



Ministry of Labour & Social Security

NATIONAL HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT POLICY



2024-2030



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FOREWORD



Hon. Phila W.
Buthelezi (MP)

**Minister for Labour
and Social Security.**

The Ministry of Labour and Social Security through the National Human Resource Planning and Development (NHRPD) Unit is charged with the responsibility to coordinate the National Human Development programme to ensure that the Kingdom of Eswatini has adequate and relevant skills and competencies which are labour market driven.

As such, the Strategic Road Map 2019-2022 of the Government of Eswatini and the National Development Strategy (NDS) state that the country's social and economic priorities and human resources have been placed at the heart of all development agendas.

For a prolonged number of years, the country has faced stagnant economic growth that has failed to keep pace with the growing numbers of new job seekers. Exacerbating the high unemployment problem is the deteriorating education quality, and increasing social and economic challenges which thwarts human capital development in Eswatini.

Currently, skills development in Eswatini is haphazard, lacks guidance and is based on the interests of skills developers, financial muscle of select implementers, and is usually at the detriment of the learner and the economy at large. This points out that there is no interface between training institutions and industry to inform curricula and partner in funding skills development. Thus, there are predominant gaps in Eswatini's human resource development systems for both graduates and current employers.

The inability of employers to engage in lifelong-learning programs is frustrated by the absence of human resource development policies that facilitate learning at work and encourage up-skilling.

This policy therefore, seeks to guide the development and implementation of planned activities designed to increase knowledge, skills and capabilities of all the people in the country to meet the current and future needs of the economy. The policy will also provide opportunities for all emaSwati to develop their skills and competencies, encourage people at all levels to engage in continuous learning and ensure that the education sector reviews its curricula to include, amongst other issues, competency-based programmes and align them with industry needs and national development goals.

To this end, the Ministry would like to recognize and extend its appreciation to the International Labour Organization (ILO) for their invaluable support towards the development of this policy and Eswatini Economic Policy Analysis Research Centre (ESEPARC) for providing technical expertise.

The Ministry requests all HRD actors to play their part in the implementation of this policy as they have made immense contributions throughout the policy development process.

It gives the Ministry great pleasure to present the revised National Human Resource Development Policy of Eswatini 2024-2030.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



Makhosini S.
Mndawe

Principal Secretary

**Ministry of Labour
and Social Security**

The National Human Resource Planning and Development Policy 2024-2030 is an outcome of a teamwork between Eswatini Economic Policy Analysis and Research Centre (ESEPARC) and the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MoLSS). It reflects the considerable input from a wide range of stakeholders who are too numerous to mention individually.

The policy is aimed at aligning national and regional policies to support economic growth and sustainable development through well-equipped human capital. It is rooted from the global development agenda to align skills supply and labour systems with the demands of the global economy and a rapidly changing development landscape. Eswatini's main concern is to accelerate development so that there is a match between supply and demand for human resources.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Security wishes to thank the team from the National Human Resource Planning and Development Unit; The Director, Ms Gcebile C.T Dlamini (Team Leader), Ms Celiwe P. Nxumalo, Mr. Moses Z. Gamedze, Mr. Sandile X. Nxumalo who played a very important role in the success of this policy.

The Ministry is equally indebted to the team of Eswatini Economic Policy Analysis and Research Centre (ESEPARC) who worked tirelessly towards the development of this policy document.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Security is immensely indebted to the International Labour Organization (ILO) for the technical and financial support.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Alternative education: Is a set of flexible programs that can be adapted in terms of schedule, location, enrolment process and delivery platform (remote, blended, online, independent learning). It mostly covers non-formal programs and can be offered within schools or in alternative educational settings, such as community centres (UNICEF).

Competencies: The ability, encompassing knowledge, skills, and attitudes of an individual to perform adequately in a job. (ILO 2006)

Cross skilling: is defined as learning more than one skill in the workplace instead of performing a specific job.

Development: Instructional programmes and/or experience designed to equip employees with the knowledge, skills and attitude to be efficient, professional, and to achieve future positions.

Education: The gradual process by which a person gains knowledge and understanding through learning.

Formal Education: Education that is institutionalised, intentional and planned through public organisations and recognised private bodies and, in their totality, make up the formal education system of a country (UNESCO).

Human Resource Development Information System (HRDIS): A software designed within the NRD system that supports the collation, collection, and analysis of data.

Human Resource Development: The process of increasing the knowledge, the skills, and the capacities of all the people (including children, youth, and adults) in a society.

Human Resource Planning: A strategy for acquisition, utilisation, development and retention of human resource. It is concerned with the forecasting and projection of the requirements of human resource.

Human Resource: Totality of skills and knowledge available to a society as well as the prevailing attitude and resourcefulness of the members of that society to manipulate natural, physical, and other resources towards the production of socially and economically valuable goods and services.

Informal education: Forms of learning that are intentional or deliberate but are not institutionalised. It is consequently less organized and structured than either formal or non-formal education (UNESCO).

Learning Organisation: An organisation that both learns and encourages learning and promotes the exchange of information among its employees.

Learning: The individual acquisition or modification of information, knowledge, understanding, attitudes, values, skills, competencies or behaviours through experience, practice, study or instruction. (UNESCO 2013)

Life-long learning: Learning that meets the diverse and context-specific needs of all age groups, including the acquisition of basic literacy and technical skills through both formal education and effective alternative pathways to learning. Adult learning, TVET, literacy and workplace learning all represent significant components of the LLL process (World Education Forum, 2015).

Non-formal education: Education that is institutionalised, intentional and planned by an education provider. The defining characteristic of non-formal education is that it is an addition, alternative and/ or complement to formal education within the process of the lifelong learning of individuals (UNESCO).

Reskilling: Learning new sets of competencies to transition to a completely new role (World Economic Forum, 2015).



