

ABBREVIATIONS

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ASP	Adaptive Social Protection		
СВЕ	Central Bank of Eswatini		
CCA	Common Country Analysis		
CHRPA	Commission on Human Rights and Public Administration/ Integrity		
CRC	Committee on the Rights of the Child		
CANGO	Coordinating Assembly of Non-Governmental Organisations		
CS-DRMS	Commonwealth Secretariat Debt Recording and Management System		
ECSO	Eswatini Central Statistics Office		
CSO	Civil Society Organisation		
DCO	Development Coordination Office		
DFA	Development Financial Assessment		
DPMO	Deputy Prime Minister's Office		
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction		
EWS	Early Warning Systems		
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations		
FODSWA	Federation of the Disabled in Swaziland		
GBV	Gender-Based Violence		
GDP	Gross Domestic Product		
GRB	Gender Responsive Budgeting		
HCI	Human Capital Index		
HTEI	Higher and Tertiary Education Institution		
IDPP	International Development Partners Platform		
IFMIS	Integrated Financial Management Information System		
ILO	International Labour Organisation		
IMF	International Monetary Fund		
INFF	Integrated National Financing Framework		
IOM	International Oganisation for Migration		
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification		
LUSIP	Lower Usuthu Smallholder Irrigation Project		
MEPD	Ministry of Economic Planning and Development		
MNWAP	Mkhondvo – Ngwavuma Water Augmented Programme		
MoF	Ministry of Finance		

NDC	Nationally Determined Contributions			
NDMA	National Disaster Management Agency			
NDP	National Development Plan			
NDS	National Development Strategy			
NERCHA	National Emergency Response Council on HIV/AIDS			
NGO	Non-Government Organisation			
NMRF	National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System			
NNDSS	National Notifiable Diseases Surveillance System			
NWA	National Water Authority			
ODA	Official Development Assistance			
OVC	Orphan and Vulnerable Children			
PPP	Private Public Partnership			
PPSG	Policy and Programme Support Group			
PSFM	Public Sector Financial Management			
RCO	Resident Coordinator's Office			
SACU	Southern African Customs Union			
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community			
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals			
SRM	Strategic Road Map			
UNCT	United Nations Country Team			
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme			
UNDRR	United Nations Disaster Risk Reduction			
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme			
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund			
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund			
UNRC	United Nations Resident Coordinator			
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework			
UPR	Universal Periodic Review			
VAC	Vulnerability Assessment Committee			
VNR	Voluntary National Report			
WB	World Bank			
WFP	United Nations World Food Programme			
WHO	World Health Organisation			
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FOREWORD

on behalf of the Eswatini UN Country Team (UNCT). The report represents the collective efforts of the the adjustment of its annual calendar to accommodate United Nations in Eswatini, together with Government, development and implementing partners, in advancing created momentum for critical debates and enhanced the 2030 Agenda for people and planet.

2023 was a remarkable year for Eswatini. The country dividend and youth empowerment, quality education, successfully completed its electoral process, leading gender-based violence, digital transformation, to the appointment of a new government under the Rt. Hon. Prime Minister Mr. Russell Dlamini. Commendably, the elections resulted in an increase in elected women Partners Platform (IDPP), convened by the Resident in parliament.

It is also the year that His Majesty King Mswati III, in response to citizens' submissions eSibayeni ('People's 2.0' signalled enhanced coordination support to the Parliament'), declared poverty a national disaster. He followed this up with the rallying call of 'Nkwe!' (speed, urgency), instructing Government to respond expeditiously to the people's needs. His Majesty's implementation of the SDGs.

achieved several milestones, key among them being Contributions (NDC) under the Paris Agreement on Recovery and Acceleration Plan; and launch of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement National test. Our work is cut out for us. Strategy and Implementation Plan.

The extremely challenging environment confronting UN Resident Coordinator, global efforts to achieve the SDGs have remained all too evident, with new reports indicating that only 15% of the targets have been achieved world-wide. It bears repeating that, in 2023, the world continued to face multiple crises with significant ramifications especially for developing countries like Eswatini. Closer to home, a new cycle of the El-Niño drought phenomenon in the region saw several countries declaring food deficits and emergencies.

I am pleased to present this Results Report for 2023 For UN Eswatini, the global and national contexts called for shifts and adaptations. Key for the Eswatini UNCT was bimonthly strategic policy dialogue meetings that have the UN's engagement with Government on strategic policy in areas such as energy options, demographic health systems, and food security, among others. The deliberations of the International Development Coordinator and co-chaired in 2023 by the European Union Ambassador, were equally significant. Within the Resident Coordinator's Office, the rebranding to 'RCO UNCT and partners for more efficient operations.

I take this opportunity to sincerely thank His Majesty's Government and our development and implementing call resonated well with the efforts to accelerate the partners for their steadfast collaboration and support to the SDG agenda. Looking forward, 2024 is the penultimate year of the implementation of the current Despite 2023 being an election year, the country UNSDCF 2021-25. Guided by the UN planning timelines, the preparation of the successor UNSDCF 2026the launch of its ambitious Nationally Determined 2030 commences in 2024 even as we simultaneously implement the current document. The new UNSDCF will Climate Change; submission of the Eswatini SDG cover the last, five-year dash to 2030 in which collective efforts to accelerate SDGs achievements will be a key

> Mr. George Wachira, Kingdom of Eswatini





Government

to the Government of the Kingdom of Eswatini, achievements of 2023. Through various ministries, the

We also owe our gratitude to the following international and national partners:

International Development Partners

US Embassy, European Union, British High Commission, High Commission of India, Government of Ireland, World Bank, African Development Bank.

Parastatals

The United Nations extends its profound gratitude Eswatini Revenue Services, National Emergency Response Council (NERCHA), Public Service Pension particularly the Ministry of Economic Planning Fund, Eswatini Bank, Eswatini Communications and Development (MEPD), for the remarkable Commission, Eswatini Standards Authority, Eswatini Environment Authority, National Agriculture Marketing government has collaborated with the UN to deliver Board, Manzini Industrial Training Centre, Eswatini Water impactful support and empowerment to Emaswati. and Agricultural Development Agency, Central Bank of Eswatini, Eswatini National Youth Council and others.

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

Coordinating Assembly of Non-Governmental Organisations (CANGO), the Federation of the Disabled in Swaziland (FODSWA), Kwakha Indvodza, Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse, Women Farmer Foundation, Family Life Association, Southern Africa

AIDS Dissemination Service ,Bantfwana, Diabetes Religious Sector Association of Eswatini, African Women's Peace Council of Swaziland Churches, and Development Foundation, Community Health League of African Churches, Empowerment Forum, Alliance of Mayors Initiative for Eswatini Conference of Churches. Community Action of HIV/AIDS at the Local Level, Save the Children, Church Forum on HIV and AIDS, and others.

Academia

University of Eswatini, Limkokwing University of Creative Technology, Southern African Nazarene University, Good Shepard College of Nursing, Eswatini Medical Christian University and others.

Private Sector

Business Eswatini, Federation of Eswatini Business Community, Conco Limited, Standard Bank, First National Bank, MTN Eswatini, and others.

