



Swaziland

Education for All 2015 National Review

This report was prepared by the relevant national authorities in view of the World Education Forum (Incheon, Republic of Korea, 19-22 May 2015). It was submitted in response to UNESCO's invitation to its Member States to assess progress made since 2000 towards achieving Education for All (EFA).

The views and opinions expressed in this document are those of the authors and do not commit UNESCO. The designations employed and the presentation of material do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of UNESCO concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

The paper can be cited with the following reference: "Education for All 2015 National Review Report: Swaziland". For further information, please contact: efa2015reviews@unesco.org



Education for All



The Swaziland Education For All Review Report, 2000-2015

This report was prepared by the Ministry of Education and Training in Swaziland together with development partners and representatives from the civil society. It was developed in response to UNESCO's invitation to its Member States to assess progress made since 2000 towards achieving Education for All (EFA) and in view of the World Education Forum (Incheon, Republic of Korea, 19-22 May 2015). It was submitted in the UNESCO regional Office in Harare, Zimbabwe in April 2015.

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-------------|
| LIST OF FIGURES..... | ii |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS | v |
| FOREWORD | vi |
| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | viii |
| SECTION 1: THE EDUCATION FOR ALL (EFA) INITIATIVE AND DEVELOPMENTS SINCE 2000 | 1 |
| 1.1 Introduction | 1 |
| 1.2 Main EFA challenges in 2002 and targets for 2015..... | 2 |
| 1.3 Policy Reforms to facilitate the effective implementation of the EFA initiative | 6 |
| 1.4 Legislation and Policies in Education | 7 |
| 1.5 Institutions responsible for implementing EFA and Coordination Mechanism..... | 8 |
| 1.6 Public Financing Education | 8 |
| SECTION 2: PROGRESS TOWARDS EFA AND REMAINING CHALLENGES | 11 |
| SECTION 3: IMPLEMENTATION OF EFA STRATEGIES..... | 41 |
| OVERALL LESSONS LEARNT | 52 |
| LESSONS LEARNT WITH REGARDS TO EACH EFA GOAL | 53 |
| Case Studies..... | 55 |
| SECTION 4: PROSPECTS FOR POST 2015..... | 59 |
| 4.1 Proposed targets on the Post 2015 Education Agenda | 60 |
| 4.2 Operationalization of the Education Agenda..... | 63 |
| 4.2.1 Suggested National benchmarks | 63 |
| 4.3 Implementation Requirements..... | 65 |
| 4.4 Conclusions | 66 |
| REFERENCES..... | 67 |

LIST OF FIGURES

| | |
|---|----|
| Figure 1: Public Expenditure on Education (2000/1 - 2013/14) | 9 |
| Figure 2: Apparent Intake Rate: 1999 – 2012 | 15 |
| Figure 3: Net Intake Rate: 2009 – 2012 | 16 |
| Figure 4: Gross Enrolment Rate; 1999 to 2012..... | 18 |
| Figure 5: Net Enrolment rates Primary: Source AEC, 2012..... | 19 |
| Figure 6: Survival Rates | 20 |
| Figure 7: Repetition Rate at Primary Level 2010- 2012 | 20 |
| Figure 8: Primary to Secondary Transition Rates: 2010 - 2012..... | 21 |
| Figure 7: Distribution of Grade 6 Learners Reading Scores. Source: SACMEQ III, 2007 | 38 |

LIST OF TABLES

| | |
|---|----|
| Table 1: GER: Pre-Primary | 12 |
| Table 2: New Entrants to Grade 1 (2012) | 16 |
| Table 3: Survival Rate: 2012..... | 19 |
| Table 4: No. of Trainees and Trainers by type of Institution | 27 |
| Table 5: Literacy Rates of: 1986-2007..... | 29 |
| Table 6: Gender Parity Primary: GER | 32 |
| Table 7: Gender Parity Primary: NER | 32 |
| Table 8: Gender Parity: Higher Secondary - GER | 32 |
| Table 9: Gender Parity: Higher Secondary - NER | 32 |
| Table 10: Means for the reading and mathematics test scores of Grade 6 Learners: 2007 | 36 |
| Table 11: Reading Competency Levels..... | 37 |
| Table 12: Percentage of Grade 6 learners in Various Reading Competency Levels | 38 |
| Table 13: National benchmark for selected Quality in Primary Education..... | 39 |
| Table 14: Sebenta enrolment 2004 to 2011 | 46 |

ACRONYMS

| | |
|---------|--|
| ABE | Adult Basic Education |
| AEC | Annual Education Census |
| CSTL | Care and Support to Teaching and Learning |
| DHS | Demographic Health Survey |
| ECCD | Early Childhood Care and Development |
| ECCE | Early Childhood Care and Education |
| ECDE | Early Childhood Development Education |
| EFA | Education For All |
| EMIS | Education Management Information System |
| ERS | Economic Recovery Strategy |
| ESSP | Education Sector Strategic Plan |
| EU- SET | European Union Support to Education and Training |
| FDI | Foreign Direct Investment |
| FPE | Free Primary Education Programme |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| HDI | Human Development Index |
| ICT | Information Communication Technology |
| IGCSE | International General Certificate for Secondary Education |
| INSET | In-service Education and Training |
| ISCED | International Standard for the Classification of Education |
| MDD | Millennium Development Declaration |
| MDGs | Millennium Development Goals |
| MoET | Ministry of Education and Training |
| MTEF | Medium Term Expenditure Framework |
| NDP | National Development Plan |
| NDS | National Development Strategy |

| | |
|--------|--|
| NETIP | National Education and Training Improvement Programme |
| NGOs | Non- Governmental Organizations |
| NPE | Non-formal Primary Education Programme |
| NQF | National Qualification Framework |
| NUPE | Non- Formal Upper Primary Education |
| OSISA | Open Society Initiative of Southern Africa |
| OVC | Orphaned and Vulnerable Children |
| PRSAP | Poverty Reduction Strategy and Action Programme |
| REOs | Regional Education Officers |
| SACMEQ | Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality |
| SACU | Southern African Customs Union |
| SELDS | Swaziland Early Learning Development Standards |
| SHR | Sexual Reproductive Health |
| SNI | Sebenta National Institute |
| SPC | Swaziland Primary Certificate |
| SNAP | Swaziland National AIDS Programme |
| TSC | Teaching Service Commission |
| TVET | Technical and Vocational Education and Training |
| UNESCO | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children Education Fund |
| WHO | World Health Organization |

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Ministry of Education and Training would like to make special thanks to all members of the Education sector who made it possible to put together this report. Compiling this report called for the participation of various key stakeholders. Without their active involvement, it would not have been possible to undertake the compilation of the report. These stakeholders include: officials of government ministries, which include the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (School Health Department), the Deputy Prime Minister's Office (Children's unit, Social Welfare department, Gender Unit and Disability unit); representatives from teachers' union, International development partners such as UNESCO and UNICEF; NGOs such as world vision; and academics from the University of Swaziland.

We are also grateful to line Ministries, Non- Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and all other agencies that provided facts and figures that enabled us to produce this report about Swaziland's journey towards realizing the EFA Goals and to share with the rest of the world on what are the prospects for education in Swaziland beyond 2015.

The assistance of the EFA Coordinating Committee and in particular the National EFA Coordinator is greatly appreciated. The EFA coordinator was very key in arranging meetings and consolidating this report.

Lastly, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to all our development partners; UNESCO, UNICEF, the European Union, the Government of the Republic of China on Taiwan, the Government of Japan, PACT, World Vision, NGOs to name a few; for their continued support in the implementation of the EFA as well as in their technical and financial contribution to the development of this report.

FOREWORD

EDUCATION FOR ALL STATUS REPORT 2002 TO 2015, SWAZILAND

It gives me great pleasure to release this Education for All Status report that incorporates a summary of the interventions we have made, and plans to strengthen our education system. This Education for All Status Report 2000- 2015 maps out the progress Swaziland has made in achieving the Dakar goals agreed at the World Education Forum in 2000. The goals agreed in Dakar helped Swaziland to refine the implementation of the National Development Strategy (NDS) of 1997 which guide development and growth of the education and training sector. As a country, we have been able to re- strategize and prioritize education in our national budget resulting in increased spending on education in real terms.

Since 2010, we have made progress in expanding access to primary education for all children including orphans and vulnerable children as well as children with special education needs. We have also made significant progress in improving access to literacy programmes and eliminating inequalities such as rural –urban and gender disparities in primary and secondary education. Furthermore, Swaziland has taken significant steps in terms of providing policy and strategic direction in the provision of Early Childhood Development Programmes through the development of the ECDE Policy (which is still a draft policy) and the adoption of Early Learning and Development Standards.

Despite these achievements, Swaziland still faces a number of challenges. These include the low participation rates at ECCE and secondary education levels, ensuring quality throughout the education system, inefficiencies in the education system, limited role played by the civil society and the private sector in supporting education and training.

The low participation rates at ECCE and secondary education levels are largely attributed to poverty. A majority of children cannot access education due to financial barriers (MICS Report, 2010). Quality and relevance of education have remained one of the priority areas for the education system in Swaziland. In pursuit of these, during 2013, the Ministry with support from partners such as UNICEF, the Open Society Initiative of Southern Africa (OSISA) and the EU started working on the articulation of the ECCE curriculum and the development of a competency based curriculum for the basic education level. The aim is to articulate a strong and coherent curriculum that will provide all learners with skills and competencies necessary for the 21st century. The Ministry with support from partners, continues to roll-out the life skills programme both at primary and secondary education levels. It is expected that it will have a positive impact on the lives of learners leading to safer behaviour patterns. In addition to this, the intervention at secondary education level include offering an education that presents opportunities to a variety of career paths. This is being done

through the introduction of practical subjects that equip learners with essential skills for them to be self-sustainable in future. Special attention is being placed also on improving the learning and teaching of subjects such as Mathematics, Science and ICT.

I extend my grateful thanks to all those who have contributed to this report and more specifically to those who were involved in the implementation of the EFA. Through their contributions, we can take genuine pride in the fact that the outcomes from their work have directly contributed to the economic and social development of Swaziland.

DR. P. L. MAGAGULA
HONOURABLE MINISTER OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

UNESCO Member States were requested to conduct National Education for All (EFA) 2015 Reviews. The Review Reports are meant to document progress made towards the achievement of the 6 EFA goals agreed to at the World Education Forum held in Dakar in the year 2000. It is against this background that the Ministry of Education and Training together with the National Commission for UNESCO in Swaziland initiated to conduct the National EFA Review Report. This National EFA 2015 Review Report, describes and assesses progress that Swaziland has made towards the achievement of Education for All (EFA) goals since 2000. It presents main achievements, strategies that have been employed and obstacles on the road to achieve the EFA goals. Also, the review indicates remaining gaps, lessons learnt and prospects beyond 2015.

Following the adoption of the EFA initiative various strategies were employed leading to the following achievements:

- Improve the regulation and quality of ECCE through registration of ECCE centres, development and adoption of Early Learning and Development Standards and introducing the ECCE teacher training programme in local teacher training institution.
- Increased participation at primary school level, with 95.6% of age appropriate primary school going children accessing primary education in 2012. This was achieved through various strategies such as the introduction of the orphaned and vulnerable children's grant, introduction of state funded primary education, provision of infrastructure and facilities for primary education etc. Evidence from the 2012 education census shows that about 75% of children enrolled in primary education do complete the primary education cycle. It also shows that the transition rate from Grade 7 to Form 1 has been above 90% over the review period.
- Improved participation rate of females in education. The gender parity both at primary and secondary school level is almost 1:1. Since 2000, the ratio of girls to boys in primary education has remained almost constant, averaging 0.93; highlighting that there are more boys enrolled in primary school than girls. However, in Swaziland there are more girls of school going age than boys, and the desired ratio is 1.01. At primary education level, boys are more advantaged compared to girls. The Gender Parity indexes at secondary education level were better than at primary levels. This may be due to the fact that more boys drop out than girls, thus their dropping out may have created a balance. At higher education level, females outnumber males. This is particularly true in teacher training colleges where more than 50% of students enrolled are females. The participation of females in mathematics, science and technical subjects in institutions of higher learning is still less than that of males. However, it is worth noting that in TVET institutions the opposite is true.

- The quality of primary education has continuously been strengthened through curriculum reviews at various levels of education. For example, one of the curriculum reforms that are currently underway is the development of a competency based curriculum and syllabi for both primary and secondary education. A secondary education curriculum is being broadened to offer technical and vocational subjects. Other examples include that the pupil- textbook ratio for core subjects at basic education level has improved over the review period and reached a ratio of 1: 1. Also, the pupil teacher ratio has improved to a ratio of 1:30 with about 75% of primary school teacher being appropriately qualified to teach at the primary education level.
- During the period under review, reforms in the education sector resulted in the Non-formal education (NFE) being given the same status as formal education. This resulted in improved access to NFE through attachments of NFE classes in public primary schools throughout the country to allow for afternoon classes for adults and the youth. The NFE teaching staff were given responsibility for organizing and teaching the youth and adults using the same curriculum as the formal system. In addition to this, a variety of skills and knowledge made available to youths and adults through broadened school education curriculum, technical and vocational training programme provided by the Non- formal Rural Education Centres under the MoET, various line ministries, and through outreach programmes offered by NGOs. Literacy rate for the 15- 24 years age group increased during the period under review. According to the Swaziland Population and Household Census Report of 2007, the literacy rate for the above mentioned aged group was 95.4%. This places Swaziland amongst countries with high literacy rates in Africa.
- Improved quality of learning and teaching. Efforts to improve the quality of teaching and learning resulted in the provision of training of school administrators, expansion of the in- service teacher training programme, expansion and strengthened pre-service teacher training programmes in colleges or universities. The intention is to improve the performance of learners.

Despite all the achievements, Swaziland encountered some challenges on the road to EFA 2015. The key challenges faced are as follows;

- Low participation rate of age eligible children in Early Childhood Care and Education Programmes;
- Lack of quality assurance in the provision of primary and secondary education;
- Existence of a curriculum that is not entirely responsive to the labour market needs;
- Inefficiencies in basic education resulting in high repetition and drop-out rates (above 10%)
- Unattractive conditions of service for teachers;
- Shortage of qualified teachers especially in Mathematics, Science and ICT
- Mainstreaming Special education in schools i.e. provision of facilities for disadvantaged children;

- Poor monitoring and supervision of education programmes;
- Ineffective regulation of private owned education institutions;
- Inadequate financing of education;

In terms of Swaziland's' proposed education agenda beyond 2015, it is important to note that as much as there has been progress towards the achievement of EFA goals, most of the goals have not been fully achieved. There are still gaps that need to be filled thus the country's priorities and prospects beyond EFA 2015 centres around the unfinished business.

SECTION 1: THE EDUCATION FOR ALL (EFA) INITIATIVE AND DEVELOPMENTS SINCE 2000

1.1 Introduction

Swaziland is a small landlocked country in Southern Africa measuring approximately 17 360 square kilometers, with a population of approximately 1 018 449, of whom approximately three quarters reside in rural areas¹. While Swaziland is classified as a middle income country, many economic and social indicators appear to be inconsistent with this classification. Though per capita income was recorded at USD 2,429.75 in 2013, 63 % of the population live in poverty.² According to the Labour Force Survey (2012), unemployment rate stood at 29%.

Swaziland ranks 141 out of 186 countries in the 2012 UNDP Human Development Index (HDI). The HDI for Swaziland currently stands at 53%. This is due to the low life expectancy at birth of 48.8 years resulting from the High HIV/AIDS prevalence rate. During 2012, Swaziland recorded the highest prevalence of HIV in the world of 26.5% (WHO report, 2012).

Swaziland is a member of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), from which it derives a substantial amount of its revenue. SACU receipts have on average constituted over 60 % of the total government revenue over the years, subjecting the country to fiscal difficulties. The real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in Swaziland declined from 0.3% (2011) to -1.5% in 2012 to 0% in 2013 (Central Statistics Office, 2014). The downward spiral was initially triggered mainly by low foreign direct investment.

Prior to the EFA declaration, the Government of Swaziland had already developed and adopted a long term development strategy commonly referred to as the National Development Strategy (NDS). The NDS was adopted in 1999 to provide policy direction and respond to the social development needs of the country. The NDS vision 2022 seeks to place Swaziland *amongst the top 10 percent of medium human development group of countries founded on sustainable economic development, social justice and political stability*. In an effort to operationalize the long term NDS, the Government of Swaziland continued to develop medium term plans referred to as the “National Development Plan (NDP)”. Following the EFA Declaration, Swaziland incorporated interventions in the long term plans to respond to the socio- economic challenges faced by the country. It was expected that these would in turn lead to the achievement of the EFA Goals.

In an effort to operationalize the NDS and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) including the EFA goals, the Government of Swaziland developed and adopted the Poverty Reduction Strategy and Action Programme (PRSAP) in 2007. The PRSAP addresses

¹ Swaziland Household and expenditure survey report, 2010

² <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/swaziland/gdp-per-capita>, retrieved 5th February, 2015 and Swaziland Household and expenditure survey report, 2010

the issue of human capital development in Swaziland with particular focus on providing quality basic education for all, reducing illiteracy and improving participation in quality Vocational Education and Technical Training.

