

ESWATINI ZERO HUNGER STRATEGIC REVIEW

December 2018



Foreword

The Kingdom of Eswatini is repositioning itself to towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This follows the endorsement and localization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in June 2016. Ending Hunger (SDG 2) is one of the prioritized goals that the country has considered in the medium term. This is enshrined in all national development frameworks, such as the National Development Strategy (NDS), the Strategy for Sustainable Development & Inclusive Growth (SSDIG), the National Development Plan 2019/2023, the Kingdom of Eswatini Strategic Roadmap 2019/2022 and other sectoral policies and programmes including the National Food Security Policy and Eswatini National Agricultural Investment Plan (ENAIP). Experience has shown that, with the right mix of policies, financial and human resources ending hunger and under-nutrition is possible.

The Eswatini Zero Hunger Strategic Review (EZHSR) was conducted as a first step towards achieving SDG 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture. The link between hunger and poverty in the local context was evident. The Review analysed the current food and nutrition security situation in the country and identified opportunities to strengthen programmes and strategies towards the attainment of zero hunger.

The review confirms that the country is food insecure and cannot meet its national dietary requirements for grain or protein sources. Furthermore, tackling issues of hunger hinges on poverty, thus there are positive spill over effects on simultaneously achieving SDG 1 and 2. This report provides a renewed focus on how to respond to the food and nutrition insecurity challenge. It is envisaged that the response plan for ending hunger, once developed, will provide a mechanism that brings together the different sectors led by the Government working with civil society, the private sector, the development partners including the United Nations and communities for collective impact in the area of food and nutrition security, sustainable food systems and poverty reduction.

Sincere gratitude is extended to the Regional Administrators, Regional Secretaries and the Community Chiefs and Headman for their support during this exercise. Appreciation is also accorded to the United Nations Agencies (WFP, FAO and UNDP) for the technical and financial support. Together we will eliminate hunger and poverty in Eswatini by 2030.

Dr. E.T. Gina

Acknowledgements

The Ministry of Economic Planning and Development wishes to acknowledge the technical experts whose efforts went towards the development of this review process. Much appreciation goes to the Ministry of Agriculture for its leadership guidance and foresight. The Ministry of Tinkhundla Development and Administration for facilitating the consultation process from the regional to community levels. The Constituency Development Chairpersons (Tindvuna teTinkhundla), the Community Development Chairperson (Bucopho) and the community members. Officials from different Government Ministries, such as the Deputy Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Commerce Industry and Trade.

Special appreciation goes to the contribution of primary data collectors who collected data from the different chiefdoms that participated in this review. The Ministry is also grateful to the contributions of all people who may not have been cited here for their contribution in different capacities during the process of the Eswatini Zero Hunger Strategic Review through to the preparation of the report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.0 Introduction

The Government of Eswatini has endorsed and domesticated the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 and further prioritized SDG 2 in an effort to end hunger among its citizens in line with the Global Zero Hunger Challenge. This challenge calls for member states *to end hunger, achieve food security & improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture*. In this regard the country working with key sectors undertook the Eswatini Zero Hunger Strategic Review (EZHSR) in an effort to inform implementation of SDGs 1 and 2. Achieving Zero Hunger is a priority that is articulated in national development frameworks, in particular the Strategy for Sustainable Development & Inclusive Growth (SSDIG) - and other sectoral policies and programmes including the Eswatini National Agricultural Investment Plan (ENAIIP).

The Review seeks to analyse the obtaining food and nutrition situation and its linkages to poverty in the country and identify opportunities to strengthen current and future programmes and strategies aimed towards the attainment of zero hunger and ending poverty by 2030. The specific objectives of the review are:

- ❖ Provide a comprehensive understanding of the poverty, food security and nutrition context for Eswatini, including strategies, policies, programmes, institutional capacities and resource flows;
- ❖ Highlight previous progress and identify challenges Eswatini must overcome to achieve zero hunger by 2030 in line with the targets of SDG 2;
- ❖ Identify and prioritise policy and programme actions that are necessary to accelerate progress towards zero hunger, and recommend how these actions may be implemented.

Methodology

Both primary and secondary data sources were used during the consultative process of the Review. Primary data sources include Focus Group Discussions and Key Informant Interviews (KII) with Chiefdom Leaders (Chiefs) Regional Development Teams (RDTs), Community Development Teams (CDTs) in all four regions of the country and a randomly selected 110 chiefdoms from the 55 Constituencies (Tinkhundla). Another level of key informant discussions were held with policy makers, officials from Government, private sector, civil society and development partners. A qualitative analysis was done, which resulted in a strategic review report and policy briefs.

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

The country has policy, legislative and programmatic measures in place to reduce hunger. The National Development Strategy (Vision 2022) aims towards a high-income status for Eswatini as opposed to its current lower middle-class status. Eswatini endorsed the Strategy for Sustainable Development and Inclusive Growth (SSDIG) 2030 that aims to reach the targets of Vision 2022 and enhance inclusive socio-economic growth.

Some policies have remained draft versions while others require reviewing to align with latest developments at global and national levels.

The Comprehensive Agriculture Sector Policy (CASP) provides a clear guidance on policy options at sectoral level and portrays necessary measures to enhance sustainable development of the agriculture sector and its contribution to overall economic growth, poverty alleviation, food security and sustainable natural resource management.

Findings regarding

Pillar 1: Access to adequate food throughout the year:

The country is food insecure and cannot meet its national dietary requirements for grain or protein sources. Maize, which is a key food security crop, remains inadequate in the country as approximately only 50 percent of the national grain requirement is produced due to low productivity of 1.5 tonnes/ha compared to the ideal of 4-6 tonnes/ha. Food import statistics also point towards low levels of food self-sufficiency in animal products, legumes and vegetables. With the wide spread of poverty levels and low household incomes, coupled with high food prices, it means access to food all year round is a challenge for the poorest groups, particularly rural dwellers.

Pillar 2: Zero Stunted Children Less Than Two Years:

The country has a high rate of stunting (23.6 percent) in children below 24 months and this increases the burden on public, social services and health cost incurred by the Government, communities and the affected families. For example, in 2009, about 3.1 percent of GDP was lost as a result of child undernutrition. Stunting compromises the overall child development and thus their contribution to socio-economic development of the country.

Pillar 3: All Food Systems Are Sustainable:

There is a decline in agricultural production levels and minimum utilisation of agricultural technologies. On the other hand, the country has limited legislation and policies framework for a sustainable food system. Over the last few decades,

climate change has negatively impacted the country's food systems, resulting in weakened capacity in food production, which compromises current production trends.

Pillar 4: Increase in Smallholder Productivity and Incomes:

There is low productivity for smallholder farmers in the country due to inadequate capacity and poor access to finance for venturing into commercial agricultural production. Productivity regarding crop and livestock in the communal areas is generally constrained by high frequency of droughts, low farming technologies, low investment in inputs and equipment, low off-take rates as well as structural exclusion from the formal markets that offer better pricing. Furthermore, the lack of value addition processes contributes to low income returns. The low productivity coupled with high cost of production and low producer prices reduces incomes of smallholder farmers.

Pillar 5: Zero Food Loss and Food Waste

The country experiences food losses averaging 30 percent for all the food produce combined and up to 50 percent for some value chains. The high food loss and wastage means that the country is not only losing the value of the food but also the extra incurred cost for moving it through the value chain. This situation points to the lack of facilities for pre- and post-harvest management (storage and processing) of food.

Pillar 6: Proportion of People Living in Poverty in All its Dimensions Reduced by Half

Eswatini is a lower middle-income country with GDP per capita of USD 3,791. However, high levels of poverty and inequality continue to exist with 58.9 percent of the population living below the poverty line and a high GINI coefficient of 0.61. Vulnerability assessments indicate increasing food insecurity since 2010 with a high of 26 percent of the population affected in 2018. The food insecurity prevalence is intrinsic to the high poverty levels in the country resulting in chronic vulnerability among the poorest.

Recommendations

1. Policy reforms

There is a need to finalize policies that have remained drafts and review those that are out-dated and develop a comprehensive implementation framework to guide full integration and implementation of the food and nutrition security related policies.

2. Pillar-specific Recommendations

Pillar 1: Create an enabling environment to increase food production and employment opportunities that will allow the private sector to visibly participate in food security. Improve technologies that can enhance diversification, sustainable production and productivity and intensify adherence to climate smart technologies and standards to strengthen resilience and expand social protection systems to sustain the growth of smallholder farmer-led food availability.

Pillar 2: Strengthen and improve maternal and child health with a special focus to prevention of stunting. Strengthen nutrition in health promotion strategies and service delivery capacities in primary health care systems and community-based care to prevent stunting and acute malnutrition.

Pillar 3: Provide enabling infrastructure with requisite capacities for the efficient functioning of the food systems. Ensure industry adherence to set quality market standards, technologies and practices for climate smart agriculture that will mitigate the effects of climate change for improved productivity.

Pillar 4: Strengthen capacity and export market-led production and processing for smallholder farmers including access to finance. Fast-track effective implementations of special economic zones to include agriculture.

Pillar 5: Strengthen pre- and post-harvest management throughout the value chain to prevent food losses. Improve storage and aggregation infrastructure to enable access to markets. Strengthen capacity of farmers on harvesting, storage, processing and preservation of food.

Pillar 6: Implement coordinated development initiatives or support targeting the multidimensional nature of poverty. Strengthen social protection programmes as it relates to food and nutrition security.

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List of Acronyms

AEP	Agriculture Extension Policy
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AU	African Union
AWPS	African Women's Progress Scoreboard
BMI	Body Mass Index
CDT	Community Development Team
CAADP	Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme
CASP	Comprehensive Agricultural Sector Policy
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
EHIES	Eswatini Household Income and Expenditure Survey
ENAIP	Eswatini National Agricultural Investment Plan
EU	European Union
EZHSR	Eswatini Zero Hunger Strategic Review
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FNS	Food and Nutrition Security
FSNP	Food Security and Nutrition Policy
GAP	Good Agricultural Practices
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GDI	Gross Domestic Income
GII	Gender Inequality Index
GSS	Gender Status Score
HA	Hectare
HDI	Human Development Index
HEU	Home Economics Unit
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Viruses
LTLI	Land Tenure and Land investments
MEPD	Ministry of Economic Planning and Development
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MT	Metric Tones
NCDS	Non-Communicable Diseases
NFNP	National Food and Nutrition Policy
NDMA	National Disaster Management Authority
NDS	National Development Strategy
NFSP	National Food Security Policy
NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
NMHCP	National Multi-Hazard Contingency Plan
PRSAP	Poverty Reduction Strategy and Action Plan
RDT	Regional Development Team
RDF	Regional Development Fund

SACU	Southern African Customs Union
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEDCO	Small Enterprises Development Company
SNL	Swazi Nation Land
SSDIG	Strategy for Sustainable Development and Inclusive Growth
SZL	Eswatini Lilangeni
TDL	Title Deeds Land
U5MR	Under Five Mortality Rate
UAP	Urban Agriculture Policy
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programmes
USD	US Dollar
VAA	Vulnerability Assessment and Analysis
VAC	Eswatini Vulnerability Assessment Committee
WFP	World Food Programme

CHAPTER 1

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

In times where enough food is produced to feed the entire world, a staggering 11 percent of the world's population are still hungry and a third still suffer from malnutrition¹. With a vision of a world free from hunger, malnutrition and rural poverty, the former United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon launched the 'Zero Hunger Challenge' in 2012.

The Zero Hunger Challenge was to be achieved through an integrated and multi-sectoral approach with the transformation of food systems. With the subsequent adoption of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and committing to the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development in 2015, United Nations member states decided on a comprehensive, integrated and universal transformation in the global development agenda.

In line with the Zero Hunger Challenge, SDG 2 aims to eliminate hunger by 2030. It focuses on five elements that, if collectively implemented, can eliminate hunger, end all forms of malnutrition, and build inclusive and sustainable food systems. These elements are:

1. All food systems are sustainable from production to consumption
2. An end to rural poverty: Double small-scale producer incomes and productivity
3. Adopt all food systems to eliminate waste
4. Access to adequate food and health diets for all people all year round
5. An end to malnutrition in all its forms

To mobilise national efforts towards ending hunger, the UN World Food Programme (WFP) supported Governments worldwide to undertake a Zero Hunger Strategic Review. The process seeks to bring together all relevant national stakeholders to create food systems with an integrated approach and can subsequently deliver collectively to the Agenda 2030. Zero Hunger Strategic Reviews are generally framed around five pillars that align to the Zero Hunger Challenge / SDG 2.

