



Eswatini Country Office

**Accelerating
efforts towards
ZERO preventable
maternal deaths**



**Annual
Report
2021**



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Message from the Head of Office

2021, a year to celebrate



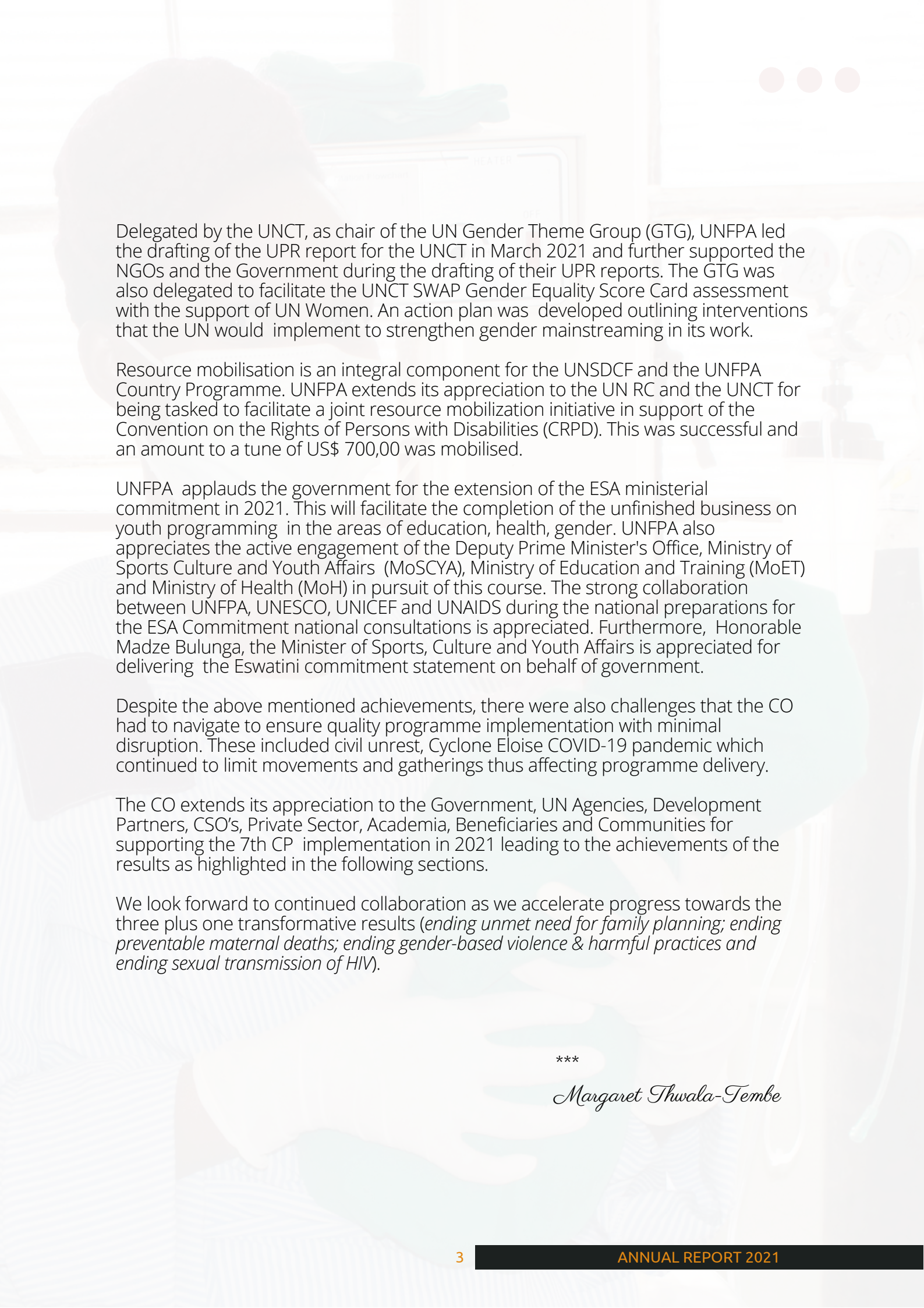
This report presents our 2021 results and achievements amidst the triple challenges encountered.

Though 2021 was challenged by the triple crises of COVID-19, civil unrest and cyclone Eloise, the Eswatini Country Office recorded a number of significant achievements. These included the approval of the 7th Government of Eswatini and UNFPA Country Programme (2021-2025) during the first Executive Board Session held in February 2021. The 7th Country Programme (CP) is derived and aligned to the Eswatini United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) and the vision is the reduction of institutional maternal deaths by 50% by the year 2025. In the UNCT, UNFPA co-leads the Results Group 2 and a sub-group on violence in Results Group 3 for the UNSDCF.

