vary from project to project and it depends on which networks WfW has in place.

WfW usually taps into existing systems, for example, other poverty alleviation channels. Awareness has been created by churches in certain communities. It is also thought that WfW's in-school programme may have created awareness. Programme staff however do not have a precise sense of how people come into contact with the CDM.

There is no information about the CDM available on the WfW website. Potential contractors may therefore see it as difficult to obtain general information about the CDM. One of the interviewees did however indicate that it is not really expected that contractors would be attempting to acquire information about the CDM on the internet as many do not have access to a computer and are not computer literate. Therefore it may not be necessary to include this information on the WfW website if awareness is raised sufficiently through other means.

As only a limited number of individuals can be selected as contractors, WfW does not undertake other more elaborate means of attracting its target population. By only working through certain networks or established channels, WfW may not reach some suitable contractors. Programme staff therefore have to deliberate whether the programme is reaching its intended target population sufficiently through its current means, or whether in fact additional processes for raising awareness should be implemented.

### **Is it difficult to apply to become a contractor?**

Considering the CDM's target group, the poorest segment of society, it is important to assess the degree of difficulty involved in the application process. In the opinion of the evaluator, this process is relatively simple. Once aspiring contractors become aware of the CDM, they are required to hand in a CV to the implementing agent, which is usually situated in close proximity to communities where WfW work. For example, there are various implementing agents in the Cape Peninsula, one in Worcester, Knysna and also in smaller

towns. Shortlisted individuals are subsequently contacted for interviews. No official documents are required and no specific format for CVs is prescribed. This application process occurs in a similar manner at the different sites. A fixed process such as this is useful and may contribute to clarity and aspiring contractors receiving the same treatment. The enrolment procedure can be seen as simple and user-friendly – two important characteristics when CDM's target group is considered.

### **Is the selection process adequate?**

One of the key areas identified for investigation by programme staff at the outset of this study was the CDM's selection process. The selection process currently entails reviewing the applicant's CV, an interview and checking his/her references. Du Preez (2003) views psychometric testing as a possible other alternative. He argues that it can be useful during selection, specifically in order to identify potential entrepreneurs. Psychometric testing may however not be a realistic selection strategy for WfW due to the cost implications. There are also concerns re bias that has been culturally embedded in psychometric tests, especially toward non-English speaking, poor, marginalised groups. Mangoale (2009) argues that other less expensive techniques should be considered including a review of aspiring contractors' past accomplishments and written tests. The addition of a written test may be beneficial to the selection strategy. Even a simple 20-question test may be able to provide WfW with a more in-depth understanding of aspiring contractors' knowledge and attitude towards entrepreneurship, hereby facilitating the selection of more appropriate applicants. This test may also be useful for establishing contractors' motivation levels, which was identified as a moderator variable likely to influence entrepreneurial development in the plausibility assessment section.

One of the interviewees emphasised the importance of this initial phase of the CDM. The interviewee mentioned an example of a successful, though time-

consuming process, which took place in Swellendam. Through a three month participatory process in which a large portion of the local community was involved, a contractor for a particular project was unanimously nominated. This contractor received a high level of buy-in and was very successful in the area. This is however not the standard procedure for identifying potential contractors. A lesson from this case may be that even though a participatory approach during the selection process may be time-consuming, it may play a critical role in the success of a contractor later on. This case can therefore serve as best practice example, illustrating how initial effort may result in positive outcomes later in the programme cycle. It may therefore be worthwhile investigating the feasibility of a more participatory contractor selection process.

Two of the interviewees indicated that isolated cases of corruption and nepotism do occur during the contractor selection phase. Examples include instances where implementing agents select family members or friends as contractors. A process for formally recording grievances of this nature was put in place earlier in 2010. However, insufficient information to report here has been recorded thus far.

In a process evaluation of the WfW programme in Limpopo (Mangoale, 2009), contractors emphasised the importance of the involvement of all stakeholders during the selection process. They viewed it as important in order to ensure efficient and effective employment processes.

Corruption and nepotism within the CDM may be reduced by ensuring that all relevant stakeholders fulfil their selection responsibilities. In addition, if a broader range of stakeholders are involved in the selection process, it may lead to greater legitimacy for contractors in their communities and teams. It may be worthwhile to develop checks and balances for the selection process to ensure that the relevant parties fulfil their responsibilities.