³ www.actionagainsthunger.org/world-hunger-facts-statistics

The Kingdom of Eswatini included a sixth element to the Eswatini Zero Hunger Strategic Review (EZHSR) Framework, reflecting the inextricable linkages between poverty and the other SDGs:

Pillar One - 100% Equitable Access to Adequate Food All Year Round

Pillar Two - Zero Stunted Children Less Than Two Years

Pillar Three - All Food Systems are Sustainable

Pillar Four - 100% Increase in Smallholder Productivity and Incomes

Pillar Five - Zero Waste or Loss of Food

Pillar Six - Proportion of People Living in Poverty in All its Dimensions Reduced by Half

The pillars are aligned to Eswatini's National Development Strategy (NDS) and the Strategy for Sustainable Development and Inclusive Growth (SSDIG). These frameworks are operationalized through a number of multi-sectoral policies, programme strategies and action plans. Correspondingly, they are reflected in the three priority areas for the United Nations Development Framework (UNDAF) 2016-2020 agreed upon jointly by the UN and Government. These frameworks prioritise the realisation of food and nutrition security at community and household level, the commercialisation of agriculture on Swazi Nation Land (SNL) and efficient water resource management among others.

1.2 Rationale

The Government acknowledges that hunger continues to be a challenge with major negative impact on the socio-economic development of the country. The Cost of Hunger Study 2010 revealed that the overall cost of hunger for Eswatini stood at SZL 783 million in 2009, equivalent to 3.1 percent of the GDP.

To respond to the hunger situation, the Government of Eswatini prioritised SDG2 with a view to ending hunger and consequently commissioned the EZHSR to better understand associated factors and to provide insights into the policy and strategy landscape for food and nutrition security. The EZHSR aims to establish a country programme that can be implemented towards achieving Zero Hunger by 2030.

1.3 Objective of the EZHSR

The EZHSR seeks to analyse the current Food and Nutrition Security (FNS) situation in the country and to identify opportunities for strengthening current programmes and strategies towards the attainment of zero hunger.

Specific objectives:

- Provide a comprehensive understanding of the poverty and FNS context for Eswatini, including strategies, policies, programmes, institutional capacities and resource flows;

- Highlight progress so far and identify the challenges the country must overcome to end hunger in line with SDG 2 targets;
- Identify and prioritise policy and programmes to accelerate progress towards zero hunger, and recommend how these actions may be implemented.

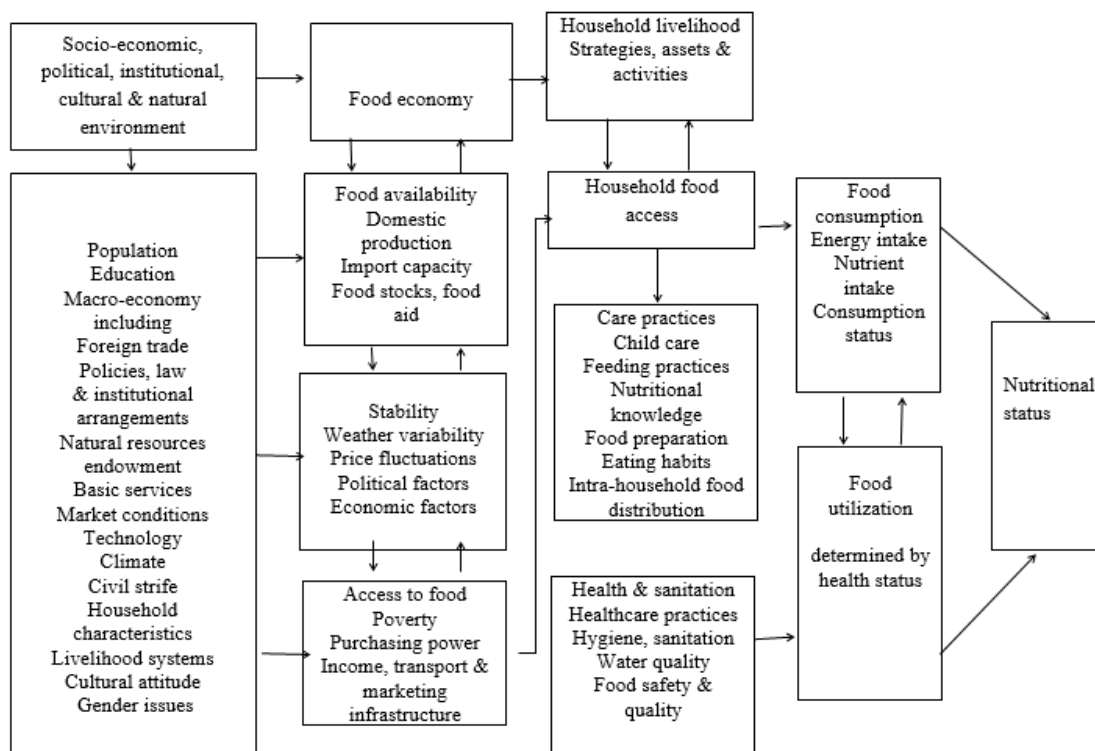
1.4 Conceptual Framework for Food Security and Nutrition

The EZHSR adopts the Food Security and Nutrition Conceptual Framework of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) as below. It provides a tool for a systemic approach to understanding linkages between the underlying causes and effects of food and nutrition insecurity and poverty. Some SDG 1 and SDG 2 targets are intricately linked to aspects of the other fifteen SDGs.

The framework (see Figure 1 below) highlight's the conceptual linkages between socio-economic, political and environmental factors, such as food economy, household strategies and outcomes of FNS for individuals:

Food economy is affected by food availability and stability factors. Poverty is the main underlying factor in access to food, while individual nutritional status relates to food utilization and food consumption, energy and nutrient intake. The framework recognises cross-cutting factors, such as issues of gender, climate change, micro-economy and the policy framework.

Figure 1: Food and Nutrition Security Conceptual Framework



Source: FAO, 2004

1.5 Factors Affecting Hunger in Eswatini

1.5.1 Climate change

Climate change has wide-ranging impacts including frequent droughts and dry spells, extreme rainfall and floods. Impacts can already be witnessed, which have a direct influence on availability of water for agriculture production, energy sources and supplies, waste management, and environmental management and sustainability. These conditions contribute to declining food and nutrition security and health outcomes.

Reduced flow of major rivers, heavy cyclones and flash floods, and persistent drought conditions, exacerbate food and nutrition insecurity particularly in some of the low-lying areas in the Lubombo and Shiselweni regions.

According to the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA), the 2016 El Niño-induced drought cost the country over SZL 3.84 billion (7 percent of GDP)². It resulted to about 25 percent of the population, mainly in Lubombo and Shiselweni, to be food insecure.

1.5.2 Migration, population growth and urbanization

The country is experiencing an increase in internal migration with more people moving to Manzini and Hhohho region as well as from rural to the urban areas. Urban population increased from 21 percent in 2012 to 25 percent in 2017³.

Most young people that look for work come from rural areas into major cities and neighbouring South Africa in search of employment opportunities, leaving behind older people, young children and women. This constrains labour strength in rural areas resulting in low levels of food production. Whilst the geographical shift in population can have negative impact on food and nutrition security for some, it can also provide an opportunity for cash remittances that improve household income and enable increased access to food and nutrition.

Eswatini's population tripled in size from 375.000 in 1966 to 1,093 million in 2017⁴ with an annual population growth rate of 0.7 percent until 2017 and a projected annual growth rate of 1.2 percent between 2012 and 2030⁵. The increasing population has implications on food security as it increases the demand for food commodities. This requires commensurate increases in the availability of food to prevent hunger. It is therefore critical that approaches towards ending hunger consider population dynamics and migration patterns.

² Eswatini National Multi-Hazard Contingency Plan (NMHC), 2017-18

³ Eswatini National Census Report, 2017

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

Smallholder farmers, who are the predominant producers of food available for consumption in the country, are unable to produce adequate food that meets national requirements. They are unable to produce enough to consistently meet the needs of urban markets with food products. Consequently, the perpetually growing national food demand, is largely met with cross-border or international trade. Such trade patterns impact consumer demand trends and the prospects for sustainable rural economic transformation. Trade can disconnect domestic consumption from rural production, especially under conditions of urbanisation, economic growth and globalisation. The rapidly urbanizing centres draw from imports through formal and informal trade and thus weaken the production response from smallholder farmers in the country.

According to the Household Economic Assessment, conducted in 2016, consumptive poverty has reduced significantly between 2012 and 2016, compared to extreme poverty. There Standards of welfare for the poor have not improved and there is significant regional and urban-rural variation⁶. Literature shows that poor domestic infrastructure exacerbates weak food supply systems in the country and increase reliance on cheap South African food imports. A balance needs to be created among urban consumption and rural transformation⁷.

1.5.3 Land Tenure and Land investments (LTLI)

In Eswatini, there are two basic forms of land tenure: Title Deed Land (TDL), which comprises around 40 percent of total land, and Swazi Nation Land (SNL), making up for around 60 percent. TDL is mainly used for commercial farming, therefore attracting more investments in infrastructure and equipment. SNL is mainly used for rain-fed cropping and grazing and shows minimal investments in the land.

Large-scale land investments can come at the expense of smallholder farmers and may threaten the food security and nutrition status of affected households and must therefore be moderated. There needs to be a balance between these large-scale investments in the agricultural sector and the transformation of the sector with a view to raising incomes and productivity, meeting nutritional requirements of the population and reducing poverty.

Efforts to improve investments in SNL are pursued through various smallholder agriculture leasing systems financed by investors.

⁶ Eswatini Vulnerability Assessment Committee (VAC), 2016

⁷ Ibid.

1.5.4 Changing dietary needs

Over the past decades, Eswatini citizens have moved away from traditional foods that include small grains (sorghum and millets), cassava and tubers towards maize meal. More recently, imported rice and processed foods (such as pasta) have gradually started complementing maize products but maize remains the staple food.

Changing lifestyles in the Kingdom have contributed to changes in dietary patterns. The majority (92 percent) of the adult population in Swaziland eats less than the recommended five servings of fruit and/or vegetables per day. Consumption of sufficient amounts of fruit and vegetables remain key to the prevention and control of chronic Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs). On average, the adult population consumes one serving of fruit every second day. People eat about 1.5 servings of vegetables per day about 5 times a week.

1.6 Methodological Approach

The EZHSR was commissioned by the Government of the Kingdom of Eswatini through the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development (MEPD). The MEPD carries the national mandate to coordinate the implementation of the Eswatini Strategy for Sustainable Development and Inclusive Growth (SSDIG), operationalized through the Poverty Reduction Strategy Action Plan (PRSAP). The ministry undertakes poverty assessments, established the National Poverty Monitoring Forum and disseminates information on poverty reduction initiatives.

As the country transitions towards the achievement of the SDGs, MEPD and the Poverty Monitoring Unit operate their mandate within the SDG framework. The EZHSR provides an opportunity to review SDGs 2 and its linkages to SDG1. For the EZHSR, the MEPD established and led a multi-sectoral technical team made up of representatives from key ministries including the Ministry of Agriculture; Ministry of Ministry of Health, Tinkhundla Administration and Development; Central Statistics Office; the Eswatini National Nutrition Council; as well as the UN agencies FAO; UNDP and WFP. The highly consultative process was designed to chart a roadmap for the Eswatini Zero Hunger Challenge. In addition, the team held several workshops with members of the Eswatini Vulnerability Assessment Committee (VAC) to understand issues related to food, nutrition, hunger and poverty.

The methodology employed the use of both secondary and primary data collection. A desk review provided the basis for the analysis of relevant poverty, food and nutrition issues of the country, guided by SDG 1 and SDG 2 targets and the Zero Hunger Challenge pillars. Primary data sources included community consultations with Regional Development Teams (RDTs) and Community

Development Teams (CDTs) in all four regions of the country. 110 chiefdoms (out of 300 nation-wide) in 55 Constituencies (Tinkhundla) were randomly selected to obtain a representative sample. Technical consultations were conducted with policy makers and other key informants in Government, Private Sector, Civil Society and Development Partners (namely EU and UN agencies). A special report from the primary data was developed to capture and consolidate voices of the people as to inform the main Eswatini Zero Hunger Strategic Review Report. Technical consultants collated the information into the Eswatini Zero Hunger Strategic Review Report. The review process culminated in a series of stakeholder feedback consultations and validation workshops. The report will be the source for the development of a master action plan for ending hunger in the country and will also be disseminated at national, regional, Tinkhundla and community level.