In line with the UNFPA COVID-19 Pandemic Global Response Plan published in April 2020, Eswatini CO provided technical support to the government on supply chain management and tracked stock of contraceptives and life saving maternal health commodities and supplies.

Upon realising that there were low stock levels and stock-outs for some RH commodities, the CO mobilised additional financial resources to a tune of US\$ 160,000 through the Regional Office to replenish the commodities that were in short supply.

Furthermore, the CO undertook a rapid assessment on the impact of the civil unrest and cyclone Eloise on the uptake of SRHR and GBV services. The evidence generated was used to advocate for alternate means to promote access to integrated SRH/HIV and GBV services by women and girls and communities.



Delegated by the UNCT, as chair of the UN Gender Theme Group (GTG), UNFPA led the drafting of the UPR report for the UNCT in March 2021 and further supported the NGOs and the Government during the drafting of their UPR reports. The GTG was also delegated to facilitate the UNCT SWAP Gender Equality Score Card assessment with the support of UN Women. An action plan was developed outlining interventions that the UN would implement to strengthen gender mainstreaming in its work.

Resource mobilisation is an integral component for the UNSDCF and the UNFPA Country Programme. UNFPA extends its appreciation to the UN RC and the UNCT for being tasked to facilitate a joint resource mobilization initiative in support of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). This was successful and an amount to a tune of US\$ 700,00 was mobilised.

UNFPA applauds the government for the extension of the ESA ministerial commitment in 2021. This will facilitate the completion of the unfinished business on youth programming in the areas of education, health, gender. UNFPA also appreciates the active engagement of the Deputy Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Sports Culture and Youth Affairs (MoSCYA), Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) and Ministry of Health (MoH) in pursuit of this course. The strong collaboration between UNFPA, UNESCO, UNICEF and UNAIDS during the national preparations for the ESA Commitment national consultations is appreciated. Furthermore, Honorable Madze Bulunga, the Minister of Sports, Culture and Youth Affairs is appreciated for delivering the Eswatini commitment statement on behalf of government.

Despite the above mentioned achievements, there were also challenges that the CO had to navigate to ensure quality programme implementation with minimal disruption. These included civil unrest, Cyclone Eloise COVID-19 pandemic which continued to limit movements and gatherings thus affecting programme delivery.

The CO extends its appreciation to the Government, UN Agencies, Development Partners, CSO's, Private Sector, Academia, Beneficiaries and Communities for supporting the 7th CP implementation in 2021 leading to the achievements of the results as highlighted in the following sections.

We look forward to continued collaboration as we accelerate progress towards the three plus one transformative results (*ending unmet need for family planning; ending preventable maternal deaths; ending gender-based violence & harmful practices and ending sexual transmission of HIV*).

Margaret Thwala-Tembe

Country Context

Eswatini is a landlocked country in Southern Africa bordering South Africa and Mozambique, with a population of about 1.1 million. UNFPA's programme is on integrated SRHR, HIV prevention, Gender equality and women's empowerment including GBV prevention and response which is informed by population data.

Evidence generation and utilization enhances programming and policy advocacy for attainment of the UNFPA's transformative results. The transformative results are the overarching contribution that UNFPA is advancing towards the attainment of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs.

2021 was the first year of the 7th UNFPA and GoE-Country Programme (CP) implementation. The CP's vision is to reduce preventable institutional maternal mortality by at least 50 percent by 2025 as a way of accelerating the global UNFPA transformative results.

The country's health systems were overstretched in 2021 as the country grappled with the triple crisis of COVID-19, the civil unrest and cyclone Eloise. Furthermore, the fiscal space was further affected due to the country's reliance of SACU receipts that had been drastically reduced as a result of COVID-19 travel restrictions



COUNTRY CONTEXT

Key Demographic Profile



Population

1,093,238



Population in rural areas

79%



Population below 35 yrs

72.9%



Population aged 15-24

13%



Total Fertility Rate

3.3 children per woman

Poverty Level



Income Inequality
GINI Coefficient

0.52



Poverty level

58%



Youth Unemployment

58%

Key issues in CCA for UNFPA mandate



Adolescent fertility rate - 87 birth per 1000 adolescents aged 15 - 19



Unmet need for FP at 15.1% - higher among adolescents at 27% - rural young women at 17.1% among 15-24



MMR is 452 / 100 000 despite high skilled birth attendant & hospital deliveries at 88%



Neonatal Mortality Rate is at 20 per 1000 live births



Impact of COVID-19 on SRH indicators.