JNSC Members

The implementation of the UNSDCF is overseen by the Joint National Steering Committee (JNSC) co-chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator and the Minister of Economic Planning and Development and would like to acknowledge the following members for their contributions.

Ministry of Economic Planing and Development

Hon. Minister **Principal Secretary Under Secretary Chief Economist ACMS Team**

Government Ministries (Principal Secretary Under Secretary, Directors of planning)

MoF, Commerce, Trade and Industry, Ministry of Labor and Social Security, Health, Education, Justice and Constitutional Affairs Natural Resources and Energy, Tourism and Environmental Affairs, Agriculture, Sport, Youth and Culture, Natural Resources and Energy, Tinkhundla Administration, DPMO,

Development Partners

US Embassy, European Union, British High Commission, High Commission of India, World Bank, African **Development Bank**

Trade Unions

Trade Union Congress of Eswatini Federation of Eswatini Trade Union

Representatives from Women's Groups

Businesswomen Eswatini, Women Farmer Foundation, Women and the Law, Action Group Against Abuse

UNCT Members and deputies

UNICEF, UNFPA, UNAIDS, WHO, UNDP, FAO, UNESCO, Eswatini National Youth Council IOM, WFP, UNEP, UN Women, UNHCR, OHCHR, UNIDO, ILO, UNODC, UNDRR, IFAD, ITC

Representatives from Women's Groups

Businesswomen Eswatini, Women Farmer Foundation, Women and the Law, Action Group Against Abuse

Permanent J-NSC Members (CEOs)

NERCHA National Executive Director FODSWA Executive Director

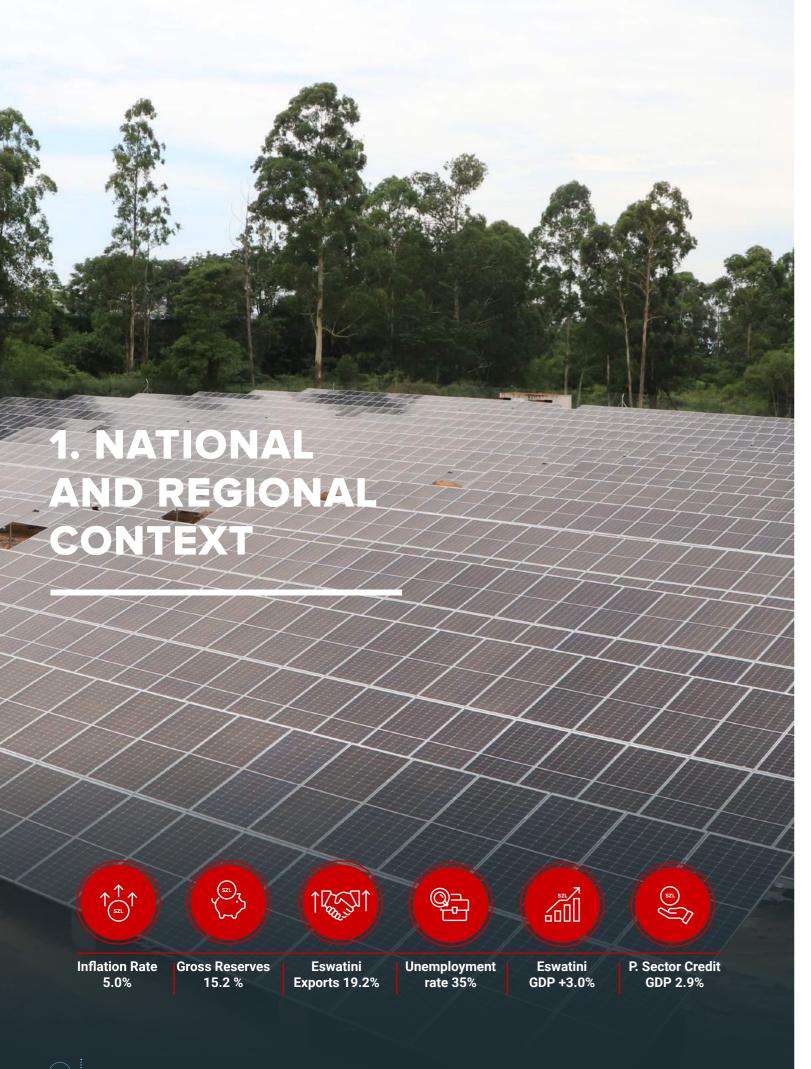
CANGO Executive Director NDMA CEO Business Eswatini CEO

Representatives from Youth Groups

University of Eswatini, Limkokwing University of Creative Technology, Southern African Nazarene University, Eswatini Medical Christian University

RCO

Resident Coordinator RCO Team



SDG Index Rank
132/166





SDG Dashboards and Trends

lick on a goal for more information



In 2023, Eswatini's economy experienced recovery, with real GDP increasing by 3.0% quarter-on-quarter and 7.7% year-on-year. Export of goods grew by 19.2%, aided by a weaker local currency. Inflation reached 5.0%, while lending rates stayed stable. Credit to the private sector rose by 2.9% in real terms, and gross official reserves improved by 15.2% due to higher SACU receipts. Despite this progress, challenges such as high unemployment (of 35%), economic inequality, limited access to finance, and vulnerability to external shocks persisted, emphasizing the need for inclusive growth efforts in Eswatini.

To promote economic recovery, Eswatini focused on stimulating investment, supporting SMEs, and implementing growth-oriented policies in 2023. Infrastructure development in transportation, energy, and water aimed to enhance connectivity, service access, and job opportunities. Diversification efforts prioritized reducing reliance on traditional sectors and promoting tourism, manufacturing, and technology to build a more resilient economy.

Globally, the economic growth in 2023 was projected at 3.0%, with a decline to 2.9% in 2024 due to factors like tight monetary conditions, high inflation, conflicts, financial stress, and climate disasters. Sub-Saharan

Africa's economic activity is expected to moderate to 3.3% in 2023 before rebounding to 4.0% in 2024, influenced by uncertainties in resource-rich countries and structural challenges in major economies like Nigeria and South Africa, posing risks to the region. South Africa, Eswatini's primary trading partner, presents heightened risks for the country's outlook.

Domestically, Eswatini's economic growth averaged 3.1% in 2020-2022, surpassing the 20-year average. Projected growth for 2023 is 4.8%, rising to 4.9% in 2024. The growth will be supported by fiscal policy, increased revenue mobilization, public spending, and investment, particularly in manufacturing, construction, and service sectors. Challenges remain in textile manufacturing and agriculture due to market conditions and weather-related issues. The tertiary sector is expected to grow by 6.7% in 2023, with subsectors like wholesale retail, transport, tourism, and information services contributing positively.

Looking ahead, the medium-term outlook for Eswatini from 2024-2026 is positive, with real GDP projected to average 3.3% and peak at 4.9% in 2024, aligning with the goal of achieving at least 5% economic growth as desired by the country's leadership.

1.1 KEY DEVELOPMENT **INDICATORS IN ESWATINI**



- · The country has an estimated population of **1.2 million** people and an estimated median age of • 21,7 Years.
- Eswatini has a population with a relatively high proportion of children, adolescents, and young adults (46.9) under the age of 25 (47.4 % male and 46.3% female).
- Over 76.2 % population in the rural areas.
- The estimated life expectancy in Eswatini is 60.9 years for males and 65.5 years for females.