At Ministry level, the EFA Steering committee was established to coordinate all EFA activities and to oversee their implementation. The EFA Steering committee was composed of representatives from all education stakeholders such as development partners, non-governmental organizations, teachers' unions, church based organizations, line ministries that play a role in child development and education and training. The purpose of establishing the steering committee was to ensure that the process towards the achievement of EFA goals by 2015 was collaborative, cooperative and participatory. Following the World Education Forum held in Dakar in year 2000, the Steering committee together with all stakeholders in the education sector developed the EFA Plan of Action in a move towards the achievement of the EFA goals. The steering committee received support and guidance from the National Commission for UNESCO and other development partners. The EFA Plan of Action covered the following:

- A situation analysis of education in Swaziland in 2002;
- The Contextualization of EFA In Swaziland;
- Institutional Arrangements and Management of Education Service Delivery and
- Main Education Sector Issues, Critical Challenges and Recommendations;

The EFA Steering committee was chaired by the EFA Coordinator who worked very closely with the National Commission for UNESCO and participated in regional and sub-regional events on EFA. Despite the strategies, plans and efforts by all stakeholders, Swaziland could not fully achieve all the EFA goals as anticipated. This situation was made worse by the global melt down in 2010/11. The Education sector in Swaziland was not spared as spending on education was reduced significantly. Spending in education declined from 18 % to 16% between 2010/2011 and 2012/13 (Government Estimate book, 2012/2013). In 2011, Swaziland developed the Economic Recovery Strategy (ERS) with a view to turning around the economy.

1.2 Main EFA challenges in 2002 and targets for 2015

Early Childhood Care Education- The role of government is with regards to ECCE in year 2000 was limited to regulation of the sub- sector. Its provision was entrusted upon communities, churches and individuals. The Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) was not responsible for the training, recruitment and engagement of pre-school teachers as well as their remuneration. Pre- primary education was not a prerequisite for entry into primary school. More than a decade after the EFA was launched, the situation has not changed much. The ECCE sub- sector receives support from Government in the form of the provision of inspectors to monitor the quality of education offered; training of ECCE teachers, provision of teaching and learning materials to selected or target ECCE centres. The share of the MOET budget that goes to ECCE is less than 1% and this is not adequate for the operation of this sub-sector.

Basic Education – According to the National EFA Plan of Action 2002, the situation with regards to participation of learners in the education system was such that since year 2000, Swaziland was facing a serious challenge of declining enrolment at primary school level. For example, the total enrollment of primary education declined between 2000 and 2003 by 2.5 percent. As a result, the gross enrollment ratio at primary level had declined steadily from 106.5 percent in 2000 to 93.9 percent in 2003. At secondary school level, the enrollment ratio was found to be mostly stagnant, with slightly over 50 percent at junior secondary level, and around 30 percent at senior secondary level.

Besides declining enrolments, the basic education system was also characterized by low internal inefficiencies (high repetition rates, high dropout rates). The repetition rate was extremely high in Swaziland when compared to policy guidelines/recommendations. The EFA Plan of Action (2002), states that repetition rates average 16 percent in primary school classes in 2003. The highest repetition rates were at grades 1 (18.6 percent) and 3 (18.7 percent). Repetition was also high at secondary level, at 12 percent per grade on average.

It further mentions that the overall drop-out rate in 2003 at primary level was 6.2 percent. By fourth grade, nearly 20 percent of grade 1 pupils had dropped out. Thus, 1 pupil in 5 who commences schooling could not have been regarded as having received even the most desirable basic education in order to make a living. Dropout rates were also high at secondary level. There were only less than 30 percent of school entrants that could achieve 10 years of education, and as low as 13.5 percent finished the secondary cycle.

Equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes - Curriculum and relevance. Since 1980s Swaziland has been gradually revising the curriculum at primary and secondary level. Swaziland's primary curriculum and course syllabus are largely localized with primary textbooks published locally. Curriculum at secondary level has also been revised to be more suitable for Swazi children with assurance of meeting international standards.

Eliminating Gender Disparities- The statistics on enrolment provided by the Central Statistics Office indicated that there were disparities in terms of the number of girls and boys enrolled in schools. The situation as at year 2000 was that there were more boys participation than girls at basic education level.

Improving all aspects of Quality Education- The Quality of education is mainly reflected by learning outcome, which is best measured through the results of standard examinations. According to the EFA Plan of Action (2002), A SACMEQ study conducted at that time came out with results indicating that the quality of basic education in Swaziland is not up to standard. Both reading and mathematics scores of Swazi 6th-graders were much lower than those achieved by students from Kenya and Tanzania, whose GDP per capita was much lower than that of Swaziland. The results from Swaziland's national examinations at the end of primary, junior secondary and senior secondary cycle also indicated many areas of low student performance. At primary and junior secondary level, the poor level of students' vocabulary and

comprehension in English was noted. This was indicated by the percentage of students that had failed due to having failed English language. This also led to the failure of understanding questions thus low performance in other subjects. The O-level examination results showed that the failure rates were high on Mathematics (57.04 percent), Biology (45.40 percent), and Literature English (59.44 percent). In many cases, the learning outcomes were closely related to educational inputs, including teachers, school environment, teaching and learning materials. Other process factors such as classroom dynamics, time in task, learning effort outside classrooms also showed their importance in learning process.

In addition, the EFA Plan of Action (2002) states that on average, the total number of teachers was adequate at both primary and secondary level. The average pupil-teacher ratio at primary and secondary was 31:1 and 13:1 respectively. This was low compared most of the Sub-Saharan African countries. However, the distribution of teachers was quite uneven, since it was possible to find a school with PTR of 20:1, while in other schools (urban) it is 60/70:1.

At secondary level, the most distinctive issue was the lack of mathematics and science teachers. At aggregated level, there was 1 mathematics teacher for every 84 secondary school enrollees on average.

The Government of Swaziland started to provide textbooks to all primary schools starting in 2002. However, the sustainability of textbook provision remained a major challenge particularly with increasing enrollments. The centralized procurement process also left schools with no flexibility of choosing textbooks. At secondary level, schools placed book orders with local booksellers before the beginning of a school year. In some schools books were rented out to pupils on a considerably reduced cost than that of individual direct purchase. Parents paid book rental at a quarter of the book cost thus making education affordable to the Swazi child. However, schools were often in debt to the booksellers due to difficulties of school fee collection. Sometimes there was also no guarantee of timely delivery of textbooks by the booksellers. As for other learning materials, such as exercise books, notebooks, pencils, the shortage was not severe according to 2000 SACMEQ study.

The school census conducted by CSO during year 2000 did not include school facility information, such as the number of classrooms, laboratories and workshops. However Ministry of Education SNAP survey conducted in 2004 provided some information on the status of basic school facilities. The general observation from the survey was that the total number of classrooms was adequate. However, the status of many classrooms did not provide a good learning environment. For example, some classrooms did not have enough lighting fixtures; the windows were either small or too high. Many classrooms did not have enough furniture for all the children and thus some had to use building blocks to sit on. Many of the chairs and desks needed to be repaired in order to provide a conducive learning environment. While many schools tried to provide adequate sanitary conditions such as toilets, it was noted that some did not have enough for the school enrolment.

Years before the EFA initiative, the MoET in Swaziland has introduced the continuous assessment (CA) system as a tool for monitoring and improving the quality of education. The system started with centrally designed tests in all subjects, to all pupils and in all grades of the primary education system; three times a year. This process was gradually decentralized to be administered by teachers at school level. The results of these tests were used by schools to identify the mastery of the lesson objectives and also to determine the progression of children.

In Dakar, 164 countries, including Swaziland, committed themselves to the six goals. The Swaziland EFA Plan of Action clearly articulates the each of the six goals and these are shown below:

GOAL 1: To expand and improve Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) especially for the most vulnerable and dis advantaged groups.

GOAL 2: Ensure that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and are able to complete basic education that is free, compulsory and of good quality.

GOAL 3: To ensure that the learning needs for all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes.

GOAL 4: To achieve a 50% improvement in levels of adult basic literacy by 2015 especially for women and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.

GOAL 5: Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring full and access to achievement in basic education of good quality.

GOAL 6: Improve all aspects of the quality of education and ensure excellence so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills

1.3 Policy Reforms to facilitate the effective implementation of the EFA initiative

The country ratified the Education For All (EFA) Agenda. EFA is a global commitment to basic education taken on by the International community in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990 and reaffirmed at the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal in April 2000.

Swaziland was also amongst the countries that committed to ensuring that the Millennium Development Declaration (MDD) will be met. The common goal in both declarations, the MDD and the EFA, is the attainment of universal primary education by 2015. The constitution of Swaziland adopted in 2005, declared education as a right for every child in the country. This facilitated the introduction of universal primary education that is free and compulsory. As a result of this, Swaziland is on track to achieve, after the progressive roll out of Free Primary Education, which began in Grade 1 and 2 in 2010, and has reached the last grade of primary school in 2015.

In taking the education development agenda forward, the Government - in collaboration with the World Bank and the European Union (through the Support to Education and Training (SET) - undertook a comprehensive Education Sector Review in 2009. The aim was to amass critical knowledge on how the sector could be restructured so that it supports accelerated growth, reduces poverty and enhances the standards of living of the people of Swaziland.

The Review has assisted the Education Sector to consolidate its priorities and has created a key information base for development of two key documents:

- i) Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) in 2010 and
- ii) Education and Training Sector Policy in 2011.

These policy documents provide a strategic and visionary framework for the sector and support the wider context of Vision 2022. The objective is to provide an equitable and inclusive education system that affords all Swazi citizens access to free primary education of real quality, followed by opportunities of life-long education and training, thus enhancing personal development and contributing to Swaziland's cultural development, socio-economic growth and global competitiveness.

The Education Sector Strategic Plan is long term, covering the period from 2010 to 2022. It covers key sub-sectors including Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), General Education (Primary and Secondary Education), Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), Higher Education, and Adult and Non-Formal Education.

With support from EU SET programme and other partners, government has developed an action plan to facilitate the implementation of the ESSP and the sector policy. This action plan is referred to as the National Education and Training Improvement Programme (NETIP) and its focus is to clearly articulate education sector (EDSEC) activities within the short-term period of one to three years.

1.4 Legislation and Policies in Education

Having realized the decrease in enrolment and the growing number of OVCs not in school, the Government of Swaziland through the Ministry of Education announced the waiver of school fees for all orphans and vulnerable children in January 2004. The Snap survey undertaken in April/May 2004 indicated that there was approximately 15% increase over the 2003 enrolment. The sharp increase in enrolment as a result of this policy reform shows that affordability of schools has been one of the most important factors that contribute to declining enrollment. This means that prior to the reform children from poor households could not attend school or if they do, they dropped out due to the difficulties in affording school fees.

The National Constitution of 2005 declares education a right for all Swazis. It further states that primary education shall be “free and compulsory”. Following this, the Government has put in place several policies and legislation which embraces the spirit of EFA agenda. These are the:

- Free Primary Education Act of 2010
- Guidelines for the establishment of Private Education Institutions
- HIV/ AIDS Policy in Education
- Special Education Policy Statement of 2009
- The Technical and Vocational Education and Training and Skills Development (TVETSD) policy of 2010
- The Higher Education Act (2012),
- The National Education and Training Sector Policy

The Ministry of Education and Training is also working tirelessly in reviewing the Education Act, the Teaching Service Commission (TSC) Act and Regulations as well as the School Accounting Rules and Regulation. The Ministry is also at an advanced stage in terms of the finalization and adoption of the following pieces of legislation; The Council of Educators Bill, The Examinations Council Bill and the Sebenta Bill (for regulation of non-formal education). Other policies that are being developed are the ECCDE policy and the Science, Mathematics and Technology Education policy.

Outside the education arena, other Acts of Parliament and policy frameworks have impelled the efforts to achieve the EFA goals. These include the National Gender Policy of 2010, Children’s Protection and Welfare Act of 2012, the Swaziland National Children Policy of 2012, School Health Policy 2014, National Disability Policy of 2013 etc. Swaziland has built on these foundations to progress towards the achievement of EFA goals by 2015.

1.5 Institutions responsible for implementing EFA and Coordination Mechanism

Coordination of actions and activities towards achieving EFA goals has been done by a National EFA Steering Committee. The committee is made up of officials from different government ministries (e.g. Education, health, Deputy Prime Ministers office responsible for children's rights OVC issues, etc.), development partners, NGOs, teacher unions and associations. In charge of the coordination has been an EFA coordinator, who has been an official from the Ministry of Education and Training.

In the process of formulating the national EFA strategy and implementation plan, it was acknowledged that (a) updating the legislation to be at par with current practice and, (b) identification of deficiencies in the current education management system and development of new legislation is very critical for the country to achieve the EFA goals. For example, one of the policy and or practice includes the repetition of pupils, to ensure compliance at school level.

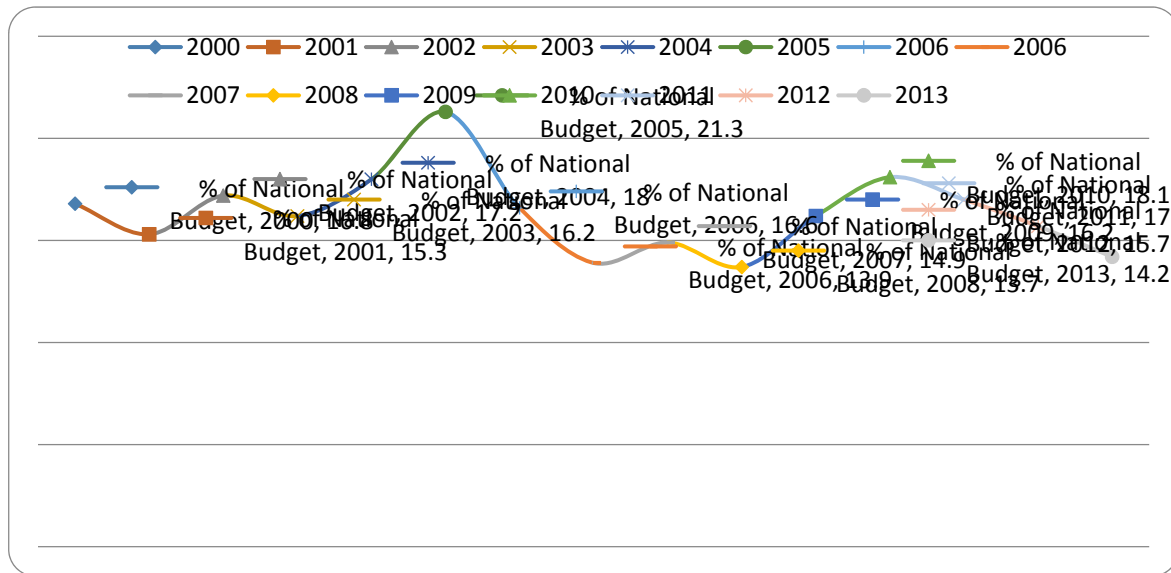
Adequate institutional arrangements and capacity were also necessary conditions for effective service delivery. Consensus was reached that strengthening institutional capacity should include strengthening the policy and planning, and monitoring and evaluation functions at the central level, and implementation functions at school and regional level.

1.6 Public Financing Education

The Government of Swaziland has over the years made huge investments in Education. On average, about 6% of Swaziland's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) goes toward education. The proportion of the annual government budget devoted to education has been about 17 % on average over the reporting period. This proportion is slightly higher than that set by UNESCO for developing countries like Swaziland. It ranks amongst the highest in Africa and many of the goals set at the world summit for children in 2000 are being achieved. There is universal access to primary education, good progress towards gender equity across all levels of education.

Public expenditure on education has been fluctuating over the reporting period. It reached its highest in 2005 (21.3%) and the lowest in 2009 (13.7). These fluctuations were due to the unstable fiscas. Figure 1 shows the public investment in education over the reporting period.

Figure 1: Public Expenditure on Education (2000/1 - 2013/14)



Source: Government Estimates books 2000/01- 2013/14

The Ministry of Education has been receiving a larger share in the total government budget since year 2000. Further, there has been support towards education from the donor community. This however covers mainly capital projects on education. This share on education indicates Government’s commitment towards funding and supporting education initiatives. The financing of education in Swaziland can be looked at from two perspectives; the contribution by private institutions, which include parents, private organization, donor community and the public contribution by the government.

Total public resources allocated to the education sector as percentage of GDP was much lower in Swaziland than many other countries in the sub-region. During 2003/2004, the education spending as a percentage of GDP was estimated at about 5.9%. Furthermore, during the first 10 years of the EFA initiative, the allocation of the budget within education was biased towards to the tertiary education. Less than 1 percent of population was enrolled at university level, yet they accounted for 35 percent of the education resources; while 77 percent of the population was enrolled at the primary level, yet only 38 percent of the budget. The biasness further led to the exacerbation of income inequalities and poverty in the country. Those who dropped out of the system due to financial difficulties were denied the opportunity to benefit from the highly subsidized tertiary education, particularly university education; whereas basic education was subsidized at a much smaller scale.

The education and training sector faced serious budgetary constraints beginning in 2008/9 following the global meltdown which led to budget cuts and a declining share for the sector. Since then, economic growth remained stagnant which was an indication that spending in

education is not likely to improve in the near future. The Ministry of Education and training (MoET) budget increase from the previous years is only barely sufficient to keep pace with the rate of inflation. The significant increase in total enrolments in the education and training sector represent a decline in expenditure per student in real terms.

The system is also increasingly under financial pressure particularly to fund the growing demand for secondary and post - secondary education which is comparatively very expensive. The allocation of the education budget amongst the various priority areas still remains a serious concern. Primary and secondary education continues to receive the lions share while early childhood educations, technical and vocational education as well as tertiary education receive a smaller share. This limits prospects for broadening access to ECCE, TVET and Tertiary education level. The heavy reliance on the private sources of investment is not sustainable in real terms.

Comprehensive budgetary and financial reforms to increase funding for post- secondary education and other higher levels of education are required. Also, there is a need to focus on policy choices that promote efficiency gains and on budget trade- offs between education and other sectors. In terms of private sector investment in education, Swaziland is one of the countries that have not managed to facilitate and realize the necessary contribution from this sector. Parents still play a pivotal role in financing education especially from secondary to higher levels of education.

