

Kingdom of Eswatini Voluntary National Review

Key Messages

1.0 Introduction

Eswatini is committed to 2030 Agenda and Africa's Agenda 2063 implementation. It acknowledges the importance of achieving development goals contained in these agendas. The theme of 2030 agenda, "empowering people, ensuring inclusiveness and combating inequality" resonates with the aspirations of Agenda 2063, particularly "a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development".

An enabling environment is imperative for effective implementation. Government revised the National Development Strategy (Vision 2022) to incorporate emerging regional and global development issues.

2.0 The process

This report derived from desk reviews and stakeholder consultations with ministries, civil society, private sector, academia, donors, youth, women and persons living with disabilities. The key messages are clustered into four areas; (a) reducing poverty, inequality and vulnerability; (b) natural resources, climate change, environmental sustainability; (c) human capital development; (d) good governance for prosperity, inclusive and sustainable growth; and (e) partnerships and collaborative efforts.

3.0 The Key Messages

3.1 Reducing poverty, inequality and vulnerability:

SDGs 1, 2, 10

Poverty declined from 69% (2000) to 58.9% (2017), however, inequalities and vulnerabilities exist. The Gini co-efficient is 0.51 with 10% of wealth shared by poorest 40% of the population. Reforms implemented through legislation and grants, eg Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Act.

Successes: intervention measures through grants for Orphaned Vulnerable Children, and funds ie Poverty Reduction, Regional Development, Youth Enterprise.

Challenges: sustainability of intervention, adaptation to climate change, targeting for social grants.

Areas for support: Market facilities, harnessing STI for returns, M&E for social protection.

3.2 Natural resources, climate change, environmental sustainability: SDGs 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 15

The country is endowed with natural resources however, the risk of climate change exists in most sectors.

Successes: enabling policy environment with the National Water Policy (2018); Transboundary Water agreements with Mozambique and South Africa; Climate Change Policy (2016), Energy Policy and Master Plan (2018).

Challenges: water pollution in rivers, costly inefficient energy technologies, lack of adaptation to climate change.

Areas for support: water point mapping, monitoring mechanisms, energy efficient technologies, climate smart capacity.

3.3 Human Capital development: SDGs 3, 4

Sustainable skills development is essential for citizens' wellbeing and economic development. Government is expected to provide high quality, relevant, accessible, affordable, equitable and socially acceptable services.

Successes: declines in national HIV incidence from 238 per 1000 (2014) to 136 per 1000 (2017), and TB infections from 565 per 100000 (2014) to 389 per 100000 (2017), subsidised and free medical services eg ART, PMTCT, free primary education with school feeding programme.

Challenges: maternal and child mortality remain high, NCDs an emerging challenge, limited medical supplies, compromised quality of education, drop-outs and teenage pregnancies.

Areas for support: specialised skills development, health medical supplies and specialised equipment, NCD services, TVET training, harness ICT in education, infrastructure for education.

3.4 Good governance for inclusive, and sustainable growth and prosperity: SDGs 8, 9, 16

Eswatini aspires to achieve a high standard of living through sustainable and inclusive economic growth, science, technology, and innovation, infrastructure development, employment creation and access to finance for SME development.

Successes: unemployment rate declined from 28.1% (2014) to 23% (2016), youth unemployment from 51.65% to 47.4 %; national MSME policy (2018) ensuring increased access to finance for the youth; establishment of Royal Scientific and

Technology Park for promoting innovation and MSME incubation, special economic zones for FDI, and a peaceful nation.

Challenges: high internet costs, poor infrastructure maintenance, few industrial zones; small non-diversified manufacturing sector, dwindling FDI, perceived corruption, crime and violation of human rights.

Areas for support: investment in R&D, data collection and surveys, ICT, skills development for industrialization, capacity building in judiciary related institutions.

3.5 Partnerships and collaborative efforts towards sustainable development: SDG 13; 17

Implementation of the SDGs benefited from donors support. South-South Cooperation provided funding for the Participatory Poverty Assessment and UN providing specialised support. Donors supported funding for infrastructure development in education, health, energy, agriculture etc.

Successes: National Aid policy (2000) guides the flow and utilisation of donor support.

Challenges: inability to access concessional funding whereas challenged by high poverty level, inequalities, vulnerability and fiscal crisis. The middle income status not favourable for increased donor support.

Areas for support: resource mobilisation and capacity building.