- Poverty rates 58.9%
- 20% of the population living below the extreme poverty line.
- Using the new international poverty line of \$2.15, the estimated extreme poverty for Eswatini is
- Stunting rate for children under five 20%.



- medium-term outlook for 2024-2026 is positive, with real GDP projected to average 3.3% and peak at 4.9% in 2024.
- The average Eswatini inflation rate for 2023 was
- National unemployment rate 35.4% in 2023.
- Youth unemployment rate 56% in 2023.
- In 2023, Eswatini was ranked 121st out of 190 economies in terms of ease of doing business according to the World Bank annual ratings.
- Eswatini SDG index rank was 132/166, index score was 57.9% and the spillover score was 92.3%



- Eswatini projected growth for 2023 is 4.8% and the The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) estimates that
 - Phase 1 (in food security) 528, 200
 - Phase 2 (people stressed) 421, 700
 - Phase 3 (people in crisis) 238,500 (20% of the population)



- Energy access rate 82.9%
- 8 in 10 households use drinking water from improved sources.
- 1 in 2 households obtain water within premises.
- Eswatini adopted its first economy-wide emissions reduction target of 5% by 2030, or 14% with financial support.
- Forest area as a proportion of total land area -28.93%.



- Maternal mortality ratio 452/100 000 live births
- Neonatal Mortality Rate: 21/1000 live births
- Under 5 mortality rates is estimated at 41/1000 live births
- Antenatal Care 99%
- Skilled Birth Attendance 93%
- Institutional delivery 93%
- Low Birth weight 9.3%
- Postnatal care: Maternal 90% newborn 90%
- Adolescent birth rate 78/1000 live births
- Basic immunization coverage 77%
- Full immunization coverage 66



GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

- Approximately 1 in 3 females in Eswatini have experienced some form of sexual abuse by age of 18 years and 48.2% of women having experienced some form of sexual violence in their lifetime.
- 17 391 GBV cases reported in 2023.
- Manzini 36%, HhoHho 26%, Lubombo 24% and Shiselweni 14%.
- 67% of the cases reported in 2023 were women and 33% were males.



- Early childhood education 9% (22% for children from the richest households and 4% for the poorest).
- School net attendance rates: Primary 95%, Lower Secondary - 51%, Upper Secondary -29%
- 18% of the children in grades 2 or 3 have foundational reading skills and 8% of the same cohort possess foundational numeracy skills.





2.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE COOPERATION FRAMEWORK RESULTS

In January 2021, the Kingdom of Eswatini embarked on the implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) for 2021-2025. This framework, embodying the vision of "a prosperous and just Eswatini where no one is left behind," concentrates on three strategic priorities and four outcome areas that are harmonized with the national development goals outlined in the National Development Plan (NDP) 2023-2028.

To ensure the effective realization of these outcomes, each strategic area is supported by dedicated Results Groups (RGs) under the Joint National Steering Committee, co-led by the Minister of Economic Planning and Development and the UN Resident Coordinator. These RGs facilitate the implementation process through

meticulously planned joint annual and biennial work plans, continuously monitoring the progress towards the agreed-upon outputs. Each RG is co-chaired by a Principal Secretary from the Government and a Head of Agency from the UN.

The 2023 results report highlights significant investments and achievements across various sectors:

Inclusive Growth: The UN invested SZL 131 million, benefiting over 73,000 Emaswati through economic empowerment initiatives, MSME and trade promotion, digital acceleration, and food security programmes.

Human Capital & Social Development: The UN allocated SZL 84.6 million, impacting 45,000 learners, 390 teachers, and 34,000 young people with educational and social programmes. Additionally,

211,578 Emaswati were reached through health, HIV, and GBV prevention initiatives.

Governance, Justice, and Human Rights: The UN invested SZL 19 million, reaching 20,000 people with human rights messages and programmes.

Environmental Sustainability: The UN dedicated SZL 37.8 million, supporting 100,000 Emaswati through renewable energy, water, and sanitation initiatives.

This report provides a comprehensive overview of the progress made under the UNSDCF, showcasing the collaborative efforts between the Government of Eswatini, Development Partners, Civil Society, Private Sector, Academic and other sectors, in driving sustainable development and improving the well-being of the Emaswati.

2.2 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

Laudable Increased **Investments National**

In the 2024-2025 national budgeting cycle, government increased allocations to important areas of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), demonstrating a strong commitment to enhancing crucial sectors such as education, health, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), social transfers, infrastructure development, and environmental conservation initiatives.

Following a horrific spike in violence against women and girls, His Majesty King Mswati III spoke strongly against the scourge, as did members of his government led by the PM and DPM, and civil society organisations and the media. In support of efforts to eliminate the vice, RCs in 6 countries in southern Africa launched a regional initiative against GBV which seeks to support laws and polices, boost response capacities and prevention. The European Union provided \$500,000 to the Eswatini chapter of the initiative.



Ahead of the SDG Summit in September, the UN supported the Government in developing the Eswatini SDGs Recovery and Acceleration Plan, aligned with the National Development Plan 2023- 2028 and the UNSDCF 2021-2025.



Presenting to the new government on strategic shifts:

These included seizing the advantage of a youthful population to generate jobs through entrepreneurship in agriculture; enhancing the quality of education through increased efficiencies and targeting; exploring energy choices for driving the economy and sustaining the environment; investing in functioning health systems.



Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC):

In line with its commitments under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, Eswatini launched a \$1.3 billion NDC plan.



African Continental Free Trade Agreement:

In 2023, Eswatini moved closer to its goal of enhancing its share of intra-Africa trade by unveiling its National Strategy and Implementation Plan for AfCFTA.



Human Capital and Social Development



(USD)

100% Percentage

4.7M Expenditure

utilized

Number of Beneficiaries

211 578

Emaswati Reached With SRHR, HIV & GBV 45 000

Learners Accessed Digital Curriculum

390

Teachers Trained

1050

34 000

Emaswati Reached Through SBCC

Government, Justice and Human Rights



1 M Expenditure

87% Percentage utilized

Number of Beneficiaries:



Emaswati reached with Vote For Womer Campaign



Child Protection Cases reffered for assistance



Women Elected/



Birth Registration

Inclusive Growth



7.2M Expenditure

73% Percentage

Number of Beneficiaries



Emaswati Received



Accessed

Agri-businesses



Received Economic

Environmental Sustainability



2.1 M Expenditure (USD)

40% Percentage utilized

Number of Beneficiaries:



WASH and **Environmental**



benefit from



Women trained on Green



Mini Grid

benefit from 35KW

Emaswati benefited from Rehabilitated

100 000





Enhanced Policy Framework

Development and facilitation of 12 key policies: These policies aim to spur business growth, empower SMEs, and enhance trade to foster a conducive economic environment and reduce poverty.

Improved Food Security: Food Security Initiatives reached 70 000 Emaswati. This effort has sustainably contributed to improved access to nutritious food and enhancing the overall well-being of vulnerable communities in the country.

Expanded Economic Data

Blended FINSCOPE Survey: Enhanced accuracy in economic assessment through the Blended FINSCOPE Survey, focusing on financial inclusion and gender-sensitive diagnostic assessment.

