



UNFPA Eswatini Country Office

# Newsletter

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# FOREWORD



Welcome to the second edition of UNFPA Newsletter 2024. This publication covers UNFPA collaboration with implementing partners undertaken between October and December 2024. These include, but not limited to the few achievements highlighted below.

In supporting girls vision for a bright future UNFPA partnered with the Deputy Prime Minister's Office (DPMO) to advocate for continued support for girls. UNFPA also collaborated with Ministry of Sports, Culture and Youth Affairs in taking the conversation on digital skills to improve youth employment to the rural places.

The aim of enabling young Emaswati reach their full potential was also supported by

affording 4 young people an opportunity to attend the Youth Connekt Summit 2024 whose focus was on **Jobs for Youth Through Innovative Skilling**.

With Gender-based violence continuing to be rife in the Country, UNFPA continued efforts to support government in addressing gender-based violence and other harmful practices through the 365 days action plan.

Collaboration with the Ministries of Sports, Culture and Youth Affairs, Health, as well as Education and Training in the Youth Programme included the benchmarking exercise on improving adolescent friendly health services and life skills education for out of school youth in the Republic of Zambia.

UNFPA further continued collaboration through the social protection cluster in supporting menstrual hygiene for women and girls displaced by the political unrest in Mozambique.

I would like to invite you to journey with UNFPA Eswatini by reading this publication which highlights achievements of the last quarter of 2024.

**Ms Margaret Thwala-Tembe**  
**Head of Office**



Section of young girls from KaBhejisa Primary School girls following the proceedings during the commemoration of the International Day of the Girl at Hluthi in the Shiselweni Region. **Photo Credit : DPMO|Busisekile Gamedze**

## NURTURING GIRLS' VISION PARAMOUNT FOR ESWATINI'S ENVISAGED BRIGHT FUTURE

Empower a Girl, Transform a Community is an adage that came true on 18 October 2024 at KaBhejisa Primary School in the Shiselweni Region.

On this day, the Deputy Prime Minister's Office partnered with UNFPA, the Ministry of Education and Training as well as SOS Children's Village to commemorate the International Day of the Girl 2024.

The celebration was held under the theme, **"Girls' Vision for the Future"** and attracted many other stakeholders supporting girls in Eswatini including The European Union, Kwakha Indvodza, World Vision Eswatini, Nhlango Aids Training Information and Counselling Centre (NATICC) and Cabrini Ministries, to mention just a few.

The event highlighted the need for supporting girls in Eswatini to reach their full potential and help the country realize a future where girls meaningfully participate in development. Further emphasis was made on

the removal of barriers which limited girls from attaining the future they want. These include teen pregnancy, gender biased opportunities, and gender-based violence.



UNFPA's Ms Rachel Shongwe-Masuku making remarks on behalf of Head of Office Ms Margaret thewala Tembe during the celebration at KaBhejisa. **Photo Credit : DPMO|Busisekile Gamedze**



Ministry of Education and Training Director Guidance and Counselling Ms Lindiwe Dlamini making remarks during the commemoration at KaBhejisa. **Photo Credit : DPMO|Busisekile Gamedze**



Photo Credit DPMO/Busisekile Gamedze

## Kudliwa Inhloko majaha: Eswatini utilising International Men's Day to create safe spaces for Men's Health Champions

On 19 November 2024, UNFPA in partnership with the Deputy Prime Minister's office (DPMO) and civil society organisations, joined the rest of the world in commemorating the International Men's Day.

The event was held at Sibane Sami Hotel in Ezwulwini in the Hhohho region under the theme "Men's health champions," and was attended by about 100 men from the different regions.

The celebration was aimed at advocating for improving the overall health and well-being of men and celebrating individuals and organisations committed to reducing

health challenges faced by boys and men using a cultural approach *kudliwa inhloko majaha* meaning (the eating of a cow head.)

Mr Mgcineni Ndlangamandla from the Ministry of Health – Sexual and Reproductive Health Unit (SRHU), shared

lessons on men's health focusing on SRH including infertility.

Chairperson of the Gender Consortium encouraged men to be positive role models in every aspects of life including health and prevention of GBV.



Men and boys following the proceedings during the International Men's Day Commemoration at Sibane Sami Hotel. Photo Credit DPMO/Busisekile Gamedze

# 16 Days of Activism Against GBV Campaign 2024 Taken to the Streets

On Monday 25 November 2024, the Deputy Prime Minister's Office, in collaboration with other development partners including the UN, EU, PEPFAR and civil society organisations launched the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence at the UN House in Mbabane.