Scarce Skills: Scarce Skills refer to those occupations in which there is a scarcity of qualified and experienced people, currently or anticipated in the future, either (a) because such skilled people are not available or (b) they are available but do not meet employment criteria.

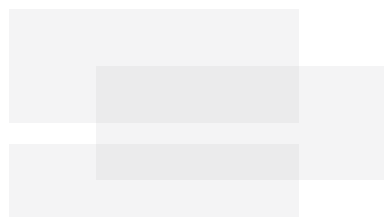
Skills Audit: A process entailing of analysing and monitoring skills coverage across organisations and nations and identifying skills gaps and mismatches that exist.

Upskilling: Learning new competencies to stay in current role, due to the change in skills required, or adding certain competencies for career progression (World Economic Forum)



ACRONYMS

Acronym	Description
AfCFTA	African Continental Free Trade Area
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
DIVT	Directorate of Industrial Vocational Training
ECCDE	Early Childhood Care and Developmental Education
ECCE	Early Childhood Care Education
ECOT	Eswatini College of Technology
ENQF	Eswatini National Qualification Framework
ESEPARC	Eswatini Economic Policy Analysis and Research Centre
ESHEC	Eswatini Higher Education Council
EQA	Eswatini Qualifications Authority
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FESBC	Federation Of Eswatini Business Community
FPE	Free Primary Education
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HDI	Human Development Index
HR	Human Resource
HRD	Human Resource Development
ICT	Information Communication Technology
ILFS	Integrated Labour Force Survey
ILO	International Labour Organization
IP	Intellectual Property
IVT	Industrial Vocational Training
LMIS	Labour Market Information System
MoCIT	Ministry of Commerce Industry and Trade
MoET	Ministry of Education and Training
MoLSS	Ministry of Labour and Social Security
MoSCYA	Ministry of Sports, Culture and Youth Affairs
MSME	Micro Small and Medium Enterprises
NDP	National Development Plan



NDS	National Development Strategy
NEET	Not in Education Employment or Training
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NHRD	National Human Resource Development
NHRDP	National Human Resource Development and Planning
NQF	National Qualification Framework
PPP	Public Private Partnership
RSTP	Royal Science and Technology Park
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEDCO	Small Enterprise Development Company
STEM	Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNESWA	University of Eswatini
VOCTIM	Gwamile Vocational and Commercial Training Institute
WHO	World Health Organization

01

INTRODUCTION



The world is always changing and developing. There are discoveries almost every day in industries and the way people live. Life is all about learning new things. Success in professional life also depends on learning new skills. Human capital development rests on skills development and life-long learning. It is about accelerating more and better investment in people for greater equity, economic growth, and development. Human capital development has to be the centre of any country's strategy for development. As the World Bank (2022) puts it, human capital consists of the knowledge, skills, and health that people invest in and accumulate throughout their lives, enabling them to realise their potential as productive members of society. When countries invest in their people through nutrition, health care, quality education, jobs, and, skills, it helps them develop their human capital, and this is key to ending extreme poverty and creating a more inclusive society.

National Human Resource Development (NHRD) is an integral part of social and economic development in any country. It contributes to improved productivity and competitiveness through the talent, know-how, and skills of its human capital. The Eswatini National Development Strategy (NDS) also places human capital at the heart of social and economic development. The NDS and National Development Plan (NDP) 2023/24 – 2027/28 emphasise the need for Eswatini to develop relevant capacities to match the development priorities for the country to achieve its development goals, particularly to drive industrial growth. Chams and García-Blandón in 2019 argued that efficient human resource development (HRD) systems can contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Studies demonstrate that quality HRD can lead to efficient labour market systems, which can in turn, contribute to improved livelihoods and sustainable development.

Ideally, HRD should focus on developing local capacities for innovation and creativity to ensure competitiveness of the labour force and the economy as a whole. Governments are increasingly understanding that the entire educational system, that is, from early childhood through tertiary education, must reflect the requirements of the global knowledge economy, which increasingly demands a better-trained, more skilled, and adaptable workforce. This has triggered a renewed focus on higher education. Graduates with limited skills require further training to meet modern workplace needs. Training institutions also need to produce job creators as well as job seekers. They need to cultivate innovation and entrepreneurship as exploratory solutions to youth employability. This can be attained through the development of sustainable and innovative people-driven economies dedicated to the improvement of employment outcomes, especially for the youth. In fact, projections for Africa indicate that the youth population is expected to double to over 830 million by 2050, this currently stands at 425,052 in Eswatini.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) notes that if this demographic dividend is properly harnessed, the increase in the working-age population has the potential to support increased productivity and stronger, more inclusive economic growth across the continent. Therefore, there is a need for African educators and trainers, including in Eswatini, to be able to track skills demands and respond quickly to make sure that the labour force is always ready to add real value to businesses worldwide, and to think entrepreneurially, critically, creatively, and analytically.

As such, the Government of Eswatini (GoE) through the Ministry of Labour and Social Security envisions a future where every liSwati is equipped with the requisite skills, knowledge, and competencies to become globally competitive and enjoy full decent and productive employment. The NHRD Policy aims to strengthen the human resource development framework focusing on both demand and supply of skills development, encouraging industry – higher education relationships and improving the employability of Eswatini's youth population. Through the support of both private and public institutions the NHRD policy will foster collaboration, streamline skills development, and strengthen the funding and inclusiveness of the human resource ecosystem in the country.