Rebased National Accounts: Support for rebasing national accounts and developing a macroeconomic model has enabled better understanding and prediction of economic trends. Economic Data and Agriculture Census: Establishment of an online socio-economic data management system and conducting an annual agricultural census contributed to informed decision-making.

Enhanced National Economic Capacities

Training for Farmer Groups: Capacity-building efforts included training provided to 263 beneficiaries from three farmer groups on value addition, packaging, and distribution. Operationalizing Agriculture Development Fund: Support extended towards operationalizing the Agriculture Development Fund to boost economic efficiency and food security.

Improved Child-Sensitive Social Protection

Child Poverty Studies: Implementation of child poverty studies and related policy development safeguarded child well-being and rights, focusing on human capital development for sustainable growth.

Digital Agriculture Advancement

Agri-Tech Hubs and Agri-Fin-Tech Accelerator: Establishment of Agri-Tech hubs and an Agri-Fin-Tech accelerator to modernize agriculture through technological innovation, addressing supply chain challenges, and increasing productivity.

Increased Youth Internship and Skills Development

Youth Empowerment Programme: Rollout of the Youth Empowerment Programme and skills development initiatives benefited 300 unemployed graduates through internships, with at least 45 gaining full-time employment. Additionally, 360 out-of-school youth were capacitated through artisanal skills development initiatives, with 90 gaining full-time livelihoods from the skills attained.

Advocacy on Population and Development Issues

Increased Knowledge on ICPD: Enhanced understanding of the International Conference on Population and Development through the review of the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development@10, indicating a conducive policy environment for actualizing AADPD commitments.





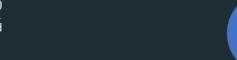
















Young Women Economic Empowerment Project gives young women in Eswatini the tools to run successful businesses

Phumelele Manana, a 28-year-old entrepreneur from Mweni in Eswatini's Mbheka area in the Manzini Region, formalised her family business in 2022 with the help of the Young Women Empowerment Project. Phumelele inherited the family piggery business from her father, who she also credits for her business acumen. After inviting her to work in the business with him for several years, her father fully handed over the business to her in 2022. Phumelele is now the sole owner of the business that raises and sells pigs.

She joined the UNAIDS-supported Young Women Economic Empowerment Project in 2022 to upskill herself to take the business to the next level. At the time she, her two children, and the rest of her immediate family depended on the income her father generated from the business as her livelihood. Although this sustained the business, which only had access to their local community as it is market, it was not thriving. Other challenges also added to the shortage of operational funds. Phumelele recalls how they would take all the money from the business to provide for the family's needs without investing any of it back into the business. As a result, the business would be short of money to buy more stock and feed, and its growth stunted.

When Phumelele heard about the Young Women Economic Empowerment project in her village she immediately applied to participate. She enrolled in the 5-day Entrepreneurship and Business management course, which made her eligible for a grant to start her own business after completion.

The course taught her how to start and formalise her business, manage business resources and cash flow, and identify new markets.

Using the grant, she got from Swaziland Network of Young Positives (SNYP), Phumelele decided to formalise the business. Using the skills, she acquired from the training and the continued mentorship from YSPN, she secured six months' worth of feed for her pigs. This injection of resources allowed her to expand her operations and purchase additional pigs for slaughter. Phumelele was also able to expand her market beyond her community. In addition to her hometown of Mweni, she now sells to neighbouring communities as well. She has seen a surge in the profits of her business which has brought financial stability and security to her family. She also saves at least 400 Swazi Lilangeni (about \$21) monthly for her business.

The Young Women Economic Empowerment programme did not only grow Phumelele's business, but also contributed to her personal development. Motivated to put action to her dreams, she decided to study further, using her earnings from the business. In 2023 she enrolled in a 6-months plumbing course which she completed and got experience from doing her practicals with a local company. She is now awaiting to do her trade test which will certify her as a plumber. Her future is marked by clear goals and unwavering determination, one of those being to acquire her own assets such as a vehicle and house, over the next five years.

By Maphuti Mabothakga Mhlaba





INVESTING IN HUMAN RESOURCES AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT











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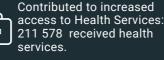








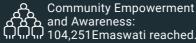




Enhanced Cervical Cancer

Prevention: 46,674 girls

recieved HPV Vaccine



















- The HPV vaccination campaign reached 46,674 girls, a significant step towards combating cervical cancer, which is prevalent due to high HIV rates in the country.
- Institutional strengthening, such as the installation of oxygen piping and the scaleup of birth registration, improved healthcare service delivery.

Improved Policy Environment

- · Development of the National Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) Prevention and Control Plan for 2024-2028 and the HIV Prevention Roadmap.
- Advocacy for tax-free menstrual hygiene commodities.
- Support for the National Strategic Framework for HIV and AIDS and the Condom Strategy Evaluation.

Enhanced Capacity for Quality Healthcare

- · Institutional strengthening through the scale-up of birth registration and improvements in healthcare service delivery, including the Baby Friendly Hospital
- Installation of oxygen piping in healthcare facilities and provision of equipment in four government hospitals.

Enhanced Health Services

The Safe Delivery application pilot reached 270 healthcare workers.

Community Empowerment and Awareness

- Digital SBCC initiatives and blood donor campaigns increased public awareness on health issues, reaching 104,000 Emaswati.
- Dissemination of information on gender norms, HIV prevention, and violence to 189 men and 62 traditional leaders, promoting male involvement in HIV and GBV response efforts.
- Contributed to increased access to HIV prevention, and GBV services reaching 211,578 Emaswati.







Digitalised Curriculum:

- Digital learning initiatives reached 45,000 learners, enhancing access to quality educational resources.
- Training and capacity-building efforts ensured better resource allocation for children's education.

Advanced Advocacy for Extention of Education Support:

High-level engagements advocating for the extension of Free Primary Education (FPE) to secondary levels and for free basic education from Grade 0.

Enhanced Capacity for Child-Centric Policies:

Training key government officials on Public Financing for Children and Child Poverty Analysis.

Supported Vulnerable Learners:

- Reintegrated 255 vulnerable post pregnant adolescents back into the school system.
- Created safe school environments through the Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL) programme, reaching 354,000 learners from 618 schools.