The 2024 campaign ran for 365 days until 25 November. Stakeholders shared results and achievements on engaging the communities including men especially the bus rank dialogues and information dissemination at road blocks.

The commemoration was themed **“Together Let's End Gender-Based Violence”** and included community outreach activities including roadblock and bus rank dialogues with men. These were aimed at raising awareness on gender-based violence, disseminating information to the public and getting community involvement in the fight against the increasing GBV cases in Eswatini.

During the launch, speakers including the Acting Deputy Prime Minister Honorable Jane Mkhonta-Simelane, UN Resident Coordinator Mr George Wachira and GenderConsortium Chairperson Mr Ncamiso Sonic Dlamini who all reaffirmed their commitment to sustained

action beyond the 16 days of the campaign. Furthermore, violence against children was condemned during the launch and emphasis was made on improving the family structures as important steps towards.

Stakeholders shared achievements and challenges faced as they engaged

communities and individuals in the fight against GBV creating safe environment for children to thrive and reach their full potential.

The whole-of-government and society approach to end GBV is critical to ending GBV as it calls for all stakeholder including communities, to actively participate in activities for eliminating the scourge of gender-based violence and other harmful practices .



UN Resident Coordinator Mr George Wachira (L) and Acting Deputy Prime Minister Honorable Jane Mkhonta Simelane making remarks during the 16 Days launch at the UN House. Photo Credit UNRCO/Thoba Dlamini



Members of the public participating in the 16 Days walk in Mbabane. Photo Credit DPMO/Busisekile Gamedze

# Eswatini Commemorates International Day of Persons with Disabilities and Launches Phase 2 of UNPRPD Project and Disability Services Directory

On Monday 2 December 2024, Eswatini celebrated the International Day for Persons with Disabilities under the localised theme “**Amplifying the Leadership of Persons with Disabilities in Eswatini for an Inclusive and Sustainable Future**” at Mavuso Exhibition Centre in Manzini.

The commemoration was organised by the Deputy Prime Minister’s Office in collaboration with other government ministries, the UN, Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), Civil Society Organisations and Private Sector.

As part of raising awareness on disabilities, the commemoration commenced with a 2.5 Kilometres march from Manzini Central High School to the exhibition centre.

The day brought together persons representing all disability groups including visually impaired, physical disabilities, persons with albinism, and persons with auditory impairment as well as parents of children with disabilities.



*The Honorable Deputy Prime Minister Senator Thulisile Dladla with UN Resident Coordinator Mr George Wachira and heads of UNPRPD participating agencies, UNFPA Ms Margaret Thwala-Tembe and UNICEF Ms Amina Mohammed doing a symbolic launch of the UNPRPD project Phase 2 and the Disability Services Directory . Photo Credit UNFPA Eswatini/Senanelo Mdaka*



*Representatives of the different Organisations for Persons with Disabilities and key stakeholders also joined the DPM and UN Agencies in the symbolic launch of the UNPRPD Project Phase 2 and the Disability Services Directory during the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, Photo Credit UNFPA Eswatini/Zwelakhe Nsibande*



The celebration was also an opportunity to shine the spotlight on challenges faced by the diverse groups with disabilities and discuss possible solutions to these challenges. In Eswatini, PWDs have limited access to employment opportunities with their unemployment rate at 27%. Additionally, PWDs have limited access to education, health services and other infrastructural impediments.

The day was also used as a launch of the phase 2 of the United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) project as well as the Disability Services Directory.

The UNPRPD project will be implemented by UNESCO, UNFPA and UNICEF with overall leadership of UN Resident Coordinator's Office and the Deputy Prime Minister's Office with technical coordination by UNFPA.

This phase will focus on improving health and education data systems to incorporate disability indicators; strengthen collaboration between the government, UN agencies, and OPDs and early diagnosis of children with disabilities.

## UNFPA Walks the Talk In Mainstreaming Disability

In a bid to mainstream disability inclusion, UNFPA Eswatini through the UNV programme has hired Mr Khanyakwezwe Tfwala as UNV Disability and Inclusion Officer.

Tfwala's recruitment is in line with the Office efforts of delivering programmes that bring positive change to all Emaswati in especially underserved population groups such as persons with disabilities.