1.1. The Review Process and Formulation of the NHRD Policy 2023 – 2024

The NHRD Policy 2017 – 2030, which remained a draft document in the period 2017 – 2022 was an attempt by the GoE to declare its commitment to develop human resource to a level that can ensure the country has adequate, relevant skills and competencies for an improved economic and human development. Given that the Policy was never adopted, the review process to develop a new and refreshed NHRD Policy 2024-2030 assessed the concepts, principles, and the policy direction the country wanted to take in 2017 given the social and economic scenario at that time and looking forward to 2030. The process

of developing the NHRD Policy 2024 – 2030 re-evaluated the policy stance and direction set out in 2017. The aim was to reflect on the current social and economic situation in Eswatini, to respond to the needs for competitive skills and channel human capital to productive economic activities. Hence, the review highlighted the relevance of human resource development to current and future needs of the country.

The preceding NHRD Policy was developed by the MoLSS in 2017, but remained a draft document, gaps and achievements attained in the review period could not be ascertained. In this period, the policy formulation process focused on extensive stakeholder consultation and engagement, in-depth document review and analysis to inform the theory of change required to improve HRD system in Eswatini, and using historical data and economic forecasts to define the overall new policy stance and direction for advancing HRD in the period 2017-2030. Contributions from the different stakeholders were consolidated to inform the development of harmonious and integrated human resource strategies that will enable the development of a robust NHRD Policy.

Specifically, the NHRD Policy 2017 – 2030 was developed through extensive consultations and participation of different stakeholders in the private sector, education and training, individuals, civil society, and other government institutions. Some of these entities were, the MoSCYA, MoET, MoCIT, MoICT, ESHEC, Business Eswatini, FESBC, DIVT, ECOT, UNESWA, Gwamile VOCTIM, Botho University, and private sector companies. The consultation provided up-to-date information on sectoral HRD aspirations, labour market demands, emerging HRD issues and an appreciation of the changing economic landscape that the Policy needs to respond to.

Key reference documents underpinning the review of the Policy included;



1

The National Development Plan 2023/24 – 2027/28
The National Development Plan 2019 – 2022,
The Eswatini Education and Training Sector Policy 2011,
The Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Sector Policy 2022,



2

Eswatini's Industrial Development Policy 2015-2022,
The National Youth Policy 2020,
Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise (MSME) Policy 2018



3

The Integrated Labour Force Survey 2021 and 2023,
National Skills Audit Report 2022,
The World Bank Education Sector Analysis 2021,



4

Landscape Analysis of Skills for Employability Programmes in Eswatini,
Landscape Analysis of Skills for Employability Programmes in Eswatini: Skills
Audit (Afflouton 2020), and
The Industrial and Vocational Act as reviewed in 2022.

02

THE ESWATINI CONTEXT

The Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MoLSS) produced the first-ever comprehensive National Skills Audit Report in 2022 that revealed the leading constraints to skills development in Eswatini. The key impediments to skills development for Eswatini include lack of training infrastructure, skill mismatches, lack of support for technical vocational education and training (TVET), insufficient financing, lack of industry participation in training, and rigid and outdated curriculum and training equipment. Over and above these weak points of the education and training system, delivery of training and education services is fragmented, there is no institutionalised system for skills anticipation, the labour market information system is not fully functional, and there is no overarching national policy framework and master plan for skills development. This has rendered skills produced in education and training mostly irrelevant and unresponsive to the development needs of the country, both in job creation and self-employment.

Yet, investment in a high-quality workforce can enable productivity growth and foreign direct investment (FDI) as well as result in job creation and more public and private investment in the education and training system. For instance, the NDP of Eswatini 2023/24 – 2027/28 highlights the need for Eswatini to enhance social and human capital development for sustainable livelihoods through equitable and accessible quality education and lifelong learning. The development and implementation of a relevant Human Resource Development (HRD) Policy is therefore consistent with the historical and current thrust of government's development agenda. HRD has been identified as a vital instrument in all government strategies to accelerate development, reduce poverty, and inequality. Given the current fiscal constraints, the high poverty rate (58.4%) and increasing level of unemployment (from 33.3% in 2021 to 35.4% in 2023) as reported by the Eswatini Household



Current Economic Challenges:

High poverty rate (58.4%)

Increasing level of unemployment
(from 23% in 2016 to 33.3% in 2021)

Fiscal constraints

“Concerted efforts in human resource development are needed in order to yield the desired results for social and economic transformation.”

Income and Expenditure Survey of 2016/17 and Eswatini Integrated Labour Force Survey, 2021 and 2023, respectively. The country is in dire need of new innovative strategies that can increase investments in its people so that all emaSwati acquire the necessary and relevant skills, attitudes, and nurture their talents to create jobs, push the frontier of social and economic development in Eswatini, and enjoy the highest quality of life possible.

The NDP laments that public expenditure in the education sector is inequitable yet insufficient, with 75% of the recurrent budget directed to personnel costs. Despite the high spending on education compared to other sectors in the economy, in recent years, there is an observed decline in real value of the spending in this sector, from 7% in 2016/17 to 5.5% of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2020/21. Even though there are attempts by the Government of Eswatini (GoE) to provide scholarship funding, Free Primary Education (FPE) and efforts towards improving early childhood care and education (ECCE), the country's education system is declining in quality, rigor, and relevance. Both the recent Integrated Labour Force Survey (ILFS) and National Skills Audit Report indicate that well over half of Eswatini's youth are unemployed. Deliberate and targeted efforts towards human resource development can improve the current gloomy labour market outcomes in Eswatini through investment in relevant and productive skills to improve livelihoods and pursuit of decent work.

Concerted efforts in human resource development are needed to yield the desired results for social and economic transformation. As such, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security developed the first National Human Resource Development Policy in 2017, and has remained a draft for the period under review. The Policy has been reviewed to re-prioritise the human capital development as the key ingredient for Eswatini's development agenda and provide an overarching national framework for ensuring that all emaSwati have the knowledge, skills, and know-how to realise their potential as productive members of the Eswatini economy.