GBV prevalence at 33% - COVID-19 lockdown resulted in 15% increase.

Progress on the 3+1 Transformative Results

**Towards
Ending Unmet
Need for Family
Planning**



**Towards
Ending Preventable
Maternal Deaths**



**Towards
Ending Gender-
based Violence &
Harmful Practices**



**Towards
Ending Sexual
Transmission
Of HIV**





Towards Ending Unmet need for Family Planning



*Sister Phindile Nkambule
from Family Life Association
of Eswatini (FLAS) displays an
IUD during an FP training.*
Photo: @UNFPA Eswatini

In 2021, UNFPA Eswatini continued to provide Technical Assistance to the Government of The Kingdom of Eswatini on Supply Chain Management to track stock levels of family planning commodities by routinely using the LMIS data. The CO also supported the procurement of family planning commodities to a tune of US\$ **150,000.00**

Key Results



113,628

Couple Years of Protection.



18,165

Unintended pregnancies averted



Enhanced capacity to deliver quality FP services through training 63 HCWs from different health facilities.



79,708

60,000 Depo-Provera; 5,500 Noristerat; 12,000 Norigynon; 1,008 Implanon NXT & 1,200 Jadelle procured to improve RH commodity security



Improved efficiencies in procurement to prevent stockouts by successfully advocating for the third party procurement.



Meeting Eswatini's health needs through improving capacity of healthcare workers to deliver quality family planning services

Improving health worker's skills in delivering family planning (FP) services is an important step towards ending unmet need for FP as it enhances the quality of services offered to the clients.

In 2021 UNFPA improved capacity for the delivery of family planning services through provision of FP training equipment to the Ministry of Health and civil society organisations as a commitment towards ending unmet need for FP by 2030. These included ZOE Gynecologic, Reproductive Implant Training Arms and Educator Female Condom Models valued at \$60,000,

"UNFPA prioritizes the SRH needs of women and girls, hence the donation of equipment for use in providing quality FP services and training by the respective health facilities," stated Head of Office Ms Margaret Thwala-Tembe.

Deputy Director Public Health, Ms Rejoice Nkambule, appreciated UNFPA's support stating that, "this adds on the long list of support received from our FP advocacy partner; UNFPA, which includes technical assistance for supportive supervision, healthcare worker training and SRHR information dissemination to communities."

ASRH Coordinator in the Ministry of Health, Ms Zandile Masangane, underscored the importance of refresher training as core in continuously upgrading healthcare workers' competences in FP service provision.

"When it comes to rendering family planning services to women, we have to equip the healthcare workers so that they provide the services according to acceptable standards," Masangane stated.

"As with most crises like the current COVID-19 pandemic, access to life-saving SRH services get severely disrupted."

As such, UNFPA and Government of Eswatini are working on finalising the Third Party Procurement Agreement to enhance RH commodity security.



Handover of FP training equipment to the Ministry of Health and FLAS. **Photo: UNFPA Eswatini**





Towards Ending Preventable Maternal Deaths



Midwife Zodwa Mhlanga preparing to conduct a delivery in a maternity ward.
Photo: @Good Shepherd Hospital

In an effort to contribute to the prevention of maternal deaths, the country office continued to support key interventions in maternal health despite the triple crisis.

Key Results



35

Maternal deaths averted



Ensured availability of life-saving MNH medicines and supplies by conducting quantification and forecasting of commodities.



3,996

Unsafe abortions averted



20,000

6,000 Oxytocin, 6,000 Magnesium Sulphate & 8,000 Misoprostol procured



Enhanced evidence-based interventions towards reduction of maternal mortality by conducting quarterly maternal death review audits.



A Life-saving role of a Midwife in Eswatini amidst COVID-19

COVID-19 entered its second year in 2021 and its impact increased to alarming levels as the deadly waves were witnessed at the beginning of the year.

In keeping her pledge to save lives no matter the situation, Zandile Maseko, a nursing sister in Manjengeni clinic in the northern Hhohho region, dropped everything to attend to a distressed and heavily pregnant woman. The woman had just walked into the clinic.

As the country's health facilities were not fully equipped on COVID-19 response, a highly pregnant woman arrived at Manjengeni clinic sweating, coughing and running out of breath.