CHAPTER 2

2.0 THE HUNGER CHALLENGE

2.1 Introduction

Household vulnerability to food insecurity is often related to its geographical location. The country is divided into seven rural and three urban livelihood zones based on ecological and climatic conditions, which determine the dominant livelihood strategies. These ten zones cut across administrative regions, agro-ecological zones and constituencies as shown in Figure 2.

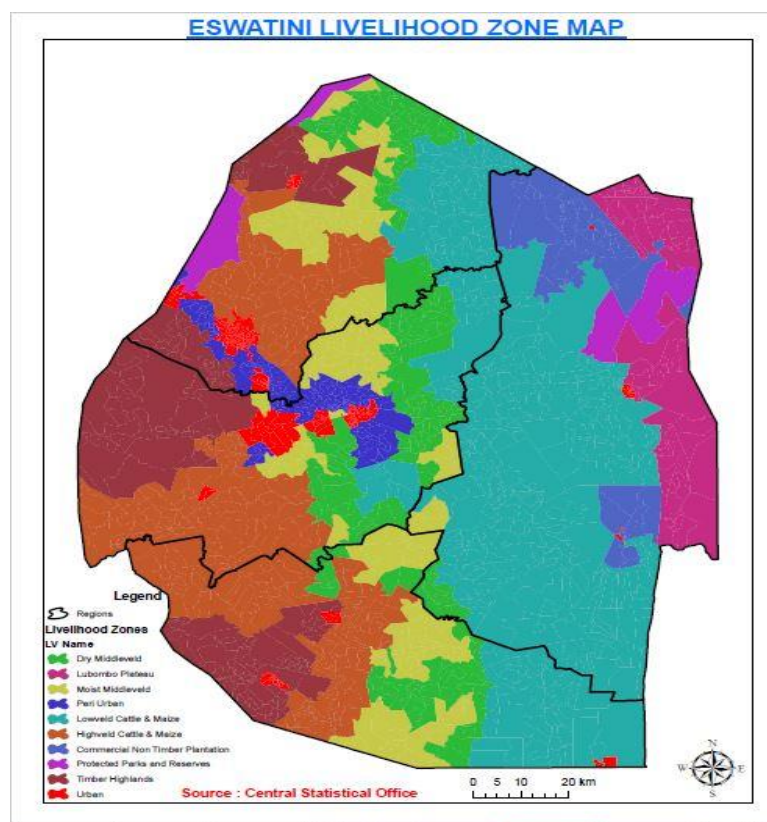


Figure 2: Map showing Eswatini Rural Livelihoods Zones (Source: VAC, 2016).

The zones are namely: the Highveld Maize and Cattle; Timber Highlands; Moist Middleveld; Dry Middleveld; Lowveld Cattle, Maize and Sugarcane; Lubombo Plateau; and the Urban Livelihood Zone, which is further divided into the Low, Middle, and High-Income Zones.

Evidence shows that the impacts of climate change on agriculture and food availability also affect livelihood zones differently in both rural and urban settings. Drought spells have an impact on crops and livestock leading to increased vulnerability, poverty and food insecurity. This exacerbates the capacity of households to sustain their livelihoods. In order for households to

meet their food and nutrition requirements, they start relying on food donations from the Government, private sector and development partners. Access to food is hampered by price hikes that increased from 4.3 percent in March 2015 to 19 percent in December 2016, further aggravating food and nutrition insecurity at household level.

The dependency burden in Eswatini stands at 69 percent in 2017, leaving the remaining 31 percent in charge to feed the rest of the population. Moreover, high unemployment rates at 28 percent⁸ further reduces the capacity of the economically active population to provide adequate food for dependents, considering high annual food import bill of over USD 300 million.

The hunger situation in the country is further exacerbated by high rates of poverty at about 59 percent and income inequality with a Gini Coefficient of 49.3⁹. Gender inequality affects access to food in the country where the Gender Inequality Index (GII) is estimated 0.568 for females compared to 0.603 for males and the country is ranked 141 out of 160 countries¹⁰. The severe gender disparity is also confirmed by the African Union (AU) tool, which is a framework for monitoring gender inequality in Africa and considers political, economic and social factors. Evidence shows that women fall short of matching their male counterparts in development including the degree of access to means of production, management and income levels. Of further concern is the low representation of women in positions of influence indicating that women remain far behind when compared to their male counterparts in the political spheres of development¹¹. Gender inequality has implications on the contribution of women and men in addressing the food and nutrition insecurity challenge.

2.2 Pillar One: 100% Access to Adequate Food All Year Round

This pillar advocates for full access to food all year round for all people in the Kingdom by 2030. SDG Target 2.1 notes: “By 2030, end hunger and ensure access by all people, in particular the poor and people in vulnerable situations, including infants, to safe, nutritious and sufficient food all year round”. Food availability means that adequate food is physically present through domestic food production, imports, stock levels or food aid. This review confirms that the country is struggling to make food available and accessible to people all year round. Participants of Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) confirmed that in both rural and urban communities hunger does exist as food is not available all year round due to low production and inadequate resources.

⁸ Central Statistics Office, 2018: *Eswatini Household Income and Expenditure Survey 2016/2017 (EHIES)*

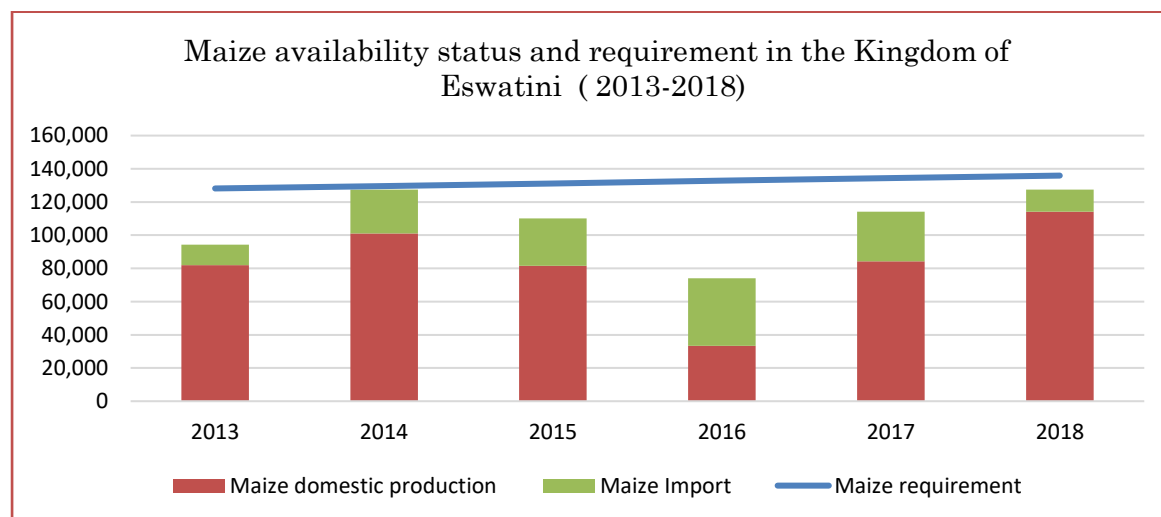
⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ <http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/country-notes/SWZ.pdf>

¹¹ Eswatini Gender and Development report, 2016

In the past, Eswatini has considered self-sufficiency in maize as the main indicator for its food security status. The national maize requirement stands at 140 000 metric tons (MT) but the country has not been able to produce adequate amounts of maize to meet its domestic requirements and therefore relies on imports. Figure 3 shows maize production trends over a six-year period between 2012/13 to 2017/18. Notably the data shows the drastic reduction in maize production during 2015/16 during the El Nino-induced drought.

Figure 3: Trends in maize availability



The inadequate availability of food that affects rural and urban households was confirmed at the community level focus group discussions (*VAC reports*) and said to be related to both low production and inadequate resources to access the food. They further cited other underlying factors such as the impact of climate change, which affects production. It was further noted that the infrastructure for irrigation is unaffordable to farmers yet water is needed for crops to grow. Poor communication infrastructure (road and transport) is perceived to reduce accessibility to food and its availability in markets, as well as inefficiencies in Government programmes including poor distribution of dams and weak capacity of systems that deliver farm input subsidies and extension services

The broader causal factors of hunger that were identified by the focus group participants are shown below (Box 1).

Box 1: Identified causal factors of hunger in Eswatini

- Unavailability of job opportunities
- Dry spells and other changing weather patterns as a result of climate change
- High fertility rate amongst the youth
- Poor extension services
- Lack of water for irrigation
- High food prices

- Poor access to input and output markets – high price of inputs and control of maize imports
- Poor roads/ infrastructure resulting in high transport costs
- Disability

In the country, food availability is dependent on production, imports and direct purchases. Given the importance of food purchases to enhance food security, it is important to note that the total area of crop land in Eswatini entails 195,000 ha of which 63 percent is Swazi Nation Land (SNL) and 37 percent Title Deed Land (TDL). Of that amount, only about 55 percent of SNL crop land is planted compared to 79 percent of TDL¹². TDL makes out 80 percent of the overall agriculture production. Large tracts of uncultivated SNL reveal that many smallholder farmers have transformed into rural dwellers that do not engage in farming activities and survive on remittances, purchases and government social safety nets. The naturally growing population, especially in rural areas, along with increasing input costs, has arguably led to reduced area planted by most households, thus affecting the capacity of the country to produce adequate food.

The country experiences subtropical climate that is highly susceptible to droughts, floods, winds and storms. These weather patterns are exacerbated by the effects of climate change thus affecting food production and water security in the country. Although the country has a few major rivers passing through to the Indian Ocean, 95.5 percent of the renewable water is used for irrigating sugarcane and not food production. Food crops, particularly maize production, is mostly rain-fed and is produced in the High- and Middleveld. The agro-ecological differences and the use of water for agriculture have implications on agricultural production and productivity. The study further found that irrigation infrastructure is unaffordable to smallholder farmers yet water is needed for plants to grow.

The Eswatini National Agricultural Investment Plan (ENAIP) highlights that the major constraints of maize production in Eswatini include: SNL size on average 1.3 ha or less; high dependence on rain-fed agriculture, which has become erratic; soil acidity in the High- and Middleveld of Eswatini; inadequate draft power as most farmers (57 percent) on SNL rely on tractors to plough the land and Government fails to meet the demand; escalating cost of production (inputs, etc.) resulting in low maize yield (usually between 1.33 t/ha as compared to commercial production of 5.5 t/ha) and poor financial support as most finance institutions avoid smallholder SNL farmers.

While food availability needs can be satisfied through production, procurement is another possible means. Figure 3 above shows that part of the food is imported

¹² Ministry of Agriculture, 2015: *Eswatini National Agricultural Investment Plan (ENAIP), 2015*

from outside the country to increase the amount of food available. Commercial markets serve as primary channels through which most food is accessed, though certain sections of the population lack purchasing power to use them.

Even in relatively stable contexts, food systems can be negatively affected by poor communication, transportation, storage facilities and geographical locations. Communities confirm that poor infrastructure (roads and transport) was perceived to reduce accessibility to food sources and hampers access to markets, both for consumers to procure and for smallholder farmers to sell.

If the country is to attain its target of ensuring 100 percent access to adequate food all year round, addressing the enduring constraints to productivity and markets, and social safety net mechanisms need to be addressed for ending hunger. Communities made suggestion to improve the situation including strengthening policy implementation; construction of dams to enable downstream irrigation and developing a strategy focusing on irrigation and water supply; improving poor people's access to production resources and credits; farmers adopting and implementing the strategies developed to mitigate climate change for sustainable production; improving post-harvest infrastructure including roads; and communication networks to improve market access.