Currently, UNFPA is part of the UN agencies participating in the implementing the MPTF-funded UNPRPD project on the rights of persons with disabilities in Eswatini which is in its second phase. UNFPA is coordinating the project on behalf of the UNCT



*Mr Khanyakwezwe Tfwala, the UNFPA Eswatini Disability and Inclusion Officer* **Photo Credit UNFPA Eswatini/Zwelakhe Nsibande**



*Learners from Mzimpofo rendering a song during the commemoration* **Photo Credit UNRCO/Thoba Dlamini**



## UNFPA, UNDP Keep Eswatini's Desire for Youth Connekt Chapter Alive

In a bid to ensure youth participation in regional and international forums, UNFPA supported 4 young people to participate at the Youth Connekt Africa Summit 2024 which took place in Kigali Rwanda on 8 – 12 December 2024.

The summit was held under the theme: **Jobs for youth through Innovative Skilling**, aimed at exploring opportunities for continued investments in preparing young people for success in the marketplace and brought together young people, governments and development partners to dialogue on pathways for forward-thinking on solutions to redefine future-fit skills for addressing current challenges faced by young people and opportunities for scaling up.

This also provided Eswatini delegation a chance to interact with other young people on

steps followed by other countries on establishing the Youth Connekt chapter.

This advocacy effort was also supported by UNDP who funded the participation of the Honourable Minister for Sports, Culture and Youth Affairs, CEOs for Eswatini National Youth Council (ENYC) and Youth Enterprise Revolving Fund (YERF) and an additional 4 young people.



The interaction was so incredible and I absorbed the interventions that they are doing and will align them to the needs of Eswatini. My highlight was getting an invitation to Royal FM radio station in Rwanda to discuss issues of GBV”, **Lisa Badenhorst**



“A Positive and Growth Mindset & lifeskills remain key and crucial in unlocking youth potential in Technology, Agriculture, Entrepreneurship as evident in the discussions.” - **Sibongakonke Dlamini-Mamba**.



“We are not getting younger, we are the future so let us impact one another for Africa's purposes.”- **Lwazi Thulebona Kunene**.



“I was empowered and believe that the next summit more young Emaswati will get the exposure to move their lives forward.” - **Bongiswa Bong'menzi Gwebu**.



Eswatini delegation at the UN House in Lusaka, Zambia comprising (L-R) Mr Mfanfikile Mabuza-Ministry of Sports Culture and Youth Affairs, Mr Dumsani Simelane - Eswatini National Youth Council, Ms Margaret Thwala-Tembe-UNFPA, Ms Zandile Masangane - Ministry of Health, Mr Thembinkosi Hlatshwayo - Eswatini National Youth Council, Ms Lindiwe Ngci Dube - Ministry of Education and Training, and Mr Mfundo Khanyile - Khulisa Umntwana **Photo Credit UNFPA Zambia/Paul Daka**

## Eswatini Aims at Improving Provision of Adolescent and Youth Friendly Health Services and Life Skills Education for Out-Of-School Youth

On the 9 - 13 December 2024, Eswatini conducted a south south learning exchange visit to the Republic of Zambia on the integration of adolescent youth friendly health services and life skills education for in and out-of-school youth programme.

The visit aimed at getting experiences on how Zambia is incorporating SRHR services and livelihood skills on the Life Skills Education as well as techniques for enhancing adolescent and youth friendly health services.

The Eswatini delegation comprised representatives from the tripartite ministries, (Ministry of Sports Culture and Youth

Affairs (MoSCYA), Ministry of Health (Moh) and Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) and the Eswatini National Youth Council (ENYC). Key lessons learnt included the

integration of livelihoods in LSE and government support to reduce youth unemployment and other economic development activities.



The delegation visited a youth skills centre to view steel fabrication livelihood projects under the LSE programme. **Photo Credit UNFPA Zambia/Paul Daka**



The delegation also visited a youth skills centre to view IT livelihood projects under the LSE programme. **Photo Credit UNFPA Zambia/Paul Daka**

# 40 GRADUATE FROM UNFPA/JA ESWATINI INTEGRATION OF SRH IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP PROGRAMME

Tears of joy and ululations were the order of the day on 16 December 2024, when Junior Achievement Eswatini hosted a graduation ceremony at Eswatini Electricity Company (EEC) Auditorium in Manzini.

A total of 40 young people from Mtfongwaneni Inkhundla and Mawelawela Correctional Services Facility which were part of the UNFPA-supported integration of sexual reproductive health in entrepreneurship graduated on the day.

