



Country: Eswatini

Initiation Plan

Project Title: Crisis Stabilization and Recovery Project

Expected UNSDCF Outcome:

Outcome 1: By 2025, women, men and youth, including marginalized persons, contribute to and benefit from economic progress, through greater access to decent employment, equitable social economic opportunities, sustainable enterprise opportunities as well as resilient, financially sustainable social protection systems.

Expected CPD Output(s):

Output 1.4: Data and risk informed development policies, plans, systems and financing incorporate integrated and gender responsive solutions to reduce disaster risks, enable climate change adaptation and mitigation

Output 2.2: National coordination capacities for economic recovery strengthened with special attention on COVID-19 economic impact

Output 2.1: Capacities developed across whole of government and Parliament to integrate SDGs and human rights including gender equality into national planning and budgets

Initiation Plan Start/End Dates: 01/10 /2021 – 31/12/2022

Implementing Partner:

Ministry of Economic Planning

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Brief Description

The Kingdom of Eswatini is faced with slow growth, fiscal crisis, high levels of unemployment, rising poverty and inequality – a situation that has been further amplified by the COVID -19 pandemic. The socioeconomic conditions in Eswatini continues to highlight the need for renewed focus to support the country’s government and institutions to consolidate recent development gains and effectively address the challenges that remain. With the growing need for peaceful dialogue and a political solution to the worsening flagrant situation, an integrated and coordinated response from government, private sector, civil society, and development partners is urgently needed in order to stabilize the situation and transition the country towards recovery and sustained social and economic growth.

Programme Period: 2021-2022 _____

Atlas Project Number: _____

Atlas Output ID: _____

Gender Marker: Gen 2 _____

Total resources required \$100 000 _____

Total allocated resources: _\$100 000 _____

- Regular _\$100 000 _____
- Other:
 - Donor _____
 - Donor _____
 - Government _____

Unfunded budget: _____

In-kind Contributions _____

Agreed by UNDP:



18-Oct-2021



Purpose and Expected Output

Background and purpose

The socioeconomic conditions in Eswatini continues to highlight the need for renewed focus to support the country's government and institutions to consolidate recent development gains and effectively address the challenges that remain. The UNDP Strategic offer provides a foundation for the Eswatini Country Office (CO) to mirror the solutions required by the country. Amid progress, the country is still experiencing High levels of Poverty at 59% of the population with 20.1% still living in extreme poverty, Youth unemployment is also a challenge – currently at 46%. The COVID-19 pandemic aggravated Eswatini's fragile economic situation of subdued growth, averaging 1.7% per annum during 2014-2019, due to mounting fiscal challenges, difficult external environment, and impact of the 2015/16 drought. Besides economic stress, Eswatini remains vulnerable to extreme weather events and associated disasters such tropical storms and droughts exacerbated by climate change. The climate change induced natural disasters that have beleaguered the country are a testament of the Anthropocene the world has entered (Human Development Report 2020) and have negatively affected livelihoods and eroded economic development gains of the country.

The challenges the country is facing because of the global pandemic is further impacted by the breakout of civil unrest that was largely influenced by increasing levels of poverty and inequality (Eswatini ranked below medium HDI countries on inequality with a value of 0.432) and triggered by the government's suspension of delivery of political petitions through the Constituency Structures. The protests and looting that occurred in many parts of the country were estimated to have caused damage amounting to E3 billion (US\$ 210 million) and the loss of 5,000 jobs. About 70 persons lost their lives in the unrest and thousands had their sources of livelihoods negatively impacted. With Eswatini being a net importer of food, border closures impacted negatively on food supplies, placing an estimated 27 percent of the population at risk of food insecurity. Food prices spiked, with prices of bread doubling, due to the sudden increase in demand for food items as people tried to stock food supplies due to the uncertainty brough about by the civil unrest. The Government declared a curfew and deployed security forces on the ground to stabilize the situation.