2.3 Pillar Two: Zero Stunted Children Less Than Two Years

Stunting¹³ is the impaired growth and development in children. It reflects chronic malnutrition and is a result of prolonged inadequate nutrition during the first 1000 days of life (conception to 24 months), both in terms of macro- and micronutrients, poor infant and young child feeding practices, and recurrent or chronic illness. Stunting is associated with increased morbidity and mortality, loss of physical growth potential, reduced mental developmental and cognitive function, reduced productivity and an increased risk of chronic disease in adulthood. SDG Target 2.2 aims at ending all forms of malnutrition by 2030, that includes achieving the internationally agreed targets on stunting (40 percent reduction) and wasting (reduction and maintaining wasting to less than 5 percent) in children under 5 years of age by 2025, and to “address the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons”.

During EZHSR community focus group discussions, participants showed basic understanding of stunting. They realize that stunted children are short for their age and seem to be experiencing growth failure caused by not eating a balanced diet (the mother during pregnancy or the infant). Relevant factors cited include difficulties in reaching health facilities to ensure prenatal and postnatal care leading to poor maternal health; lack of knowledge on good nutritional practices;

¹³ Height for age value less than two standard deviations of the WHO Child Growth Standards median

poverty (lack of resources to procure food items that ensure a balanced diets); and changes in family structure with caregivers lacking good child care and feeding practices.

Box 2: Community perceptions about causes of Malnutrition in children

Communities showed awareness of stunting and described children who are stunted as being short for their age and referred to them as *'incucumbane* or *kubhabhadlela*' as opposed to *'Luzantayi*' referring to wasted children. Associated factors that were mentioned: Causes of stunting and wasting in children

Poor maternal and child health

- Poor family planning
- Limited child immunization (getting all prescribed injections)
- Smoking and drinking alcohol during pregnancy

Poor child feeding practices

- Poor breastfeeding practices
- Lack of knowledge
- Lack of balance diet, no adequate food
- Guardians inadequate ability to take care of children' nutritional needs

Irresponsible parenting

- Lack of law enforcement on irresponsible parents
- Shifting of responsibility to grandmother who does not have means to raise the child
- Child abuse

Myths and misconceptions, misinformation

- Overwork children
- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Stunting related to genetics (short stature being hereditary)

Among children under two years, the prevalence of stunting is 23.6 percent. Stunting rates are at 16 percent for the 0-5 months old and increase significantly after 12 months, peaking at 35 percent for ages 18-23 months. Stunting in this age group is primarily caused by poor infant and young child feeding practices: 40 percent of children are inappropriately introduced to complementary feeding before their bodies are ready (at 6 months), while 62 percent of children aged 6 - 23 months do not receive the minimum acceptable diet¹⁴. The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2014 identified a need for improvement of breastfeeding practices (particularly initiation and duration), introduction of solids, diet quality and nutrient intake.

¹⁴ Central Statistics Office, 2015: *MICS 2014*

The economic impact of stunting is significant, in the 2013 Cost of Hunger study estimated that SZL 783 million, (3.1 percent of GDP) were lost due to child undernutrition in 2009.

Under-five mortality rate (U5MR) is at 80 for every 1000 live births in Eswatini; with male children having a higher value of 85 and females 75 by 2014¹⁵. The high U5MR reflects the impact of the HIV and AIDS pandemic that has infected roughly a third of Eswatini's productive population, particularly affecting women. This situation affects the nutritional status of a child within the first 1000 days. Table 1 below shows the nutritional status of children in Eswatini.

Table 1: Nutritional status of children in Eswatini

	Underweight %	Stunted %	Wasted %	Overweight %
Total	5.8	25.5	2.0	9.0
Region				
Hhohho	5.5	23.5	1.5	10.2
Manzini	5.4	24.5	1.6	9.4
Shiselweni	6.5	28.0	2.2	6.1
Lubombo	6.1	26.9	3.0	9.7
Age				
0-5 months	5.9	16.4	4.4	19.3
6-11 months	8.6	15.4	4.3	15.8
12-17 months	6.4	27.0	2.7	8.6
18-23 months	8.2	35.3	2.8	9.0
Area				
Urban	4.3	19.0	1.8	11.6
Rural	6.2	27.3	2.1	8.2

Source: MICS (2014)

Safe water supply and sanitation enhances nutritional status particularly among children under 5 years. The country coverage for it reaches 42 percent of rural population and 87 percent of urban population. Rivers and unprotected wells are the main source of household water for people in the countryside with 67 percent of the rural population relying on them. This puts them at high risk for diseases and therefore poor nutrition.

Eswatini has made significant progress in the reduction of stunting in recent years. Rates decreased from 31 percent in 2010 to 25.5 percent in 2014¹⁶. These rates are still far from targets of both the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture

¹⁵ https://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/swaziland_statistics.html

¹⁶ Ministry of Agriculture, 2015: *Eswatini National Agricultural Investment Plan (ENAIP), 2015*; and Central Statistics Office, 2015: *MICS 2014*

Development Programme (CAADP) 2025 (target at 15 percent) and SDG target (0 percent). This high prevalence of stunting is evidence of widespread under-nourishment as well as lack of dietary diversity and poor health including the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS.

The health system constraints contribute to stunted growth and development that manifest through poor maternal health and nutrition, inadequate infant and young child feeding practices and infection.

There is insufficient data on diets and food consumption habits of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons. The Comprehensive Health and Nutrition Survey of 2017 found out that the prevalence of undernutrition among women (non-pregnant) of childbearing age at 2.3 percent is acceptable according to WHO standards. However, prevalence of overweight and obesity was found to be high (32.3 percent and 28.8 percent respectively). The inability of women to challenge cultural norms and prevailing risky sexual practices, including the low use of condoms, contribute to approximately a third of women between the ages of 15 to 49 years living with HIV (35 percent), as compared to 19 percent in men¹⁷. This high HIV incidence among pregnant and nursing mothers worsens the nutrition situation for children born to such mothers.

2.4 Pillar Three: All Food Systems are Sustainable

A sustainable food system is “a system that delivers food and nutrition security for all in such a way that the economic, social and environmental sectors ensure that food security and nutrition for future generations are not compromised”¹⁸. Whilst Government endeavours to construct dams and provide incentives like input subsidies and extension services, there are still concerns in the efficient delivery of these services.

SDG target 2.4 asserts that food production systems must be sustainable and that “By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality”.

Communities and stakeholders of this review believed that climate change has a major impact on food systems. This is mainly related to prolonged dry spells that affect farming practices and availability of water. Greenhouse gas effects were not mentioned as communities do not seem to recognise much needed

¹⁷ UNAIDS, 2017: <http://www.unaids.org/en/regionscountries/countries/swaziland>, accessed 08.04.2019

transformation to climate resilience and low carbon foot print of food systems throughout the value chain. It was further revealed that poor adoption of sustainable practices results from:

- a) Limited training and awareness on sustainable farming practices.
- b) Poor policy and enforcement of the provision and conservation of water in all communities.
- c) A missing component in community initiatives being the aspect of introducing new technologies for water and soil conservation.

Promoting sustainable environmental management and improving sustainable utilisation of land and water resources are considered the two strategies for assuring an enabling environment to create sustainable food systems. Inputs and processes must be employed under a landscape approach integrating various community and environmental needs regarding sustainability. Production factors that threaten the environment include negative farming methods, harmful farm inputs, invasive plant species and excessive animal grazing including greenhouse gas emissions.

As climate change effects become evident in the country, it becomes increasingly important to embrace new climate-smart agricultural innovations to maximize land productivity, minimize environmental degradation whilst sustainably increasing crop yields. The Government of Eswatini has been promoting conservation agriculture and agroforestry to break the vicious cycle of food insecurity. The country introduced mechanisation in conservation agriculture, which eliminates draught power-intensive soil tillage and reduces labour required for crop production by up to 50 percent if fully adopted¹⁹. According to the VAC 2015, out of 220,000 farming households only an estimated 5,000 rural households practice sustainable agriculture, while none in the private sector.

2.5 Pillar Four: 100 % Increase in Smallholder Productivity and Income

Innovation in agriculture remains the key driver in addressing zero hunger challenges. The rural economy in Eswatini includes both crop and livestock sectors and is characterised by low productivity, hence many of farmers in the sector are low-income earners. An increase in smallholder productivity and their inclusion in the food system is necessary to reduce poverty and address existing inequalities. SDG Target 2.3 states that by 2030 agricultural productivity and incomes of smallholder food producers need to be doubled, in particular for women and youth including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment.

¹⁹ FAO, 2013

While some smallholder farmers attempt to produce a variety of crops, the majority of smallholder farmers largely practice rain-fed agriculture mainly for maize production. In the rain-fed smallholder farming systems, maize represents 84 percent of the crop area, cotton 7 percent (mainly in the Lowveld) and groundnuts 6 percent²⁰. Other crops that can significantly contribute to food and nutrition security but are produced rarely include grain legumes, root crops (mainly sweet potato and cassava) and sorghum. Productivity data is mainly available for maize. Average maize yields fluctuate according to rainfall and average about 1.33 t/ha, which is well below potential and regional averages. As such, a 100 percent increase in smallholder productivity would mean increasing the national average to 2.66 t/ha for maize.

Cattle herd productivity is also low with an off-take rate of only 7 percent producing around 10,600 tons of carcass weight²¹. Grazing lands for livestock are low at one (1) livestock unit per ha (LSU) in all agro-ecological zones and farming systems. Eswatini National Agricultural Investment Plan (ENAIP) notes the following three dominant animal production systems:

- (i) Traditional smallholder system on SNL land with minimal inputs, high stocking rates and uncontrolled mating which accounts for around 82 percent of grazing livestock;
- (ii) Dairy farming, commercial feedlots and ranching on TDL; and
- (iii) Modern industrial-scale pig and poultry production.

The productivity of dairy cows is constrained by the tools used, timing of the process and limited quality feed especially for smallholder farmers. Productivity in the commercial ranges and modern industrial scale production is higher but does little to enhance the incomes of smallholder farmers and rural dwellers. Continuous low productivity in the smallholder sector that holds the highest herd size means that Eswatini remains heavily dependent on imported animal products; especially meat and dairy. The country's domestic trade policies influence the economic development and transformation of smallholder farmers. Import restrictions could strengthen local industry. Market efficiencies will need to improve as they determine income levels of smallholder farmers.

Shifts in food demand and consumption patterns are happening in favour of processed foods, animal protein and vegetables. Such shifts need to start benefitting smallholder farmers who must fulfill the changing demand. However, foreign and domestic investment in local supermarkets, food brands and food services are connected more strongly to global rather than national production, thus reducing the prospects of smallholder farmers' access to markets and incomes.

²⁰ Ministry of Agriculture, 2015: *ENAIP 2015*

²¹ *ibid.*

Efforts by Government to ensure availability of water for agriculture have not yet impacted smallholder farmer productivity positively. There are nine major dams with a total storage capacity of about 585 million m³ and seven of the dams are used for irrigation purposes mainly by large scale farmers in sugarcane production²² and to a very small extent food production.

These challenges were also echoed by the community members who participated in the FGDs where they emphasized the need for increased access to water for agricultural food production, efficiencies in incentives like inputs and loan subsidies, extension services and access to markets.

Box 3: views of communities on improving small holder farmer productivity and incomes

Communities recognized the need to improve current farming systems in order to improve smallholder productivity and incomes. These needs included:

- Water for Irrigation need in order to transform current rain fed agriculture to less risky agri-businesses.
- Document produce coming out of each region and promote use of local produce
- Actions that link farmers to markets in country and also focus on export to create demand.
- Farming and Business Skills Development by Mainstream agri-business skills training in schools, relevant tertiary institutions and in rural projects that involve smallholder farmers.
- Promoting farming techniques that are suited for Swaziland's 4 climate zones, preserve soil quality and restore nutrients in the soil by supporting soil testing and quality improvement services to which were added to input packages and extension services.
- Continue to experiment on new maize see varieties that are drought resistant. Encourage the adoption of new on re-introducing drought tolerant foods in the Lubombo region, for example sorghum. Explore cassava in all its variations for consumption.

2.6 Pillar Five: Zero Loss or Waste of Food

FAO (2015) defines food loss as 'the decrease in quantity or quality of food/ agricultural / fisheries products, intended for human consumption, that are ultimately not consumed by people or that have incurred a reduction in quality reflected in their nutritional value, economic value or food safety.' Food waste is part of food loss. It refers to discarding or alternative use of food that was fit for human consumption, or if food gets spoiled or expire due to negligence.