These signs were a strong indication that she may have contracted COVID-19, thus creating a panic wave among the health workers in the facility.

Therefore, it came as no surprise when all the junior nurses shied away from assisting her.

Seeing an expectant woman in such a distress, required sister Zandile to act swiftly to save her life and that of the baby in utero.

She managed to stabilize the woman and assisted her to deliver her bouncing baby girl. The possibility of having contracted COVID-19 came as an after thought as her focus was primarily to save lives and leadership stewardship was put to a test in that health facility.

In Eswatini, UNFPA in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and other partners, conducted trainings to equip frontline health care workers on COVID-19 response at the start of the pandemic.

Furthermore, UNFPA in cooperation with other development partners and stakeholders supported integration of COVID-19 in ANC & PNC guidelines to enhance quality MNH services provision.



Thabang Masangane from MoH training frontline healthcare workers on COVID-19 response.

Photo: UNFPA Eswatini



Towards Ending Gender-based Violence & Harmful Practices



*Mpendulo Masuku from the Deputy Prime Minister's Office making remarks during the Men's Symposium. **Photo: @UNFPA Eswatini***

In 2021, UNFPA continued to integrate gender-based violence issues in humanitarian and COVID-19 prevention strategies and recovery plans.

Key Results



200

traditional leaders trained on SODV, social norms change & addressing GBV.



Improved capacity and functionality of the national GBV surveillance & reporting system through review of data collection tools and updating paper-based GBV reports.



125

GBV referral network members trained on GBV/SRH/HIV integration and were further oriented on National GBV Multisectoral Guidelines.



Enhanced integration of GBV in humanitarian response through convening quarterly social protection cluster meetings for enhanced humanitarian response.



Attainment of Zero GBV is Possible With Community Leadership Involvement

A fish rots from the head, goes an old English proverb, which can be loosely translated to say, bad leaders harm an organisation. In Eswatini, UNFPA and partners put this proverb into action by prioritising educating community leaders to turn them into influencers of positive behaviour regarding GBV prevention in communities. A total of 200 community leaders participated in dialogues and trainings including orientation on the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence (SODV) Act 2018.

"The members of our inner council are now well equipped on preventing and responding to gender-based violence and as a result our community is becoming safer," stated Bhekithemba Dlamini explaining how sensitizing other community leaders would expand GBV response in Kwaluseni community.

Dlamini is a member of the inner council (bandlancane) at Logoba Royal Kraal near Kwaluseni Inkhundla. Kwaluseni inkhundla is a peri-urban community located in Matsapha industrial town.

His community accommodates diverse population groups (primarily young people), in particular, migrants from the rural areas of Eswatini in search of employment opportunities.

"In a dynamic community such as Matsapha, a strongly involved traditional structure is required to address all social ills such as violence against women and girls," added Dlamini

Dlamini further explained that participation in



Kwaluseni inner council member Bhekithemba Dlamini during the sensitisation meetings. **Photo: Kwakha Indvodza**

GBV sensitization meetings supported by UNFPA through the Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse (SWAGAA), helped the inner council better understand GBV dynamics.

"In the sessions, we shared experiences with other leaders from different communities and adopted some of the good practices for combating GBV in our communities," Dlamini said.

Dlamini also shared that constant sharing of GBV messages during community events is a good practice used in Logoba to ensure that everyone plays their part.

"To fast-track progress towards ending violence, every member of society must get involved. We encourage men to discuss with their boys while women talk with their girls. In this way, every family member gets the message."

The neighbouring community of Mhlane through their community leader Pastor Mbingo also commended implementation of GBV prevention initiatives at grassroots level. Mbingo, who doubles as a church leader further expressed that the church is a crucial institution in the fight against GBV.



Above: Men in a GBV dialogue in Eswatini
Photo: Khulisa Umntfwana



Towards Ending Sexual Transmission of HIV



*A member of the Church Forum on HIV and AIDS in Eswatini facilitating a workshop,
Photo: Church Forum*

In an effort to contribute to zero sexual transmission of HIV, the CO continued to support interventions implemented by the Church Forum on HIV and AIDS in Eswatini.

Key Results



11,660,000

Male condoms distributed

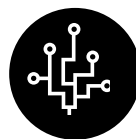


Enhanced integration of SRHR/HIV/GBV through capacitation of 70 Youth leaders.



130,850

Female condoms distributed



Improved coordination of condom and FP programmes through regular technical working group and quarterly stakeholder's meetings.

