

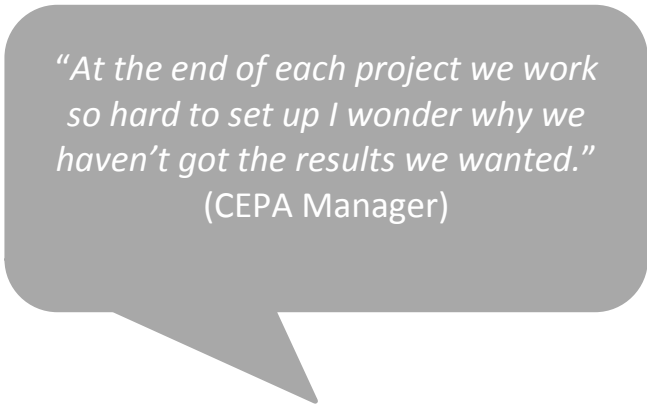
SECTION 1: ORIENTATION

Why this Toolkit?

Evaluation is now a regular part of our professional lives. It is however not a simple process, and practitioners and managers often look for evaluation guidelines. There are therefore many resources on how to do M&E (monitoring and evaluation), including some excellent online toolkits for evaluating environmental education and public awareness programmes.

Why then, another evaluation resource?

The City of Cape Town found that although they were starting to do regular evaluations of their Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) activities for biodiversity, these evaluations were too limited. They did not tell the City enough about their CEPA programmes, and whether they were on-target and worthwhile. In particular, evaluation teams seldom used indicators that seemed particularly suitable to CEPA.



"At the end of each project we work so hard to set up I wonder why we haven't got the results we wanted."
(CEPA Manager)

When Cape Town approached ICLEI (International Council of Local Government Environmental Initiatives, see www.iclei.org), they found there was also wider interest in developing better ways to get the measure of CEPA in a local government context. ICLEI's Local Action for Biodiversity (LAB) programme therefore decided to partner the City of Cape Town in funding the development of a toolkit that would focus on indicators and processes that are particularly suitable for CEPA evaluations.

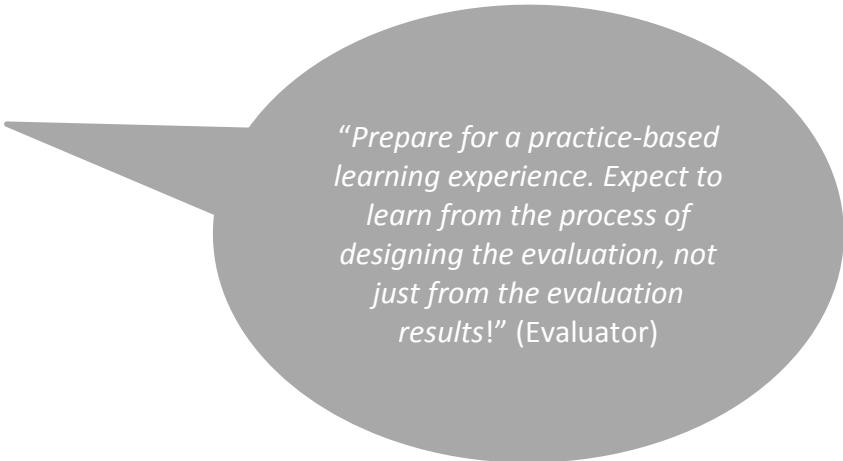
Four pioneering local governments from around the world signed up to contribute to the development of this resource.

If you are a CEPA manager or practitioner who wants to use evaluation to account for your activities and improve your programmes, this resource will be useful to you.

What can you expect from this toolkit?

- A guide to planning evaluations that extend the widely used linear logical framework, in order to better serve complex, non-linear social and ecological change processes.
- Contexts related to biodiversity action. Although the toolkit can also be used for CEPA programmes in other contexts, biodiversity and CEPA specific examples help to clarify evaluation guidelines for those familiar with this context.

- Case studies that illustrate local governments' biodiversity related CEPA programmes and the ways in which they are being evaluated.
- Detailed guidelines on indicator development.
- A view of CEPA as inputs into complex ecological, institutional and social systems.
- An approach to evaluation as a tool for ongoing learning and adaptation.
- An approach to evaluation design that is participatory – we recommend that evaluation designers involve evaluation stakeholders in determining roles, approaches, evaluation questions and indicators, not only because this would make the evaluation outcomes more relevant to these stakeholders, but because the process of evaluation design can in itself generate and share useful insights.
- A framework for communicating insights about the values and processes of CEPA programmes to funders, management and the public in ways that are clear, credible, and powerful enough to contribute to broader change.