SECTION 2: PROGRESS TOWARDS EFA AND REMAINING CHALLENGES

Goal 1: Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children

Early Childhood Care and Education is the foundation of effective human resource development and helps ensure that every child is enabled to achieve his/her full potential. ECCE is a critical stage of human development therefore a strong foundations that stimulates and nurture a child's physical, social, emotional and intellectual development must be laid. Early investment in the child's formative years has shown to give the best returns on human capital development and it on the basis of this that Swaziland continued to prioritize ECCE.

A Survey that was undertaken in 2011 indicated that from the over 1200 centres only 18 were owned by Government. This suggested that this level of education is still largely under private hands – owned by individuals and organizations. This limited the engagement of the Ministry in the sector. However, the Ministry's mandate with regards to ECCE includes regulation and Monitoring of the sub sector, through inspection.

ECCE is one of the Ministry of Education portfolio responsibilities that stand out in the Education and Training Sector (EDSEC) policy adopted in 2011. The EDSEC policy has a variety of short- term to long- term strategies that Swaziland planned to use in order to realize the ECCE policy goal of expanding equitable access to early learning to accommodate all children in Swaziland aged 3 to 6, to quality ECCE and ensuring the full integration of the nation's most vulnerable children. This led to considerable achievements, with regards to access to ECCE.

Achievements:

1. **Registration of ECCE Centres** - The Ministry started the process of registration of ECCE centres in 2008. The Registration of the ECCE centres is being carried out by the Regional Education Offices. Centres that have registered are assisted in terms of improving the standard of service provision.
2. **Development and adoption of SELDS** – The Ministry with the support from partners developed and launched the Swaziland Early Learning and Development Standards (SELDs) in 2013/14. The SELDS are specifications of what young children should know and be able to do. Standards are important because they state the development milestones (what children should be able to do at what age) and help parents, care givers and teachers to provide the best care to the child in line with her needs. These were disseminated to ECCE centres and training of ECCE teachers on these is on- going.

3. **Improved monitoring and supervision of ECCE** - This has been through restructuring and strengthening of the ECCE inspectorate at headquarters and regional offices as well as through the recruitment of a curriculum designer. The Ministry is able to provide professional guidance through inspectors who supervise all educational programmes at this level of education. The Ministry is now able to provide professional guidance in the form of inspectors, who supervise all educational programmes at this level of education.
4. **Training of ECCE Teachers** - During 2013/2014, the Government of Swaziland introduced a programme for the training of ECCE teachers in one of the Teacher Training Colleges (Ngwane Teacher's College). This is a three year diploma programme offered on a part- time basis. The programme is sponsored by the Open Society Institute for Southern Africa (OSISA). Currently 180 students are enrolled for this programme. It is expected that during 2015/16, Swaziland will witness the first group of students to graduate under this programme.
5. **Training of care givers on psychosocial support** - at the University of Swaziland. This is a one year certificate programme offered through distance education.
6. **Sensitization on the importance of ECCE through campaigns** - a series of campaigns were conducted in all the four regions in order to promote parental involvement and increase children's access to ECCE
7. **Establishment of a National ECCE Panel** - The panel was established to plan, coordinate, monitor and evaluate the provision and quality of ECCE services, standards and activities.
8. **Increased budget** - ECCE in Swaziland is largely in the hands of the private sector thus has been receiving very little financial support from the Government. The share of the MOET budget that goes to ECCE is less than 1%.

Since this level of education is still in private hands it has been a challenge to get data as most of the centres have not been registered thus did not provide data. Data has been very unstable and as such has not been consistent. In 2010 the Gross Enrolment Rate stood at 25.4%. The availability of this data was a result of a comprehensive study on the sub-sector which was funded by the European Union (EU). The Ministry has had challenges in regulating these privately owned ECCDE centres since they are unstable in their operations.

Table 1: GER: Pre-Primary

| | Both | Male | Female | GPI |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|------------|
| 2010 | 22.3 | 21.9 | 22.6 | 1.03 |
| 2011 | 25.4 | 25.1 | 25.7 | 1.02 |

Source: AEC report, 2011

The Gender Parity Index, for both years was more than 1.00 which suggested that more girls than boys were enrolled in this subsector. Although the proportion of girls is slightly higher than boys, this indicator has suggested that there was an element of commitment to girls' education by communities.

Challenges:

1. Almost a decade after the Swaziland became signatory to the EFA declaration, the Ministry of Education was insufficiently capacitated to handle, among other things, ECCE curricula development, teacher training, monitoring and evaluation.
2. Even though we have introduced training for ECCE teachers a majority for the teachers at this level still remain untrained. However, some in-service training is carried out through workshops.
3. ECCE has been receiving very little financial support from the Government. The share of the MOET budget that goes to ECCE is less than 1%.
4. Most centres do not reach the required standard of infrastructure and facilities. Furthermore, they do not even have adequate teaching and learning material.
5. The coordination of ECCDE is one of the serious challenges hindering progress in the achievement of the goal. This is due to the fact that Swaziland still lacks an integrated ECCDE policy. The mandate of child care and development is not entirely under the Ministry of Education and Training. Some aspects fall under the Ministry of Health and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, as such it has been difficult to coordinate the education component.
6. Most of the centres are not registered with the Ministry, they operate as business entities. It has been a major task to identify them, register and also monitor their activities.
7. Although there is a Statistics Act that allows for data and statistics to be collected from all institutions, such centres tended to be shady to avoid paying taxes and this has resulted in very weak statistical information systems.
8. The disparity in school fees is reducing access to ECCE. Hence only 33% of age eligible children are able to access ECCE currently (MICS, 2010). There is no law regulating the fees.
9. Most of the centres do not provide a feeding scheme, especially the centres owned by communities yet nutrition is very important for the holistic development of the child. This also affects access to ECCE.

10. No provision of early identification and intervention for learners with disabilities. This has grossly affected access to ECCE for learners with disabilities.

Action Plan:

1. **ECCE Policy Development** - Swaziland will continue working on finalizing a national policy on ECCDE which will facilitate registration of all centres, provide guidance and facilitate regulation of ECCE service provision in the country.
2. **ECCE Curriculum Development** - The ECCE department will continue with the process of developing the syllabus that will be used in all ECCE centres.
3. **Facilitate birth registration for all children** – The Ministry of Education and Training will collaborate with the relevant ministry to facilitate that all children are registered at birth. This is important because without the birth registration, the child cannot access basic services such as education grant.
4. **Capacity building for ECCE Teachers** - The Ministry of Education and Training will continue to support ECCE teacher training programmes as it will lead to improved quality and delivery of education at this level. Currently 180 teachers are being trained in one of the teacher training colleges.
5. **Improving access to ECCE-** To strengthen access to ECCDE, the Government of Swaziland is planning to introduce grade zero in every public primary school from 2017. It is also proposed that it becomes part of the free (state funded) education (Concept Paper, 2014). This will ensure that all new entrants to grade 1 have a pre-primary education of high quality. It will also serve to level the playing field especially in those families that could not afford the high fees of ECCDE. Focus will also be on improving access to ECCE for learners with disabilities. This will be accompanied by efforts to strengthen early identification and intervention programmes for learners with disabilities. Another aspect to be explored is the introduction of nutritious feeding schemes for all children enrolled in ECCE centres.

Goal 2: Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to, and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality.

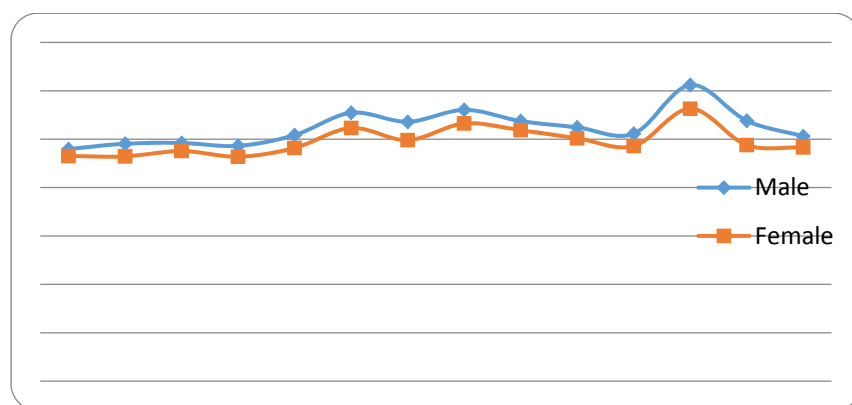
Swaziland introduced the Free Primary Education Programme (FPE) in 2010 in Grades 1 and 2. This was brought about by the Constitution of the Kingdom which declared education a right

and had instructed that the FPE to begin in 2009. This increased the demand for primary education and beginning 2009 the nation prepared itself for the initiative. Although the constitution had suggested FPE be introduced in 2009, Government due to financial and other infrastructural requirement could only introduce the programme in 2010 in Grades 1 and 2 to cover for the slight delay. To facilitate the realization of this right the Government then introduced the FPE. As a consequence an FPE Act was established which created an enabling environment for all Swazis to access primary education. The FPE Act of 2010 also adjusted the entry requirement from age 6, to a range of 6 – 9 years for Grade 1 to allow for older children who could not afford to pay for fees to enroll.

The huge demand for education resulted in increased intake rates. The apparent intake rate fluctuated during the period between a low of 94.5 in 1999 to a high of 109.3 percent in 2007. It dropped a bit in 2009 only to increase to a high of 117.5 percent in 2010 – the year the implementation of the FPE programme commenced. This might have been due to the high demand for education that was created by the declaration of the state funded free primary education programme. On average, more boys seem to benefit at primary levels than girls.

When Government introduced the FPE programme a number of communities enrolled some marginalized children (poor, vulnerable and orphans) some who were above the official age. Since Government has also had set age limits, from 6 to 9, specifically for the FPE there were some communities that enrolled over and under aged children. The trend for the intake rates is shown in the figure 2. These rates suggested that the country has created enough space for its appropriately aged pupils. However, these gains meant that some of the ‘out of age’ children who took advantage of the situation created competition for spaces, this resulted in dropping Net intake rates.

Figure 2: Apparent Intake Rate: 1999 – 2012



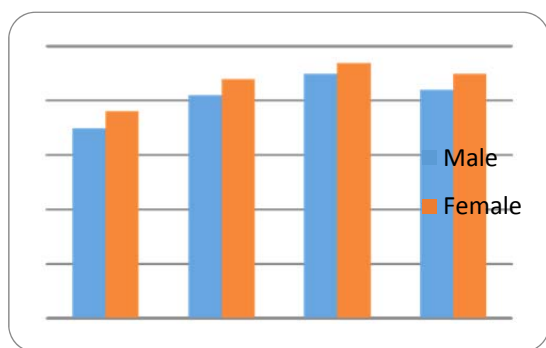
Source: AEC report, 2012

| Year | Male | Female | Avg |
|------|-------|--------|-------|
| 1999 | 95.9 | 93.0 | 94.5 |
| 2000 | 98.1 | 92.9 | 95.5 |
| 2001 | 98.4 | 95.1 | 96.8 |
| 2002 | 97.3 | 92.8 | 95.0 |
| 2003 | 101.7 | 96.4 | 99.0 |
| 2004 | 110.9 | 104.6 | 107.8 |
| 2005 | 107.2 | 99.6 | 103.4 |
| 2006 | 112.1 | 106.5 | 109.3 |
| 2007 | 107.5 | 103.7 | 105.6 |
| 2008 | 104.9 | 100.4 | 102.7 |
| 2009 | 102.3 | 97.2 | 99.7 |
| 2010 | 122.4 | 112.6 | 117.5 |
| 2011 | 107.6 | 97.6 | 102.6 |
| 2012 | 101.2 | 96.6 | 98.9 |

Apparent Intake rate is the number of new entrants irrespective of age in Grade 1 divided by the population of 'official entry age', which in the case of Swaziland is 6 years of age. Net intake would be those that are aged six years over the same population. Due to the high number of new entrants not aged six, the apparent intake rates are above 100%.

This observed drop in **Net** Intake rates resulted in rates which were less than 50%. This indicated that more children who were not of official age (6) had enrolled, this was a good occurrence as it indicated that more children who may not have had the opportunity of going to school were now enrolled. However the flip side is that the Net Intake Rates as shown in figure 3 below dropped to rates of about 45%.

Figure 3: Net Intake Rate: 2009 – 2012



Source AEC, 2012

The figures also indicated that generally, more girls were likely to enter at appropriate age than boys. One hypothesis for this drop was that in some communities they could have enrolled older children. This drop was not entirely bad for the country, it achieved the country vision of improved access to everyone.

Another fact is that when the FPE programme was introduced the demand for education increased as a consequence some school communities only enrolled children who had reached age 6 by the beginning of the term. This is witnessed in the age profile of Grade 1 children where the majority of learners are aged 7 (See Table 2). Ideally, the largest proportion should have been aged 6, however it is true that some may have turned 7 by the date of the census. According to international standards for the intake indicators, emphasis is placed on those children aged 6 years. All the other ages do not contribute to the **NET** intake age.

Table 2: New Entrants to Grade 1 (2012)

| | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 17 | 22 | Total |
|---------------|------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|---------------|
| Female | 65 | 5,573 | 7,531 | 1,327 | 205 | 49 | 37 | 29 | 6 | 6 | 2 | | 1 | 14,831 |
| Male | 71 | 5,458 | 8,097 | 1,594 | 311 | 95 | 64 | 33 | 8 | 5 | 7 | 2 | | 15,745 |
| Total | 136 | 11,031 | 15,628 | 2,921 | 516 | 144 | 101 | 62 | 14 | 11 | 9 | 2 | 1 | 30,576 |

Source: AEC report, 2012

As observed in the table above, only 11 031 of the 30 576 Grade 1 pupils were of the appropriate official age (aged 6). This initiative may have affected the indicators in 2010 and beyond. Accordingly, even though the country adjusted the entry ages, this did not affect the internationally defined indicators as such, some may appear to have been compromised. But from a developmental perspective this was good for the country as those who were not previously benefitting were enrolling and this would in the long run have positive impact in development of the country. Some children who had never attended schools got the opportunity to enroll in school. There are a few challenges that were brought by the initiative, in some cases there was a wide range in the ages of the children that were enrolled and this offered some teaching innovations as level of development of the children varied greatly.

Intake rates also imply some policy shifts. Swaziland witnessed an increase in ECCE centres during the same period which influenced some primary schools to begin demanding a child to have a pre-primary experience before they enrolled them. Although this is an EFA recommendation it is still not such in Swaziland due to lack of access at ECCE levels. As a consequence, some children could have spent an additional year in such centres before enrolling. This is also driven by the quest to enroll children in the 'schools of choice', which had upped their entry requirements despite the current policy of the Ministry that preschool is not a prerequisite for entry into grade 1.

Challenges around Intake Rates

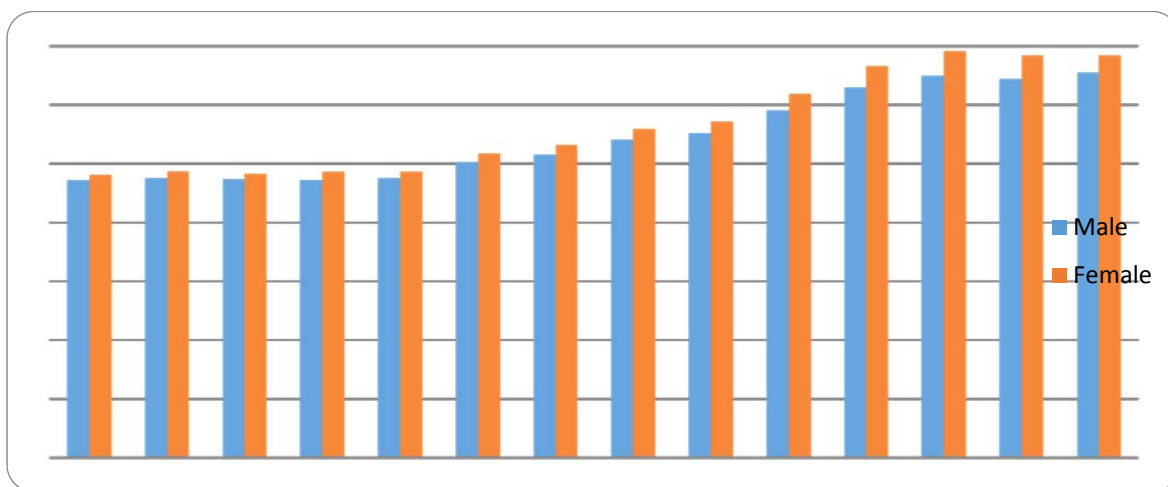
1. The Ministry's policy for entry into Grade 1 is age 6. However when FPE was introduced, the Ministry adjusted this policy to allow for marginalized learners from 6 to 9 years old to register. This meant that the country's Net Intake Rate dropped.
2. However, due to the laxity in the monitoring of prescribed guidelines and other reasons on the official age of entry (6-9 years), a lot more over aged children enrolled. Some were even too old to be in formal primary education, and should have been enrolled in adult literacy programmes. This then resulted in children of varying cognitive levels to in the same grade, placing a challenge on teaching and learning.
3. The demand for education due to the FPE also led to some schools adjusting the policy. The requirement for a child to have reached 6 years on the first day of school denied a lot of children an opportunity to start on time, this is why in Grade 1 the majority of children are aged 7.

4. Some children who are aged six, after being denied entry were forced to stay at home, some continued enrolling in non- formal ECCE sites (neighborhood care points) and preschools. The demand had some negative impact on those who were not aged six early in the year.

2.0 Primary Enrolment Rates

Despite that a lot of over-aged children entered grade 1, the majority of them were still within the official primary school going age, i.e. between 6 and 12 years.