On 19 July 2021, the King appointed a new Prime Minister for the country. However, this appointment has failed to quell public discontent and demands and was opposed by several stakeholders, foremost of whom is the Public Sector Association of Eswatini which questioned the integrity and capacity of the newly appointed Prime Minister and also the basis of his selection and appointment. The appointment has not heralded a shift in the government's handling of the situation, treating the public clamour for democratic reform as a security matter and further tightening its grip on the public dissent. On 25 July, the Government arrested two Members of Parliament identified as leading the calls for reform and accused them of contravening the Suppression of Terrorism Act, as well as the Coronavirus (COVID-19) regulations of 2020 under the Disaster Management Act. The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), representing the biggest organization of workers in the country, has joined the call for reform demanding a series of short and long-term actions which if Government does not make firm commitment will result to widescale industrial action on August 6. Protests in all corners of the country continue to be organized and responded to through violent dispersals using firearms.

The situation in Eswatini is anticipated to be drawn out engagement with potential for more violence, leading to more loss of lives and aggravating already declining economic condition, high unemployment, loss of livelihoods, and lack of opportunity for engagement in local decision making processes. With the growing need for peaceful dialogue and a political solution to the worsening flagrant situation, an integrated and coordinated response from government, private sector, civil society, and development partners is urgently needed in order to stabilize the situation and transition the country towards recovery and sustained social and economic growth.

Project outputs

The main objective of the project is to support Government and civil society in crisis management and facilitate a transition towards recovery and stability through a transparent, non-violent, and productive engagement. To achieve the above objective, the project proposes the following outputs:

Output 1: Strengthen the coordination role of the Government in crisis management and just transition to recovery

Under this output, the project will support national structures to coordinate response and recovery efforts in relation to the multi-faceted crisis. A Senior Crisis Management and Recovery Advisor will support the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development (MEPD) and the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) to ensure a coordinated approach to the handling of the crisis with specific focus on addressing the root causes of the crisis through response and recovery programming. The primary focus of UNDP action will be influencing government response towards upholding human rights and addressing the economic impact of COVID-19 (aggravated by the current violence) on livelihoods, income, and food security. Through this intervention, the project will strengthen the capacity of the government in ensuring a coordinated approach and the realignment of resources that support the management of current and future multiple and complex crises.

Output 2: Development of integrated Crisis Stabilization and Recovery Strategy and Plan

UNDP is currently supporting the Government of Eswatini in finalizing a COVID-19 Recovery Needs' Assessment (CRNA), which is built on the current private sector-led recovery plan, the Eswatini Master Plan, and other planning and programming instruments of Government. This project will build on this exercise by expanding the scope of the CRNA to assess and analyze the socio-economic impact of protest. Furthermore, UNDP will develop together with government, civil society, private sector, and development partners an integrated strategy that will ensure the stabilization and recovery of the country from the crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic. Special focus will also be made on youth and vulnerable segments of the society who have been hard hit by both crises. The strategy will inform the development of a medium-term Crisis Stabilization and Recovery Plan that is specifically primed at addressing the issues of unemployment and loss of livelihoods, food insecurity, lack of empowerment, and poverty that has become more pronounced from the ongoing crisis and enable the country to recover from the shocks of the crisis and the pandemic. To ensure that the Crisis Stabilization and Recovery Plan is implemented, a resource mobilization strategy will be developed for the financing and realization of set Plan objectives. The tracking of investments and response and recovery actions/initiatives will be captured through the regular MEPD development monitoring system and reported regularly and widely through Government and civil society platforms and mechanisms.

UNDP will consolidate its position and influence from Government and civil society to establish a transparent, inclusive, and participatory coordination mechanism for issues sparking the crisis to be discussed and for solutions to be explored. A multi-stakeholder platform comprised of donor partners, UN agencies, government, and civil society will be established to afford partners with a better understanding of the root causes and impact of the crisis (in addition to COVID-19) and develop a coordinated response from all stakeholders towards stability and recovery.