### **Do all contractors receive training in the same manner?**

A contractor training matrix has been in existence since the conception of the CDM (Revised Contractor Development Training Program, 2009). This matrix outlines the different types of training, the NQF level, a unit standard identification number, the number of credits allocated to the course, a brief explanation of what the course entails as well as the learning outcomes for each course. Training service providers are therefore provided with a clear mandate of what is required from them. No records of the training content of service providers were available for this evaluation, but one of the interviewees reported that training does occur in a consistent manner across the province. The interviewee indicated that the functional training does however vary slightly from region to region, largely based on the species of invasive plant that is prevalent in the region. Training can also vary because certain contractors or regions may take longer to fulfil all the training requirements. Despite these minor variations, training was reported to occur in a consistent manner.

Training related data is not captured on WIMS or stored centrally. The evaluator was therefore unable to assess which training courses contractors completed or how many training sessions or days were attended. With training forming a key component of the CDM, it is important to capture this type of information. Capturing and storing data in a manner that is easily extractable is also important and may facilitate planning and management of the programme. It may also assist programme staff to assess how many training sessions have to be repeated and training costs per contractor.

### **Is the CDM training appropriate for contractors?**

A full implementation evaluation which includes the views of contractors would be particularly significant here. However, given the limitations of this evaluation, the views of key informants were the only sources of information

that the evaluator could draw on. Despite the inherent limitations of such a procedure, the key informants were strategically selected and where possible, the evaluator determined whether interviewees were in agreement.

### ***Functional training.***

Of the three interviewees questioned about the functional training, all agreed that they regard it as adequate and appropriate for contractors. One interviewee indicated that:

*“The training content that contractors should be receiving is sufficient. It is the same training that our foresters have received for many years and it worked perfectly for the formal market.”*

The evaluator could not locate any external assessments of the functional training, it is however encouraging to see that programme staff feel that the functional training is of a high quality. This training forms the foundation for contractors. Proper usage of the equipment is not only required in order to do clearing work effectively, but it may also reduce injuries in the contracting teams.

### ***Contractor training.***

Only one interviewee commented on the Contractor training. The interviewee indicated that business mentors or advisors may be a useful addition to the programme. This suggestion adds to the merit of including mentoring as an additional activity as identified during the plausibility check earlier in this chapter. It was further reported that accessible government resources for SMME development are needed as well as cost-effective professional and support services for SMMEs.

A recent programme development that may increase contractor exposure is the introduction of a register for contractors which will be publicly visible

(Proposal for New Contractor Model for Working for Water, 2009). It is hoped that the register will be a mechanism for growth for those contractors interested in building larger contracting businesses

As contractors are not paid a large sum of money for their services, it is unlikely that they would be willing to spend money on SMME support services. It is therefore important to include as many as possible critical business elements into the contractor training component to optimally develop contractors during the training.

### ***Social development training.***

Currently contractors receive the same set of social development training courses as workers. An interviewee reported that this training is useful, but:

*“[it is]...however not pitched at the level of the contractor (or the level that the contractor should be). [they] should also attend a ‘Managing HIV/AIDS in the workplace’ course in addition to the general HIV/AIDS course.”*

Based on comments from three of the interviewees, the social development training component is not the core focus of the CDM and subsequently many programme staff and contractors do not view it as a priority, as illustrated by this comment:

*“Contractors do not understand how the wellbeing of the team can affect their outcomes in terms of clearing. At the end of the day you can’t clear with a sick team. That is why one of our social development initiatives is health. Not just HIV, its TB, general health etc.”*

It is understandable that contractors who are attempting to build successful businesses may have limited interest in attending social development training. It is here that the differences between regular entrepreneurship programmes and a social programme such as the CDM comes into play. Programme staff

need to decide whether it is realistic to expect contractors to attend and value the social development training, or whether their time would be better spent on other activities.

### **Is training being performed adequately by service providers?**

Training records were not available for this evaluation and an interviewee reported that these documents are not stored centrally. According to a process evaluation conducted by Mangoale (2009) in the Limpopo province, training within the CDM and WfW is not assessed, monitored or evaluated as required.