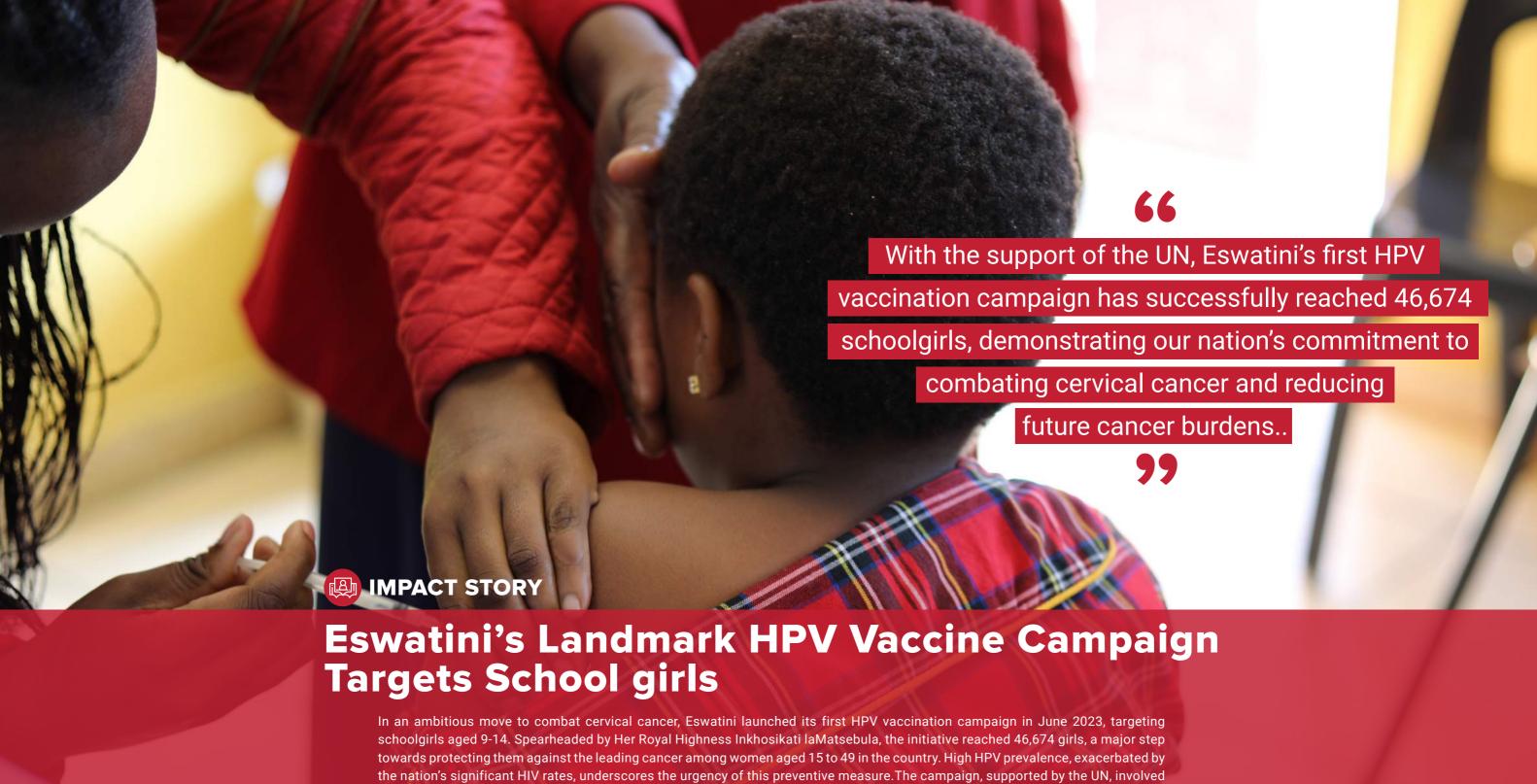












meticulous planning, including the creation of health worker guidelines and monitoring tools. Her Royal Highness emphasized the vaccine's role in preventing HPV infections, aiming to significantly lower cancer incidence. With approximately 360 new cervical cancer cases annually and a high mortality rate, the importance of vaccination cannot be overstated. Sandzisile Mamba, a health worker involved in the campaign, expressed gratitude for the opportunity to provide young girls with protection against the disease.

HPV vaccines, proven safe and effective, target the primary cancer-causing virus types, significantly reducing the risk of cervical cancer and precancerous lesions. The success of the vaccination effort was bolstered by extensive community mobilization and sensitization efforts, reaching parents and educators through various media channels. The comprehensive training of over 400 health workers prior to the campaign ensured its smooth execution, demonstrating Eswatini's commitment to safeguarding its young female population and reducing future cancer burdens.

By Winile Mavuso





Increased Number of Women into Decision-Making Positions

Vote 4 Women Campaign: Led to the election or appointment of 17 women as Members of Parliament and Senators. This campaign included regional workshops, multimedia campaigns, and training traditional authorities on elections.

Strengthened Good Governance and Human Rights

Policy and Legislative Developments: Eight essential policy tools were developed, including the Legal Aid Policy and Gender Policy, alongside legislative frameworks such as the Human Rights Bill and Employment Bill.

Promoted Human Rights Awareness

Dissemination Efforts: Human rights information reached over 275,000 Emaswati through regional roadshows, national events, and online platforms, emphasizing a widespread commitment to human rights education.

Enhanced Data for Public Health and Economic Analysis

Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Report: Production and dissemination of the 2023 report to improve data management for informed public health and economic analysis.

Strengthened Human Rights Reporting Mechanisms

National Mechanism for Report and Follow-up (NMRIF): Support and training on good governance and human rights for NERCHA staff enhanced the country's capacity to meet international and regional human rights obligations.

Integrated Population Issues into Judiciary

Training for Prosecutors: Senior public prosecutors were trained on key population issues and GBV prosecution principles, strengthening the judiciary's capacity to handle sensitive cases.

Combated Human Trafficking

Training Sessions: Law enforcement officers and NGO members received training on awareness and combat techniques against human trafficking, enhancing national capacity to tackle this issue.

Increased Birth Registration Centres

National Coverage Achievement: National coverage of 83% for birth registration services across health facilities marks a significant step towards universal access to this essential service.