This refreshed NHRD Policy 2024 – 2030 will ensure the creation of a productive labour force that can take advantage of local and international

opportunities to drive industrial growth and sustainable development, and to maximise individual and collective achievements on national productivity and global competitiveness.

Through the NHRD Policy 2024 – 2030 the Government of Eswatini commits to prioritise investments in its human capital and provides a national direction to recalibrate and enhance the HRD system for every liSwati to find growth opportunities and to be a productive member of the social and economic sectors of Eswatini for the attainment of the SDGs. The Human Resource Development Policy aligns most directly with several key SDGs; It aligns with SDG 4 on Quality Education, which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. A strong human resource development policy supports this through initiatives like workforce skills training, vocational education, and teacher training. It also ties in with SDG 8 on Decent Work and Economic Growth by promoting sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all emaSwati. Human resource development policies focused on developing employable skills, improving labour productivity, and providing decent job opportunities contribute directly to this goal.

The NHRD Policy 2024–2030 of Eswatini aligns with Agenda 2063's vision of leveraging human capital development as a crucial driver for sustainable growth and development across Africa. The continental agenda emphasises sustained investments in universal early childhood development, basic education, higher education, science, technology, research, and innovation, as well as eliminating gender disparities at all levels. Additionally, access to post-graduate education will be expanded and strengthened to ensure world-class infrastructure for learning, research, and supporting scientific reforms underpinning Africa's transformation. This alignment highlights the country's commitment to fostering a skilled and knowledgeable workforce, enhancing educational opportunities, and promoting inclusive development in line with broader continental aspirations.

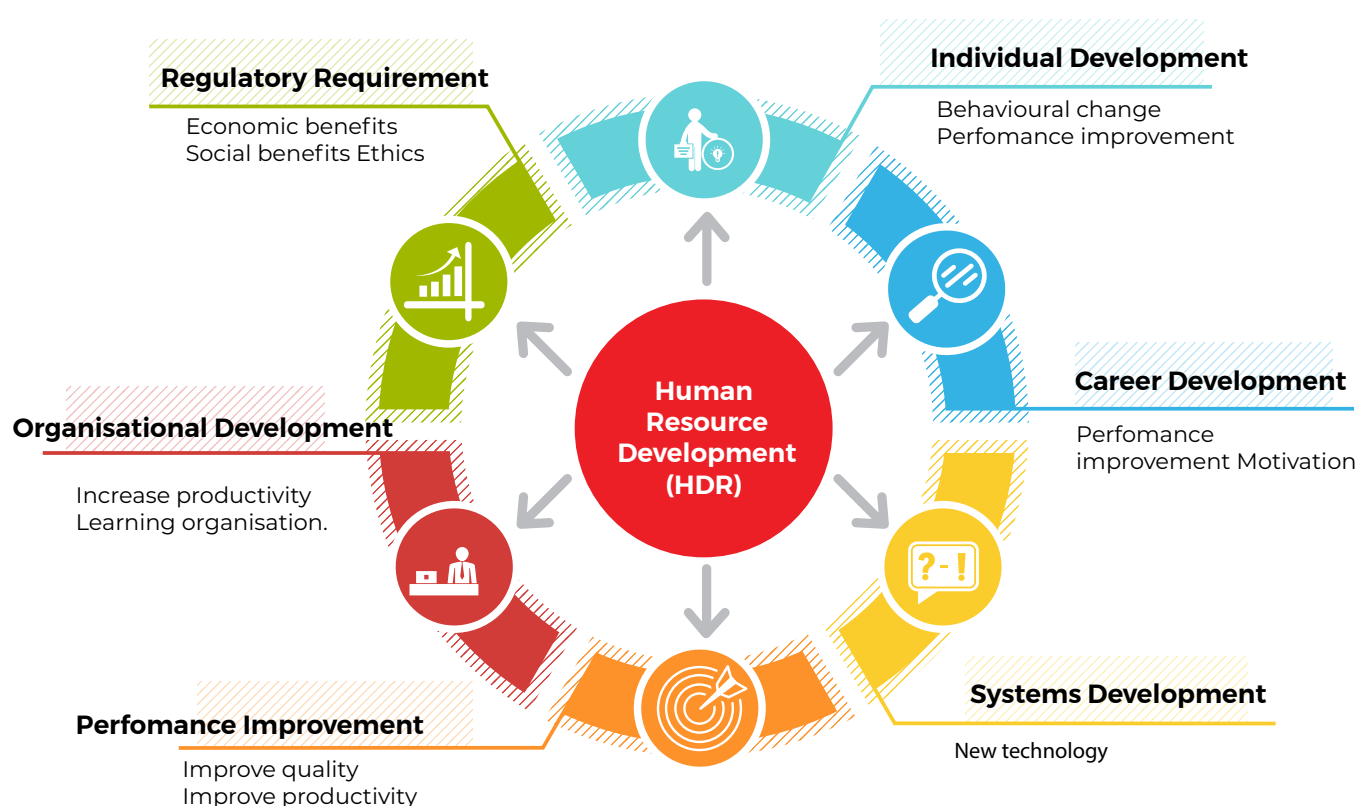
2.1. The Function of a National Human Resource Development (NHRD) System

The NHRD policy is about aligning national and regional policies to support economic growth and sustainable development through well-equipped human capital. It is rooted in the global development agenda to align skills supply and labour systems with the demands of the global economy and a rapidly changing development landscape.

A NHRD system can only contribute meaningfully to sustainable economic development if its capabilities and qualities are enhanced and all

relevant stakeholders are involved. To develop the National Human Resource Development Policy, the six (6) functions of human resource development (HRD) as explained in Figure 1 below will be considered. These include the regulatory environment, individual development, career development, organisational development, and performance improvement. In consonance with globalisation and new technology, the purpose of human resource development is to ultimately achieve good social and economic benefits for the individual, the organisation, and the economy at large. Therefore, the NHRD is shaped by each country's value system, as well as the point at which the country is at on the life-cycle of HRD.