Figure 4: Gross Enrolment Rate; 1999 to 2012



Source: AEC, 2012

Gross enrolment rates increased steadily from 2000. However the impact of the FPE was witnessed between 2009 and 2010. A significant increase between 2009 and 2010 was observed and this is very likely to be due to the constitution of the country which indicated that education shall be free as from 2009. The communities anticipating this began, enrolling their children in 2009. Government at the time had not introduced the programme but only did so in 2010 in Grades 1 and 2. A gross enrolment rate of above 100% is a strong indicator that Government had created enough capacity for its primary aged population.

Net enrolment rates improved over the same period from 71 percent in 1999 to 95 percent in 2012. This was largely due to the investments in primary levels in the form of free textbooks, free stationery and an average capitation grant of E560 (US \$80) per child at primary level. What is observed is that although boys participated more efficiently in the past, girls had taken over as their net enrolment figures rose above that of boys in 2009 and have remained higher

ever since. Learners with special needs also benefited from FPE initiatives through getting specialized teaching and learning material and equipment.

Net Enrolment rates Primary: 1999 to 2012

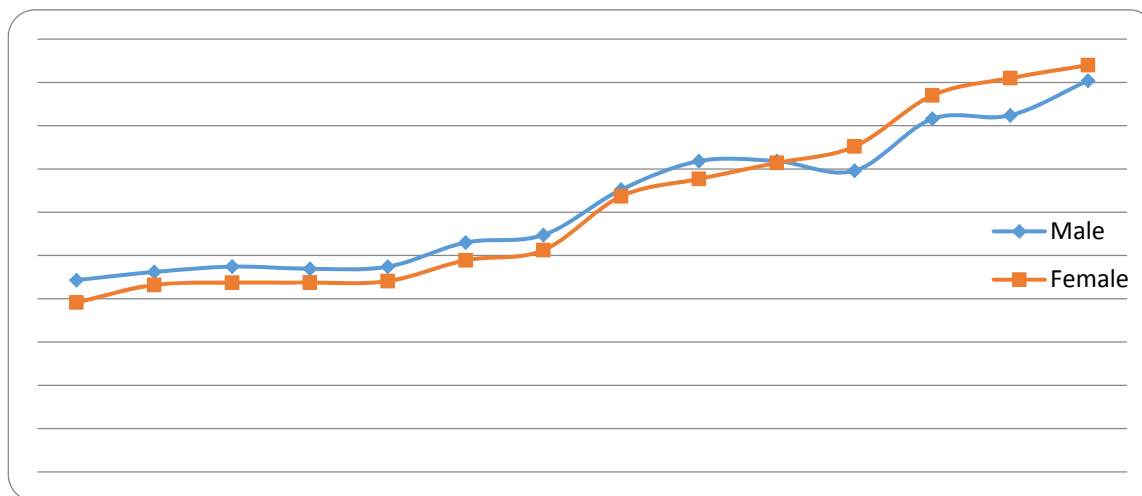


Figure 5: Net Enrolment rates Primary: Source AEC, 2012

The impact of the FPE can be observed in the increase in primary enrolment, which increased from 231 555 in 2009 to 239 422 in 2012 and is projected to be at 247 7171 in 2015. The system suffered a minor shock between 2009 and 2010 which was due to an increased demand for education.

Indicators suggest that Swaziland is on track to achieve universal access to primary education. Achievement of access is but one aspect of the progress, there was need to ensure that all children complete primary education. Survival rates at primary levels suggested that repetition and dropout may have still pushed some of the children out of the system.

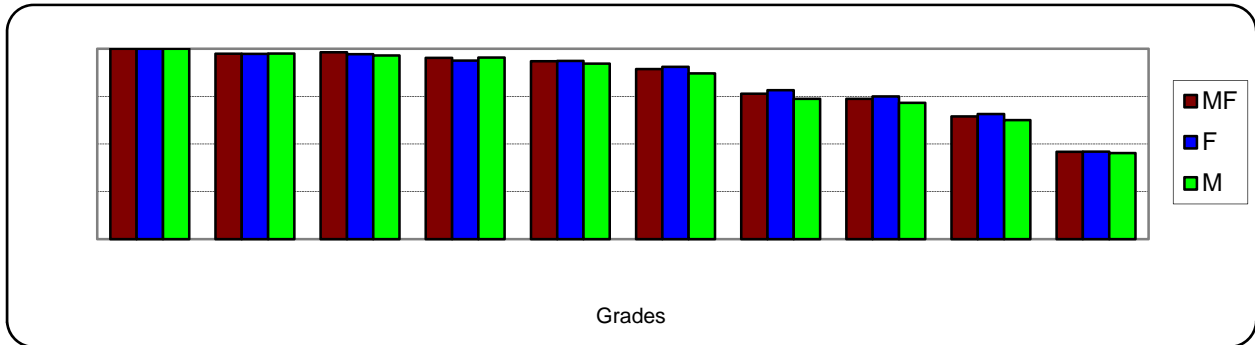
In 2006/2007 the survival rate was about 59.3 percent, it increased to 76.4% in 2012, suggesting that more children stayed on to complete primary education. This is an improvement, which implied that more children are being retained by the system. The survival rate at primary school level in 2012 can be seen in Table 3 and Figure 6.

Table 3: Survival Rate: 2012

| | Grade 1 | Grade 2 | Grade 3 | Grade 4 | Grade 5 | Grade 6 | Grade 7 |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Female | 100.0% | 97.4% | 97.2% | 93.8% | 93.6% | 90.5% | 78.3% |
| Male | 100.0% | 97.5% | 96.5% | 95.4% | 92.2% | 87.1% | 73.7% |
| Total | 100.0% | 97.5% | 98.2% | 95.2% | 93.5% | 89.4% | 76.4% |

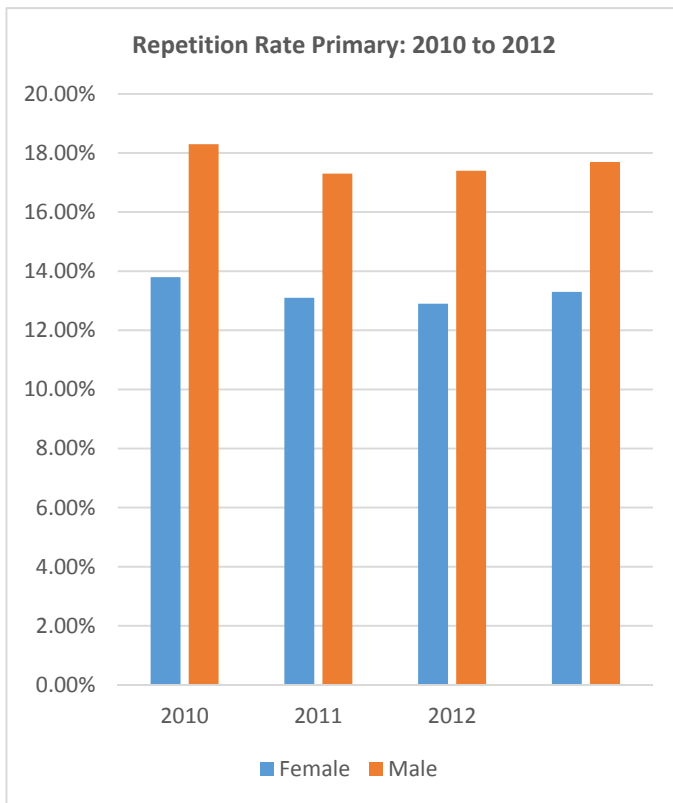
Source: AEC, 2012

Figure 6: Survival Rates.



Source: AEC, 2012

Figure 7: Repetition Rate at Primary Level 2010- 2012



A major contributor to survival rate (internal efficiency) is repetition. In Swaziland this rate is relatively higher than most countries in the sub-region. The Ministry’s norm is that children may not repeat a grade more than twice. However, repetition is above the recommended country’s norm, this on average results in a repetition rate of about 15% annually which is wasteful. This is a phenomena the Ministry will have to address, as in real numbers it implies that each and every year about 40 000 pupils repeat, which is almost equivalent to a Grade. This from an economic point of view implied that as the country moved FPE to the next Grade, the same proportion repeated.

Source: AEC, 2012

At Grade 7 children in the country sit for an external examination, the Swaziland Primary Certificate. The exam has to a great extent influenced the number of children who complete primary education and transition to secondary education. The transition rates have been above 90%, which suggested that most of our primary level graduates reach Form 1. The transition rates between primary and secondary are relatively high (over 90%) because the number of pupils enrolled in Grade 7 and Form 1 are not very different. If one considers that there are more than 620 primary schools and only about 255 secondary schools this may seem abnormal. The true picture is that the repetition rates from as early as Grade 1, gradually decrease enrolment figures such that by end of Grade 7 only a selected few qualify for Form 1.

Figure 8: Primary to Secondary Transition Rates: 2010 - 2012



The rates are above 90 percent on average. This suggested that about 10% of the children did not reach lower secondary levels of education. There are a variety of reasons for this, however the Ministry might also have to look at efficiency at lower secondary because with a repetition rate of about 10% this might be also another cause where schools limit the space for new intakes because of repeaters in Form1.

Source: AEC, 2012

Challenges at Primary Level

1. **Shortage of appropriately qualified teachers** - The high demand for primary education created a need for additional teachers. However, there was a shortage of appropriately qualified teachers. According to the Annual Education Census Report (2010), 25% of the primary school teaching staff was not appropriately qualified to teach at that level. This necessitated the deployment of irrelevantly qualified teachers into the primary level, mainly teachers qualified for the secondary level, thus compromising the quality of education. This is because in Swaziland secondary level teachers sometimes take a single major and cannot offer all the subjects like primary trained teachers, importantly

they do not possess the pedagogy to teach young children. Coupled with the fact that they need strong pedagogy skills to teach children between ages of 6 to 18 years in one class in some cases.

2. **Charging of top-up fees** - As Government took over the payment of fees, schools' income gradually declined in some schools which were previously charging above the government approved grant per learner. This has unfortunately led to a phenomenon where schools are now charging a 'top-up' fee alleging that the Government grant is not enough. This has created problems for Government as those marginalized children who had entered under FPE are being gradually forced out of the system by the charging of top-up fees. However, the government is looking into this issue with an aim of coming up with a lasting solution.
3. **None adherence to policy on repetition, admission by schools** - There is a high repetition rate at primary level which counters the effectiveness of the FPE programme. In 2012 there were about 40 000 learners repeating and these represents 16% of the total enrolment. This is about the total enrolment of a grade, which suggests that each year the FPE goes to the next grade, about the same number of learners repeat, which is a waste.
4. **Mainstreaming Special Education Needs**- A majority of teachers in primary schools are still not yet capacitated to support learners with special needs. Furthermore, the teaching and learning material and equipment is still not enough to cater for all the learners enrolled.
5. **Infrastructure disparity**- The disparities in rural and urban schools causes rural - urban migration. This leading to high teacher pupil ratio in urban schools to the extent of 1:60.

Action Plan:

1. Strengthen in-service capacity building for teachers on special needs and inclusive education.
2. Address the issue of proper deployment of teachers for primary schools.
3. Develop infrastructure in schools that are not well resourced this will lead to reduction of rural urban migration
4. Review the FPE grant and standardize the school fee structure.
5. Develop strategies to ensure adherence to policy with regards to repetition, and put in measures for the retention of learners in the school system.

6. Reconsider introducing Free Basic Education (Forms 1 to 3). This will not only address the post 2015 agenda but also ensure that most of the pupils that graduate from primary education under the FPE programme progress to secondary levels. This will demand major investments in the sub-sector, demand for extra classrooms, teachers, laboratories etc.

Goal 3: Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes.

(i) Life Skills

In Swaziland, the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes through a combination of approaches; the Educational Guidance, Testing and Psychological Services (EGTPS), the SADC initiative of which Swaziland is a leading pioneer in making schools centres of Care and Support for Teaching and Learning (CSTL), locally known as Inqaba (a child-friendly fortress), and through a 2011 Education Sector Policy which embraces an inclusive education system.

The Ministry of education and Training realizes that as the global economy rapidly changes and new technologies are introduced, more appropriately educated/trained human resources are engaged. The Ministry of Education and Training continues to recognize the importance of relevant education and skills in the transformation of the economy. To this end, efforts are made to broaden the curricula at general school level and to re-align programmes at post-secondary level. The University of Swaziland has reviewed the duration and relevance of some of its programmes. The Swaziland College of Technology (SCOT) has taken giant steps towards transforming the institution into a university, a step that will see it offering degree courses for the first time in the history of the country.

Equitable access to appropriate learning implies a consideration of the diversity of the learner, their background and family circumstances and this is captured in the 7 pillars to be addressed in all schools through the Inqaba.

The theory of change that underpins the Inqaba initiative is that, to reduce the impact of poverty violence and the HIV/AIDS pandemic, one must act at the local level, through the school and within its environment. The specific objective of the Inqaba initiative is to create school environments that are friendly, safe, healthy and conducive for learning. Within this

specific objective lie two main objectives: i) creating safe and caring environments for children and ii) providing quality education.

In order to do so, the strategy works on seven dimensions – called ‘pillars’:

- ✚ Protection and safety of the children
- ✚ Psychosocial support to children, through counselling, sports, children’s clubs, etc.
- ✚ Food security which involves providing food to every child
- ✚ Health which refers to the provision of essential physical health services through schools
- ✚ Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) to facilitate the provision of essential water and sanitation services through schools
- ✚ Life skills education and
- ✚ Quality teaching and learning.

At the heart of the programme lies the School-Community partnership: to share facilities, resources and expertise and build their capacity to support children and provide them with essential services.

The primary beneficiaries of the Inqaba initiative are in priority the children, especially the orphaned and vulnerable children. The secondary beneficiaries are the (head) teachers, the members of communities as a whole (parents, school committee members, etc.) and the different private and public stakeholders such as NGO’s, service providers, etc.

As mentioned above, one of the Inqaba pillars is life skills education. Through the Inqaba initiative, every child and adult learner benefits from Life Skills Education. Life skills are psychosocial competencies and capabilities that help to, deal with life events that affect a person directly; better decide amongst life’s opportunities, and take action and generate change in order to increase the likelihood of positive behaviour leading to enhanced health, higher level of participation and personal fulfilment. The wide spectrum of life skills can be broadly categorized under: cognitive life skills (for problem-solving and decision making); personal life skills (for agency freedom and commitment); inter-personal life skills (for building social capital). (EDSEC Policy 2011)

The MoET, and partners have prioritized life skills in secondary school through the introduction of an age-appropriate, stand-alone, non-examinable life skills course that endeavours to integrate life skills, ASRH, HIV and AIDS, STIs, health promotion and career guidance into the school curriculum as a compulsory component of the curriculum (EDSEC Policy 2011).

Livelihood skills are a component of providing relevant and appropriate learning. They are provided in the form of Practical Arts, Agriculture and TVET in primary to secondary.

Achievement:

1. The 2005, SADC Education ministers articulation of CSTL/Inqaba as a priority for Ensuring that the learning of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes. The development of a national conceptual framework for the implementation of CSTL/Inqaba in all schools to guide the programme and facilitate coordination and monitoring. All schools set up a school development plan on a yearly basis. It is a very effective tool to structure, prioritize and plan for the activities to carry out during the year. It also serves as a reminder of what has to be done within the school so as to ensure an enabling environment for teaching and learning.

The Inqaba initiative has made a difference in terms of access and quality to education that we can measure. Statistics on enrolment in primary schools from 2009 to 2012 in Grade 1 indicates the impact of the introduction of FPE in 2010. According to several stakeholders, the Food programme has also acted as a major contributor to the positive impact of the Inqaba initiative on the access to education.

From a qualitative point of view (that is, retention instead of enrolment), the Inqaba initiative has contributed to create school environments that are safe, protective and supportive. It has raised awareness on several issues, has revealed itself to be a decisive input to new activities implemented within schools to improve one or several of the seven Inqaba pillars. In other words, even though a lot remains to be done, the Inqaba programme has, so far, affected the well-being of the children of Swaziland. An evaluation of the Inqaba Programme in 2014 confirmed that on the whole, sensitization to Life Skills, is a success. For schools, life skills are definitely part of their core mission.

2. A Life skills Education Curriculum for in-school youth that is age-appropriate and culturally sensitive together with teachers handbook has been developed and piloted in 25 secondary schools. This has been approved by the Curriculum Coordinating Committee for roll out in all secondary schools systems.
3. Built capacity for MoET key official and teachers from pilot schools to deliver LSE in classroom settings.

4. A situational assessment conducted in teacher education for the institutionalization on LSE in teacher education.

Challenges:

1. Coordination of the CSTL/Inqaba programme proved to be a challenge due to diverse partnerships per pillar at school, regional as well as national levels.
2. The involvement of community was highly variable from one school to another, depending on the school leadership, but also, with regard to parents, on their involvement in the education of their children.
3. The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for CSTL exists but has not yet been implemented.
4. There is no training programme for Life Skills teachers specifically or the mainstreaming of Life Skills in pre-service training for all teachers.
5. The absence of a national action plan for Inqaba's implementation and separate budget line hindered progress to some extent. Funds are derived from a range of current services provided within key ministries and departments. NGOs and UN agencies also contribute to the development of one or several pillars of the Inqaba initiative. It is not possible therefore to gauge the complete contributions by the MoET and partners for implementing and sustaining the Inqaba programmes.

Action Plans:

1. Set up a strategic plan that articulates objectives, specific activities and expected results
2. Make the monitoring of the programme operational
3. Ensure a close follow-up and supervision of the Inqaba activities implemented
4. Strengthen the accountability and reporting aspects of the Inqaba initiative
5. Enhance collaboration at all the levels and clarify the respective roles, notably regarding collaboration between the guidance officers, the inspectorate and in-service training
6. Enhance communities', notably parent's, participation into schools' matters

7. Improve the government's financial support
8. Pay attention to existing school resources when planning the Inqaba programme.
9. Include the Inqaba initiative into pre-service training in a more systematic way.
10. Roll- out the Inqaba initiative in all secondary/ high schools as well as at pre-primary education level.