87%













1.1M



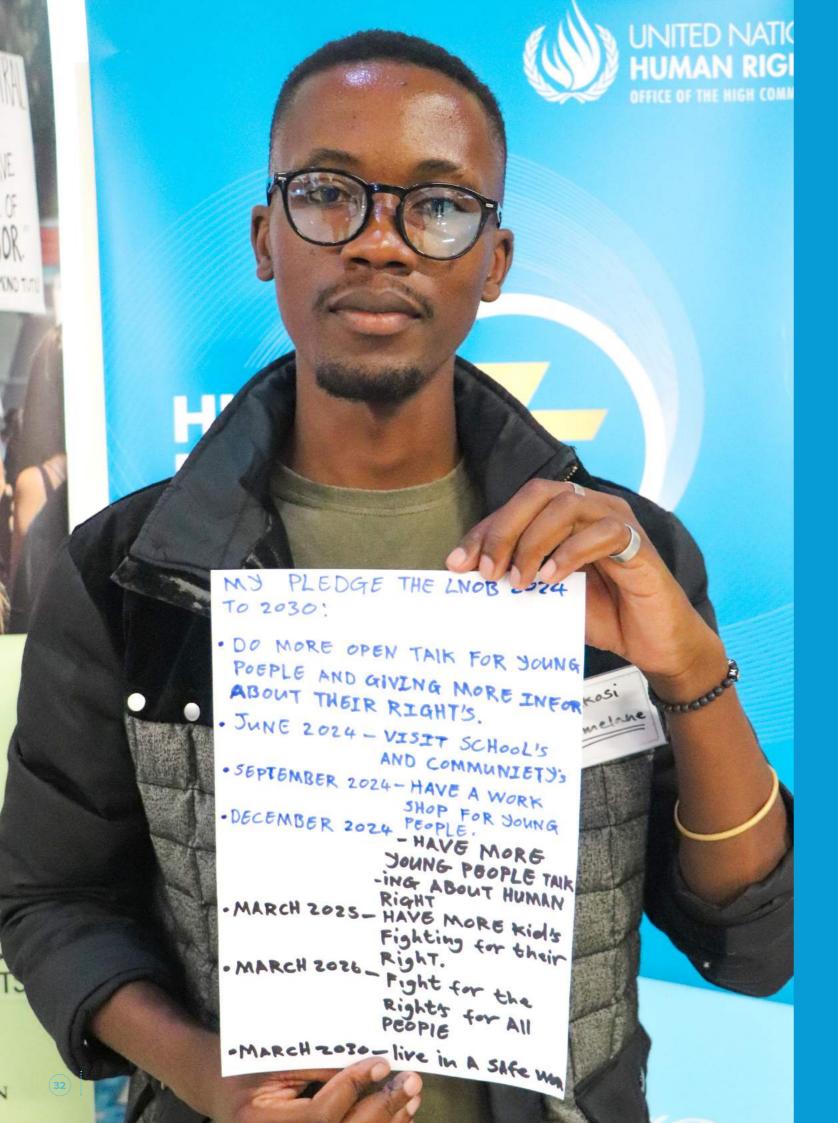




83% Increase of Birth

Registration Centres.







Empowering Voices: Zwelakhe Simelane's Journey from Silence to Advocacy

In the heart of Manzini, Zwelakhe Simelane, a 27-yearthe transformative power of human rights education. His journey from an aspiring artist to a vocal advocate for human rights highlights the profound impact of the UN Eswatini's human rights workshops.

point for me," Zwelakhe shares. "As a young person, I'm responsible for making my voice heard. I shouldn't be scared to step up and stand up for my rights. When I speak out, I don't just speak for myself; I speak up for my brothers and sisters in rural areas. I got this privilege to be here. A number of young people don't get that privilege. So, moving forward, I'll speak more often. I will let our voices be heard because it's our right to be heard."

Zwelakhe's words resonate with the core objectives of the UN Eswatini workshops: to empower individuals with the knowledge and courage to advocate for their rights and the rights of others.

The workshops integrated a Human Rights-Based Approach and a Gender Perspective with a focus on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They equipped participants with tools to promote and protect human rights in their communities. The regional training sessions targeted diverse groups, including government officials, private sector representatives, civil society organizations, and community-based groups.

Participants like Zwelakhe were introduced to By Tiphelele Simelane fundamental human rights principles and the importance

of aligning these rights with Eswatini's constitution and old artist and founder of House of Living Art, exemplifies legal systems. The workshops emphasized the role of duty bearers and rights holders, encouraging informed decision-making at the community level.

Zwelakhe's path has been far from easy. He dropped out of school in Form 4, just a year before completing "Attending the human rights workshop was a turning high school, due to family issues. His father forced him to start working in the transport industry to make a living. Despite these challenges, Zwelakhe pursued his passions and uplifted others. He runs an NGO that empowers young people who have also dropped out of school, teaching them skills to make a living through drama, poetry, and music.

> "I have just completed a short course on leadership, which helps me with public speaking and standing in front of people to advance the case for disadvantaged young people," he says. However, his NGO struggles financially and receives little support. "We survive on donations and the goodwill of people who know us," he

> Many participants echoed Zwelakhe's sentiments, highlighting the workshops' critical role in enhancing their understanding and commitment to human rights. The commitment and enthusiasm demonstrated by participants like Zwelakhe underscore the workshops' success in fostering a culture of human rights advocacy. The initiative by UN Eswatini is paving the way for more inclusive and sustainable development projects, ensuring no one is left behind.





Policy and Legislative Advancements

Climate Change Bill: Drafted with the support of UNDP and UNEP, this bill signifies a pivotal legislative step towards renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Developed National WASH Master Plan:

Developed to improve water and sanitation access, impacting over 300 households

Created Natural Resources Management Profile

Country Water Sector Profile: Creation of this profile showcases efforts to improve water and sanitation access for households.

Improved Environmental Compliance: Strengthened capacities of institutions like the Eswatini Environment Authority and the Department of Water Affairs to improve regulatory compliance and climate resilience.

Increased Knowledge and Capacity Building

Knowledge Management Platform developed to inform policy development in natural resources management and climate action, adhering to data protection standards.

National Green Cities Indicators: Formulated in partnership with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, advancing sustainable urban development.

Training for Women in Energy Sector: Specialized training provided to 50 women, highlighting progress in gender-inclusive capacity enhancement.

Established Renewable Energy Initiatives Mini Grid: A 35KW Mini grid at Mvundla, serving 21 households and 2 churches, and another benefiting 90 households at Ebulimeni, demonstrating the deployment of off-grid decentralized renewable energy

Installed Solar PV Plant: Sigcineni 35KW Solar PV Plant powering Mvundla, transforming lives and enabling improved study conditions for children.

Improved WASH and Environmental Services

Support to Health Facilities: 32 health facilities received support for water supply, sanitation, hygiene, waste management, and environmental cleaning rehabilitation.

Enhanced Access to Climate Finance: Facilitated access to environment and climate finance, aiding the Eswatini Environment Authority and the Eswatini Development and Savings Bank in their accreditation and proposal development for renewable energy and energy efficiency projects.

IMPACT STORY

Empowering Eswatini's Rural Communities with Mini-Grids

In the remote Mvundla community of Eswatini's Manzini Region, Sithembile Khumalo, a mother of two, once depended on firewood for energy, a common plight in a country where 59% live below the poverty line and 90% of rural homes rely on traditional energy sources. Despite an 85% national electrification rate, high costs and reliance on imported power are challenges, with ambitious national goals aiming for 100% access to clean, modern household energy by 2030.

The shift began in 2021 when Eswatini Electricity Company, in partnership with Eswatini Energy Regulatory Authority, introduced the Sigcineni 35KW Solar PV Plant, powering Mvundla with its first taste of electricity. This development transformed lives, enabling easier household management and improved study conditions for children.

However, the lack of local businesses remained a hurdle, necessitating long trips for basic needs. This gap sparked a community drive for economic empowerment, significantly bolstered by a UNDP-led training for women entrepreneurs. The initiative, part of the Powering Equality Project funded by the Republic of Korea and Luxembourg, equipped women with vital skills in sustainable living, business planning, and more, aiming to leverage renewable energy for business development.

As a result, Khumalo and her peers are now embarking on ventures ranging from a grocery store to a hammer mill and broiler chicken business, inspired by the training. This effort aligns with the broader Africa Minigrids Project, which seeks to foster small business creation through solar power, showcasing the potential of renewable energy to drive gender equality and economic growth.

By Mantoe Phakathi

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Our community's drive for economic empowerment is significantly bolstered by the Powering Equality Project..