The country does not have adequate data on food loss and waste; however, it is acknowledged that post-production food loss and waste have an impact on

²² FAOstats, 2017: <http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/MK>, accessed on 01.12.2018

hunger, nutrition, income generation and food security. Qualitative food loss may affect nutritional status, and food loss in general represents loss of economic value, and for commodities traded on international markets it can affect food availability and prices²³. FAO estimates that 1.3 billion tons or one third of all food produced is lost or wasted every year, varying by type of commodity.

Table 2: Food loss and waste by commodity

Commodity	% Food losses & waste
Cereals	30
Dairy products	20
Fish and seafood	35
Fruits and vegetables	45
Meat	20
Oilseed and pulses	20
Roots and tubers	45

Source: FAO, 2015

Resources required during reduction of food that is later lost or wasted affects the environment needlessly. Most of this wastage and loss occurs early in the food supply chain with 50 percent being lost during the post-harvest phase, 25 percent during processing and packaging, 20 percent during distribution and retail, and 5 percent at consumer level.

FAO conducted a study to determine food loss along the maize value chain in Eswatini. Post-harvest losses in the cabbage value chain as an example of vegetable was at up to 31 percent with 5 percent occurring at harvesting stage; losses during trade and in the supermarket of 15 percent and 5 percent respectively due to hygiene and cleanliness issues, and lack of grading and storage facilities. Losses attributed to transportation were at 11 percent of the total losses.

Considering high levels of food imports, losing almost half of what has been harvested is too high and must be prevented in an environmentally friendly and climate smart manner. Appropriate processing of harvested produce not only reduces loss but also adds value to the produce. It was estimated that the application of post-harvest technologies can reduce losses by 20 percent.

²³ FAO, 2015

Box 4: Food Loss and Wastage Community voices

Responses from community members on key issues related post-harvest food losses:

- Lack of knowledge (and practice) on post-harvest management and technologies by farmers
- Transportation challenges coupled with poor road infrastructure contributing to quality losses.

The community did not perceive food waste as a critical problem in the country. Proposed strategies for the reduction of waste include:

- Promotion of food processing and preservation (value addition & food fortification) as food preservation measure
- Food conservation - preparation of tailored food preservatives
- Sharing of food with neighbours and relatives

2.7 Pillar Six: Proportion of people living in poverty in all its dimensions reduced by half

The first SDG target is to eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere (people living on less than USD 1.25 a day) by 2030. According to the Eswatini poverty target for SDG 1, the poverty line is estimated to be at USD 2.3 per day. Fifty nine percent of people currently live below the Eswatini poverty line²⁴. Poverty is most pronounced in rural areas where about 70 percent of that population are poor. The sixth Pillar of the EZHSR derives from SDG 1. Literature confirms that “the primary and most obvious cause of hunger is poverty”²⁵. In recognition of the nexus between hunger and poverty, the Government endorsed mainstreaming SDG 1 through the sixth pillar of the Review.

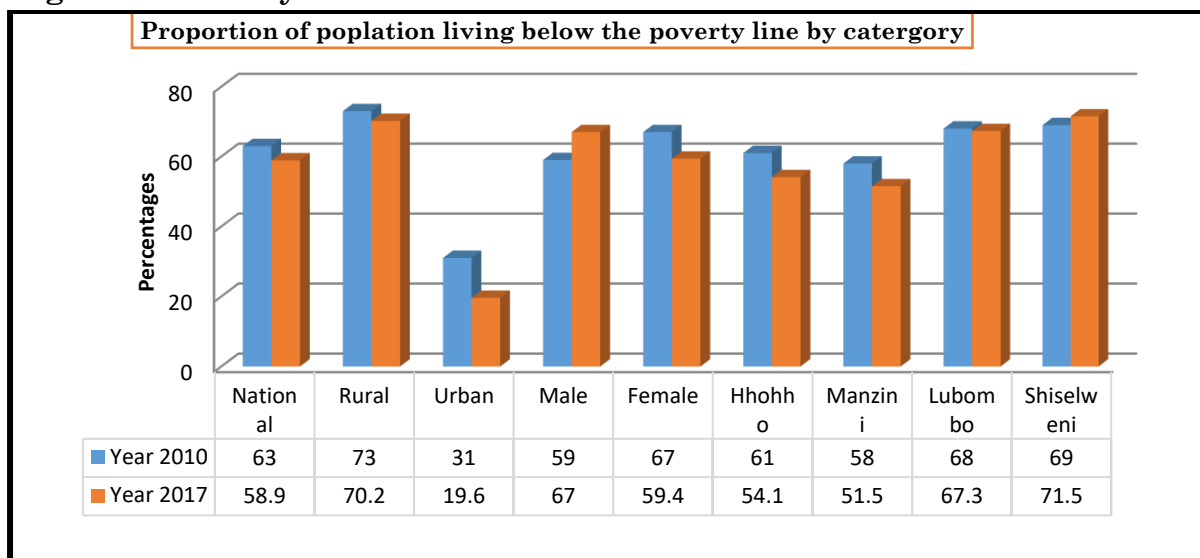
In 2016, Eswatini was considered a low middle-income country with a GDP per capita of USD 4,434²⁶. On average that would take every citizen above the USD 1.25 per day threshold but 56 percent of the economy is in the hands of the richest 20 percent of the population. High levels of poverty in Eswatini have had negative effects on socio-economic growth and development of the country. This is a principal factor of widespread hunger. Figure 4 shows the poverty trends in Eswatini’s between 2010 and 2017.

²⁴ Central Statistics Office, 2018: *EHIES, 2017*

²⁵ Walthouse, 2014: <https://borgenproject.org/effects-of-hunger-on-education/>, accessed on 08.04.2019

²⁶ World Bank, 2017: <https://data.worldbank.org/country/eswatini>, accessed on 08.04.2019

Figure 4: Poverty Trends



Source (C.S.O.): EHIES, 2017

The community members acknowledged that poverty is prevalent in the country at all levels. It is perceived as a lack of access to more than monetary and food deprivations. These include; access to clean water, land, public services, communication networks etc. They suggested that the poverty alleviation initiatives should adopt the consultative approaches, especially in the design and implementation of such projects for it to make a positive impact. Evidently, communities are able to understand and describe poverty as it directly affects their lives. Box 5 below shows a list of deprivations that describe the broader dimension of poverty.

Box 4: Types of poverty deprivations for people living in poverty mentioned during Community and Regional consultations.

- Food (lack of nutritious food to eat in a predictable manner over a period of time).
- Land (arable land for farming, grazing land, commercial land)
- Water (for farming, other livelihoods, cooking and drinking)
- Sanitation (clean toilets and waste management)
- Electricity (for light to study, refrigeration to store foods and run businesses)
- Road (feeder roads), quality roads
- Markets for agricultural produce and livelihood products
- Assets, including shelter, clothing, cattle, income
- Education & Skills Trainings
- Access to public services (such as community infrastructure for meetings, events, schools, bridges, clinics, dip-tanks, and roads).

CHAPTER 3

3.0 THE GAP ANALYSIS AND RESPONSE

3.1 Introduction

Poverty, food and nutrition in Eswatini are governed by a wide range of policies and strategies that address various components of food security and nutrition. This chapter presents analyses of key policies and strategies and how they affect the EZHSR pillars. In view of the cross-cutting nature of national food and nutrition related policies, the analysis of the policy environment is presented in one subsection. Policy and capacity gaps including status on resource flows are presented under each pillar.

3.1.1 Policy and Institutional Environment

Access to adequate food is a basic human right that is guaranteed under various international conventions, which the Kingdom of Eswatini has signed. A number of these global, continental and regional documents relate to food and nutrition security. These include the Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition, the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and its Plan of Action, the Malabo Declaration, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda (Agenda 2030).

The ratification of these conventions demonstrates the country's commitment to effectively ending hunger in the country. Efforts towards the domestication of global frameworks are made through national development policies and strategies aimed at ending hunger and malnutrition. The country's national development agenda is formalized in the National Development Strategy and further aligned with the Strategy for Sustainable Development and Inclusive Growth (SSDIG), which seeks to adopt and domesticate the Agenda 2030 and SDG framework. The frameworks are operationalized through a number of multi-sectoral policies, programme strategies and action plans.

In the food and nutrition sectors the following policies have been developed and are being implemented:

1. The National Food and Nutrition Policy (NFNP) of 2005, has a goal “to ensure a well-nourished and healthy population that contributes effectively to sustainable socio-economic development of the country through multi-sectoral and coordinated efforts”. The policy provides a guide for planning nutrition-sensitive interventions in Eswatini. It aims to inform and influence development through enabling legislation especially regarding food fortification and supplementation, and to promote

mainstreaming of food and nutrition services and concepts into development programs in various sectors.

The policy underpins Eswatini's efforts to enhance sustainability of food systems, smallholder productivity and incomes. It presents policy options on food production and distribution, working towards sustainable food production, efficient use of land and water, enhancing research and extension, improvement of farm operations and mechanisation, improvement of marketing infrastructure, addressing the impact of HIV/AIDS on food production, promoting the role of women and youth in food production, diversification of crop production, direct support to maize production, and the need to improve the effectiveness and targeting food aid.

2. The Draft Comprehensive Agricultural Sector Policy (CASP, 2005) provides policy options and measures necessary to “sustainable agriculture sector development and its contribution to overall economic growth, poverty alleviation, food security and sustainable natural resources management” and forms the basis of food system sustainability and mainstreaming sustainable production systems. It portrays a need to stimulate the “adoption of sustainable rain-fed cropping systems and management practices in high rainfall areas”. CASP strategies include to identify, advocate, introduce and promote management measures that will improve food systems including soil properties and productivity such as agro-forestry, intercropping, conservation agriculture, crop rotations, planting leguminous crops.
3. Other policies in place albeit in draft include: Food Security and Nutrition Policy (FSNP, 2017), Urban Agriculture Policy (UAP, 2017), Agriculture Extension Policy (AEP 2016), Revised Health Policy.
4. The National Climate Change Policy of 2016 aims at developing a sustainable climate-resilient and inclusive low-carbon green society. It has considered policy statements and integrated water resource management, agriculture and food security with special focus on climate smart agriculture, enhancing adaptation and building resilience, climate risk reduction and disaster risk management, resilience and land use among other things.
5. The National Disaster Management Act and Policy (2006) supports food and nutrition security incentives by enabling the country to increase access to food and nutrition during times of shocks resulting from low harvest of the essential foods in the country. The policy also gives mandate on food distribution during emergencies to NDMA and NGOs to enhance food access for all.

6. The Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), the Malabo Declaration on the Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation at SADC level, and the Food and Nutrition Security Strategy (2015-2025) show that food and nutrition insecurity and child stunting levels are still very high in some of the SADC member countries. The CAADP framework for agriculture has ensured the development of the Eswatini National Agricultural Investment Plan (ENAIP).

3.1.2 Policy gap in general

Though the policy environment is conducive for the attainment of food and nutrition security objectives in the country, several policies have remained drafts whilst some have not yet embraced the concept of food and nutrition security in an integrated manner. For example, the CASP is silent on stunting-sensitive strategies and nutrition-sensitive agricultural production systems. Low-income groups in the country continue to have difficulties in meeting their daily requirements for nutritious food intake. The policy environment requires further analysis to ensure the food systems are efficient in enabling equitable access to food by all.

The policy and institutional environment encompasses the people, institutions and processes through which food is produced, processed and brought to consumers. They form the basis for the pillars of the review. Reduction of post-harvest losses is only mentioned as a tool for improving food access but so far there is no specific and dedicated policy statement on food loss.

3.2 Pillar One: Equitable Access to Adequate Food All Year Round

While Eswatini has made progress in pursuing 100 percent equitable access to food, there are still gaps and a lot more efforts are required, particularly on implementing approved policies. Low institutional capacity within the Ministry of Agriculture, especially regarding the coverage capacity of extension service provisions, limits the effectiveness of efforts to enhance food access for all.

3.2.1 Policy response and gap

The Ministry of Agriculture is the primary institution mandated by the Government to ensure the development of agriculture, FNS and hence, meet the target of Pillar 1. The Ministry does so through the development and implementation of policies that ensure access to food. Key policies that contribute to the target of 100 percent access to food include the National Food Security Policy (NFSP 2009), National Framework for Food Security in Schools (2013) and National Agriculture Research Policy. The Comprehensive Agricultural Sector Policy (CASP 2005), Food and Nutrition Policy (FSNP 2017),

Urban Agriculture Policy (UAP 2017) and Agriculture Extension Policy (AEP 2016) are still in draft form yet they are key in the fulfilment of the pillar.