Figure 1: Functions of Human Resource Development



Source: Source: Abdullah (2020)

To ensure that the National Development Strategy (NDS) is fulfilled, the NHRD Policy needs to be enshrined and drive all the spheres of economic development which are education, health, social protection and gender, youth, employment, including information, communication and technology (ICT), among other sectors. To support the holistic development of the individual as described by Abdullah in 2020 the NHRD Policy needs to foster the six functions to deal with the social organisational and economic components of human resource. For instance, by improving behavioural change and motivation it promotes the adoption of new technology which improves performance. Whereas improvements in the quality of skills and competences lead to productivity and increased organisational performance which ultimately achieve economic and social benefits through decent work, income, and social harmony. This also creates learning organisations that can adapt to their changing environments while remaining competitive. Thus, both social and economic actors play an important role in human resource development. For sustainable economic development to be realised, optimum coordination of all the institutions and actors responsible for overseeing the growth and effectiveness of NHRD must be prioritised.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Framework provides the first reference for countries to achieve prosperity, environmental sustainability, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth. Specifically, Goals 4, 8, and 9 highlight the need for human capital development, decent work, sustainable cities, green economies, and knowledge-based economies, respectively. SDG 4 aims to promote quality education, while SDG 8 focuses on priorities for job creation and decent work, and SDG 9 aims to promote industrialisation and innovation.



Improvements in the quality of skills and competences lead to productivity and increased organizational performance, which ultimately achieve economic and social benefits through decent work, income, and social harmony.”

The SDG development framework emphasises the need for countries to develop strategies to improve health, education, of these goals demands the development of adaptable HRD policies to address present and future skills demand, inculcating a culture of creativity and innovation, and affording all people access to quality education and decent work.

Growing complexity and diversity in achieving sustainable development has placed HRD at the heart of contemporary public policy development, driving governments to adopt people-oriented policies to build resilience and reduce poverty. This agenda emphasises the capacities and capabilities of the population as the key to driving development. Aspiration 6 of the African Continental Agenda 2063 advocates for **“An Africa Whose Development is people driven, relying on the potential offered by African People, especially its Women and Youth, and caring for Children”** and goal 18 of the Agenda confers the empowerment and engagement of the young people through investments in education, training and skills development. These ambitions are domesticated in Eswatini’s national policies and advocated for through different national initiatives such as Free Primary Education (FPE), TVET enhancement projects, the National Youth Policy 2020, National Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) Policy 2022 - 2027, National Education and Training Sector Policy of 2018. All these policies strive to develop a resilient, productive, and proactive labour force through sustainable and equitable access to quality education and training for all EmaSwati, especially the youth.

Apart from aligning national policies and strategies, the NHRD policy will foster development through regional partnerships and trade agreements to ensure Eswatini is aligned with agreed visions for development and trade. For example, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) intends to increase the liberal movement of goods, services and people within the continent, this will enable labour mobility and increase trade. Regional integration and trade is one way through which the country can drive inclusive growth through job creation and access to wider markets by leveraging trade, investment, and regional value chains. In line with the Eswatini Strategic Road Map 2019-2022, Industrialisation Development Policy 2015 – 2022, NDS, and sectoral development policies, regional strategies have prioritised similar investment areas to drive economic development and regional competitiveness. The Common Market for Eastern

and Southern Africa (COMESA) industrialization strategy 2017–2026 focuses on agro-processing, energy, textile and garments, leather and leather products, mineral beneficiation, pharmaceuticals, chemicals and agro-chemicals, light engineering, and the blue economy. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) Industrialisation Strategy and Road Map (2015–2063) thrives to achieve development in the same sectors by addressing issues of infrastructure, skills, and finance. To contribute to regional development and take advantage of the regional value chain opportunities and markets, Eswatini needs to improve its production capacity, competitiveness and quality of education and training by investing in its people. The implementation of a robust HRD policy will facilitate labour mobility and align training and skills development to both regional and international frameworks to enable skill recognition for adequate skills supply and expedite effective regional integration.

Over the years, economic shocks have added another layer of complexity to human resource development, causing labour market turmoil. This has challenged HRD policies to be forward looking, anticipate skills changes and cater for drastic economic crisis. Demonstrated by the great recession in 2008, the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia – Ukraine war have challenged the way HRD has been done over the years. These events have revealed the gaps in industrial production capacity, efficacy of the education and health system, shifted labour demand and changed the culture of work. The Africa Economic Outlook 2022 states that an estimated 30 million Africans were pushed into extreme poverty in 2021 and 22 million jobs lost due to COVID-19. By the end of 2022 it is predicted that a further 1.8 million will be pushed into poverty as a result of the Russia – Ukraine war. The vulnerabilities exposed in the health sector, education system and industrial production may be addressed through innovative HRD policies that enable skilling, reskilling, cross skilling, and lifelong learning opportunities for people to capacitate themselves in the relevant areas for development.

Well-crafted HRD policies based on robust information systems will ensure that there is an adequate supply of relevant and critical skill sets. This will also cater for new and emerging skills necessary in technology, energy, climate change, and science and engineering. Productivity skills remain critical in all sectors of an economy to help countries adjust to economic pressures and respond effectively.

2.2. Rationale for the Eswatini NHRD Policy 2024 – 2030

The NHRD policy sets out key strategic priorities that aim to address the most pressing constraints for HRD in Eswatini, such as matching education and training curricula to labour market needs, improving labour market regulations, making labour markets more adaptable and responsive to shocks and changes in the market, while encouraging private sector investment and productivity-enhancing innovations.