In the current evaluation, problems with regards to contractor training were reported by two interviewees. One of these interviewees indicated that the training requirements are not always adhered to:

*“There are specifications available that indicate what is required for training, for example, a field for the practical component. But the training doesn’t happen as it is supposed to. There have been cases where the trainers create simulated scenarios, and bring in trees, while it would actually be more beneficial for contractors to practice in the field. It dilutes the whole idea. They try to make it easier on everybody, but actually it isn’t making it easier”*

The same interviewee reported that there have been cases where trainers are accredited and fulfil all the standards and requirements according to the qualifications framework, but still do not provide good training. There have been cases where trainers sent substitute facilitators/trainers who were unable to conduct the training properly. Furthermore, some trainers do not provide the training in order to address the outcomes sufficiently. Specific reference was made to a case where a trainee could not switch on a chain saw after a full chain saw training course.

Recently a process was developed to evaluate private service providers. Those providing unacceptable training are supposed to be blacklisted and not to be used again. This process is however still in its early phases and the regional training coordinators have not been trained to assess whether service providers are reaching the required outcomes. This is an immediate concern and WfW should attempt to investigate it as soon as possible. If the training sessions can be assessed by trained individuals, it may save WfW significant funds and it can potentially increase the effectiveness of the training. It is important for WfW to continuously assess the quality of CDM training as contractor development and preparation for independent entrepreneurship is dependent on the quality of the training to a large extent.

**Do participants engage in the application of activities when they leave the programme?**

A 1997 evaluation conducted by the Commission of European Communities indicated that in order to assess the socio-economic impact of the WfW programme as a whole, coherent M&E systems should be implemented. This report also mentioned the need for baseline studies. A 2002 study identified a significant lack of M&E of the social development interventions as one of the main challenges for the programme. The Common Ground report (2003) indicated that an overall evaluation of WfW's social development interventions was unrealistic due to the lack of baseline information. Despite these consistent recommendations around the need for increased and improved monitoring, WfW does not collect data on what contractors do when they are no longer involved with WfW.

The Common Ground (2003) evaluation found a number of contractor success stories where people had substantially broadened their asset base, acquired equipment and skills, been provided with business and tax advice and had been able to operate independently of WfW.

One of the interviewees indicated that he was aware of a number of contractors who have been awarded contracts from municipalities and there have been cases where WfW contacted previous contractors when contractor capacity was required. He also mentioned that a number of these contractors “*sit around and wait*” to be contacted by WfW and do not really pursue opportunities actively.

In order to assess whether programme participants engage in the application of activities after they exit WfW, it is necessary to implement a follow-up procedure with past participants. WfW has to determine whether contractors have benefitted from the CDM and are using the skills they developed during their WfW contracting period. It is impossible to determine the worth or value of the programme without investigating past participants’ behaviour and employment activity.

An outcomes assessment investigating what contractors do when they are no longer involved with the CDM is another example of a fruitful study area. It may also be worthwhile to follow up on the successful contractors and try to learn from them and their experiences with the CDM.

## **Support**

### **Is the programme well organised?**

A number of areas that present obstacles in the organised functioning of the CDM are outlined below.

#### ***Strategy.***

Interviewees reported that the initial conceptualisation (what can be seen as the “programme theory” in this study) of both WfW and the CDM was done in a hasty manner. There was an urgency to spend funding within the required

timeframes as it was thought that delays might “fatally obstruct” the momentum of the programme (Common Ground, 2003, p. 14). The Common Ground evaluation explains that a “combination of rapid expansion, technical and social complexity, a narrow base of social development staff coupled with pressure to spend large amounts of money in short periods of time have put the attainment of its [WfW’s] social development goals under serious pressure” (2003, p. 36). The result was that WfW’s mandate was not formally recorded at the inception of the programme in 1995.

In the 2003 Common Ground report, a lack of strategic direction was identified as one of the key challenges facing the programme. This report also stated that there has been significantly more focus on the technical (alien clearing) aspects as opposed to the social development aspects of the CDM and WfW as a whole. Mangoale (2009) argues that the lack of strategic direction, social development expertise as well as monitoring and evaluation has resulted in an unsustainable effort towards poverty alleviation and social development. She explains that the absence of strategic direction has had a negative effect on the monitoring of initiatives, as well as on the overall performance of WfW.