3.2.2 Technical capacity gap

The supply and value chain from inputs for producers to linkages to markets is long and weak with noticeable inefficiencies. Food processing in the agribusiness sector is quite underdeveloped. Significant quantities of key commodities (including maize, vegetables and fruits) remain unprocessed. Most smallholder agribusinesses rely on importation of pre-processed materials from neighbouring South Africa to supply the local market. The coordination between ministries is poor, duties are often duplicated or activities done in isolation. For development partners and NGOs, there are a few if any programmes to assist civil society to facilitate the transition from emergency to development and consequently, programming on building resilience at community and household level remains weak to non-existent.

The Ministry of Agriculture together with development partners and civil society promotes technologies and practices that enhance adaptation and resilience building among farmers through support of climate smart practices. These include conservation agriculture; promotion of drought tolerant/ early maturing crops; promotion of irrigation among smallholder farmers and a variety of other climate smart agricultural activities. The coverage of such efforts still falls far too short of the required level and more farmers are yet to adopt such practices. The Ministry of Education provides school meals to children from grade zero (5 years) to high school. However, children under 5, in particular 6 to 24 months, are not covered by any programme, yet it is the critical age when impacts of malnutrition can be reversed. Various policies only ensure food security in schools – children that do not attend school are not covered by any policy with regards to social protection/ feeding programmes like the ones in Neighbourhood Care Points (NCPs).

3.2.3 Resource flow

The Ministry of Agriculture remains poorly funded to address issues affecting the supply chain of food. Lack of investments in institutions to ensure adequate availability and distribution of food at all times are not sufficient to deliver on their mandate.

Poor investment towards local production resulting from weak linkages between smallholder farmers and local markets create a challenge for farmers to commercialise production that could enable a food secure nation.

3.3 Pillar Two: Zero Stunted Children Less Than Two Years

Eswatini has launched a number of initiatives that are geared towards the reduction of stunting for under-fives years. These initiatives are contained within the Health Sector Strategic Plan, the National Stunting Action Plan and other maternal & child health and HIV and AIDS programmes of the Ministry of health.

Eswatini's NFSP has a nutrition component in which zero stunting is one of the objectives. NFSP links hunger and malnutrition to poverty stating that "malnutrition is prevalent among the poor and vulnerable groups".

3.3.1 Policy response and gap

To combat malnutrition among the poor and vulnerable, the NFSP recommends the promotion and implementation of the National Plan of Action for Nutrition. The gap in the policy is that it does not offer any stunting-specific interventions particularly targeting the first 1000 days of life.

It is crucial to develop, revise, update and harmonise existing acts that relate to food and nutrition and to support enforcement of the Food and Drug Legislation, Nutrition Supplements Regulation, Code of Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes Act, Maternity Protection Act and other related food and nutrition regulations.

The Food Security and Nutrition Policy and the Revised Health Policies have not been finalised. The nature and complexity of problems can change before the full operationalization of the policies and hence, outcomes may not fully address the challenges. Health interventions require a nutrition based approach, particularly against the challenges of HIV, TB and non-communicable diseases (NCDs). However, there is no overall nutrition programme for the health sector that facilitates decentralized interventions to the regional level where they are most needed.

3.3.2 Technical capacity gap

The Stunting Prevention Action Plan (2016-2018) is structured along a mix of ten nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive intervention areas. Guidelines related to zero stunting are being implemented by the Ministry of Health in line with the Health Sector Strategic Plan II and the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative. Recently 14 health facilities and hospitals were assessed and only eight (8) were certified as baby friendly. Together with the slow yielding stunting rate, this indicates weak institutional capacity to address nutrition security programmes in general. The weak coordination capacity of the National

Nutrition Council restrains the multi-sectoral response to nutrition and the implementation of the Stunting Action Plan.

3.3.3 Resource flows and investment gap

Whilst the National Health Sector Strategic Plan (2013-2018) provides a framework for addressing stunting as a national health challenge, budget allocations to the health sector still fall short of the stipulated requirement. Health interventions, including nutrition-specific activities, are not adequately resourced. Current nutrition activities are, to a large extent, supported by development partners. The inadequate resource availability for nutrition activities compromises the effectiveness of the national efforts towards the reduction of stunting in the country.

3.4 Pillar Three: All Food Systems Are Sustainable

3.4.1 Policy response and gap

The Draft Comprehensive Agricultural Sector Policy (CASP, 2005) forms the basis of food system sustainability. It mainstreams sustainable production systems including a policy statement on the need for the “adoption of sustainable rain-fed cropping systems and management practices in high rainfall areas”. Strategies of CASP include identifying, advocating, introducing and promoting management measures that will improve soil properties and productivity (such as agro-forestry, intercropping, conservation agriculture, crop rotations, and planting leguminous crops).

The advent of climate change has revolutionised the concept of sustainability of food production in Eswatini. Various technologies and methods have been applied over the years to support crop and livestock production in climate resilient ways. These include the use of certain hardware (tools and equipment for farming, agro-chemicals and crop varieties) to and software technologies (crop production methods and practices, information and communication technologies). Unfortunately, the policy does not put emphasis on the use of the recommended technologies assigning roles and accountabilities for implementation.

Youth engagement in agriculture is still low especially in rural areas where most farming is done by older men and women. Older people are less likely to adopt new management technologies, invest in infrastructure and practice climate smart agriculture.

As result of structural gaps in policy implementation the efforts to address inefficiencies of the food system remain minimally effective. Beyond the agro-

climatic limitations to sustainability, the food system remains fiscally unsustainable due to high net food imports mostly from South Africa.

The Ministry of Agriculture also implements the Sustainable Agriculture and Infrastructure Development Programme in partnership with the Ministry of Public Works and Transport and other line ministries. The programme is limited as it lacks evidence of effectiveness and is only limited to a small geographical area.

3.5 Pillar Four: 100% Increase in Smallholder Productivity and Incomes

3.5.1 Policy response and gap

The Government of Eswatini formulated the CASP in response to the national vision enshrined in the National Development Strategy (NDS). It gives guidance “on the policy options and measures necessary to enhance sustainable agriculture sector development and its contribution to overall economic growth, poverty alleviation, food security and sustainable natural resources management” (CASP, 2005). The policy, while it sought to establish the Eswatini National Agricultural Investment Plan (ENAIP) as the strategy to implement it, the policy itself remains a draft document. The Ministry of Agriculture promotes commercialisation of subsistence agriculture, however, this policy objective remains poorly implemented as it is only a recommendation of an agribusiness policy and the establishment of an agribusiness unit. This means there is no official policy to support this pillar.

3.5.2 Technical Capacity gap

The ENAIP fits within the broader policy and strategy framework and seeks to coordinate investment and implementation arrangements of existing strategies. However, the implementation of the ENAIP has been slowed down due to factors that affect most Government projects, including limited capacity in Government institutions, poor coordination between different agencies and between government and non-government organisations, limited private investment in the SNL sub-sector and the deterioration in the fiscal position due limiting effectiveness of service provision to small holder farmers.

The Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) outsourced these initiatives to parastatals but without monitoring and evaluation, service delivery improvement may not have been established. The programmes remain largely disjointed and operating independent due to donor requirements. Coordination between these programmes through the value chain is necessary to improve timeliness of services needs and better information between produce markets, smallholder farmers and retailers and manufactures of farm inputs and equipment.

3.5.3 Resource flows and investment gap

The ENAIP requires SZL 10 billion over 10 years. The Government of Eswatini through the MoA allocates about 3 percent of the annual budget to support smallholder farmers. This falls short of the 10 percent the country planned to commit by ratifying the Malabo declaration. Over the last few years, the weak fiscal situation led to slow economic growth and/ or loss of SACU customs revenues and that smaller allocated budgets significantly affect delivery of services to smallholder farmers. A consolidation of all agriculture based budget allocations from all contributing ministries could provide a better overview of the budget the Government of Eswatini provides to resource this pillar.

MoA with funding from various development partners including United Nations Agencies, NGOs and with increasing participation of the private sector and credit service providers has established several agricultural projects/ programmes. These are under the umbrella of the ENAIP and mainly target productivity and income generation of smallholder farmers. See Annex 1 (Table 3).

The country is implementing a number of youth-focused agricultural interventions supported by the Ministry of Agriculture and the private sector. They include the Children and Youth Development Programme (CYDP), Junior Farmer Programme; the Junior Achiever and ENECTUS. These programmes are mainly funded by local donors and complement Government efforts towards achieving food and nutrition security. There is however the need for systematic investment and scaling up the targeting of youth in all regions and particularly in rural areas.

3.6 Pillar Five: Zero Waste or Loss of Food

3.6.1 Policy response and gap

There is no specific policy that target solving food loss related to food systems. Literature reveals that since food loss and wastage have not yet been identified as a major challenge in the country, there is no direct financing that has been advanced to comprehensively address such concerns.

The issue of food loss and food waste across the value chain (from producer to consumer) provides an immense opportunity to increase the supply of food in the country through the implementation of policies that minimise and eliminate food losses and wastage. There is a gap in available information to underline the severity of the problem and a lack of legal policies and frameworks to address food loss and wastage.

3.6.2 Technical capacity gap

The concept of food loss and waste is not adequately understood at all levels (institutional, household and individual levels). The upscaling of processing and preservation of quality agricultural products by the MoA Home Economics Department is designed to increase the availability of nutritious agricultural products throughout the year. Additionally, the Grain Storage Unit under the MoA aims to reduce post-harvest losses for grains mainly through strengthening farmer capacities on post-harvest technologies. These efforts are small in scale and therefore have a negligible effect on the country's challenges. The coverage is very limited and it is determined by the farmer's willingness to engage and adopt the technology.

Poor coordination between producers and markets result in badly timed supply of scheduled commodities against demand. Excessive losses are incurred as cold chain and storage facilities fail to cope with influxes during oversupply periods in the market.

There is minimal disaggregated data and evidence on the magnitude of food losses countrywide. Infrastructural issues including the coverage of grid electricity and improving the state of roads particularly in rural areas need to be addressed. Related units lack appropriate skills in these sectors.

3.6.3 Resource flows and investment gap

There is limited funding towards food loss and wastage because the activities are disjointed and lack a defined framework for both coordination and implementation. Limited efforts are embedded within other programmes along specific mandates of various institutions. While resources may be available through these programmes, there is no way to quantify if they are adequate.

3.7 Pillar Six: Proportion of People Living in Poverty in all its Dimensions Reduced by Half

3.7.1 Policy response and gap

In view of the crosscutting nature of poverty and the high prevalence of poverty in the country particularly in rural areas, the Government is implementing the Poverty Reduction Strategy and Action Programme (PRSAP) aimed at reducing poverty and completely eradicating it by 2022. A number of sectoral policies, strategies, legal instruments, programmes and action plans have been developed and continue to be implemented. However, there is no operational social protection/ anti-poverty programme that is responsive to the needs of people living in poverty. According to the situational analysis, the country has a high

incidence of poverty that requires urgent Government action if the vision 2022 is to be met.

Although there are a few opportunities for livelihood support from a variety of sources, there is no unified funding policy framework for supporting entrepreneurship and livelihoods that offer options for the different strata of the population. Considering the magnitude of rural poverty, the policy of targeting the poor for income generation is currently counterproductive. People in poverty need cash funding resources that will enable them to meet their most basic needs as opposed to investing in livelihoods that take time to realise returns. Additionally, the Youth Fund and Community Poverty Reduction Fund had poor credit management and loan recovery mechanisms to improve loan repayment.