(ii) Equitable access to Livelihood Skills Programmes

In 2010, the Ministry of Education and Training developed the National Technical and Vocational and Skills Development Policy. The implementation of the policy has however been slow due to lack of an implementation mechanism. There are a few institutions that are formally providing training at different levels. The sub-sector lacks effective coordination and a quality assurance framework. This is because the country still does not have a National Qualification Framework (NQF). However, there is training which goes on as is recognized by employer organizations in the country. There are currently 70 TVET institutions.

Table 4: No. of Trainees and Trainers by type of Institution

| Type of Institution | Institutions | | Trainees | | | Trainers | | |
|---------------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|-----------|
| | No | % | No | % | % female | No | % | % female |
| Public | 27 | 39 | 2 482 | 36 | 44 | 411 | 54 | 68 |
| Private | 29 | 41 | 3 322 | 48 | 68 | 255 | 33 | 38 |
| Others | 14 | 20 | 1 077 | 16 | 45 | 101 | 13 | 39 |
| Total | 70 | 100 | 6 881 | 100 | 56 | 767 | 100 | 54 |

Source: Assessing Swaziland Vocational and Training Institutions - World Bank Report, 2013

This data is not reported to UNESCO because most of these institutions are not registered with the Ministry and importantly have not been classified under the International Standard for the Classification of Education (ISCED, 2011). Data indicated that more females are enrolled; this is because most of the institutions offer soft courses such Accounts, Computer Studies and Secretarial courses. There are other skills training that are under non formal education under the adult education sector.

Challenges:

1. Lack of NQF makes it difficult to collect data for TVET institutions and also to effectively map institutions under the ISCED map.
2. There is currently no quality assurance mechanisms in place.
3. The level of TVET offered by the institutions currently does not respond to skills that can develop the country's economy.
4. There is a weak alignment between current TVET provision and labour market requirements.
5. There is no baseline data on TVET allowing for comparison or monitoring of progress.
6. TVET for persons with disabilities is of poor quality and not monitored by the MoET
7. Relevance of TVET curriculum to the labour market

Action Plans:

1. Establish the National Qualifications Department and put in place the National qualifications framework to ensure that the quality and relevance of TVET programmes is assured.
2. Map TVET institutions under the ISCED map.
3. Collect data on TVET, analyze and publish it. Use information in planning, monitoring, reporting as well as in decision making.
4. Ensure that courses or training programmes offered in TVET institutions are aligned to labour market requirements.
5. Enhance the quality of TVET offered to persons with disabilities.

Goal 4: Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults

In Dakar in 2000, countries committed themselves to “achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults. At that time, Swaziland had already established an institute responsible for non- formal adult education. The programmes offered in the institute were targeting all adults and the youth who could not read and or write (the illiterate). The

programmes comprised of Adult Basic Literacy Programme and Life Skills Learning. The institute still offer these programmes with the aim of improving the level of adult literacy in Swaziland. Adult and non-formal education complements or supplements formal education or acts as an alternative means of access to education and training for out-of-school youth and adults, who are seeking education for a range of purposes, including formal qualifications, specific skills, or other tailor-made training.

In 2010, the Ministry of Education and Training began to roll out the FPE programme. This necessitated the expansion of the mandate of the institute to incorporate providing education and training of the over- aged learners (10-18) who could not be absorbed in the formal school system. Following the expansion of its mandate, the Non-Formal Primary Education (NPE) Programme was developed and introduced. The programme is comprised of six subjects (English, siSwati, Mathematics, Social Studies, Practical Science and Religious Education) and these are examined under the Swaziland Primary School Certificate (SPC). In 2011 SNI, had an initial intake of 10 learners who wrote the examinations in 2012 and achieved a pass rate of 70%. In 2013 and 2014, the pass rate from the institute stood at 70 and 72% respectively.

Swaziland, through the Central Statistics Office conducts literacy assessment under the population census which is undertaken once in ten years. The last census was done in 2007; as such there is limited data between the years. A person above the age of 15 years is considered an adult. Literacy is defined as being able read a short passage in Siswati or English, normally the passage is pegged with Grade 5. A literacy rate of above 90% suggested that most Swazis are literate, and able to engage in simple communication.

Table 5: Literacy Rates of: 1986-2007

| Year | 1986 | 1997 | 2007 | 2008-2012 | |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----------|---------|
| | | | | Males | Females |
| 15-19 | 86.1% | 92.6% | 96.1% | 92.2% | 95.3% |
| 20-24 | 80.6% | 90.7% | 94.5% | | |
| 15-24 | 83.7% | 91.7% | 95.4% | 92.2% | 95.3% |

Source: MDG Report 2010 and http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/swaziland_statistics.html, retrieved 04 March 2015

Achievement:

1. Statistics from the 2007 Population and household Survey indicate that the literacy rate for adults between the ages 15-24 years has reached 95.4% which was an increase from 91.7% in 1997. Statistics from the UNICEF website also indicate high literacy rates between 2008 and 2012 for both males and females in the 15-24 years age group. The increase in the literacy rate indicated that the SNI programmes are effective and can lead to the intended results if strengthened.
2. The FPE programme, did not only focus on formal education, in those communities where there were other barriers to accessing formal education children and youth enrolled in the SEBENTA Non formal programme.
3. The children and youth who enrolled in these programmes were also given other practical skills in addition for education.
4. The courses are very flexible, it enabled those who had to work to come to school after work. This occurred in rural isolated areas, where children had to work to survive.
5. This programme has expanded and has resulted in a few of its graduates enrolling in formal education (crossing over).

Challenges:

1. There is a continued stigma associated with participating in the non-formal education system even when the curriculum, examinations and certificates are the same to those conducted in the formal education system.
2. The SNI is dependent on government funding which is also insufficient to meet the needs of the institution.
3. The capacity of NFE facilitators/teachers is limited to deliver the NFE curriculum in line with the formal curriculum.
4. Limited access to or lack of NFE/TVET training institutions in some communities to address the skills and literacy needs of the youth and adults.

Action Plans:

1. Lobby for an increase in resources allocated by Government towards non-formal education and training programmes. In addition, the SNI will explore alternative sources of funding for its programmes.
2. Provide opportunities for capacity building of NFE/TVET teachers so that they are able to deliver effectively under the non- formal education environment.
3. Expand the provision of NFE programmes through construction of more Rural Education Centres (RECs) or securing space, teachers, teaching and learning materials for communities that require NFE services.
4. Sensitize the nation about the importance of being literate with the aim of changing their mind set and reducing the number of illiterate citizens.

Goal 5: Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.

Generally, Swaziland does not discriminate according to gender. In cases where there are discrepancies, it is usually due to a specific reason for instance; finances especially in secondary school, the distance covered by learners to school and back home which poses as a challenge to the access to education of the girl child as several national studies reveal that the girl child is sexually violated on their way home to school and back (UNICEF, 2010)³. The National Surveillance Report of 2014⁴ revealed that 26% of sexual violence among girls happens in the open fields, which includes distance covered by the girls. Other social issues such as pregnancy and early marriage of the girl child as well as health factors which include HIV/AIDS as the prevalence rate among young women is at 26.5% (SHIES, 2013)⁵.

Gender parity index indicated that boys are generally dominating the primary levels sub sector; this has been the case over the years. This is noted with the GER (GPI) less than 1.00. However, there are also indications that this index is on the increase implying more girls may be benefitting from the FPE programme and other facilitating programmes such as the CSTL.

³ UNICEF Swaziland (2010) "A National Study on Violence Against Children and Young Women in Swaziland"

⁴ National Surveillance Task Team (2014) "National Surveillance Report"

⁵ Central Statistics Office (2013) "Swaziland Household Income and Expenditure Survey"

Table 6: Gender Parity Primary: GER

| | Hhohho | Lubombo | Manzini | Shiselweni | National |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 2009 | 0.89 | 0.89 | 0.88 | 0.89 | 0.89 |
| 2010 | 0.89 | 0.89 | 0.92 | 0.88 | 0.89 |
| 2011 | 0.90 | 0.91 | 0.92 | 0.88 | 0.90 |
| 2012 | 0.91 | 0.92 | 0.91 | 0.91 | 0.92 |
| Avg | 0.90 | 0.90 | 0.90 | 0.89 | 0.90 |

Source: AEC, 2012

Table 7: Gender Parity Primary: NER

| | Hhohho | Lubombo | Manzini | Shiselweni | National |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 2009 | 0.97 | 0.98 | 0.96 | 0.96 | 0.97 |
| 2010 | 0.97 | 0.97 | 1.00 | 0.95 | 0.97 |
| 2011 | 0.96 | 0.96 | 0.97 | 0.95 | 0.95 |
| 2012 | 0.99 | 0.95 | 0.95 | 1.00 | 0.98 |
| Avg | 0.97 | 0.96 | 0.97 | 0.96 | 0.97 |

Source: AEC, 2012

When one considers the GPI for net enrolment rate, the ratios are higher, suggesting that at this level girls are making more efficient use of educational resources. More girls are in the appropriate age to be in primary education as compared to boys. This suggested that girls flow through the system more efficiently than boys.

Table 8: Gender Parity: Higher Secondary - GER

| | Hhohho | Lubombo | Manzini | Shiselweni | National |
|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| 2009 | 0.9 | 0.9 | 0.9 | 0.9 | 0.9 |
| 2010 | 0.9 | 0.8 | 1.1 | 0.9 | 0.9 |
| 2011 | 0.9 | 0.9 | 1.0 | 0.9 | 0.9 |
| 2012 | 0.9 | 0.9 | 0.9 | 0.9 | 0.9 |
| Avg | 0.9 | 0.9 | 1.0 | 0.9 | 0.9 |

Source AEC 2012

Table 9: Gender Parity: Higher Secondary - NER

| | Hhohho | Lubombo | Manzini | Shiselweni | National |
|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 2009 | 1.11 | 1.68 | 1.59 | 1.51 | 1.40 |
| 2010 | 1.34 | 1.19 | 1.63 | 1.25 | 1.35 |
| 2011 | 1.25 | 1.03 | 1.52 | 1.30 | 1.26 |
| 2012 | 1.31 | 1.13 | 1.12 | 1.63 | 1.25 |
| Avg | 1.24 | 1.21 | 1.41 | 1.40 | 1.31 |

Source: AEC, 2012

At secondary levels the gender parity indexes indicated that girls take over from boys. The notion that girls are of appropriate age is evident from the GPI (NER) which is above 100%. This suggests that boys are generally over-aged than the girls. Reasons for the discrepancy could be due to the fact that boys repeat more than girls or that they repeat more often than girls resulting in them being older.

The UNICEF Situational Analysis of Children and Women in Swaziland (2013) reveals that urban/rural and regional disparities persist in the number of years of education acquired, with urban males completing a median of 8.0 years education, compared 7.8 years for urban females. In rural areas the disparities are 3.9 years for males and 4.7% for females.

Swaziland has not achieved gender parity at both primary and secondary levels; boys are still dominating the system. However, indications are that as you approach higher levels of education girls stay on and complete their education.

1. Boys have a particularly low enrolment in lower secondary (42%) than girls (58%). This scenario changes in upper secondary school where the girl child drops out of the education system with pregnancy accounting for 41% of reasons learners drop out (2011 Annual Education Census).
2. Transition rates from primary to secondary seem high at 84% for all learners; however, the number of years boys take to complete the primary schooling cycle is higher than for girls.
3. Fewer girls participate in tertiary and vocational training, especially in science, mathematics, engineering and technology related subjects. Trends show that when girls get to secondary education, their performance in the hard sciences tend to drop compared to that of boys. They tend to go for the softer sciences if they do select the sciences.
4. Currently, there are no national programmes in place to correct this imbalance. Girls' enrolment in sciences and math's in tertiary drops dramatically. This ultimately impacts on girl's employment potential and ability to command higher future income quintiles.
5. Furthermore, the results for SACMEQ II and SACMEQ III, regarding gender differences in performance outcomes in literacy and numeracy seem to suggest that not enough is done to improve the performance of girls in mathematics and that of boys in reading.

While the policy allows for girls to be accommodated in school after the pregnancy, in practice, adolescent mothers do not return to the same school as the communities and schools often resist this.

The lack of proper water and sanitation at schools affects the health and wellbeing of all children, directly influencing girls' attendance and retention at schools. Furthermore, there are minimal interventions to provide for adolescent girls' reproductive health needs, e.g. sanitary pads at school.

Violence against children, in particular girls is a critical concern. Statistics show that 1 in 3 girls have experienced some form of sexual violence by age 18.

Moving towards this goal, the Ministry of Education is advocating for political support to draw attention to CSE issues in schools. Furthermore, a national Guidance and Counselling Curriculum is being piloted in 25 schools and aims to be rolled out to all secondary schools by 2015. The programme empowers teachers to provide a comprehensive information package including; HIV, Gender, Life-skills, Career Guidance, Psychosocial Support, Health and Hygiene. The great achievement in 2014 has clearly been the approval of all five handbooks for teachers to use in the classroom, the allocation of space in the time-table for this cross-cutting and non-examinable yet highly interactive and participatory lesson. Support will be required in the future to roll this out to all primary and secondary schools nationally in the new country programme document 2016-2020.

A further response to this report on gender in education recommended that the Ministry of Education implements practical proposals for schools to provide sanitary pads and improved WASH conditions in schools for girls; an intensive and continuous training of all educators and learners on the Child Protection and Welfare Act of 2012 that came into effect on 1st July 2013; and the introduction of Child Friendly Schools Concept in all schools and the implementation of a Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) Campaign in Swaziland.

Achievements:

1. Considering the gender parity GER at primary education level, there has been an improvement since the ratio increased from 0.89 to 0.92 between 2009 and 2012 respectively. At Secondary school level, the gender parity ratio of 0.90 was maintained over the same period.
2. A Gender Unit was established to mainstream gender into areas of national development including legislation, policies, programmes and projects thus giving equal opportunities to services like education.
3. There are policies in place that address the gender disparity issues:
 - The Swaziland Education and Training Sector Policy
 - National Gender Policy

- Child Protection Act and Welfare of 2012

Challenges:

1. Despite the development of policies on gender, these have not been disseminated to the grassroots level.
2. Monitoring of the implementation of the policies on gender in the schools is in most cases not done effectively. Also, the country faces challenges in terms of enforcing these policies.
3. Despite efforts made to eliminate GBV in the country, Violence in Schools against the girl child still exists. The National Surveillance Report of 2014 revealed that between January and June, 2% cases of sexual violence occurred in school.

Action Plan

1. Disseminate and sensitize policies on gender issues to all stakeholders in education
2. Strengthen the monitoring of gender policies and initiatives at school level.
3. Facilitate the enforcement of gender based legislation within the education system
4. Put in place additional measure to facilitate the participation of girls in education and especially in subjects or training programmes that are currently dominated by boys.
5. Put in place additional measure to facilitate the participation and retention of girls in the school system.

Goal 6: Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills

Swaziland does not have National Assessment other than the external examinations at primary, junior and higher secondary levels. To evaluate the learning outcomes at primary the country used SACMEQ III data, which was undertaken by the SACMEQ countries in 2007.

SACMEQ presented the results in three different ways. From the number of items scored, the traditional method of means was used; this is the method that was used in collaboration with the SACMEQ mean of 500. All scores for Grade 6 pupil were averaged and Swaziland achieved a national average score of 549.4 and 540.8 in Reading and Mathematics respectively. This was above the SACMEQ mean of 500. This method is the normal and traditional way of measuring achievement. This score did not however tell us about the cognitive development of the learners.

Table 10: Means for the reading and mathematics test scores of Grade 6 Learners: 2007

| | Reading | | Mathematics | |
|-------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| | Mean | SE | Mean | SE |
| Hhohho | 547 | 7.08 | 537.4 | 6.05 |
| Lubombo | 552.1 | 6.74 | 542.6 | 4.95 |
| Manzini | 556 | 5.32 | 544.1 | 3.84 |
| Shiselweni | 541.4 | 4.18 | 539.2 | 3.76 |
| SWAZILAND | 549.4 | 2.98 | 540.8 | 2.39 |

Source: SAQMEQ III, 2007

The second method that was used to get some insight into the cognitive development was the “Comparison with expert judgments”. In SACMEQ studies prior to the data collection, the national and international expert committees agreed on ‘standards’ or ‘criteria’ that defined levels of performance. Two broad levels were identified, i.e. performances that would be expected from a pupil who would (a) barely survive during the next year of schooling (the “Minimum” level) and (b) are guaranteed to succeed during the next year of schooling (“Desired” level). In Swaziland this meant the “Desired” level represented performance that would guarantee that a pupil would be able to proceed and pass Grade 7, the end of primary school examination. There was also a category of learners who performed above the ‘desired’ level, did exceptional well such that they could be classified as operating at a higher cognitive level than an average Grade 6 pupil. Such learners were classified as having reached an “advanced level” of cognitive development and according to Blooms Taxonomy, would be at the higher end (analysis and synthesis).

The SACMEQ III survey indicated that seven percent (7%) of grade 6 learners did not reach the minimum Reading levels; this meant one in ten grade six learners were in danger of not passing their end of primary examinations. This is a reason for the Ministry to be concerned because it means on average ten percent (10%) of the learners that may sit the Swaziland Primary leaving exam go into grade 7 with slim chances of passing the exam.

The third method was using the difficulty levels of the items in the tests. First, batches of items were arranged in terms of difficulty such that they ranged from easy to more difficult. This made it possible to develop items which could be mapped to specific skills that learners needed to have to answer them. Test items were developed such that there were a number of related questions that could be classified as of the same difficulty levels. SACMEQ Project then developed eight levels of competency based on the levels of difficulty (i.e. skills required to

answer) the items. Items started at level 0, which is basic reading (as simple as recognizing and object and naming it), to higher levels which demand deeper understanding such as summarizing texts. These three methods meant that it was possible to grade a learners according to (i) the raw score they got (mean-traditional method), (ii) categorized as have met/not met/ was above the ‘desired levels’ and lastly (iii) put at a specific level of development.