In the current evaluation, an interviewee indicated that it is necessary to define the purpose of the CDM more clearly and that there are various different interpretations of the goal of the programme:

*“Everyone has a different idea of what we are trying to achieve... our strategy doesn’t really flesh it out. We know we want to develop contractors, others say employ, others say empower, and if you think about it... those are three very different things.”*

Another explained that a lack of understanding of the CDM exists:

*“There are many variables. It is as though we are juggling with water and fireballs. It is difficult to implement something that is difficult to comprehend”.*

Rossi et al. (2009) see the above gaps as deficiencies of the programme theory. They explain that appropriate responses to this finding may entail clarifying the CDM's goals and objectives, restructuring the programme components for which the intended activities are not occurring, needed or feasible, and finally, work with stakeholders in order to obtain consensus about the logic that connects programme activities with the desired outcomes. In the CDM's case, responses may specifically include refining the programme goals, objectives, target group and the intended outcomes among others. Rossi et al. (2009) argue that it is difficult to evaluate a project for which the programme process theory is not well defined, as ambiguity about the programme's operational activities will exist. They elaborate by explaining that if the programme impact theory is not well developed, an outcome or impact evaluation may not be able to determine which outcomes were produced and why not. The theory evaluation component of this study may therefore be specifically useful in identifying some of the gaps and may assist programme stakeholders in reassessing programme activities and the intended outcomes and impact.

For staff it is important that a clear and concise strategy, mission, vision, goals and objectives are formulated. This is essential in order to ensure that staff are working towards the same goal. Even the development of a comprehensive background and programme description (as briefly provided in Chapter 1) can be useful, especially for new staff members who join the team.

### ***Developmental goals.***

The CDM has an ambitious and diverse range of developmental goals that require a broad range of expertise. According to the Common Ground evaluation, it is believed that the lack of a mandate has allowed WfW to "take on all problems" and that it lacks focus (2003, p. 46). The report indicated that WfW has in many cases taken on responsibilities which should have been

exercised by other agencies. The report further mentions that WfW has “overly ambitious social objectives relative to budget” (2003, p. 63)

Two of the interviewees in the present evaluation indicated that this is still the case and mentioned that certain programme elements, specifically the health and HIV/AIDS components, are perhaps more aligned with the services of the Department of Health or other NGOs. These organisations might be more suitable and equipped to provide the services. This sentiment is illustrated by the following comment:

*“We should have partnered up with departments who are specialised in things we would like to do. The support was there, we just weren’t tapping into the support. The networking hasn’t been happening”.*

One can consider this matter in combination with the question of whether it is worthwhile for contractors to receive social development training at all. Does the CDM attempt to cover too much ground in its training interventions? Could funds and contractors’ time be better utilised? This evaluation does unfortunately not provide conclusive answers to these questions. Based on the evaluator’s impressions at the end of this study, it does however appear that the social development training may have limited relevance in terms of the development of entrepreneurs.

According to one of the interviewees, WfW does have certain obligations in terms of providing social development training to contractors because the CDM forms part of the EPWP. It is however recommended that programme staff investigate whether it would be possible, and perhaps more appropriate, to remove certain social development training elements from the CDM’s training suite, hereby reducing the time that contractors spend on training that may not necessarily contribute to their entrepreneurial development.

### ***Planning.***

A 1997 evaluation by the Commission of the European Communities identified a significant planning deficiency within WfW. The authors reported that the limited initial planning and the management style within WfW can be seen as the causes for this lack of planning throughout WfW. Two interviewees in the current evaluation mentioned that staff often do not have time for crucial functions and planning is not prioritised as illustrated by the comment below:

*“[We are] so busy putting out fires that we don’t have time to put systems in place to avoid fires...There is a planning component missing. There is almost a lack of understanding of the importance of planning and how this affects the functioning of the team...”*

Prioritising planning within the CDM may allow the programme to develop contingency plans and to formulate more streamlined strategic and operational plans. It is suggested that the CDM prioritise planning and build regular planning processes into its programme cycle.

### ***Policy.***

WfW and the CDM have grown at a rapid pace. There are currently 302 operational projects across South Africa (WIMS, 2010). Three of the interviewees reported that rules, regulations and the requirements from contractors and project managers are altered on a regular basis. The interviewees mentioned that project managers and contractors have started *“making their own rules”* in certain instances, project managers have been reported to be *“stagnant”* and unwilling to adapt to new rules. One interviewee commented that these policy inconsistencies can have a serious impact on contractors.