At the heart of the problem is that over two (2) billion workers around the world (or more than 60 %) of all employed people earn their livelihoods in the informal economy, this was established by Golman and Ernst in 2022. In Eswatini 46.3% are employed in the informal economy as reported in the ILFS 2023. To cater for this increasing demographic in the economy, the NHRD policy will foster holistic development and implement coordinated and context-specific programmes that promote quality job creation and decent work for all emaSwati. The ILO contends that economic diversification and investment strategies that thrive for market activation and intermediation that integrates the most vulnerable groups of the community is critical to HRD.

This includes policies and programmes that facilitate the transition to formality as well as the creation of employment and income opportunities in the rural economy. Productivity gains are derived from pursuing formal, informal, and non-formal education, and recognising the job-learning and work experience.

Why does Eswatini need a National Human Resources Development (NHRD) policy?

I.

To ensure the development of relevant knowledge, skills and competencies of all Emaswati to meet the current and future needs of the economy for sustainable social and economic development.

II.

To encourage lifelong learning of an innovative and productive labour force for career advancement and job satisfaction.

III.

To ensure a responsive, holistic , and integrated approach to skills development and governance between the private sector and other players in human resource development.

IV.

To align skills development with global trends, technological advancements, and regional, international or global development policies and skills demand.

V.

To strengthen the development and implementation of quality and inclusive skills development which recognises all forms of learning (formal, informal, non-formal) to all groups of society regardless of location, disability, gender or age group.

VI.

To develop a guiding framework for alignment of all HRD policies and legal/regulatory frameworks with national strategic development goals and to support the generation, collection and collation of all information on skills.

The relationship between human capital and economic growth has long been established, and economists argue that human capital development is one of the most effective ways for promoting long-run growth, productivity, and reducing inequality. Systematic, planned and well-coordinated skills development stands a better chance to achieve a country's social and economic development objectives. This requires an integrated and holistic system through which strategies, policies and programmes individually and collectively improve the standard of living of the population, through supportive systems of human resource development, on all aspects of human health, education, and employment. As such, the development of the NHRD policy in Eswatini is important to clearly articulate the national commitment to invest in human resource and provide a guiding framework to do so. The policy is an overarching framework to guide policymakers, education providers, industry, civil society, and other partners in the development of HRD policies that will cultivate local capacities for sustainable socio-economic growth and industrial competitiveness.

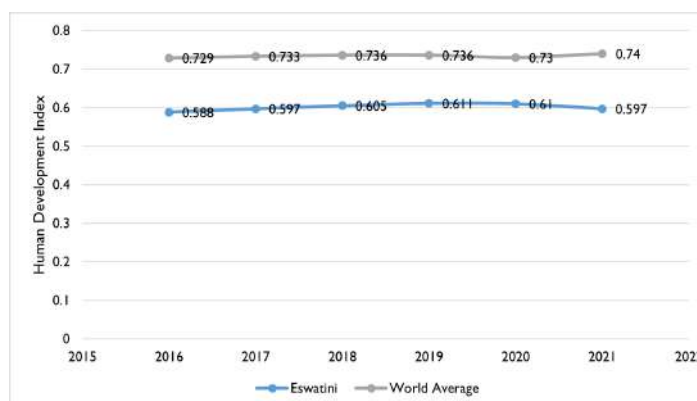
2.3. PROBLEM STATEMENT

At the heart of the NHRD problem is that economic growth over the past decades has not kept pace with the growing numbers of new job seekers. The ILO notes that while 10 to 12 million youth enter the workforce each year globally, only 3 million jobs are created, leaving vast numbers of youth unemployed. The ILFS 2023 states that youth unemployment is 48.7% in Eswatini from a total population of 1,093,238, constituting 425,052 youth. According to the World Bank, youth account for 60% of all of Africa's jobless population. The large number of young people who are not in education, employment, or training but also the lack of demand-oriented skills development leads to the fact that young people do not find adequate employment. This is one of the greatest challenges for the socio-economic development of Africa, and Eswatini included. In addition to the unemployment problem, the declining economic performance, deteriorating education quality, and increasing social and economic challenges are the major drivers of the human capital challenge in Eswatini. This is evidenced by the low labour force absorption rates (23.7%), a growing number of youth are found out of education, employment, and training (NEETs) (46.0%). This is negatively impacting the Eswatini's future development prospects and has significant repercussions on social cohesion, production, productivity, and stability.

Therefore, the huge level of unemployment demonstrates Eswatini's inability to generate jobs fast enough to create employment opportunities due to low/slow growth and failures of the education system to produce the required industry skills. This results in massive erosion of human capital, low productivity, and affects the living standard of the population driving more people into a cycle of poverty. Alongside the unemployment challenge, Eswatini is also facing rising inequality due to many of the working age population unable to find productive means to earn a decent livelihood. For example, gender inequality caused by the

lack of representation of women in high paying jobs such as in Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields is a major driver of income inequality in the country, while a declining representation of people living with disabilities is observed from tertiary education through to employment. Consequently, Eswatini's Human Development Index (HDI) has recorded below the world average from 2016 – 2021 as demonstrated in Figure 2.4.1 below.

Figure 2.4.1: Trends in Eswatini's Human Development Index (2016 – 2021)



Source: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Reports

The absence of adequate skills and competencies in the country is also affecting the level of innovation, industrial development, and competitiveness to stimulate growth. Furthermore, inadequate human resource development is a hindrance to the development of adaptive capacities to environmental and economic shocks and adoption capabilities of new technology and methodologies to push the social and economic development agenda. Low creativity coupled with low productivity of the majority of Eswatini's population is now detrimental to individual and national development and wellbeing. Hence, it is important for the GoE in partnership with the private sector and development partners to address the human resource development as a

matter of priority and give it the urgent attention it requires. The NHRD Policy 2024 – 2030 is a first step in the right direction for channelling resources to supporting the development of strategies and design relevant tools and mechanisms to close the human resource development gaps to equip the nation with the 21st century skills that can enable quicker job creation and sustainable growth.