Table 11: Reading Competency Levels

| Reading Competency Levels | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------|----------------------|---|
| | Level | Descriptor | Competency |
| BASIC READING SKILLS | 1 | Pre-reading | Matches words and pictures involving concrete concepts and everyday objects. |
| | 2 | Emergent Reading | Matches words and pictures involving prepositions and abstract concepts. |
| | 3 | Basic Reading | Interprets meaning (by matching words and phrases, completing sentences). |
| | 4 | Reading for Meaning | Reads to link and interpret information located in various parts of the text. |
| | 5 | Interpretive Reading | Interprets information from various parts of the text in association with external information. |
| ADVANCED READING SKILLS | 6 | Inferential Reading | Reads to combine information from various parts of the text so as to infer the writer's purpose. |
| | 7 | Analytical Reading | Locates information in longer texts (narrative, document or expository) in order to combine information from various parts of the text so as to infer the writer's personal beliefs (value systems, prejudices and biases). |
| | 8 | Critical Reading | Reads from various parts of the text so as to infer and evaluate what the writer has assumed about both the topic and the characteristics of the reader |

Source: SACMEQ III, 2007

Table 12: Percentage of Grade 6 learners in Various Reading Competency Levels

| Percentages of Grade 6 pupils in various reading competency levels in Swaziland | | | |
|---|------|------|--------|
| | 2000 | 2007 | Change |
| | % | % | % |
| Pre-Reading | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Emergent Reading | 2 | 1 | -1 |
| Basic Reading | 11 | 6 | -5 |
| Reading for Meaning | 32 | 21 | -11 |
| Interpretive Reading | 31 | 35 | 4 |
| Inferential Reading | 15 | 26 | 11 |
| Analytical Reading | 7 | 10 | 3 |
| Critical Reading | 2 | 2 | 0 |

A pupil operating at Level 4 and above is considered to have competent reading skills for this level of education. The SACMEQ III study revealed that more than 9 in 10 learners did on average possess good reading skills. Results indicated that only 1 in 100 could not read. This suggested that the learning outcomes under the South and East African consortium were relatively good. The concern was that it appeared as if there were also a few learners who were in the analytical and critical reading bandwidth.

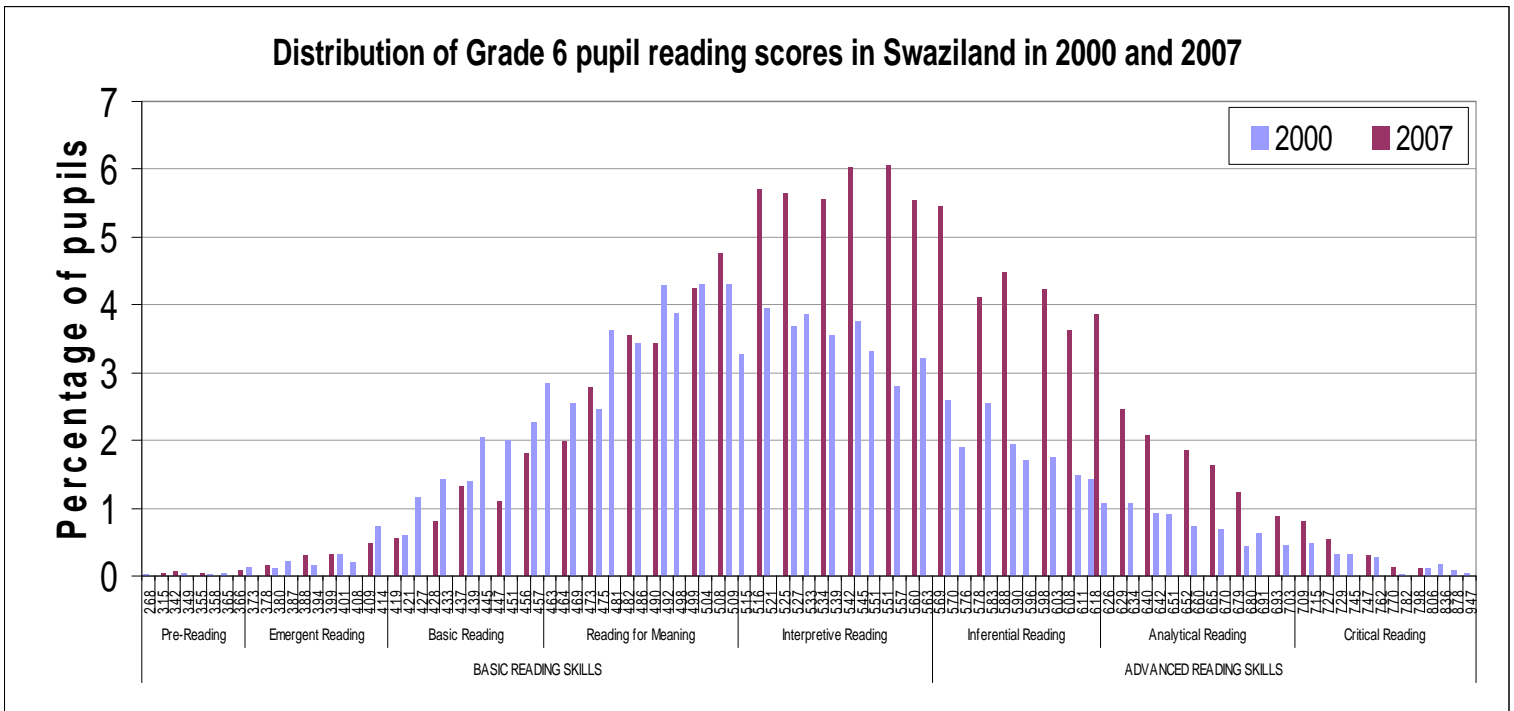


Figure 7: Distribution of Grade 6 Learners Reading Scores. Source: SACMEQ III, 2007

This suggested that there was need for teachers to challenge the learners so as to promote critical thinking. As can be observed from the graph a majority of the learners achieved levels 4 to 6.

In 2007 the learners improved their performance thus indicating improved quality of education. The highest proportion of learners was those that were able to engage in interpretive reading, i.e. reading with understanding.

Another important aspect of quality at primary is the quality of educational inputs when weighed against national benchmarks. The benchmarks for key educational resources in Swaziland are given in Table below.

Table 13: National benchmark for selected Quality in Primary Education

| National Benchmark for the Selected Indicators of Quality Education | | |
|---|--|--------------------|
| Selected Indicator | Description of the Indicator | National Benchmark |
| Basic learning materials | Pupil has at least one exercise book, a pencil (or a pen or ball pen), and a ruler | 1:1 |
| Mathematics textbook ownership | Pupil has sole use of a mathematics textbook during mathematics lessons | 1:1 |
| Pupil-teacher ratio | Total number of learners in a school divided by number of teachers in the school | 1:40 |
| Grade 6 class size | Average number of Grade 6 learners per class | 1:45 |

Source: SACMEQ III, 2007

In 2007, ninety four percent (94%) of the Grade 6 learners had at least one exercise book, a pencil or a pen and a ruler – in other words only one in twenty learners did not have all of the basic learning needs in the country. In an average class of 40, only two would be expected not to have these materials. Swaziland’s position is slightly better than the SACMEQ countries average which stood at seventy nine percent (79%) in 2007. This implied that the country’s free stationery programme is being implemented and functioning well. In fact the country’s position improved from eighty six percent (86%) in 2000 to ninety four percent (94%) in 2007. This suggested that the injection of learning materials which happened between 2003 and 2005 was a success.

When the Government of Swaziland introduced the free textbook programme the intension was to have a pupil-textbook ratio of 1:1 in the core subjects. The results indicated that in 2007 **only** 1 in 100 Grade 6 learners did **not have** textbook of their own. In 2009, Swaziland did not perform well on this indicator. The SACMEQ study revealed that 1 in four Grade 6 learners did not have their own textbook – a decrease of about 25 percent. Swaziland fared relatively higher than the SACMEQ average (41.2%). On average these ratios have remained lower than the SACMEQ average and the results indicated that on average the ratios are within the national benchmark.

The mean number of Grade 6 learners per class in Swaziland rose from 37 in 2000 to 40 in 2007. This figure was still below the national benchmark of 1:45. However, this did not mean that there were no classes that were larger than 45. There was variation in rural and urban schools, urban (42) classes tended to be bigger than rural (38) classes. The same variation also existed across the regions, where on average Grade 6 learners from Hhohho came from bigger classes than their counterparts. The figures for Hhohho and urban confirmed the theory that urban schools were on average bigger than their rural counterparts.

Challenges to Quality Primary Education:

- The national pupil-teacher ratio hides the fact that schools in the urban setting of the country are normally too big with pupil-teacher ratios exceeding 60. There is very little education in big classes. This is however due to the urban bias of our education system, where schools in the cities are slightly well resourced than rural schools, therefore distribution of education is still not equitable.

Action Plans

- Education is not equitably distributed in Swaziland. The Ministry's planning unit needs to allocate resources; material and human that need them i.e. targeted interventions. Schools which are at different levels of development should not be treated the same. For example, if you have furniture do not divide it by four because there are four regions but instead allocate based on school need for furniture.
- Swaziland needs to break the poverty cycle, rural schools where low-income populations are living need an urgent intervention on resources (material and human). Projects and programmes need to be developed to raise these schools to the same levels as city schools. These pockets can be identified using both the SACMEQ and EMIS data.

SECTION 3: IMPLEMENTATION OF EFA STRATEGIES

Several initiatives and programmes have been introduced in the country by Government and supporting partners to support implementation of each EFA goal.

Goal 1: Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for them most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.

Initiative: Development of Early Learning Development Standards

Early Learning Development Standards (ELDS) are a set of statements that reflect the expectations concerning what children should know and are able to do. These are defined as a support for children's growth and development from birth to when they start school. It respects the dignity of all children regardless of nationality, race, colour, gender, language, religion, opinion, original, wealth, birth status or ability.

Swaziland ELDS (SELDS) have an adaptation of ELDS hinging on cultural heritage. The SELDS are defined as a support for children's learning and development from 0 to 60 months. The SELDS is a resource document that informs teachers, parents, caregivers and all stakeholders who contribute to children's education, development and care about the expectations and practices they should have for children during the early childhood years.

Structure of the Swaziland ELDS

SELDS has five domains namely:

- Physical Wellbeing, Health and Motor Development
- Cognitive Development
- Social and Emotional Development
- Communication, Language and Literacy
- Cultural Heritage

Achievements:

1. **Training of trainers and service providers on ECCD** - Since this is a new initiative, achievement so far has been the training of national trainers on SELDS and the dissemination to all service providers in the country. Plans are in place to monitor implementation to ensure children's holistic growth and development.

Challenges:

1. **Regulation of ECCE Centres**- Ensuring that all ECCE centres adhere to the ELDS is a challenge since most of them are not registered with the Ministry thus difficult to reach

and monitor. The challenge that ECCDE Centres are mainly privately owned, continues to pose a threat in Government initiated programmes targeting this level.

Partnership and coordination: Partner mobilisation was one major achievement in the development and implementation of SELDS. Government received support from development partners, international organisation, civil society organisations and communities.

Goal 2: Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality.

Initiative: Non-formal Primary Education Programme (NPE)

Sebenta National Institute is a public institution within the Ministry of Education and Training. It was established with the mandate to provide literacy education to adults who did not have the skills to read, write and count. In 2009, Sebenta was formally mandated to provide non-formal education to out of school and over-aged children, parallel with the MoET'S roll out of state funded education in 2010. The over-aged children could not enrol in formal primary school as a result of age restrictions in access to FPE, limiting grade 1 to those aged 6-9 years old and grade 2 to those aged 7-11 years old. This new mandate resulted in an institutional shift in focus; basic education provision shifted from only adult learners to providing education for all irrespective of age and socio-economic background. The expanded focus called for teaching and learning focus that would be accommodative of the entire clientele, especially the out-of-school or over-aged learners. The shift in mandate saw the birth of a Non-formal Primary Education programme (NPE).

NPE is a level above Adult Basic Education (ABE) and facilitates learner re-entry into the formal school system, after passing an examination equivalent to the primary school examination at grade 7 level. Learners can proceed with secondary education and skills training via a number of institutions providing non-formal and continuing education.

Achievements:

1. Children that were initially kicked out of the formal education system due to a variety of barriers, which still exist despite the introduction of FPE, have been provided with an opportunity to re-enter the formal education system through the Sebenta non- formal education programme.

2. Strengthened links between the non-formal education system and the formal education system as a result of the development of clear paths for progression from non-formal education programme to formal education programme. This has been accompanied by the review and alignment of the non-formal education curriculum, development of modules and the sharing infrastructure and teachers amongst other things.

Challenges:

1. However there is insufficient capacity to cater for all these learners and the quality of education is not regulated and in some cases not accredited. There is therefore a pressing need to develop a parallel, regulated system of non-formal education that follows an agreed curriculum to open flexible entry point into the formal system.
2. Even though the Government of Swaziland provides access to entry into the formal education system for age – eligible children, it has been observed that the number of such children enrolled in the non-formal education program is increasing. This is likely to be associated to the cost of education in the formal education system such as the cost of uniform, top-up (additional) fees etc.
3. The teachers that are currently teaching the learners in the NPE programme do not have the relevant training on the use of non-formal teaching methodologies. This is due to the fact that at pre-service teacher training, the teachers are not equipped with skills on how to teach learners under the non-formal education level.

Partnership and coordination: The implementation of this initiative has been supported largely by UNICEF and UNESCO.

Goal 3: Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes

Initiative: Life Skill Education Curriculum in Swazi Secondary Schools

In an effort of improving access and realizing optimal achievement for learners, the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) provides a conducive policy environment for the provision of comprehensive age-appropriate life skills education in schools. As such, MoET has developed a Life skills education curriculum and a standard set of five age-appropriate Life Skill Teacher Handbooks including scripted lessons to provide comprehensive sexuality education in schools and these are being rolled out in all Secondary Schools in the country. Currently, life skills

education at primary level is integrated into some subjects and there is a need to scan the comprehensiveness of the life skills programme in light of the prevailing SRH/HIV challenges faced by young people in Swaziland. The new life skills initiative is an age appropriate life skills curriculum that is teacher led and learner centered covering Career guidance, Health promotion and HIV & AIDS.

Achievements:

1. A Life skills Education Curriculum for in-school youth that is age-appropriate and culturally sensitive together with teachers handbook has been developed and piloted in 25 secondary schools. This has been approved by the Curriculum Coordinating Committee for roll out in all secondary schools systems.
2. Built capacity for MoET key official and teachers from pilot schools to deliver LSE in classroom settings.
3. Ministry of Education and Training with Ministry of Health as signatories to the ESA CSE Ministerial Commitment has drafted a joint cabinet paper on CSE to be tabled to parliament in order to improve delivery of CSE for both in and out of school. A National CSE Framework for in and out of school youth has been drafted to guide CSE programing in the country.
4. A situational assessment conducted in teacher education for the institutionalization on LSE in teacher education.

Challenges:

1. Delivery of LSE at primary level is not comprehensive. There is a need to conduct a LSE curriculum scan to strengthen the programme.
2. The institutionalization of LSE in teacher education is limited. Advocacy for the institutionalization of comprehensive LSE at teacher education is critical.
3. The roll out of LSE in both primary and secondary schools is expensive.

Partnerships and coordination: The LSE programme support has been strengthened through partnerships with UN and civil society partners. Coordination of LSE has been improved through a joint collaboration with Ministry of Health and Ministry of Sport Culture and Youth Affairs and their partners.

Goal 4: Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015.

Initiative: Promoting Literacy and adult basic education through the SEBENTA National Institute

Sebenta National Institute (SNI), a Public Enterprise in the Category “A” sector, and affiliated to the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) has the core business of reducing illiteracy amongst; children, youth young adults and adults in the Kingdom of ESwatini. The Institute’s major funding comes from His Majesty’s Government. Sebenta is mandated by government through the Ministry to oversee the progression of Non-formal Education and Training including Life Skills Learning.

The Sebenta National Institute runs three general education and training programmes:

- **Basic literacy** (SiSwati language) is a nine month course in reading, writing and arithmetic with some focus on encouraging awareness of social and economic development;
- **Basic and Post-basic English and Numeracy** is a two-year course that reaches a Grade 4 equivalence and includes an internal examination; and,
- **Non-formal Upper Primary Education (NUPE)** is a two-year programme in primary school subjects, such as Belief Systems, English, Practical Maths, Practical Science, SiSwati and Social Studies with an external examination at the Grade 7 level.

Sebenta has also introduced a skills development programme to complement its adult literacy training. It is only open to those who have completed both basic and post-basic SiSwati and English. For the purpose of this report, the focus will be on the **Basic literacy programme**.

The Sebenta National Institute recruits learners who are mainly poor and illiterate. The recruitment is done using community based methods. Although there is open access to the basic literacy programme, learners can only proceed to the higher levels in their basic education programme if they have the pre-requisite qualification. In recent years, it has widened its clientele ‘catchment’ to include youth who cannot attend formal school due to lack of funds or because of the long distance from the nearest school.

Achievements

The Basic literacy programme is offered to individuals who have ever been to school or have dropped out of formal school. Such citizens normally fall under the under privilege and marginalized members of our society. The institute is a non- profit making and receives a subvention from the Government of Swaziland. The institute partners with primary schools in communities where there is a high illiteracy rate amongst adults. The primary schools normally

open their doors for the adult learners to have lessons the school facility. The lessons normally take place in the afternoon once the formal school day is over.

The success of the programme can be demonstrated by the constant increase in enrolment over the years.