Too many changes on a continuous basis may be detrimental to the CDM, as it is difficult to achieve consistency across the different projects in an ever-

changing setting. It may be worthwhile to be more selective or strategic in terms of implementing new rules and regulations. The manner in which implementation related changes are communicated may also play a role in whether contractors and project managers adhere to it.

### **Staff.**

WfW is essentially an organisation that aims to reduce the effect of alien invasive plants. Three of the interviewees indicated that there are many staff members within WfW who have a forestry or conservation background, whilst few have a developmental background. In addition, the vast majority of people do not have backgrounds in managing poverty alleviation projects with social development components.

One of these interviewees indicated that many WfW staff still have the same mentality that they had in their previous positions that were focused on alien clearing. The interviewee argued that this can be seen as one of the main reasons why social development elements are not prioritised in the CDM. This sentiment is further illustrated by the comment below:

*“We are conservation/forestry minded people managing a people development project. When you go into a forestry business, your success is measured in terms of hectares you clear. They still have the same mentality. That is maybe why we are not achieving what we want to. But if we had people that were more people development centered or capacity development centered, then, it might have a different effect”*

The same interviewee reported that this phenomenon is specifically problematic and prevalent among the deputy directors in the different regions.

*“They [deputy directors] are very good at forestry, it’s what they studied. But there is another component involved and it is difficult to balance the scales. Very few people have social development qualifications. It’s forestry and conservation.”*

Increasing awareness of the CDM and its social development aspects among specifically the deputy directors, as well as the rest of programme staff, may play an important role in the improved functioning of the CDM. It is important to emphasise the fact that the CDM's purpose is not only to ensure that alien vegetation is removed within a specific timeframe, but also to develop contractors as entrepreneurs. It is essential to obtain buy-in from staff. As alien clearing is seen as the core component of WfW, this may be difficult to achieve. Increased awareness may be achieved through awareness campaigns or regional workshops. It is particularly important to obtain buy-in from high level staff, as their behaviour may influence less senior staff.

## **Programme Challenges**

### **Development of contractors.**

Over time contractors are intended to become increasingly independent as they develop from Level 1 to Level 5<sup>3</sup>. This is based on the premise that contractors will have greater independence, will receive less support from project managers, acquire more of their own equipment and complete larger contracts within WfW. In addition, it does not matter if contractors exit the programme before they reach Level 5, as long as they are pursuing opportunities they view as lucrative.

According to the Implementing Agent Contract, “the Implementing Agent shall appoint contractors to carry out the projects or tasks emanating from this agreement and shall take practical steps to empower such contractors with a

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<sup>3</sup> Level 1 -for contractors still undergoing training and contract values less than R30,000 per contract.

Level 2 – for contractors who have successfully completed their training and contract values less than R30,000

Level 3 – for contract values between R30,000 and R150,000

Level 4 – for contract values between R150 000 and R500,000

Level 5 – for contract values higher than R500,000

view to enabling them to operate independently in a commercial environment upon completion of the contracts” (2010, p. 5).

The development of WfW contractors has however not taken place as originally anticipated. Based on the interviews, few contractors are able to operate independently. Unfortunately WfW could not provide a breakdown of the levels of contractors, but according to one interviewee, there are currently only a handful of contractors that have advanced further than level two. This interviewee indicated that the main reasons for the limited advancement of contractors have been time delays on contracts and contract payments, a high turnover and insufficient capacity in the contracting teams, a lack of funding, and ineffective execution of plans. The interviewee emphasised that the limited contractor development was not necessarily due to contractors, but due to inadequate implementation of the CDM. The interviewee explained that contractor development may have been hampered from the outset of the project as contractor selection took place without considering the required characteristics of contractors. Due to the limited advancement, most contractors therefore still require significant support from project managers. The limited number of contractors that have advanced further than level 2 can perhaps be seen as an indication of the limited development of contractors.

### **Contractors no longer exiting the CDM.**

Before 2007, contractors were expected to exit WfW after two years of service, but they are however no longer required to exit the programme. One of the interviewees indicated that in certain respects, this change may be having a detrimental effect on contractor development:

*“In the past there was a goal linked to a timeframe... People started to know... listen, I have to pull up my socks... I think it was very good for people to have a goal linked to a timeframe... This changes their mindset.”*

As contractors are no longer expected to exit the programme, it may result in them continuing to work for WfW without actively pursuing external opportunities. WfW has to develop a strategy, perhaps through networking, where contractors are exposed to other opportunities. The publicly visible register of contractors may contribute to contractor exposure should it be marketed sufficiently by WfW. If this does not occur, the level of contractor development may be very limited and contractors may continue to rely on support from WfW indefinitely.