3.7.2 Resources flows and investment gap

There are a number of funding sources available to all people in the country, partly coming from Government (Youth Empowerment Fund, Regional Development Fund, Community Poverty Reduction Fund, social grants for selected population groups including the elderly, orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and people living with disability). These funds enable citizens to have access to basic necessities such as food. There are also a number of Governments and donor funded livelihood and poverty reduction projects that are implemented in various parts of the country, including:

- LUSIP-GEF Sustainable Land Management Project;
- Innovative Beef Value Chain Development Schemes;
- Smallholder Market-Led Project;
- Value Crop and Horticulture Project;
- Lower Usuthu Smallholder Irrigation Project (LUSIP) and Lower Usuthu Smallholder Irrigation Project 2 (LUSIP II Extension);
- Input subsidy programme and the programme and
- Komati Downstream Development Project (KDDP)

The Regional Development Fund (RDF) increased from SZL 80 Million in 2015/16 to SZL 88 million in 2016/17. It is a predictable budget initiative for rural development that is available to all Tinkhundla. It presents a two-sided approach towards income generation and infrastructure development. During community consultations, the infrastructure component was perceived to have contributed significantly to the development of the communities, especially the installation of electricity. The communities were happy with the participatory approaches and the degree of community consultation for the infrastructure projects. Unfortunately, availability of these funds depends highly on limited Government allocations.

3.7.3 Capacity gap

There are capacity gaps that hamper the effective implementation of livelihood programmes and some of these were raised by the communities during the FGDs. These include:

- The equitable distribution by Tinkhundla limits the potential of the fund.
- Projects are misaligned with the development priorities of the area.
- Government and NGO projects were perceived not to be taking advantage of the available local knowledge in terms of utilizing available out-of-school youth for the programmes.
- A review of the RDF is considered long overdue to efficiently increase rural livelihoods
- Lack of an accountable Monitoring and Evaluation Framework to measure impact
- Lack of adequate skills development and markets negatively affects sustainability of income generating activities

3.6.2 Resources flows and investment gaps

The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade launched an Entrepreneurship and Skills Development Programme and raised incomes for participating women and youths, although the proportion of increased incomes cannot be fully established as there has not been an evaluation.

Cash Transfer Programmes have also been rolled out as part of the basket of interventions for social protection, financed by Government and development partners. There is evidence that cash transfers can lead to improved access to food and dietary diversity among poor households. There is a need to ensure that food is available locally so that transfers can translate into a more substantive food basket. Some social protection initiatives are not sustainable and have been implemented only as pilots. Another challenge has been the lack of coordination of initiatives. In general cash transfers have a positive impact as shown in EHIES (2017), that show cash transfers were a significant source of income for some poor households.

Key ministries, namely the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Natural Resources and Energy, Ministry of Health, the Deputy Prime Minister's Office and Ministry of Education and training, are in the food and nutrition security cluster and budget for the sector. It is possible that food and nutrition security programmes specifically aimed at ending hunger might not be accommodated in the national government budget. Being left to development partners to contribute is not sustainable in the long run.

Social protection remains one of the avenues to reduce extreme poverty while also helping to reduce food insecurity. Eswatini's social protection system includes a combination of cash and in-kind transfers, subsidies, public work programs to generate short term employment, social care services and community-based interventions. This support targets the vulnerable populations including the elderly of 60 years and above.

CHAPTER 4

4.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusions

This review has established that Eswatini continues to be challenged by hunger as the country has not yet attained food and nutrition security. The country is food insecure and cannot meet the national dietary requirements for grain, protein and other important nutrients. There is a decline in production levels in all forms and lack of agricultural diversification. Food availability at the household level is also a challenge because of low household production and lack of resources to procure food.

Smallholder farmers have inadequate capacity to engage in commercial agriculture and as such their produce does not meet market demands (both domestic and international). There is poor coordination of the various value chains that will ensure full value for the farmers involved to benefit from their produce. There is lack of access to favourable finance for meaningful investments in agricultural production.

There is evidence of high food loss and wastage. This situation points to the lack of facilities for pre- and post-harvest management (storage and processing) of food. More than half (59 percent) of the country's population survives on less than 2,100 kilocalories per person a day, which shows that the population is unable to acquire the minimum energy intake.

Poverty limits mainly the rural communities' ability to invest in their livelihoods including food and nutrition security. The impact of the food and nutrition insecurity has resulted in a high rate of stunting (23.6 percent) among children under five years. This in turn increases the burden on public, social services and health cost incurred by the Government, communities and affected families. Although hunger results from many factors, with these conditions, the country is not in a position to end hunger by 2030 unless more concerted efforts are channelled to the attain SDG 2 and other related SDG targets.

The country has, for a long time, prioritised agricultural production and productivity in its national development frameworks that include the National Development Strategy (NDS) and most recently the Strategy for Sustainable Development and Inclusive Growth (SSDIG) 2030, which embraces inclusive socio-economic growth. These policies and programmes cut across sectors (agriculture, health, energy, environment, climate change & disaster management, education and natural resources). They aim to provide a clear guidance on policy options and measures necessary to enhance sustainable

agriculture development and its contribution to overall economic growth, poverty alleviation, food & nutrition security and sustainable natural resource management.

Persistent gaps, particularly in policy implementation, have reduced the effectiveness towards reducing hunger and malnutrition in the country. Gaps include legislation with some policies remaining in draft form as well as weak enforcement of some of the policies and low investment from national resources to food and nutrition security programmes. National budgets to food and nutrition security have not yet reached the regional and global targets.

This includes lack of investment for the development of smallholder farmers to ensure optimal market led and diverse agricultural production and productivity. Investments would include revolving loans and grants, subsidised farming equipment and inputs, and other agricultural infrastructure.

Programme implementation is also held back due to a lack of capacity in human resources (numbers and skills) to provide technical extension services and support to (particularly smallholder) farmers in SNL. The agriculture sector is not equipped well regarding climate smart technologies or coverage is very low. Equitable use of the natural resources (land, water for agriculture and water harvesting) to enhance diverse agricultural production remains a challenge. Coordination capacity for a multi-sectoral response to food and nutrition security programmes in the country remains weak.

To address the Zero Hunger Challenge, the Kingdom of Eswatini needs to ensure to mitigate major drivers of food and nutrition insecurity in the country, namely: inadequate availability of food all year round; lack of a comprehensive framework for sustainable food systems; weak capacity of smallholder farmers; food loss and wastage; and widespread poverty among rural households.

The Review concludes as follows:

Access to adequate food all year round:

The country is unable to make food adequately available all year round (particularly at household level) as maize production falls short by 50 percent of national requirements. As result of the widespread poverty, access to food all year round is a challenge particularly for the poorest groups who are mainly rural dwellers. Major causes include:

1. Low production of households and private sector because of high input costs and use of costly methods.
2. Low levels of food self-sufficiency in animal products, especially beef and dairy products.

3. Poor food access, compounded by poor road and communication infrastructure, as well as government intervention in markets.
4. Over-reliance on imports increasing household vulnerability to external shocks.

Zero Stunted Children Less Than Two Years:

Child malnutrition is declining in Eswatini but stunting remains a major challenge affecting about a quarter of the children under five years. Evidence shows that stunting is prevalent among infants as young as zero months, which confirms that it starts right after conception. Malnutrition is primarily caused by a lack of adequate and diverse foods for both the mother and the infant. Other indirect causes include environmental, socioeconomic and cultural factors, poor maternal and child health, poor child feeding practices and inadequate parental care. The confounding complexity of causes provides a critical point for renewed focus that requires nutrition-specific interventions targeting the first 1000 days of life and continuing through the reproductive life of women and girls.

All Food Systems Are Sustainable:

Food systems in the country remain underdeveloped particularly in food production and processing. The primary cause of the challenge includes the lack of a comprehensive framework for sustainable food systems.

Over the last few decades climate change has negatively impacted the country's food systems, resulting in weakened capacity in food production. In turn, these compromise current production trends.

Agro-dealers play an important role in the supply of inputs and the efficient functioning of Eswatini's food sector. Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), like conservation agriculture, agroforestry and other climate smart technologies, despite notable awareness, are not practiced enough to prevent harmful environmental factors that may threaten future generations. Processing and preservation of basic agricultural food products used at the household level still fall short. Along the value chain there is no incentive to support continued application of GAPs and cost recovery.

Increase in Smallholder Productivity and Incomes:

Maize yields fluctuate according to rainfall and average at about 1.33 tonnes/ha, which is below the potential of 5.5 tonnes/ha. This is mainly due to low investments by smallholder farmers in SNL compared to TDL. In addition, the productivity of Eswatini's cattle herd is low with an off-take rate of only 7 percent producing around 10,600 tonnes of carcass weight. Productivity of livestock in communal areas is generally constrained by poor management of

grazing land and low off-take rates as well as structural exclusion from the formal markets that offer better pricing. Government and partners have invested heavily to support farmers in this regard but the efforts are not sufficient to bring about a 100 percent increase in smallholder farmers productivity and incomes.

Zero Food Loss and Waste:

The country experiences food losses of up to 50 percent for some value chains. Overall post-production food losses average at 30 percent for all food items. There is no evidence to substantiate the quantities of food wasted at consumption level, yet it is acknowledged that it is an issue of concern. Most households do not have proper storage facilities and the few that preserve food have limited knowledge and skills in appropriate methods.

Proportion of People Living in Poverty in All its Dimensions Reduced by Half:

The study ascertained that 58.9 percent of the population is poor and live below USD 2.3 per day (Eswatini threshold). Reducing poverty in Eswatini will require the country to improve targeting in social protection interventions, address structural causes of unemployment and inequality, land access & investment and gender disparities. Given the link between poverty and hunger, social protection interventions will provide immediate responses while long term policy interventions need to be considered also.

4.2 Recommendations

The strategic recommendations emanate from the comprehensive analysis of the responses from consultations with different stakeholders as well as the review of secondary data and literature. Pillar-specific recommendations are followed by the ones that focus on policy reforms cutting across the pillars.

4.2.1 Policy reforms:

It is recommended that existing policies be fully integrated and implemented through alignment with NDS/SSDIG targets. The country needs to develop, finalize and endorse legal and policy instruments that will enforce the implementation of food and nutrition related policies, such as the (draft) Land Policy, CASP and the NFNP. Operational plans that can be considered for review include those on food and nutrition security; water for agriculture, forestry, rural development, livestock; health, climate change and youth development programmes.

4.2.2 Multi-sectoral Approach in Food and Nutrition Security:

Many of the institutions and programs in country operate in silos with little institutional coordination to support multi-sectoral approaches to food and nutrition security. The Review recommends the restructuring of functions and roles of the National Nutrition Council to encompass a broader spectrum of food and nutrition in its core mandate.

4.2.3 Knowledge Generation and Management:

There is inadequate data to inform policy implementation and programme monitoring across all pillars of the ZHSR, yet effective development programming requires comprehensive knowledge management. To inform policy and programme implementation - research, monitoring and evaluation need to be an integral part of knowledge management.

An annual review of stakeholders in the food and nutrition sector should be provided with the necessary knowledge and tools so as to make effective decisions.

4.2.4 Pillar-Specific Recommendations

Pillar 1 - 100% Access to Adequate Food All Year Round

Create an enabling environment to increase food production and employment opportunities that will allow the private sector to contribute to food security.

Specific recommendations

- Review agricultural trade policies to stimulate food production.
- Promote private sector-led agricultural engagements in policies, regulations, etc.
- Establish a register of farmers (e-registration) to facilitate management of farming in the country (increase knowledge on production potential, assist farmers in accessing markets, improve access to finance for meeting production costs, increase capacity of production).
- Promote market-led production and investment in smallholder farmers.
- Facilitate timely and effective agricultural subsidies and services.
- Lease out unutilised land including government farms, private farms and SNLs to farmers (private and public) including women farmers.
- Increase investment in rural infrastructure to improve access to markets.
- Improve technologies that can enhance diversification, sustainable production and productivity.
- Improve and intensify adherence to climate smart technologies and standards to strengthen resilience.

- Promote urban agriculture to improve food security.
- Combat high production costs and support local farmers to target high value crops for export.
- Expand social protection systems to sustain the growth of smallholder farmer-led food availability.
- Strengthening coordination between policies, programmes and ministries that speak to food access; particularly the NDC, CASP, the NFSP and their derivative programmes.

Pillar 2: Zero Stunted Children Less than 2 Years

The Government should strengthen and improve maternal and child health programmes with a special focus on nutrition interventions targeting the first 1000 days.