Table 14: Sebenta enrolment 2004 to 2011

| Programme | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2010 | | 2011 | |
|--------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| | | | | | SiSwati Basic a | English Basic | SiSwati Basic a | English Basic |
| Basic | 1 305 | 2 055 | 2 264 | 2 408 | 1844 | 1435 | 1459 | 1146 |

Source: Sebenta National Institute Strategic Plan, 2008–2011

Enrolments at the Sebenta National Institute increased during the period 2004 to 2011. The strategic plan 2008-2011 states that number of female students far exceeds that of males. The class sizes are small – 14 for SiSwati, 10 for English and the overall facilitator: learner ratio is 1 to 19 for SiSwati and 1 to 15 for English.

Challenges:

1. **Absenteeism:** Absenteeism is one of the major challenge faced under the basic literacy programme. The learners usually have to attend t their adult related duties thus missing some lessons.
2. **Financial hiccups:** General operations are affected by financial constraints in the following way:
 - i. Insufficient funds to procure learning equipment and material.
 - ii. Insufficient funds to run / conduct workshops / training
 - iii. Lack of funds to maintain structures and equipment both at headquarters and learning centers.
 - iv. Lack of funds to construct classrooms in the identified sites.
3. **Transport:** Insufficient vehicles for Monitoring and Supervision purposes. Some of the vehicles used are too old for the gravel roads.
4. **Poverty related problems:** some of our learners attend classes in empty stomachs because they do not have enough food in their families. This has a negative effect on their concentration and performance. In addition, some learners’ find it difficult to pay

tuition fees because they do not have income generating projects. As a result this contributes to the drop-out rate.

Partnership and Coordination

The Government of Swaziland is one of the key partners in the implementation of this programme. Other major partners for the MoET for CSTL include UNICEF, Bantwana, MiET-Africa, WHO, UNAIDS, UNESCO, and for NFE includes; UNICEF, UNESCO, NERCHA and World Vision.

Goal 5: Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.

Despite the major progress made by the country in achieving gender parity in enrolments in the primary and secondary education system, there are still disparities existing in subject selection. This subsequently leads some fields being dominated by one sex.

Initiative: Take your daughter to Work

This is an initiative that is aimed at encouraging girls to venture into male dominated fields of work, consequently selecting subjects that will enable them to venture in these fields. Currently there are fewer girls enrolled in the sciences as they progress through secondary schools. Data indicated that more females are enrolled in institutions that offer courses such Accounts, Computer Studies and Secretarial courses.

The "Take your Daughter to work" initiative aims to expose girls to different career options available. The Ministry through the Guidance and Counselling unit partners with different organizations, such as World Vision, Swaziland Action Against Abuse (SWAGAA), Junior Achievers (JA) and Municipal Council of Mbabane to facilitate this. The in-schools girls are brought on camp and different speakers, mainly females in male dominated fields deliver motivational speeches to them. Companies also give presentations about what the companies are about, the career options within the companies and what subjects are needed as prerequisites to have opportunities in those fields of work. After that, the girls select the companies they prefer to be attached to. The final stage is a feedback session from both the girls and the company representatives. Continuous follow up is provided by the Career guidance officer at regional level and the school guidance teachers.

Achievements:

Even though the impact of this initiative has not been assessed, reports from schools indicate that this initiative has had a positive impact on a number of schools. The number of girls enrolling in subjects previously dominated by boys is increasing. Also, the number of organizations and companies supporting this initiative has increased and more girls exposed.

Challenges:

The implementation of the programme is not well coordinated and its sustainability is not assured.

Key Partnerships:

UNESCO, UNICEF, Gender Unit (Deputy Prime Minister's Office) World Vision, Swaziland Action Against Abuse (SWAGAA), Junior Achievers (JA) and Municipal Council of Mbabane.

Goal 6: Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

The Government of Swaziland continued to pursue the goal of improving the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in numeracy, literacy and life skills". In an effort to achieve this goal, the Government is focused on a number of areas namely:

- i) Recruitment of qualified teachers
- ii) Improving the quality of teaching and learning
- iii) Improving access to education inputs on time and their effective use.
- iv) Providing facilities, infrastructure and support structures to make schools child friendly

Initiative: Improving quality of teaching and learning

This review will focus on the progress made by the Government of Swaziland to improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools.

During the period under review, the Ministry of education and Training made efforts to ensure that the quality of education offered at primary education level is of high quality. This was done through continuous review of curriculum and capacity building programmes for teachers so as to equip them with recent or new teaching strategies. The Ministry prioritized this initiative because it realizes that in order to maintain high levels of service delivery, teachers need to benefit from in- service training on a continuous basis. The Ministry is cognisant of the fact that teachers' professional knowledge – like all professional knowledge – weakens over time and requires constant re-modelling, upgrading and re-shaping. The Ministry believes that a highly productive teaching force that operates at state-of-the-art level is the result of an effective in-service teacher training system. Pre –service training is supported by an equally efficient and professional in-service teacher education and training system. Given this, the in-service training department was strengthened to provide in- service training for teachers at the primary education level. The department was strengthened in terms of personnel, technical assistance, financial resources both from government and partners, equipment for producing materials as well as for teaching purposes.

Given the support from government and partners, the department was able to do the following:

1. Provide ongoing support and managerial skills to head teachers as accounting officers of the schools they are heading.
2. Provide deputy head teachers and heads of departments with on-going support and managerial skills in order to improve the quality of curriculum delivery.
3. Provide opportunities for the training of teachers on various subject areas.
4. Capacitate teachers with knowledge of classroom management and organizational strategies in order to ensure that effective teaching and learning takes place.
5. Encourage sustainable professional growth by conducting school-based zonal and regional workshops based on teachers' needs;
6. Establish school clusters throughout the country and provided support to them in order to facilitate sharing of knowledge, skills and teaching strategies, approaches used to tackle difficult subject content, handling children with varying learning capabilities, etc. amongst teachers.
7. Provide platforms for discussion of issues around improving the quality of education where all educational stakeholders participate.
8. Provide ongoing technical and professional support to practicing teachers to be able to effectively deliver the school curriculum;

As part of improving the quality of education at the primary school level is the aspect of monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is done internally and externally. The internal monitoring is where by Head teachers (School Principals) and Heads of Departments/ Senior teacher check on a regular basis if proper records of assessment are kept and that the assessments/ tests meet the expectations of the programme of each subject. Under the externally monitoring, inspectors visit schools to monitor educational standards. Inspectors prepare reports with findings and these reports are shared with the In- service training department so as to ensure that all issues of concern are addressed through training or workshops for teachers' development.

Systematic evaluation is done through the continuous assessment system and an external examinations administered in Grade 7. The continuous assessment system entails conducting one test for each class in all schools periodically. This means that learners in a particular grade throughout the country will write the same test of which an analysis of their performance will be done to determine the level of knowledge and skills they have acquired. The results from this evaluation exercise reveals areas where there are weaknesses and where learners are doing well. This system has been decentralised to the school level. The continuous assessment is now used by schools to assess learner performance and the scores obtained by each learner have an impact on the progression of each learner to the next grade.

At the end of Primary education level (Grade7), learners sit for an external examination known as the Swaziland Primary Certificate (SPC). The systematic evaluations allow for an indication of how learner achievement changes with time. In addition to this, Swaziland uses SACMEQ data to measure learning outcomes at primary school level.

Achievements:

1. Swaziland has been able to achieve high pass rate in the primary education system. The average pass rate for learners at primary school level during 2012 was 83.8%. This means that the initiatives and strategies put in place to enhance quality are yielding positive results.
2. Under SACMEQ, a sample of primary schools is used to conduct tests in Grade 6 on reading and mathematics. The SACMEQ III study revealed that more than 9 in 10 learners did on average possess good reading skills. Results indicated that only 1 in 100 could not read. This suggested that the learning outcomes under the South and East African consortium were relatively good. The concern was that it appeared as if there were also a few learners who were in the analytical and critical reading bandwidth.

This suggested that there was need for teachers to challenge the learners so as to promote critical thinking. In 2007 the learners improved their performance thus indicating improved quality of education. The highest proportion of learners was those that were able to engage in interpretive reading, i.e. reading with understanding.

Challenges:

1. The In-Service department faced a challenge in monitoring or conducting follow –up visit to schools after training due to shortage of transport (vehicles). This resulted in the department not being able to provide assistance or support as required by the teachers. The Ministry has addressed this challenges by allocating more vehicles to the department in 2014.
2. Even though the department is being strengthened through the recruitment of lecturers, it has experienced a great challenge in retaining these lecturers due to unattractive salaries. The ministry needs to address the issue of the salary structure or job grading of this department.
3. When data on the pass rate is disaggregated according to gender, girls have a higher pass rate as compared to boys. According to the Annual Education Census report (2012), the pass rate for girls was 86.1% while that of boys was 81.8%.

Key Partnerships:

European Union (Support to Education Project), UNICEF, Teacher Training Colleges (William Pitcher and Ngwane Teacher Training Colleges), National Curriculum Centre, Examination Council of Swaziland.

OVERALL LESSONS LEARNT

1. **Availability of enabling legal documents, policies and plans accelerated the move towards achieving EFA goals** e.g. FPE Act, Gender policy etc.
2. **Proper planning and coordination are key for effective implementation of any programme.** Swaziland was not fully prepared to take the EFA agenda forward when she became signatory under the EFA declaration. There is a need to plan and prepare for change in order to facilitate the smooth implementation of programmes and the realization of set goals. In the implementation of programmes it was discovered that even though the National EFA Plan of Action was in place, there were no programme or departments with specific annual or medium term plans to act as guidelines in the move towards the achievement of the EFA goals. Furthermore, there are programmes which are shared by several stakeholders either within government, or civil society and international development partners. For example within ECCE, the responsibility of child care, development and education is shared by the Ministry of Education and Training, Ministry of Health and the Deputy Prime Minister's Office (Children's Unit and OVC Unit). Technical and Vocational Education and Training is shared by the Ministries of Education and Training, Labour and Social Welfare and the Ministry of Commerce Industry and Trade. Thus where programmes of this nature exist, it is necessary to have clearly established structures and mechanisms to ensure coordinated effort, clear roles and responsibilities and avoid duplication of effort.
3. **There is a need to strengthen monitoring and evaluation of all EFA programmes** – this is important so as to be able to determine/measure progress made on a regular basis.
4. **Making good and successful partnerships is key to successful implementation of programmes.** For instance engaging communities in the construction of primary schools helped in increasing access. Also, partnership between the Ministry of Education and Training resulted in support in the implementation of programmes. For example, the European Union has been supporting the Ministry in the payment of school fees for Grade 1 learners since 2010.

LESSONS LEARNT WITH REGARDS TO EACH EFA GOAL

Lessons learnt with regard to each EFA goal and implementation strategies are discussed in the table below;

| EFA Goal | Lessons Learnt |
|--|--|
| <p>GOAL 1: To expand and improve Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The quality of ECCE education can be assured if an enabling environment is provided. There is a need to put in place legislation, policies, a standard curriculum, trained teachers, guidelines/ minimum standards for service provision etc. for effective regulation and quality assurance. |
| <p>GOAL 2: Ensure that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and are able to complete basic education that is free, compulsory and of good quality.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers should be trained to utilize both formal and non-formal teaching methodologies. Political support and commitment towards the universal primary education initiative yielded positive results. For instance laws necessary for the implementation of the goal were put in place and resources needed to accelerate progress were provided. Mobilization of resources (financial, technical, human, material) from all stakeholders is very key for the successful implementation of the EFA programmes. The huge investments made in primary education resulted in a significant increase in the participation of children in education. This includes orphaned children, children with special education needs and those from poor families or disadvantaged backgrounds. |
| <p>GOAL 3: To ensure that the learning needs for all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is need for sensitization of employers about the importance of education for their employees in order to facilitate access to education for adult learners. This will go a long way in reducing absenteeism. |
| <p>GOAL 4: To achieve a 50% improvement in levels of adult basic literacy by 2015 especially for women and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is need for sensitization of employers about the importance of education for their employees in order to facilitate access to education for adult learners. There is a need to decentralize of ODL and introduction of various delivery mechanisms in order to ensure that the education needs of children, youth and adults are well catered for in terms of access to education – especially |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>adults.</p> | <p>adults who want to participate in part- time or open distance learning programmes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need for the NFE programme to be strengthened in order reduce illiteracy in the country • There is a need for the institute to address the financial challenges that hinders the effective participation of learners. • The SNI needs to put in place robust strategies to mobilize resources both from government and from the private sector. |
| <p>GOAL 5: Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring full and access to achievement in basic education of good quality</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating an enabling environment for the girl child has increased access to education. • Programmes and initiatives aimed at eliminating gender disparities should not be biased in favour of one gender but should support all so that equity is achieved. |
| <p>GOAL 6: Improve all aspects of the quality of education and ensure excellence so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct continuous in-service training for teachers together with monitoring and evaluation of the education is important in improving delivery of curriculum and to address emerging trends yields good results in terms of the performance of learners. • Encouraging children to read and practice mathematics during their spare time improves performance. • Provide extra reading materials for children to use in school and also allow them to take home improves their literacy and numeracy levels. |

Case Studies

Case Study 1: Quality Primary Education in Swaziland (Goal 6)

Situation: A number of children failed the end of primary examinations due to English. In Swaziland English is a failing subject. The nation became concerned by what they called “falling standards of education”, i.e. low performance in English and Sciences at all levels of education. In 2000, the SACMEQ II Research Project also confirms relatively low levels of performance in Reading (English) and Mathematics. It was also noted that primary school children were not master readers nor are they numerate, i.e. they did not achieve advanced Reading and Mathematics Skills.

Task: Improve literacy and numeracy levels such that children achieve higher performance levels in Reading and Mathematics by reviewing the learning experiences, i.e. curriculum (teaching and learning) at primary levels.

Action: The Director of Education instructed the Reading Subject Panel and the Mathematics Subject Panel to analyze the SACMEQ II results and identify all areas which are lacking in the curriculum. SACMEQ results had clearly spelt out areas in which learners were lacking. A number of workshops are held with the teachers and curriculum department to diagnose the issues around the subject matter in both Reading and Mathematics. A number of observations are made based on the findings of the SACMEQ research, to highlight a few:

- Although all learners had textbooks (Reading and Mathematics) they were not allowed to take them home as these books belonged to the schools due to the Book Rental Scheme that was operational then,
- Some schools did not have extra reading materials in the schools (library books), and those that did have the books they do not provide time for reading and do not allow learners to take the books home;
- Homework is given but seldom marked

Subject panel teams came up with strategies to improve the Reading and Mathematics levels. Panels came up with suggestions which included the provision of library books for all primary schools and that learners should be allowed to take their textbooks and library books home. In service workshops are held for primary school teachers in professional lesson plans and the important of marking home work so as to track individual pupil performance. Government working with partners secures additional learning materials and initiates a programme which supplies all textbooks in the core subject areas to all primary school going children in public schools. In addition it provides class libraries (book boxes) and stationery to all primary schools.

In addition school inspectors visit all low performing schools and offer additional in-service training to teachers.

Result: All primary schools have classroom libraries and children are allowed to borrow books, take them home and get assistance even in their homes. In addition, Government institutionalizes the free textbooks and Stationery programme to ensure that every children has a book to himself. The textbook pupil ratio in Swaziland at primary levels is 1:1 and every child have all the exercise books needed for school. In addition Government with assistance from partners provides all children with at least one full nutritious meal per day. The result was children attending and staying on because they have all the materials and food, attendance rates improved which impacted positively on the performance of the children.

Lessons Learned: Encouraging children to read and practice mathematics during their spare time improves performance. Provide extra reading materials for children to use in school and also allow them to take home improves their literacy and numeracy levels. School feeding in third world countries is very important because for some children it is their only meal and it encourages children to stay on and improves survival rates. Child centred approaches do improve the performance of children.

CASE STUDY 2: ADULT LITERACY: MOVING TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY (Goal 4)

For the first time in 15 years at age 27, Fikile Myeni from the Lubombo region is going to school. Her dreams of an education were shattered in 1997 when she and her five siblings dropped out of school because their family could not afford school fees. After hearing about adult classes offered by the Sebenta National Institute of Adult Education, Myeni and 28 other women started grade one at the beginning of May 2013.

Myeni is excited to learn English and always looks forward to her classes. "Coming to class helps me get knowledge and that frees my mind. For now we are still at the bottom, but I can't wait to be able to speak English," Myeni said.

Worried that friends would laugh at her, Myeni was hesitant to start classes, but her fear of illiteracy and her desire for knowledge finally pushed her to take up the challenge. "I'm more confident now and I am happy about my ambitions. I never thought it would be this close to me," explains Myeni.

Although she has to juggle classes and looking after her two children, Myeni knows that getting an education will not only better her chances of finding a job, but soon she will no longer have to rely on neighbours to read her mail.

Siphiwe Mbhamali, a 39-year-old woman, has also signed up for classes. Mbhamali only attended school until second grade because her father did not approve of her education. She always knew that education was important but did not know where to go. "I ended up in grade two, what does it say about me? It's my dream to read and write and I hope it will come true," she says.

Now that Mbhamali is a mother of four, she hopes that her children do not experience the same pain of being uneducated. "I hope they finish and do well at school and not end up in the same situation as me," explains Mbhamali.

Local NGO, Swaziland Action Group Against Abuse (SWAGAA) Communications Officer Maureen Littlejohn says, "These worthy deeds bring women closer to gender equality and equal opportunity in the country."

Swaziland has made considerable strides in improving education, since literacy levels are at 88% for women and 86% for men (CSO Report) . There is already gender parity at secondary schools and the gender gap is slowly narrowing in primary schools. Along with other SADC countries like Mauritius, Seychelles, South Africa, Botswana and Zambia, Swaziland has higher proportions of women than men enrolled at tertiary institutions.