### **A lack of back-to-back contracts.**

One of the intentions of the programme is that contractors should have back-to-back contracts. As mentioned in the Common Ground report “Back to back work is key in order to enable contractors to build their capital base and acquire equipment and transport that in turn improves their chances of being able to work independently” (2003, p. 14).

In the present evaluation, interviewees report that there are often extended periods of time during which contractors do not work, sometimes due to delays from the contractors’ side, and other times due to delays from WfW ’s side. One of the interviewees provided the following example:

*“The problem about extended periods of no work is often the result of contractors viewing the end of their contract when they inform the project managers that the required area is cleared. It is however required that the project manager first come and inspect this area. Sometimes there may still be further work required from the contractor and his workers. In some cases, even two weeks of further work is required. This means that contractors cannot start new work. The work is only completed when the final inspection is signed off.”*

WfW should attempt to streamline the areas which prevent contractors from conducting back-to-back work. It may be beneficial for project managers to

visit sites a couple of days before the anticipated completion date in order to identify problem areas which could subsequently be addressed during the final days of clearing, rather than after the formal inspection.

### **Limited penalisation for inadequate work by contractors.**

Based on the interviews, contractors are not always penalised for substandard work and many contractors that deliver substandard work are still awarded new contracts. The CDM can therefore not really be seen as a competitive system. This factor may inhibit entrepreneurial development. Two interviewees reported that some contractors feel entitled to their next contracts. In addition, there have been cases of complaints lodged with high level government officials when new contracts were not awarded to underperforming contractors from WfW's perspective. Contractors are therefore kept in the system without necessarily performing adequately as illustrated by an interviewee comment: *"The bad contractors are not sifted out."*

It is important for WfW to determine how to best manage underperforming contractors. Essentially, these contractors are using programme funds, without necessarily developing in the intended manner. One can also argue that contractors are operating in a sheltered environment and not being exposed to real life business challenges. As mentioned in the programme theory section, experiential learning is a key component of entrepreneurial development and it is important that the CDM provide this type of environment to facilitate contractor development.

## **Chapter 4: Conclusion and recommendations**

This dissertation has identified a number of possible improvements for the CDM. In this chapter, the main findings are translated into key recommendations which could potentially be used to improve the programme.

### **Recommendations**

#### **The inclusion of mentoring and networking as programme activities.**

The plausibility check revealed the absence of mentoring and networking in the CDM. Due to the costly nature of mentoring, it may not be a realistic addition to the CDM at this stage, but cheaper alternatives such as group mentoring sessions may be an option. It is however of critical importance to enhance support and mentoring for contractors as it is likely to increase the application of transfer from training received (Brinkerhoff & Montesino, 1995).

Networking may be a less costly activity for inclusion. It is documented that networking can play a critical role in the success of SMMEs and it is therefore important that WfW should create opportunities for contractors to interact with each other, but also with potential clients in their regions.

#### **Increased monitoring.**

One of the major limitations of this evaluation was a lack of data. In most cases, this was not due to a lack of availability of data, but due to limited systematic and comprehensive tracking of programme implementation and outcomes. It is suggested that programme staff identify key information to be tracked and implement the necessary systems for tracking this data. It is impossible to track all programme information, and programme staff therefore have to be strategic in deciding what information should be collected. One

strategy may be to customise WIMS in order to store the additional information centrally.

The number of different implementing agents, regional offices and service providers across the province complicates systematic monitoring. WfW should emphasise the need for consistent tracking across the province and, compliance with submitting information and reports, should be strictly enforced. It is recommended that monitoring becomes embedded in programme activities and that it should not be seen as an additional activity.

It is further important that the CDM moves towards outcomes based monitoring. This type of information will allow WfW to establish to what extent exited contractors are applying their acquired skills and how the CDM has affected their lives. This in turn will enable programme staff to make judgements about the outcomes the programme is achieving.