Strategic Focus Areas

**Integrated Sexual
and Reproductive
Health & Rights**



**Adolescents &
Youth**



**Gender Equality &
Women's Empowerment**



**Population
Dynamics**



Integrated Sexual and Reproductive Health & Rights



In 2021, the Country Office continued supporting partners in the implementation of integrated SRHR programmes. The following results were achieved

Key Results



Created enabling policy environment for MNH programming and service provision through TA provision on the development of Clinical guidelines for COVID-19 management during pregnancy, intra partum and postpartum as well as the RMNCAH&N strategy dissemination.



Improved quality of MNH services provision through capacity building of more than 300 frontline HCWs on MHN provision during COVID-19 pandemic and orientation to MNH guidelines.



Strengthened health systems to deliver on Adolescents Youth Friendly Health Services (AYFHS) through the development of ASRH National Guidelines and ASRH module and training of 637 HCWs.



Strengthened RH commodity security through active resource mobilisation and procurement of RH commodities informed by the rapid assessment conducted during COVID-19 and civil unrest.



Positioned the critical role of midwives in the reduction of maternal deaths in partners and government agenda during the commemoration of the International Day of the Midwife and launch of the State of Midwifery Report (SoMWy) 2021.



Nomqhele Msibi, a student midwife, making remarks at the International Day of the Midwife commemoration. Photo: UNFPA Eswatini



Adolescents and Youth



The Eswatini Country Office continued to work with partners including the Ministry of Sports Culture and Youth Affairs, Eswatini National Youth Council, and Junior Achievement Eswatini to implement activities aimed at enabling youth to reach their full potential. The following results were achieved:

Key Results



Successfully conducted advocacy for youth empowerment through the International Youth Day commemoration, where representatives from the traditional leadership committed to advancing and promoting youth participation in agriculture, including allocation of arable land for agriculture by young people.



Improved coordination of youth programmes across ministries and sectors through the establishment of the National Youth Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC)



UNFPA's Programme Specialist Dr Bongani Dlamini making remarks during an orientation of Headteachers on LSE. **Photo: UNFPA Eswatini**



Enhanced integration of SRHR/HIV/GBV interventions in the religious sector response through the training of the Church Forum on HIV and AIDS.



Improved youth empowerment and integration of SRHR issues in entrepreneurship through training 50 youth in business with Junior Achievement Eswatini.



Improved uptake for LSE through orientation of senior school management (principals and deputy principals) from the 4 regions.



FLAS peer educators distributing condoms during the COVID-19 lockdown. **Photo: UNFPA Eswatini**



Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment



In 2021, the Country Office continued to work with partners including the Deputy Prime Minister's Office (DPMO), Kwakha Indvodza and the Church Forum on HIV and AIDS in implementing initiatives for promoting GBV prevention and response in Eswatini.

Key Results



Improved accountability mechanisms and implementation of legislations for promotion of GEWE through: UNCT UPR report development and UNCT SWAP Gender Scorecard assessments; and sensitization of Women's Parliamentary Caucus on marriage bill, matrimonial bill, property rights bill and civil registration bill.



Enhanced autism programming in the country by conducting an Autism baseline survey in the Lubombo region after identifying people with ASD as one of the most left behind and other vulnerable groups with regards to access to SRHR and being victims of GBV.



Strengthened GEWE & GBV response advocacy through awareness raising in commemoration of International Days (International Women's Day, International Widows Day, Day of the Girl Child, International Men's Day and 16 days of Activism.)



Enhanced community engagement on GBV prevention and response through translation, simplification and dissemination of 10 752 copies of the Siswati version of the SODV Act.



Improved SGBV integration in health facilities through the training of 124 HCWs on the Health Sector GBV Guidelines for Clinical Management and on reporting tools across health centres, hospitals and clinics in all four regions.



SOS High School pupils and their teacher during the International Day of the Girl Child. **Photo: UNFPA Eswatini**



Population Dynamics



In 2021, the Country Office continued support to the Government of Eswatini in its efforts towards mainstreaming demographic intelligence both at national and subnational levels to improve the responsiveness, targeting and impact of development policies, programmes and advocacy. Some of the achieved results include:

Key Results



Increased data availability for national programming through strengthening the capacity of the Central Statistical Office to report on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics.



Improved availability of socio-demographic and SRHR data for national planning through the production of Census Statistical Reports, Inkhundla (Constituency) Population by Age and Sex, Policy brief on keeping pregnant learners at school and the Budget Analysis on SRHR Paper.