However, inaccessibility of schooling facilities, poor infrastructure, early marriage, teenage pregnancy, HIV and AIDS as well as sexual harassment, perpetrated by both peers and teachers,

still stand in the way of girls' education. In addition, the perception that educating girls has no value persists among many families.

With support from the Ministry of Education and Training, the Sebenta National Institute operates in all four regions of Swaziland, with the aim of providing education to people above the official school going age. The five-year course offers students two-hour classes, three days a week.

Field Supervisor Khethiwe Dlamini said the outreach programme welcomes rural women and men to enrol for English and SiSwati literacy classes, at a small fee of E20 or \$2 per year. "Classes normally begin at 14:30 to 16:30. We normally ask school teachers to give lessons but it's really up to the facilitator and the students how they arrange time," says Dlamini.

Finding suitable facilities and venues to hold lessons remains a challenge, but luckily the Bandlancane Local Authority and the Co-operation for Development of Energy Countries (COSPE), provided a soup kitchen in the Mambane community, where lessons take place.

Teacher Busisiwe Mazibuko says her new students are committed, eager to learn and believes the class of 28 women will make her proud. She explains that helping people who missed out on education enables them to dream again, "The aim is to bring education to everyone in the rural areas and also to empower women and make them literate. We believe it will be a success," says Mazibuko.

In order to encourage entrepreneurship and promote income-generating projects, the women are not just learning spelling but also basic practical skills and handy work.

For now, Myeni and Mbhamali may still be practising their vowels, but these small steps are vigorous leaps toward education, empowerment and independence. They are determined to see their dreams come true and to see their children do the same. As Myeni sums it up: "Knowledge is life."

This case study was carried out as part of the Gender Links Opinion and Commentary Service that provides fresh views on everyday news. Gender Links is one of the partners of the Ministry of Education in the area of gender issues.

Source: <http://www.genderlinks.org.za/article/swaziland-from-education-to-equality-2013-05-31>

SECTION 4: PROSPECTS FOR POST 2015

The last decade saw the Government of Swaziland through the Ministry of Education and Training making major thrusts in the achievement of Education for All (EFA) goals including the two Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in education. These efforts have seen the country make major gains in the achievement of Universal Primary Education (UPE) witnessed through Net Enrolment rates of above 95 percent at formal primary levels. The country has also endeavored in the achievement of other goals, however there has been some challenges. Achievement of universal access to primary education has not been accompanied by gains in quality and has not put the same focus on achievement of primary education by those outside the formal school age. Children who are above the official age who accessed primary education through non-formal education have not had it easy 'crossing-over' to the formal sector after completion of certain grades. This has necessitated creation of links between the formal and non-formal sectors.

Other challenges have been the quality of education, i.e. learning outcomes. However to address this issue the Ministry through the National Curriculum Centre (NCC) engaged in curriculum reform at primary levels to develop and introduce a competency based curriculum. Government has also expanded its look at primary education and looking at introducing a Grade zero. Due to the high costs of education at this level and a very low attendance (less than 30%) rate, it has been necessary to increase access. The vehicle that was adopted to increase access is the proposed introduction of Grade zero (a pre- primary preparatory class) in public schools. From the Post 2015 Education Agenda consultations, consensus was reached that Grade zero was also necessary to lower the high repetition rates in grade 1, which average at about 15%. It was resolved that the best method to counter this high repetition was to ensure that all children get ECCDE so that the playing field is almost level in lower primary education. Debate is currently ongoing on whether the Government needs to extend the "Free Primary Education (FPE)" programme to pre-primary.

It is a fact that true success at primary levels of the FPE will only be observed by improved enrolment rates at lower secondary levels. This would have suggested high survival and transition rates into lower secondary, which is part of basic education. It is in this regard that the Ministry undertook a study that looked into the costs of secondary education. This is critical because if all the gains of primary education do not result in increased enrolments at secondary levels then all the effort for the past seven years would have been in vain. This suggests the

operationalization of the country's Poverty Reduction Strategy Policy (PRSP), which advocates for a ten year universal basic education. So going forward the Government of Swaziland believes it has created an enabling environment for the 2030 agenda.

4.1 Proposed targets on the Post 2015 Education Agenda

In ensuring that this vision is shared with all key stakeholders the Ministry led by the EFA Coordination Committee in Swaziland held some consultative meetings with the relevant education sub-sectors. The participants in these meeting consisted of various stakeholders including government officials, representatives from NGOs, church based organizations, development partners, teachers associations etc. The focus was not only the post 2015 agenda but to make an assessments to find out what has been done and achieved, why and who did what, whether the roles of all stakeholders had been documented. It is through the inclusion debate and identification of those who were left out that guided our post 2015 debate. This section will focus on the results of the debate on the proposed goals and targets. It is the proposed target that was discussed with accompanying benchmarks. Each targets was debated by all stakeholders that are currently implementing activities in the area of have an interest.

Target 1: By 2030, at least 100% of girls and boys are ready for primary school through participation in quality early childhood care and education, including at least one year of free and compulsory pre-primary education with particular attention to gender equality and the most marginalised.

The high discrepancies at this level of education informed the decision to ensure that all (100%) children access pre-primary education. It was noted that are currently the marginalized (i.e. the poor, special education needs children and OVC) do not get a good ECCDE thus it leads to them lagging behind their counterparts. This was noted as contributing to the high repetition rates at Grades 1 and 2. The country attaches great value in ECCDE programmes however, the challenge has been that they are in private hands and quite expensive. This has been largely due to the fact that currently there is little Government support going towards this sub-sector. Government provides professional guidance through the inspectorate. Although there is evidence that children who have gone through ECCDE tend to develop faster, it has been to a large extent been for the privileged few who can afford the cost of ECCDE.

Stakeholders also argued that since Government had successfully implemented the FPE from Grade 1 to 7 in six years then this target can be achieved in less than five years. It was however noted that there are

still huge investments that are to be made for this to be a reality. The introduction of Grade 0, at every primary school will require additional classrooms, kitchens and toilets to be built. In addition, there will be a need to support this sub- sector in terms of remuneration of the service providers especially if ECCDE becomes a pre- requisite or in other words compulsory for enrolment into primary education level. The 'compulsory' notion was highlighted as a necessary tool to encourage parents to send their children to ECCDE once it has been availed.

Target 2: By 2030, all girls and boys complete free and compulsory quality basic education of at least 9 years and achieve relevant learning outcomes, with particular attention to gender equality and the most marginalized

Basic education in Swaziland is ten years. The consultation process felt that one vehicle that would ensure that this target is realised is the extension of the current FPE programme by an additional three years. However, this suggests that the country will have to reconsider the end of primary level examinations which are currently used to determine entry into lower secondary education. For a continuous education process, then Swaziland would have to introduce other assessment strategies such as competency based assessment, which would take over from the external examinations at the end of primary.

This would then become the Free Basic Education (FBE) programme, after which pupils should have acquired the essential skills to actively participate in society and would also have some level of maturity. However, due to the diversity of the curriculum, costs of textbooks and associated fees, there is a need for Government to solicit for support from its partners to fund this level of education. This was after noting that it currently is financing all of primary education save for Grade 1, which is currently financed by the European Union.

There will be a huge demand for school infrastructure, facilities and learning materials and equipment. This will be coupled with a bigger demand for appropriately qualified teachers especially in the areas of Science, Mathematics and Technology. All children irrespective of their location and socio economic status should have access to a quality secondary education. In addition, there should be consented efforts to ensure that education is equitable distribution to address the issue of rural to urban migration in search for 'so called', better schools in the cities.

Target 3: By 2030, increase the percentage of adults who reach a proficiency level in literacy and numeracy sufficient to fully participate in society to at least 98%

Current literacy rates for the country stand above 90%. It was noted that the adults of the post 2015 agenda will be more educated thus literacy and numeracy levels will be higher. One of the key issues to be addressed by the Ministry beyond 2015 is to develop Literacy and Numeracy proficiency standards that will inform the assessments undertaken during the national census surveys. It was resolved that maybe the national standards for numeracy and literacy should be pegged to Grade 5. there was concern with the linking of formal qualifications with non-formal.

Target 4: By 2030, increase the percentage of youth and adults with the knowledge, skills and competences to access decent work to at least 99 % and 99% respectively

Target 5: By 2030, all learners acquire knowledge, skills, values and attitudes for global citizenship and sustainable development

For purposes of the consultation these targets were combined. This debate started off with definitions of the Youth and Adults. This was for targeting of programmes. It was agreed in principle that there was need to mainstream life skills, Gender, Special Needs Education, ASHR, Technical and Vocational Education (TVET) with cross-cutting and contemporary skills that include entrepreneurial training. Swaziland is looking at the development of TVET to post secondary levels, currently it only produces graduates who only have basic skills and do not contribute to the economical development of the country because they are only employed in low level skill areas like factories.

Target 6: By 2030, all governments ensure the provision of sufficient numbers of qualified teachers

This sector was pegged with tertiary education, where most teachers are trained. It was agreed that all teachers need to be appropriately qualified for the sector they are teaching in. This debate brought discussion on 'what a teacher is, a qualified teacher, and an appropriately qualified teacher.' There was need for the equitable distribution of teachers to schools and also ensure that appropriately trained teachers are engaged. Swaziland defined an appropriate qualified teacher as one that is qualified and trained teacher teaching at a level of education that is relevant to his/ her training.

Since the requirement for entry into tertiary is successful completion of post- secondary education, there is a demand to adequately map all such programmes under the National Qualification Framework which should also respond to the ISCED mapping. Although tertiary education is supported by Government, the resources are very limited, thus there may be need for country to exploit other paradigms other than formal attendance.

Target 7: By 2030, all countries progress towards allocating (4-6%) of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and (15-20%) of their public expenditure to education

The average spending on education by the government of Swaziland over the last decade has been about 17%. This excludes allocations under different sub-sectors such as OVC funds under the office of the Deputy Prime Minister, Scholarships Fund for tertiary education which is under the Ministry of Social Security. The feeling was that the country fares well under this target the only focus is the cost-effective use of the funds. The important action for the future is to ensure that the education share is sustained or increased.

4.2 Operationalization of the Education Agenda

The country does have standing benchmarks in a number of areas, some of these have been harmonized with SADC and AU benchmarks which are also in line with some of the international agenda.

4.2.1 Suggested National benchmarks

Target 1: By 2030, at least 100% of girls and boys are ready for primary school through participation in quality early childhood care and education, including at least one year of free and compulsory pre-primary education with particular attention to gender equality and the most marginalised.

Swaziland has adopted the proposed ISCED levels and will have the two levels of education of ECCDE in the country. The ECCDE will be from age 0 to 3, and pre-primary will from ages 4 to 5. This then means that entry into grade 1, will be after the completion of pre-primary. This then suggest a policy shift from age being the only criteria to a successful completion of at least one year of pre-primary.

To achieve a quality ECCDE, the country will also adopt a nationally defined teaching qualification for this level of education, thus by 2030 all pre-primary classes will be taught by appropriately qualified teachers. The national benchmark for teachers will be that teachers should have a post- secondary teaching qualification at ISCED 4 and lower 5. All pre-primary schools will be attached to a primary schools and the distance to such centres should be less than 5km.

Target 2: By 2030, all girls and boys complete free and compulsory quality basic education of at least 9 years and achieve relevant learning outcomes, with particular attention to gender equality and the most marginalized

A national standard for basic education in Swaziland is ten years, i.e. from Grade 1 to Form 3. Currently there are fewer secondary schools than primary schools and the curriculum offered is pro-urban in that there is more diversity in urban schools. To curb this Ministry will have to zone schools to ensure that pupils do not have to travel to the city for a quality education. All schools will offer the core national curriculum (all subjects), this implies huge investments to be made in ensuring that all schools have libraries, computer, science and design and technology laboratories. It will also ensure that not more than three primary school feed into a secondary schools so as to ensure transition rates of more than 90% in all communities. There will also be need for a national benchmark on what subjects every secondary school should offer.

Target 3: By 2030, increase the percentage of adults who reach a proficiency level in literacy and numeracy sufficient to fully participate in society to at least 98%

It was agreed that the proficiency standards will be pegged to Grade 5. This will be mapped by the National Curriculum Centre under the “Competency based Curriculum”, being developed. For this purpose, proficiency levels in Reading (English and SiSwati) for literacy and Mathematics for numeracy at Grade 5 will be used. Swaziland is looking at having all its citizens able to fully participate in society through empowerment at all levels.

Target 4: By 2030, increase the percentage of youth and adults with the knowledge, skills and competences to access decent work to at least 99 % and 99% respectively

Apart from being literate and numerate every Swazi youth should be able to exploit the immediate environment through appropriate skills and technologies. A focus has been placed in entrepreneurial education at all levels from primary to tertiary. National benchmarks will be defined through the National Qualification Framework which is under development.

Target 5: By 2030, all learners acquire knowledge, skills, values and attitudes for global citizenship and sustainable development

This is an area that still needs further investigation and study. Values and attitudes are difficult to measure as such a national benchmark might be a challenge. However, the country will strive to ensure that its citizens have respect of the Law and fellow countrymen. It will continue to ensure that culture is at core of education and development and will ensure that the environment is conducive for sustainable development.

Target 6: By 2030, all governments ensure the provision of sufficient numbers of qualified teachers

Swaziland currently has almost no ECCDE qualified teachers and a sizeable shortage of appropriately qualified primary school teachers. It has already begun looking at programmes for training ECCDE teachers in one of its colleges. In Swaziland you have to have a recognized teaching qualification to be classified as a teacher. This should be accompanied by a post secondary (preferably) tertiary training. The lowest benchmark for fully qualified teachers will be ISCED 5 (lower). It is envisaged that the country will have produced adequate numbers of primary qualified teachers to match the demand.

The national benchmark is for all teachers to possess national recognized teaching qualifications appropriate to the level of education they teach at.

Target 7: By 2030, all countries progress towards allocating (4-6%) of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and (15-20%) of their public expenditure to education

The country's budget allocation are within the recommended 15 -20 limits. The national benchmark is 17%, and the country has always performed above this figure. However, there might need to look at the allocation for development as a huge portion is still taken by salary and benefits.

4.3 Implementation Requirements

There are a number of key requirements that were brought up in all the targets. These include the importance of data for Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E). One shortcoming of the Ministry has been a very weak M&E system. The development of the National Education and Training Education Programme (NETIP) has facilitated the development of an M&E framework. The consultations highlighted that without a functional M&E it would not be possible to realise the aspirations outlined in the document. It will be important for the Ministry to embrace a Data revolution where evidence based engagement is central to the Ministry's planning function.

The NETIP will be used to inform the Sector Wide Approach to Planning that has been adopted by the Ministry which will give a step in the solicitation for donor and partner in education. This approach will increase transparency and accountability as the plans will have to be discussed in open forums so that there is a stakeholder 'buy-in'. A number of policies have been developed; these include the ECCDE policy, the Higher Education policy, and the TVET policy under the national umbrella of the National Education and Training Policy. This has created an enabling environment of implementing of the aspirations of the post2025 agenda.

The newly adopted Medium Term Expenditure Framework (METF) which links budget allocation to programme objectives will also ensure that the targets are linked to budget lines. This will provide for informed planning and implementation.

4.4 Conclusions

In all the targets the consultations placed cross cutting issues such as, gender special education needs, orphans and vulnerable children, human rights, sexuality and equality as core and have not been addressed at individual target level. This is because it has been resolved every programme in the country should cater for these.

There has also been a strong emphasis to cater for the currently 'left out' population – the marginalised and poor to ensure that they access education. In this regard a 'pro-poor', approach had been adopted at all levels of education. In addition the policy advocates for inclusion, thus all programmes also consider the special needs education and disabled citizens. It has developed policies that ensure that the infrastructure in all institutions fully caters for such children.

The education system in Swaziland has undergone a huge metamorphosis through development of policies and strategies at all levels of education. Moving forward the country will need adopt the 'data revolution' and come up with stronger M&E implementation through strengthening of information systems at all levels of education. What would be critical for the Ministry is to ensure that the aspirations of the post2015 agenda are integrated into the NETIP. The post 2015 agenda should not be treated as a separate entity but an integral part of the national strategy.

REFERENCES

1. Central Bank of Swaziland (2014), Annual Reports, Mbabane, Swaziland.
2. Central Statistical Office (2007), Swaziland Population Census Report, Mbabane. Swaziland.
3. Central Statistical Office (2007), Swaziland Household Income and Expenditure Survey Report, Mbabane. Swaziland.
4. Central Statistical Office (2007), Swaziland Demographic Health Survey, Mbabane Swaziland.
5. Ministry of Education & Training (2012), Annual Education Census (AEC) Report. Mbabane, Swaziland.
6. United Nations Development (2012), Human Development Report.
7. Ministry of Economic Planning and Development (1999), National development Strategy, Mbabane. Swaziland.
8. Ministry of Education & Training (2002), National Education for All plan of action, Mbabane, Swaziland.
9. Ministry of Economic Planning and Development (2007), Poverty Reduction Strategy and Action Programme, Mbabane. Swaziland.
10. Ministry of Education & Training (2000), Southern African Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality (SACMEQ) Report.
11. Ministry of Education & Training (2007), Southern African Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality (SACMEQ) Report.
12. World Bank (2010), The Education System in Swaziland, working paper no. 188
13. World Bank (2013), Assessing Swaziland Vocational Education and Training
14. Ministry of Education & Training (2002), SNAP survey, Mbabane , Swaziland.
15. Ministry of Education & Training (2010), Free Primary Education Act, Mbabane, Swaziland

16. www.unesco.org
17. Government estimates books 2000/01 – 2013/14
18. Ministry of Education & Training (2011), National Education and Training Sector Policy (EDSEC), Mbabane, Swaziland.
19. Ministry of Justice and constitution Affairs (2005), The Constitution of the Kingdom of Swaziland, Mbabane, Swaziland