#### **Increased assessments.**

One of the main areas of critique of the programme is a lack of assessment. It is important to assess the quality of training provided by service providers as it can provide WfW insight into which service providers are not providing training adequately. These service providers can be informed and can possibly amend their approaches in order to better address the outcomes. If WfW is not satisfied after these processes, it can blacklist service providers and select only those that comply with its requirements.

The lack of contractor assessment can also be seen as a weakness. It is possible that WfW may not have a clear sense of the level of contractor knowledge or skills. Contractors may therefore be entering the field without the necessary minimum requirements. It is suggested that the effect of the courses are monitored through pre- and post testing where theoretical knowledge is concerned and through practical assessments for skills related

training. Areas that require further guidance or development can therefore be identified and addressed much earlier, or even during the training courses. This may reduce the prevalence of contractors having to be retrained, inefficiencies in the field as well as health and safety risks.

### **Refinement of the selection criteria.**

Based on the evidence it is clear that there have been some problems around the CDM's target population and its selection criteria. Certain selection requirements may not be realistic for the poorest segment of South Africa's population. WfW therefore has to establish whether contractors need to be members of the poorest segment of society or whether it should alter its selection criteria.

As identified during the plausibility assessment of the programme theory, entrepreneurial motivation can play a critical role in entrepreneurial success. It is therefore recommended that contractors' motivation levels are included in the selection criteria and assessed during the recruitment process.

### **Exiting contractors due to under-performance.**

As mentioned by all the interviewees, the CDM does not have the funds necessary to implement the programme as they would like to. Having fewer contractors, but contractors who are in compliance with the CDM's performance criteria may contribute to a reduction in costs. It may be worthwhile for WfW to develop a cut-off point after which contractors are asked to leave the programme if they do not comply with certain minimum standards. Another option may be to penalise contractors by not selecting them for new contractors for a specified period of time. The proposed processes may be difficult to enforce as the CDM is essentially a development programme. It may however be beneficial for contractor development to

conceptualise the CDM in a more competitive manner with certain performance requirements.

### **Streamlining of communication.**

It is recommended that WfW and the CDM attempt to streamline its communication channels. It may be worthwhile to develop a concise flow of information, with specific individuals within the national, provincial and regional offices being appointed with the responsibility of conveying information to the relevant individuals or groups in a timely manner.

### **Planning.**

A planning deficiency within the CDM was reported. Planning within and between local, regional, provincial and national levels should be prioritised. Outcomes from planning sessions should be communicated through the appropriate channels in a timely manner (as recommended above). More attention to planning may enable programme staff to identify problems or gaps within the CDM earlier and address problems in a more effective manner. Planning may also contribute to finding solutions to region specific challenges and the replication of best practices.

### **Increased focus on the social development components of the CDM.**

In a programme where the clearing of land and the number of hectares of cleared land are seen as priorities, it is important to raise awareness around the social development components of the CDM. Awareness campaigns for contractors, project managers and regional deputy directors may prove useful in changing attitudes towards the secondary importance of social development within the programme.

It may also be beneficial to appoint staff with appropriate developmental skills and knowledge to assist with this aspect of the CDM.

An alternative may be to reduce the social development components of the CDM. For example, remove the social development training elements from the programme and focus more on contractor development training. Even if there is not a significant cost implication in doing this, it may increase the amount of time that contractors can spend on entrepreneurial training.

### **Quality control of data entered onto WIMS.**

The evaluator identified a number of small errors such as incorrect ID numbers, certain full names that were replaced by initials and contract values that were missing in the data from the WIMS database. WfW should ensure that improved measures of quality control are put in place for capturing and checking contractor information. Accurate information is critical for future studies and it is therefore important to maintain high quality data.

### **Limitations of the study**

The availability of data proved one of the biggest challenges for this evaluation. The vast majority of the findings for the implementation evaluation were based on interviews with programme staff. The interviewees were however strategically selected and it is believed they were able to provide relevant and accurate information that was verified in the programme records where possible.

Conducting interviews with existing contractors as well as contractors who have exited or dropped out of the CDM may have provided a useful and different perspective to the study. This was however not possible due to a lack of updated contact details, time and resources. Involvement from contractors in future studies may prove beneficial to the development of the CDM.

Due to limited availability, the evaluator was not able to involve the various implementing agents directly. Conducting a study with a sample of implementing agents in the Western Cape may prove useful for the CDM. A study of this nature will enable WfW to identify more specific implementation related challenges. It may also contribute to knowledge about best practices which could be replicated across sites in the province or South Africa.