“Prepare for a practice-based learning experience. Expect to learn from the process of designing the evaluation, not just from the evaluation results!” (Evaluator)

When to Use this Toolkit

- ✓ Use this resource whenever you start planning a CEPA programme, or a new phase in a current CEPA programme. Don't wait until the CEPA programme is designed – there is much value in designing the CEPA programme and its evaluation together. Also consider designing the CEPA programme and evaluation, at the same time as a broader biodiversity programme is being designed. Otherwise, the CEPA activities may fail to be integrated, adequately valued and resourced, or appropriately focused.
- ✓ Many of us reach for evaluation guidelines when our CEPA programme is half-way or completed, when we need to report to sponsors, or to decide on a next phase. We have found that the tools in this resource and the steps outlined are still valuable at such a stage, particularly when one needs suitable indicators.
- ✓ Surprisingly, this toolkit can even be useful when a CEPA evaluation has already been concluded, but somehow failed to satisfy the information needs. As some of the case examples demonstrate, this toolkit can help identify what was lacking or limiting in a previous evaluation design. The tools included here help us to add probing questions that can make a big difference to the levels of insight gained from an evaluation.

Thanks to the generous contributions of four cities around the world, the Toolkit can draw on several real-life case studies. These case examples illustrate some of the diverse contexts in which biodiversity CEPA programmes take place.

The role of the case studies is not to present 'best practice'. Their role is to provide an actual situation, with some contextual detail, in which to explain the design steps and ideas in this toolkit. When explaining an idea or step, we may give an actual, or more often than not, a *possible* example from a case study. In the brief analysis of the case studies, we refer to some of the steps the evaluators could have added, or approached differently. This simply helps one to consider how the ideas and tools might work in one's own context.

This toolkit is not an academic resource. It will not help anyone who needs an overview of the intellectual paradigms and political contexts which have influenced the different generations of evaluation in the fields of education, environment and development over the years.

On the other hand, the toolkit is also not an introduction to evaluation. It is probably most useful to those who already having some experience in evaluation, and in running or managing CEPA programmes. For a basic starter-pack that introduces evaluation, see the City of Cape Town's *Into Evaluation: A Start-Up Toolkit*, which is the predecessor of this resource (www.capetown.gov.za).¹

¹ *Into Evaluation: A Start-Up Toolkit*, the predecessor of this resource (www.capetown.gov.za)

This toolkit does not provide extensive detail about the methods for collecting or generating evaluation data. This is critical knowledge which is often neglected when evaluations are designed. For many evaluators a questionnaire is the only ‘proper’ research tool and it is applied in all situations, even when not really appropriate. Qualitative methods such as focus groups, observations or interviews can be equally or more valid, if they are well designed.

Although the case studies and examples are from the context of CEPA programmes related to biodiversity in a local government, the suggestions here are valid for CEPA related to other environmental, developmental and social change contexts, too. They are also pertinent to biodiversity-related CEPA and evaluation outside of local government.

How to Find Your Way in this Toolkit

The toolkit components are stored in different folders on the CD. If you are most interested in the practical tools, start with folder 4 and work your way towards the others later.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A brochure which can be printed out (small Z-fold) to share with others, it gives an overview of the toolkit in a nutshell. Particularly useful to show the nine design steps which make up the heart of the resource and the steps you would follow (or dip into) if you were to design your own evaluation using the resource. Start here for a good sense of what this is all about.

FOLDER 1 ORIENTATION

Refer back to the current file from time to time if you want pointers on how to approach toolkit components.

FOLDER 2 KEY IDEAS PAGES

Three sets of notes that provide background to the key ideas behind the tools. Read these if you are confused and/or when you would like more in-depth understanding.

FOLDER 3 CASE STUDIES

You could read them first, to get a sense of the diverse contexts in which CEPA programmes take place, and some of the many challenges and strategies evaluation teams have. While you work through the tools in Folder 4, you may want to refer back to individual case studies, as examples are often drawn from these contexts.

FOLDER 4 EVALUATION DESIGN STEPS

This file is the biggest and the heart of the toolkit. It consists of nine giant steps through which to design a customized evaluation.

FOLDER 5 APPENDICES

Several useful source documents. They are mentioned in the other files, so look them up as and when you encounter these references, to understand their context. You could add other documents that you find useful, to this folder, keeping all your resources in one place.