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2.4 SUPPORT TO PARTNERSHIPS AND FINANCING FOR THE 2030 AGENDA

The United Nations in Eswatini has established robust stakeholders, including government officials and private partnerships with government bodies, the private sector representatives, driving initiatives in Priority sector, civil society, academia, and international Sector Lending (PSL) and Climate Change Financing. development partners to effectively deliver the UNSDCF The collaborations focused on inclusive growth, 2021-2025 commitments. By aligning these diverse rural development finance, sustainable energy, and stakeholders' interests, the UN Country Team (UNCT) environmental safeguards. Capacity building efforts, has created a collaborative environment that maximizes training programmes, and engagement sessions were resource impact for sustainable development. These highlighted to enhance expertise and foster innovation partnerships operate at various levels, driving the in tackling climate-related challenges while aligning UN's ability to meet its commitments and targets projects with sustainable development goals. This for the people of Eswatini. Key initiatives include the initiative showcases a commitment to a sustainable International Development Partners Platform, the and resilient future for Eswatini through effective Eswatini Development Cooperation Forum, and bilateral dialogues with International Financial Institutions (IFIs), all aimed at realizing the UNSDCF 2021-2025 vision and Tackling Gender-Based Violence (GBV) the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

for Financing Sustainable Development

on enabling policies for financing sustainable development. This event brought together key initiative. The UN has also committed to a coordinated

utilization of financial resources.

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) has been a persistent UN-CBE Round Table Discussion on Enabling Policies issue in Eswatini, with recent reports indicating an increase over the past year. In response, the UN Eswatini partnered with UN Resident Coordinators In March 2024, the United Nations and the Central Bank in five Southern African countries-Botswana, South of Eswatini (CBE) hosted a round table discussion Africa, Zambia, Lesotho, and Namibia. To date, UN Eswatini has mobilized USD 10,000 to support this National Strategy to End Violence in Eswatini (2023-2018 and establishing safe houses for the protection of women and children.

Moreover, the UN has strengthened coordination of advocacy efforts on GBV prevention and response. This has been achieved through structured GBV awareness campaigns, sessions with key influencers, and fostering economic empowerment for women and girls. The UN, in partnership with various stakeholders, commemorated the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, furthering its commitment gender equality, and climate action. The partnership to this cause.

Humanitarian Country Team - Light

The UNCT inaugurated the Eswatini Humanitarian action, crucial for achieving the SDGs. The United Country Team (HCT) Light in 2023, a critical mechanism for effective and coordinated humanitarian response. and innovative financing to support the 2030 Agenda, This team brings together key partners, including UN

approach with development partners, civil society, and enhance preparedness, response, and recovery efforts the private sector to support the implementation of the during emergencies. The team contributed to finalizing the Eswatini Drought Preparedness, Adaptation, and 2027). This includes operationalizing the SODV Act of Response Plan, ensuring a proactive approach to potential crises.

UN-Bushfire Partnership and SDGs

In 2023, the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was celebrated through the "Bring Your Fire Zone" at an international arts festival, part of the UN-Bushfire partnership. This collaboration with the private sector promoted human rights and inspired action on critical issues such as health access, emphasizes empowering youth and leveraging technology to advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It engages over 20,000 participants annually in discussions on health rights and climate Nations in Eswatini prioritizes strategic partnerships addressing gender-based violence, climate change, agencies, development partners, and three INGOs, to and inclusive growth to create a resilient and equitable future for all Emaswati, ensuring no one is left behind.



2.5 UN COHERENCE, EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY

In 2023, the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) • continued to demonstrate remarkable coherence, effectiveness, and efficiency through its collaborative efforts across various governance structures. Joint Annual Work Plans were developed by the four Results Groups, each co-led by Government officials and Heads of Agencies, maintaining a consistent engagement with at least two meetings in 2023 to outline priorities and monitor progress, culminating in a productive Joint National Steering Committee meeting in January 2024.

The UNCT's delivery of the UNSDCF was further supported by an array of governance structures such as the Policy and Programmes Support Group In the realm of joint advocacy, the UN has been (PPSG), the group dedicated to the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), the Operations Management Team (OMT), the UN Communications Group (UNCG), the UN Gender Theme Group (UNGTG), and the Disaster Emergency Management Team. These entities regularly reported their advancements on a bimonthly basis, ensuring sustained communication and alignment of efforts.

Highlighting the UN's collaborative success in Eswatini, several joint programmes were notable:

- The "Hlonipheka Thriving for Dignity" programme, with nearly E11 million in funding, is set to impact close to 400 survivors of gender-based violence and around 1500 persons with disabilities. This initiative, championed by the European Union and the UNFPA, is a pivotal step towards combating gender-based violence and uplifting vulnerable populations.
- RCs' initiated and led Programme to eradicate GBV in Eswatini, Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, and Zambia, which was launched in Pretoria global challenges. on the 10 October 2023.

- In 2024 efforts will be made to intergrate this into the Spotlight Initiative.
- The Joint UN Youth Programme continues to empower young Emaswati by addressing pressing societal issues through initiatives aimed at economic empowerment, educational enhancement, and health and well-being improvement. Despite a substantial funding gap, the programme's comprehensive approach, led by agencies including UNDP, UNICEF, and UNFPA, underscores the critical role of youth in societal advancement.

instrumental in facilitating platforms for dialogue and

- The annual Freedom of Expression Summit attracted over 150 stakeholders, emphasizing the importance of open dialogue across various sectors of society.
- The 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was commemorated through the "Bring Your Fire Zone" at an international arts festival, promoting fundamental human rights and inspiring action on critical issues like health access, gender equality, and climate action.
- International Days, such as UN Day, were commemorated with community outreach activities, including health services and awareness campaigns, showcasing the UN's commitment to tangible impacts on the ground.

Through these diverse yet interconnected activities, the UNCT in Eswatini has exemplified a unified approach to driving sustainable development, showcasing the power of collaborative action in addressing complex



2.6 REFLECTIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Results Group significantly contributed to the successful implementation of the Joint Work Plans. A critical factor in the success of the Cooperation Framework was the joint leadership between the government and the United Nations. Equally crucial was ensuring that cochairs from national counterparts received continuous orientation on the UNSDCF processes, fostering a sense of ownership over the UNSDCF. This was demonstrated by the co-chairs' high level of commitment, as seen in their active participation in Results Groups Reviews and It was observed that focusing the Joint Work Plans on their oversight of the UNSDCF's activity implementation.

The commitment to joint planning resulted in positive outcomes, with the process being transparent and inclusive of all key stakeholders, including national counterparts, civil society, the private sector, and others. The dedication of the permanent members of the Joint National Steering Committee was instrumental in ensuring the UNSDCF's continuous implementation, highlighting their vital role in the process.

The close collaboration between the chairs of the Efforts in joint programming led to a holistic approach to implementing the Joint Work Plans, identifying synergies across all four Outcome Areas and fostering joint resource mobilization efforts. This approach enhanced the implementation of UN Joint Programmes, such as the UN Youth Programme, the Sub-Regional Initiative to Address Gender-Based Violence, UN Partnerships on the Rights of Persons with Disability, and the UN Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS.

> fewer, high-impact strategic activities could enhance synergies and collaboration among Results Groups, leading to more effective outcomes. A shift towards reporting at the result level, rather than focusing solely on activities, enabled Results Groups to more accurately capture their impact. This shift was measured across Eswatini's four key interventions: Policy Level, Advocacy Level, Capacity Building Level, and again Advocacy Level. Furthermore, reporting at this level encouraged Results Groups to identify opportunities for collaboration with partners, particularly in response to the evolving challenges faced by the country in 2024.