Key Highlights

10 to 12 million youth enter the workforce each year globally, but only 3 million jobs are created.

In Eswatini, less than half of the youth labour force is employed.

Youth account for 60% of all of Africa's jobless.

High levels of youth unemployment in Eswatini stand at **58.2%**.

Low labour force absorption rates in Eswatini are at **30.6%**.

A growing number of youth are found out of education, employment, and training (NEETs) in Eswatini, standing at **43.9%**.

03

THE STATE OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT IN ESWATINI: A SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

The Government of Eswatini has made a strong commitment to learning and education for all EmaSwati with literacy rates at 96% in 2017. To support this commitment the Government has made concerted efforts to increase access to education through Early Childhood Care and Developmental Education (ECCDE), FPE, and school feeding schemes. However, the issue of education quality and ability to generate relevant skills remains an acute challenge for the Kingdom. The journey from ECCDE, to basic/primary education, and to tertiary or vocational streams is one that is riddled with institutional and socioeconomic challenges as shown on Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1: Differences in access and completion of education for the most and least advantaged groups



Source: World Bank (2021)

Generally, the Figure depicts that the education and training funnel becomes narrower as learners transition from primary to secondary/high school and even lower in tertiary education.

It suggests outcomes of education and training are significantly affected by pupils' socioeconomic background as well as systemic inequalities between rural and urban education and training institutions. Access to quality education and training is a function of socioeconomic status, affordability, and difference in quality of infrastructure in rural and urban education and training facilities. What it means, is that children from poor families/low-income households and those that are orphaned or vulnerable are less likely to complete higher levels of education post primary, thus contributing to the observed rising inequalities in Eswatini. The primary focus of human resource development in Eswatini needs to prioritise closing the gap in education and training outcomes so that every liSwati is given maximum opportunity possible to be a successful and productive member of our economy and the global economy.

The Government has also implemented a series of initiatives designed to support quality control in education and training by establishing the Eswatini Higher Education Council (ESHEC) and developing the national qualification framework (NQF) and competency-based education. However, occupational standards for the TVET sector have not been developed. Even though ESHEC is responsible for quality assurance and accreditation of tertiary institutions in the country, the challenge is the creation of educational pathways to enable transitions from one form of learning to another or recognise prior learning. Moreover, it is important to implement training programmes to create employment opportunities by teaching entrepreneurship skills in schools.

Although poor education quality contributes to labour gaps, mismatches and skills shortages, weak and unstructured relationships between industry and training institutions are the biggest challenge for skills development and this is exacerbated by a fragmented coordination of HRD in the country.

Inadequate financing and funding of education is also a driving force for the declining quality of education at all levels. The lack of resources to support the procurement of learning material and teaching aids, including relevant and updated equipment and machinery in vocational centres is a growing concern. As more than 15,500 pupils graduate high school each year, the demand for higher education and training is also growing exerting significant pressure on publicly funded institutions of higher learning. Most developing countries struggle to finance the growing needs of a larger student body, without having to compromise the quality of their educational offerings. Thus, innovative financing mechanisms should be developed for the education sector to ensure sustainability and maintain quality in especially public institutions. Resource efficiency is also an important component towards improving the effectiveness of training institutions while an attempt to develop a revolving scholarship system will ensure all learners have equal opportunity to afford an education.

Through the support of international development partners, the Government of Eswatini implemented the TVET Enhancement Project, which facilitated changes in vocational education especially at the Eswatini College of Technology (ECOT) and Gwamile Vocational and Commercial Training Institute (VOCTIM), introducing updated programmes, machinery and upgrading the quality of trade testing for specific skills sets. However, adapting to rapid technological and global development is also a challenge for education and training to align curricula to labour market demands.

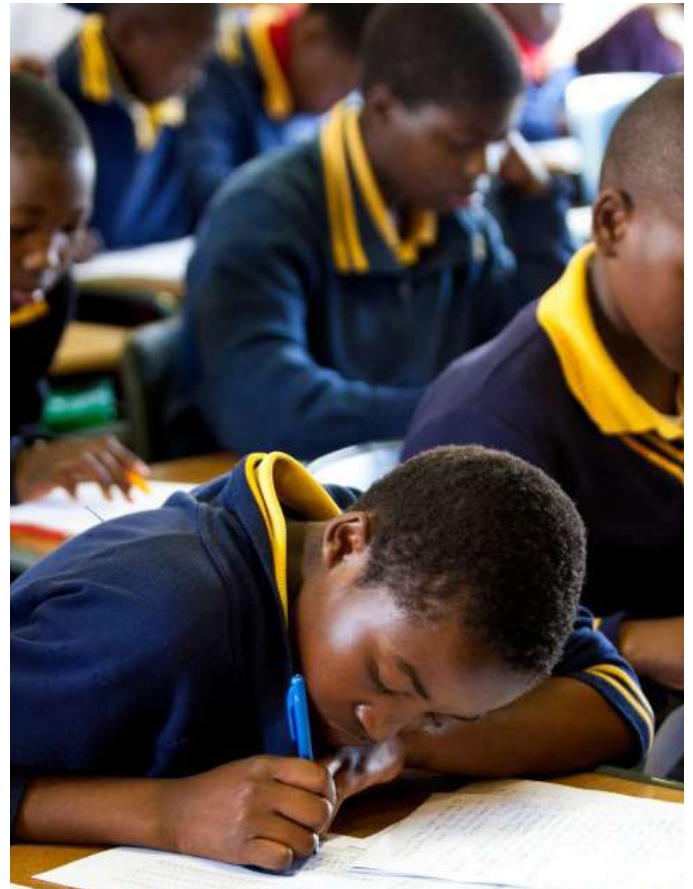
The 4th industrial revolution has emphasised the use and wider diffusion of artificial intelligence, robotics, machine learning and big data yet coding is still not taught in schools. Eswatini needs to encourage innovative learning and digitalisation of the education system to facilitate better education outcomes and increase access. Even though COVID-19 accelerated the introduction of blended learning in many schools and training centres seamless transition to online learning was faster for tertiary institutions compared to basic education due to access to information communication technology (ICT) infrastructure. The majority of primary, secondary and high schools could not access online learning materials, further increasing the disparities between rural and urban schools. Other classical changes and demands of the modern economy relate to the pursuance of a green economy which should improve climate resilience and the availability of sustainable, reliable and affordable energy.