Improved visibility of the ICPD agenda through continued undertaking of advocacy activities through commemoration of international days (World Population Day, the launch of the State of the World Population report and Anniversary of the Nairobi Summit on ICPD25 and tracking of the Nairobi Summit Voluntary ICPD Commitments)



Director Central Statistical Office Mr Amos Zwane, (l) with representatives of key stakeholders during the launch of the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Report 2020. **Photo: Ministry of Home Affairs**



A pupil from Swazi National High School making submissions during the debate on reinstating pregnant learners in school at a commemoration of the Second Anniversary of the Nairobi Summit on ICPD. **Photo: UNFPA Eswatini**

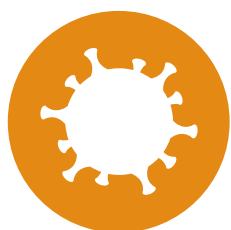


Humanitarian Action



UNFPA Eswatini continued collaborating with the government in supporting initiatives for promoting uninterrupted access to essential services, especially among adolescent girls, pregnant & lactating mothers as well as vulnerable groups in 2021, a year characterized by triple crises. The following results were achieved:

Key Results



COVID-19 Response

Strengthened health systems for SRHR services continuity through the training of 246 health care workers on COVID-19 response.

Enhanced prevention, testing and management of COVID-19 through PPE provision for frontline health care workers.

Enhanced prevention of maternal deaths through development of the COVID-19 and pregnancy guidelines and orientation of over 500 HCWs from all regions of the country.



Cyclone Eloise

As part of contributing towards the building forward better initiative, the UNFPA country office identified survivors of the tropical cyclone Eloise storm and distributed 53 dignity kits to 34 families in Big Bend in the Lubombo Region.



Hailstorm

As part of response to heavy hailstorms, UNFPA donated dignity kits for affected communities in of the storm at Mkhitsini area in the Shiselweni Region.



Above: Samukelisiwe Mamba receives a dignity package from UNFPA's Humanitarian Specialist Ms Thamary Silindza for promoting good hygiene following the Cyclone Eloise at Game 5 Community near Big Bend in the Lubombo Region. **Photo: UNFPA Eswatini**

Below: Flooding in Mndobandoba, Big Bend during cyclone Eloise Courtesy Pic.



A car damaged by the tropical hailstones in November 2021. Courtesy Pic



Flooding in Mbabane during Cyclone Eloise. Courtesy Pic



Thamary Silindza packing dignity packs donated for displaced girls in Mkhitsini community in the Shiselweni region. **Photo: UNFPA Eswatini**



Youth SRHR champion Mphilwenhle Nhlabatsi received the dignity packs on behalf of the young girls from Mkhitsini. **Photo: UNFPA Eswatini**

Program Enablers

**Policy
Environment**



**Partnerships and
Joint Programmes**





Policy Environment



Through continued advocacy with government, parliament, development partners and UN agencies, year one of the 7th country programme implementation was supported. The following results were achieved.

Key Results



Co-financing of the National Population Policy (NPP) review to a tune of \$35 000.



Enhanced policy environment for youth programming through the youth Bill consultations.



Advocacy for SRHR financing improved through engagement with SADC Parliamentary Forum on SRHR (Eswatini Chapter).



Promoted importance of population issues in development through the NPP consultations.



Enhanced advocacy for reproductive health commodity security through engagement with government, development partners and parliament.



A woman making a submission during the National Population Policy Review consultations. **Photo: UNFPA Eswatini**



A young person making a submission during the Youth Bill consultations. **Photo: UNFPA Eswatini**



Partnerships & Joint Programmes



The CO continued engagement in the reforms of the United Nations Development System in Eswatini. The following were achieved.

Key Results



Leadership in UNSDCF Results Groups

UNFPA actively engaged and co-chaired Results group 2 and a sub-group on violence in Results group 3 of the UNSDCF including the UN Gender Theme Group.



UNPRPD Project

Increased engagement in programming for persons with disabilities, UNFPA collaborated with other UN agencies to develop a joint programme on the promotion and operationalization of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Eswatini securing funding to the tune of US\$700,000 from the Secretary-General's Multi-Partner Trust Fund.



Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

In ensuring zero tolerance to PSEA, the CO continued to participate and contributed in United Nations network on PSEA and further vetted recruits, oriented IPs and reviewed IP agreement with a clause on PSEA.



Private Sector involvement

UNFPA successfully established partnerships with Business Eswatini to integrate SRHR and Menstrual Hygiene Management interventions for persons with disabilities and young women in textile sector.

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