## **Conclusion**

One of the primary aims of the current evaluation was to furnish information that could be used to guide possible improvements for the Contractor Development Model. In the first part of this study, the evaluator aimed to assist the programme staff to develop and assess a programme theory. These evaluation activities are particularly useful for rethinking a programme's goals, objectives, considering the programme's underlying theory and whether in fact the programme theory is realistic. The development of an explicit programme theory for the CDM and obtaining agreement from significant stakeholders that this theory is accurate, is regarded as a major strength of the present study.

The plausibility assessment revealed that increased networking opportunities and mentoring may further enhance the programme effects. It was also found that aspiring entrepreneurs' motivation levels play a critical role in the likelihood of entrepreneurial success and it is therefore recommended that this aspect is assessed during the contractor selection phase.

The second part of the study entailed an implementation evaluation. The CDM's target population and selection criteria were identified as two aspects that require attention as it may not be realistic to expect the poorest segment of society to be able to comply with the CDM's current set of selection criteria.

A significant challenge for the programme is a lack of established monitoring processes and subsequently little accessible data on implementation related matters. In addition, it is currently impossible to establish whether the CDM is in fact resulting in tangible outcomes for contractors. A key recommendation for the CDM is the addition of integrated monitoring processes which will allow the establishment of baseline information which could allow a comprehensive evaluation to take place.

Contractor development appears to be of secondary importance compared to the clearing of alien plants in the CDM. In a programme where the ultimate goal is entrepreneurial development, it is important to prioritise development opportunities for contractors. Reconceptualising the programme and communicating it with staff may be useful. Raising awareness about contractor development, specifically for regional high level staff, may contribute to increased buy-in and facilitate the development of contractors.

A programme such as WfW's Contractor Development Model which provides unemployed individuals with skills training and the opportunities to become a contractor and, potentially, an entrepreneur, is of much value in South Africa. Despite the limitations of this evaluation, it has identified a number of strengths, gaps and problem areas within the CDM. It is hoped that the strategic consideration of this document may contribute to the positive outcomes and impact of the CDM.

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## Appendix 1: Interview schedules

<b>Individual interview schedule for the Assistant Director: Implementation</b>
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What in your opinion are the CDM's strengths?

What are the weaknesses or areas you would like to improve on?

What do you feel is the ultimate goal of the programme?

How has the programme changed since 2003/4?

How difficult is it to find contractors that fulfil all your criteria?

Is there sufficient support for contractors from Project Managers or other WfW staff?

Why do people drop out?

What are some of the common problems WfW is confronted with in terms of the CDM?

Do you know what contractors do when they exit the programme?

Is there sufficient budget to implement the programme as it is intended?

Is there enough staff to implement the programme as it is intended?

Is staff competent for the functions that they must perform?

**Individual interview schedule for the National Training Coordinator**

What, in your opinion, are the CDM's strengths?

What are the weaknesses or areas you would like to improve on?

How do people find out about the programme?

Are people aware of the programme? How well do the advertisements work?

How do participants enrol in the programme?

Do you think it is difficult for the target population to be selected as a contractor?

Is the sequence for all programme participants the same?

How has the programme changed since 2003/4?

Is the training that is provided sufficient?

Is there sufficient support for contractors from Project Managers or other WfW staff?

Do participants engage in application of activities when they leave the programme?

Are there sufficient facilities for training?

Is there sufficient budget to implement the programme as it is intended?

Is there enough staff to implement the programme as intended?

Are staff competent for the functions that they must perform?

What are the main problems WfW experiences with the CDM?

Does the programme coordinate effectively with the other programmes and implementing agencies with which it must interact?

**Individual interview schedule for the Acting Deputy Director: Social  
Development**

What, in your opinion, are the CDM's strengths?

What are the weaknesses or areas you would like to improve on?

What changes would you make to the programme, and what do you need to make these changes?

Do you think the social development training is appropriate/useful for contractors?

**Individual interview schedule for the Assistant Director: M&E**

What, in your opinion, are the CDM's strengths?

What are the weaknesses or areas you would like to improve on?

What changes would you make to the programme, and what do you need to make these changes?

Do you think the social development training is appropriate/useful for contractors?

What do you think are weaknesses in the programme in terms of monitoring and evaluation?