Management Arrangements

The project will be implemented under the Sustainable Inclusive Growth Portfolio. UNDP Eswatini shall be responsible for the overall management and implementation of the project. The project will be implemented through DIM. In the course of implementation, the Eswatini CO will ensure to conduct continuous assessment and analysis of the evolving situation and engage with key UN agencies and partners to leverage comparative

advantages and build on existing complementarities. This project has a strong government, civil society, and youth engagement which will be further strengthened.

Project Implementation will be mainly through direct implementation modality however, it is expected that UN agencies agreements will be utilized in the delivery of the project. Quality assurance will be provided through supervision and weekly reporting under the Sustainable Inclusive Growth Portfolio. The Portfolio board for the Sustainable Inclusive Economic Growth will perform the functions of the project board which will provide oversight and strategic direction. The project partners will be the Ministry of Economic Planning and the National Disaster Management Agency. UNDP will undertake joint operations especially – monitoring and procurement with other partners, at the request of the national partners, so as to improve the cost effectiveness of project.

Monitoring

The monitoring functions will be fulfilled by UNDP Eswatini's PiP management and implementation team following UNDP regular monitoring procedures.

- The Resident Representative will oversee to provide quality assurance and ensure that the activities to ensure that the objectives and goals set in the PIP are met.
- Quarterly progress reports will be prepared, and inputs into UNDP Eswatini's ROAR will be provided in line with UNDP Programme and Project Management Policy. More frequent informal written and oral briefings will be considered and agreed, with prospective donors, once the project is launched.
- There will be a deliberate collaboration with all partners including UN agencies supporting the implementation of the activities.
- A light M&E Framework will be developed, including a system for monitoring the implementation and results. The M&E system will establish baselines and monitor progress against the set indicators in the RRF, collect lessons learnt and provide the basis for adjusting programming. This will also inform the development of a full blown project document before the end of the PiP phase.

Initiation Plan - ANNUAL WORK PLAN

EXPECTED OUTPUTS <i>And baseline, indicators including annual targets</i>	PLANNED ACTIVITIES <i>List activity results and associated actions</i>	TIMEFRAME October 2021 – March 2022			RESPONSIBLE PARTY	PLANNED BUDGET		
		Q4	Q1	Q2		Funding Source	Budget Description	Amount(\$)
Output 1: Strengthen the coordination role of the Government in the crisis management and just transition to recovery:	Activity 1.1. Deployment of Senior Crisis Management and Recovery Advisor for provision of technical advice and support				UNDP	TRAC 3	71200 International consultant:	52 000
	Activity 1.2 Crisis management and recovery coordination meetings with Government Ministries and Parliament						75700 Training, Workshops and Conferencing	4,000
Output 2: Development of integrated Crisis Stabilization and Recovery Strategy and Plan	Activity 2.1: Integrate protest crisis impact analysis into the current CRNA				UNDP	TRAC 3	72100 Contractual Services-Companies	10,000
	Activity 2.2: Organize multi-stakeholders and inclusive meetings, consultations, and validation workshops for widening civic engagement and participation				UNDP	TRAC 3	75700 Training, Workshops and Conferences	10,000
	Activity 2.3: Develop a Financing and Resource Mobilization Strategy				UNDP	TRAC 3	75700 Training, Workshops and Confer	4,000

	Activity 2.4: Adoption and sensitization of the Integrated Stabilization and Recovery Strategy and Plan				UNDP	TRAC 3	74200 Audio Visual & Print Prod Costs	7,000
							75700 Training, Workshops and Confer	5,000
	Activity 2.5: Establish a multi-stakeholder engagement platform on coordinated response and financing of crisis (COVID, Cyclone, and civil unrest) response and recovery efforts				UNDP	TRAC 3	75700 Training, Workshops and Confer	8,000
TOTAL							TRAC 3	\$100 000