2.7 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

2.7.1. Financial Overview

UNSDCF FINANCING IN 2023

The United Nations Development System allocated SZL 382 million in 2023 for various national development interventions in the Kingdom of Eswatini, distributed across four priority areas of the Cooperation Framework. The allocation and its impact were as follows:

Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Growth: Received 47.2% of the budget, focusing on initiatives that aimed at bolstering economic stability and growth, with 73% of the funds utilized.

Investing in Human Resources and Social Development: Allocated 22.2% of the budget, this area saw a 100% utilization rate, reflecting efficient investment in health, education, and social welfare programmes.

Accountable Governance, Justice, and Human Rights:

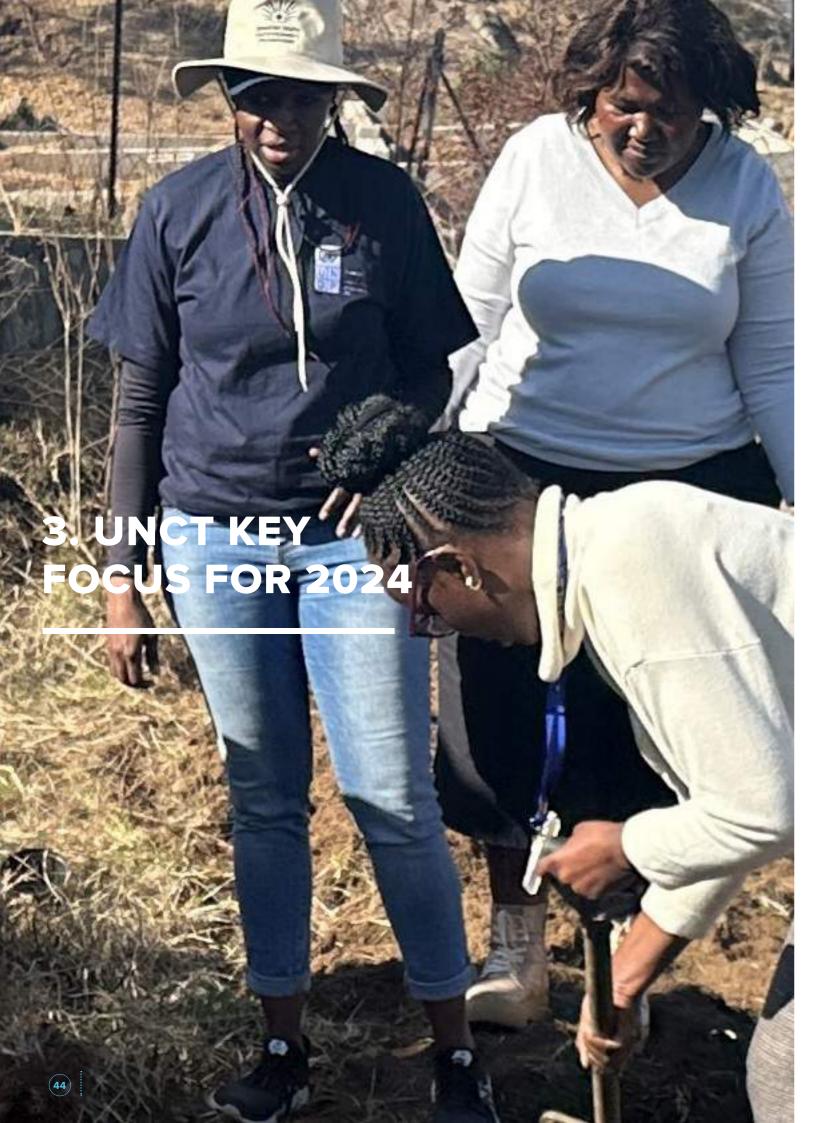
With 5.7% of the budget, this area had an 87% utilization rate, underscoring efforts to strengthen governance structures and promote human rights.

Strengthening Natural Resource Management, Climate Resilience, and Environmental Sustainability: Received 25% of the budget but had a lower utilization rate of 40%, indicating challenges in implementing climate and environmental projects.

Despite the considerable allocation, the financial utilization rate stood at 75%, leaving around SZL 108.8 million unused. This, coupled with the SZL 58.4 million underutilized in 2022, highlights the need for improved financial absorption rates.

Table 4.1 UN Investment in 2023 Towards National Development in Eswatini

Outcome Area	Allocate Budget (SZL)	Expenditure (SZL)	Percentage Utilized
Sustainable and inclusive economic growth	180M	131.4M	73%
Investing in human resource and social development	84.6M	84.6M	100%
Accountable governance, justice and human rights	21.6M	19M	88%
Strenghtening natural resource management, climate resilience and environmental sustainability	95.4M	37.8M	40%
TOTAL	381.6M	272.8M	75%



- Support to National Development Plan (NDP) Implementation: Enhance monitoring and evaluation frameworks, and implement a Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) financing strategy, leveraging public-private partnerships (PPP) and Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs).
- **Demographic Dividend and Job Creation:** Explore opportunities for job creation to harness the demographic dividend effectively, particularly in the agriculture sector.
- Legislative Development and Implementation: Focus on the rapid implementation and piloting of significant Acts and Bills, including the Citizen Economic Empowerment (CEE) Act of 2023, the Unemployment Benefit Scheme, and the Workmen • Compensation Bill.
- Food Systems Pathways: Align efforts with the outcomes of the Food Systems Summit (FSS) to . create sustainable food systems.
- Education System Efficiency: Push for poverty alleviation through efficient education systems, with a particular emphasis on foundational learning, skill development and Technical and Vocational

- Education and Training (TVET) programmes.
- Public-Private Partnerships: Adopt PPP models across sectors such as education, health, energy, and economic growth to enhance disaster resilience.
- Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Implementation and Legislative Engagement: Focus on UPR implementation, active legislative engagement, and support for Victims of Trafficking Centers.
- Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Violence Against Children (VAC): Fast-track GBV and VAC cases, improve data consolidation and accessibility, and engage communities for GBV prevention and the implementation of a Positive Parenting Strategy.
- Climate Action and COP Processes: Synthesize results from COP 28 to inform planning, with a focus on a just energy transition.
- Resilience and Disaster Management: Strengthen resilience and improve disaster management strategies.
- Development of the 2nd Generation UNSDCF 2026-2030: Begin planning for the development of the next UNSDCF, setting the stage for continued progress towards the 2030 Agenda.



3.1 UN ENTITIES OPERATING IN ESWATINI



Coordinator, who is the designated representative The UNCT works with the Government of the of the UN Secretary-General. The UNCT comprises Kingdom of Eswatini, civil society, the private sector, 17 UN agencies, funds, and programmes. Currently, international financial institutions, academia, faiththe country team has 9 resident and 8 non-resident based organizations and other development partners agencies. The UNCT is an interagency forum for joint to support the national development priorities. The UN policy formulation and decision making. It provides remains committed to enhancing its performance and

The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in the United Nations Development System agencies deliver Kingdom of Eswatini is headed by the Resident coherent, effective, and efficient development support. strategic direction and oversight to ensure that the impact in contributing to the country's development.

AGENCIES THAT SIGNED THE CF -































AGENCIES WE COLLABORATED WITH -