Specific Recommendations

- Establish and implement a Common Results Framework that brings together the Ministries of Agriculture, Education and Training, and Health to foster a multi-sectoral approach to the national response to malnutrition.
- Build and/or strengthen capacity of girls, pregnant women, caregivers and fathers on food and nutrition.
- Expedite the finalisation of the draft National Food and Nutrition Policy and other related policies and legal frameworks.
- Scale up Infant and Young Child Feeding, ante- & post-natal programmes including child growth monitoring.
- Develop and enforce food and dietary guidelines and standards.
- Promote production and consumption of traditional drought tolerant crops, diversified diets and recipes, and more diversified agricultural products (crops, livestock, and other alternative protein food sources) that are rich in micronutrients; and train farmers and households in processing and food handling.
- Develop and implement a Social Behaviour Change Communication programme in Nutrition and Sanitation to enhance understanding at community-level on nutrition with a special focus on children under 2 years.
- Strengthen nutrition in health promotion strategies and service delivery capacities in primary health care systems and community-based care to prevent stunting and acute malnutrition

Pillar 3: All Food Systems Are Sustainable

Review legislation and policies that address efficiencies in sustainable food systems.

Specific recommendations:

- Review existing policies to ensure their realignment and linkages for improved agricultural food production systems.
- Provide enabling infrastructure with requisite capacities for the efficient functioning of the food systems. Ensure industry adherence to set quality market standards, technologies and practices for climate smart agriculture that will mitigate the effects of climate change for improved productivity.
- Strengthen monitoring and regulation of food safety standards for all markets.
- Promote Private Public Partnerships / collaboration in sustainable food system development.

Pillar 4: 100% Increase in Smallholder Productivity and Income

Strengthen capacity and export market-led production and processing for smallholder farmers. Facilitate the exploitation of international treaties for agricultural export quotas. Strengthen access to credit to boost production capacity with assured market access.

Specific recommendations:

- Establish an agribusiness unit that will organize local smallholder farmers for market-led production.
- Develop a social protection policy framework that targets smallholder farmers to increase productivity and income.
- Strengthen water harvesting techniques for enhanced irrigation purposes.
- Build demand-driven approach to extension services cost borne by the farmers.
- Improve infrastructure development and the information systems linking farmers to markets (domestic and international).
- Strengthen agricultural marketing information systems linking farmers to markets.
- Provide access to tailor-made credit facilities for smallholder farmers including women with favourable terms.
- Review and strengthen the capacity of agricultural parastatals (ESWADE, Cotton Board, ESDB, NAMBoard, NMC) so they can deliver on their mandate.
- Fast-track effective implementations of special economic zones to include agriculture.
- Strengthen capacity of smallholder farmers in diverse food production (crops, livestock, horticulture) using the latest technologies and throughout the value chain.

- Strengthen capacity of farmer organisations for collaboration towards sustained production and access to market.

Pillar 5: Zero Loss or Waste of Food

Strengthen pre- and post-harvest management throughout the value chain to prevent food losses.

Specific recommendations

- Strengthen technical agricultural extension services to reduce pre- and post-harvest losses.
- Improve storage and aggregation infrastructures (e.g. pack-houses) to enable access to markets.
- Strengthen capacity of farmers on harvesting, storage, processing and preservation of food.
- Support initiatives to increase knowledge and capacity on household food storage, preparation and preservation with an effort to retain quality and nutritional value.
- Develop and enforce policy guidelines on food waste and loss.

Pillar 6: Proportion of People Living in Poverty in All its Dimensions Reduced by Half

Implement development initiatives targeting the multidimensional nature of poverty, particularly the rural poor.

Specific recommendations

- Strengthen social protection programmes (food for work, micro-saving schemes, food assistance, cash transfers, basic income grants etc.)
- Invest in life skills development to ensure improved alternative livelihoods for the marginalized (rural poor, men and youth).
- Strengthen the coordination of poverty reduction initiatives that positively impact poverty and food insecurity reduction initiatives.
- Strengthen small livestock production and food & nutrition gardens.

Annex 1:

Table 3: Selected poverty reduction programmes in the country (RDF, Youth Fund)

Programme/Project	Project/Programme Features
Komati Downstream Development Project (KDDP)	Began in 1999 to reduce poverty, increase household income and enhance food security through providing irrigation, business development, facilitate provision of credit. Programme saw smallholder farmers establish and irrigate farms for sugarcane (4,616 ha); crops (590ha); 27 greenhouse tunnels constructed; establishment of 74 livestock projects including dairy, poultry, piggery, rabbits, fisheries.
Input subsidy programme and the programme	The programme was designed to assist the country attain national self- sufficiency in maize by reaching the national grain requirement of 140,000 MT maize per year.
Lower Usuthu Smallholder Irrigation Project (LUSIP) and Lower Usuthu Smallholder Irrigation Project 2 (LUSIP II Extension)	Poverty reduction programme through commercialization and intensification of agriculture. Provides irrigation infrastructure, policy and legal framework for smallholder irrigation, and establish farmer-managed institutions, benefiting 4600 households under LUSIP.
High Value Crop and Horticulture Project	Provision of water infrastructure, downstream irrigation and SME development, extension services SWADE and NAMBOARD collaboration to provide market opportunities and locally produced food in the market. National, regional and international markets; market information system.
Smallholder Market-Led Project	To be implemented in 37 chiefdoms in three regions with the aim of increasing production, productivity and commercialization of smallholder rain-fed agriculture while maintaining a sustainable and resilient environment (climate smart) for the reduction of poverty and food insecurity.

Innovative Beef Value Chain Development Schemes	Improve livelihoods of smallholder beef cattle farmers in LUSIP who are either facing grazing constraints, or are potential feedlot operators.
LUSIP-GEF Sustainable Land Management Project	Improve livelihoods and food security while promoting sustainable land management practices, reducing land degradation, biodiversity loss and mitigate climate change leading. Implemented in 11 chiefdoms in Eswatini.

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APPENDIX: STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

Institutions	Priority intervention areas Activities and coverage	Gaps
GOVERNMENT OF ESWATINI INSTITUTIONS		
Ministry of Agriculture (Crops/Livestock , Agricultural Economics Home Economics Unit)	All areas of agriculture food security, nutrition. Activities 2017-18:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on key priorities and to target programmes more strategically in an informed manner rather than blanket support for everyone on SNL • Funding for the Home Economics department to expand to beyond 100 households. • Institutional Capacity, especially with regard to the coverage capacity of Extension Service Provision.
	Indigenous chicken Production: 2139 farmers trained, on commercialization of indigenous chicken. Result: 21 850 birds sold for about E1.2 million	
	Pig Production: 768 farmers trained. Result: Over E38 million generated for the year	
	Grazing Land Management: Result: 400 farmers trained	
	Beef Production: 230 farmers trained on feedlot production, supplementary feeding, disease control, marketing etc Radio broadcasts. Result: Livestock auction sales generated more than E1.3 million for farmers	
	Livestock marketing and linking farmers to markets. Result: 325 farmers trained	
	Goat production: Market survey for goat meat identified 30 potential local markets. Result: 110 pioneer commercial goat farmers identified and trained	
	Extension:32, 751 farmers trained on various aspects of agriculture	
	Commercialization of vegetable production:3892 farmers trained. Result: 1079.8 ha planted with vegetables and green mealies and 41 vegetable schemes on 354.3ha	

Institutions	Priority intervention areas Activities and coverage	Gaps
	<p>involved in vegetable production</p> <p>Fruit production and orchard management :445 farmers trained; Result: 30,321 fruit trees seedlings purchased from SA for farmers105,160 fruit trees produced and distributed to farmers through the Swazi.17990 fruit trees for homestead and 2800 fruit trees for schools distributed for the Tinkhundla fruit project</p> <p>Crop storage technology, crib construction and pest management: Result: 5064 farmers provided with advice, information and training</p> <p>Analysis of food products for presence of aflatoxins: Result: 120 samples out of 2116 tested positive = high potential for food poisoning</p>	
	Other activities Soil testing; Seed quality control: Mechanization workshop on tractor and implement maintenance; Tractor hire service to farmers; Mushroom development:	
Deputy Prime Minister's Office	Social Protection (Children, Disability, Elderly) and Disaster Management	Services not fully decentralized
Ministry of Economic Planning Development (MPP, PRMU, ACMS)	Policy design, implementation and monitoring (NDS, SSIDG) Micro-projects Programme infrastructure development and RDF implementation. Promoting income generating projects Poverty Reduction and Monitoring Unit (PRMU) ACMS is the donor coordination arm of the MEPD.	Improving coordination and Policy Prioritisation in an environment of limited sources of funding. M+E capacity is needed.
Ministry of	Poverty Reduction, Community	Lack of Community

Institutions	Priority intervention areas Activities and coverage	Gaps
Tinkhundla, Administration & Development	Development; Local Governance and Decentralisation	Development Action Plans, with own Implementation Strategies and budgets.
Ministry of Health-National Nutrition Council	SNNC was established through an act of parliament in 1949, it was originally based in the Ministry of Agriculture. Now in Ministry of Health. It is in transition, toggling between designing and implementing policies and projects for preventing malnutrition (stunting).	Revise the Institutional Set Up: Nutrition funding is extremely limited
Ministry of Education and Training	School Feeding	
Ministry of Finance (Microfinance Unit)	Policy environment for microfinance The Microfinance Unit (MU) is born out of a recognition of the contribution of micro finance sector to economic growth. MU is responsible for the business development aspect of entities in collaboration with (SEDCO, CTC, and Ministry of Agriculture for their technical capacities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring of grants vs loans for different target groups; e.g. youth, women etc. • Training on record management; -support in linking enterprises to market opportunities
Ministry of Labour and Social security	Social Security	
PARASTATALS		
NAMBOARD	Markets for vegetables and meat. Regulates market prices. Import substitution and trade promotion. NAMBoard has the power to stop certain imports.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separation of duties (either a regulator or a marketing agency). • Provide farmer insurance. • Production of drought resistant crops

Institutions	Priority intervention areas Activities and coverage	Gaps
SME Unit	Creating an enabling environment for SMEs	
NMC	<p>NMC started in 1985 (from CCU) – silos inherited from CCU. Located at Matsapha, and regional silos in ka Langa, ntjonjeni, ngwempisi, madulini (5)</p> <p>NMC has distribution centres, low production areas (11) – these are warehouses storing maize in 50 – 75 kg bags. Warehouse management is sub-contracted to local business people.</p> <p>NMC is regulated by Namboard. Provides NMC with permit to import when there is production deficit.</p> <p>.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No nutrition mainstreamed in promotion of maize production and marketing. • Eswatini Definition and Profile of a farmer is a gap • Budgets are not accurate.
NDMA	Disaster Management	
SEDCO	<p>The mandate to support the sustainability of SMEs in Eswatini.</p> <p>OHOP Programme; ‘one household, one product’</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured markets for farming households such as at schools. • Dependency syndrome. • Donor fatigue
ESWADE	<p>Food Availability Access, and Market Access</p> <p>The Eswatini Water & Agricultural Development Enterprise Limited (ESWADE), a project implementing parastatal organisation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The coverage is limited. • The cost is high and so is the dependency on external funding. • There is no link between lessons learnt and policy reform.
CIVIL SOCIETY (NON- STATE ACTORS)		
FSE	Umbrella for businesses; Social Protection for Employees Exploring impact of taxing employee social benefits (food, scholarship, medical, accommodation etc.	

Institutions	Priority intervention areas Activities and coverage	Gaps
CANGO – food security consortium	Farming, conservation agriculture, WASH, Nutrition and Food Security	
ACAT	Agricultural production and marketing support to communities	
World Vision	All community poverty reduction programmes	
Red Cross Eswatini	Emergency Response	
SINAN / IBFAN	Breastfeeding promotion in an environment of high HIV and AIDS prevalence.	
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNER AGENCIES		
UN Social Protection & UNDAF Pillar 1 Group	UNDP, WHO, WFP, UNICEF, FAO, UNFPA. UNICEF is also looking at non-income poverty; Multi-dimensional measures of child poverty with MEPD. To identify the baseline, high risk areas where children suffer from multiple deprivations. UNICEF leads with EU on the development of the Social Protection policy. Looking primarily at Case + Care options together with the EU.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target finalisation of Food and Nutrition Policy, an updated Strategy. There is a plan to create a Nutrition Unit in the Ministry of Health. Aim is for a full time international consultant to support this unit.
EU	Social Protection, Agriculture (sugar and horticulture)	
African Development Bank	Five priority sectors for lending and non-lending; Agriculture, Water, Transport, Energy and Public Finance Management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A recent review identified gaps in; Marketing, Diversification of Crops, Focus on Pro-poor infrastructure development.