The youth participated in a 6 months training and mentorship to equip them with skills for running business enterprises and generating ideas for supporting their sexual reproductive health through businesses' corporate social responsibility.

Additionally, the youth also went through a pitching process where they presented their business ideas before judges and winners were awarded a E10,000 seed capital.

The winners pitched projects that demonstrated the integration of SRH in their entrepreneurship projects.

The winners from Mawelawela Correctional Facility and Mtfongwaneni inkhundla are:

**Mawelawela**

- Phumzile Seyama
- Nompumelelo Dlamini
- Nokulunga Dladla
- Gcinile Hlatswako

**Mtfongwaneni**

- Khethwayinkosi Hlophe
- Zamazama Cooperative

Speakers during the graduation included UNFPA Head of Office Ms Margaret Thwala-Tembe, JA Eswatini Director Ms Phetsile Masilela, Mtfongwaneni Member of Parliament Honorable Nkosinathi 'Mdockies" Hlophe, and Assistant Commissioner Ms Mamoshoeshe Ntsane who all encouraged the young people to begin their entrepreneurship journey with courage.



*His Majesty's Correctional Services Assistant Commissioner Ms Mamoshoeshe Ntsane, JA Director Ms Phetsile Masilela, UNFPA Head of Office Ms Margaret Thwala-Tembe, Mtfongwaneni MP Honorable Nathi Hlophe and Mtfongwaneni Inner Council with members of Zamazama Cooperative pose for a group photo after receiving the Winners Cheque during the Graduation ceremony.*



*Above: Mtfongwaneni MP Honorable Nathi Hlophe, JA Eswatini Director Ms Phetsile Masilela, UNFPA Head of Office Ms Margaret Thwala-Tembe and His Majesty's Correctional Services Assistant Commissioner Ms Mamoshoeshe Ntsane, congratulate one of the winners during the graduation ceremony. Photo Credit: JA Eswatini*



*LEFT: Mtfongwaneni MP Honorable Nathi Hlophe, His Majesty's Correctional Services Assistant Commissioner Ms Mamoshoeshe Ntsane, JA Eswatini Director Ms Phetsile Masilela, UNFPA Head of Office Ms Margaret Thwala-Tembe and Mtfongwaneni Inner council congratulate the winners during the graduation ceremony. Photo Credit: JA Eswatini*

## UNFPA supports women and girl’s menstrual hygiene at the Malindza Refugee Reception Centre

In a bid to ensure continuity of Menstrual hygiene for women and adolescent girls displaced during the Mozambique unrest, UNFPA delivered over 430 dignity packs at the Malindza Refugee Reception Centre (MRRC) in the Lubombo Region.

The handover was conducted at the centre on 31 December 2024. This was during a field visit by the country office to identify sexual and reproductive health (SRH) needs for the asylum seekers as these had been missed during the initial NDMA and UN rapid assessment.

In a briefing session with the Malindza Refugee Reception Centre team, the head of office stated that the support was necessitated by UNFPA’s understanding that menstruation does not stop for disasters and wars, hence the need to urgently deliver the menstrual hygiene commodities. UNFPA further advised on the need for availability of transportation to cater for pregnant women who may need to deliver.

At the Centre, the UNFPA Team visited the family planning unit for the facility where they observed a shortage of human resources as there were a lot of women queueing for services. Similarly to the outpatient unit, there was a shortage of essential medicines.

Under the ART department, the situation seemed stable as the nurse shared that the unit had adequate stock.

The centre Manager, Ms Bongekile Mamba expressed appreciation for the support and extended invitation to other partners to contribute their support as the centre was overwhelmed.

As at 31 December, the centre which has a capacity of housing 250 asylum seekers, had received over 900 individuals. She reported that urgent needs included medical supplies, food, water supply and sanitation facilities which could help the centre to prevent potential outbreaks of water borne diseases.



Malindza Refugee Reception Centre Manager Bongekile Mamba receiving a box of sanitary towels from UNFPA Head of Office Ms Margaret Thwala-Tembe Photo Credit UNFPA Eswatini/Zwelakhe Nsibande



Minister of Health Hon Mduzuzi Matsebula and representatives of Regional Health Management team at the centre on the same day to monitor the health related issues for the asylum seekers. Photo Credit UNFPA Eswatini/Zwelakhe Nsibande