When it comes to research and information on labour market systems, the Government has also made commendable effort in not just consistently producing the Integrated Labour Force Survey but also conducting research to understand the skills development landscape in Eswatini. Some of such initiatives are the National Skills Audit (2022), the World Bank Education Sector Analysis (2021), Landscape Analysis of Skills for Employability Programmes in Eswatini: Skills Audit (Afflouton, 2020), and Mapping of Existing Labour Market Information and Skills Anticipation institutions (2022), Data Infrastructure, Capacities, and Approaches in Eswatini (2022) to name a few. These pieces of work highlighted the major constraints of developing human resource in the country and provide important information about Eswatini's labour market and opportunities for improvement. However, the labour market information system developed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security is non-operational and not well updated to provide labour market information to all emaSwati.

Policy and Legislative Framework

The National Development Strategy (NDS) of Eswatini emphasises the desire for the country to become a knowledge economy, driven by high-quality skills, knowledge, and expertise of the country to be innovative, competitive, and industrious. This vision is echoed in other strategic frameworks such as the National Development Plan (NDP) 2023/24 – 2027/28 highlighting the need for Eswatini to enhance social and human capital development for sustainable livelihoods. The National Education and Training Policy of 2018 further reinforces these goals by advocating for equitable and accessible quality education and lifelong learning opportunities. In alignment with these overarching strategies, the Government of Eswatini has also adopted the National Education and Training Improvement Programme (2018) and the National Education Sector Strategic Plan 2022 – 2034, which aim to address issues of improving the quality and inclusiveness of education at all levels, including vocational training. To drive the development and relevance of occupational and industrial skills to industry needs, the government developed the National TVET Policy and reviewed the Industrial and Vocational Training Act of 1982.

Other policies and strategies supporting the development of a relevant and highly skilled human resource include the Comprehensive Agriculture Sector Policy 2005, the National Youth Policy 2020, the Health Sector Strategic Plan 2019-2023, the Industrial Policy for Eswatini 2023-2033, the National Regulatory and Quality Policy 2010, and the National Gender Policy 2010, among others. The legal and regulatory environment is governed by different laws and regulations to support the funding of skills development, improvement of training delivery



Eswatini's National Development Strategy: Aiming for a Knowledge Economy through Quality Education and Skills Development"

and guide labour migration. For example, the Higher Education Act of 2013 seeks to ensure the quality of education. Different instruments have also been adopted to guide skills anticipation, labour market information management, and compliance with national labour laws and regulations.

On an international level, Eswatini demonstrates its commitment to human resource development through its adherence to relevant international frameworks and agreements. The country actively engages with international organisations such as the United Nations and the African Union to foster cooperation in education, skills development, and labour standards. Eswatini's alignment with Agenda 2063, spearheaded by the African Union, reflects its commitment to collective action and cooperation at the continental level to address common challenges and leverage human development opportunities. Agenda 2063 emphasizes the importance of human capital development as a central pillar for achieving sustainable growth and prosperity across Africa. By participating in Agenda 2063 initiatives and programs, Eswatini contributes to advancing the vision of a united, prosperous, and integrated Africa.

Additionally, Eswatini actively engages in regional initiatives focused on fostering skills development. The country abides by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Education and Training. The protocol serves as the foundation for the SADC Education and Skills Development Programme, which aims to facilitate and coordinate the harmonisation and implementation of regional policies and programs. The overarching goal of the SADC Education and Skills Development Programme is to ensure equitable access to relevant and high-quality education and training across the SADC region. By aligning with this framework, Eswatini collaborates with other member states to address common challenges and promote the development of a skilled and adaptable workforce.




Table 2.1: Linkages between AU Agenda 2063, SDGS, NDP and NHRDP

	National Development Plan	National Human Resource Development Policy
SDG 4: Quality Education Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.	The NDP highlights the need for investing adequately in the education sector at all levels to ensure quality and relevance of education. It recognises that a well-educated and enlightened pool of human resources is essential for facilitating development. The NDP further acknowledges that Eswatini has not invested adequately in the education sector, leading to concerns about its quality and relevance.	The NHRDP emphasises the development of a skilled and knowledgeable workforce through aligning education and training programs with labour market demands. It may focus on promoting quality education, technical and vocational education, and training (TVET), and partnerships between education institutions and industry to ensure the education system produces relevant skills.
SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.	The NDP recognises the potential of Eswatini's rapidly growing young working-age population to support increased productivity and stronger economic growth if properly harnessed. However, it acknowledges the poor link between the quality and capacity of the education sector and the ability to produce the right skills for the economy. The NDP cites the high youth unemployment rate of 58.2% in 2021, indicating a disconnect between the skills produced and the job opportunities available.	The NHRDP focuses on developing human resources to support economic growth and productivity, promoting decent work opportunities, and addressing issues which include skills development, employment creation, labour migration, labour market information systems, and labour laws and regulations to create a conducive environment for employment and economic growth.
SDG 10: Reduce inequalities The goal ensures equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard.	The NDP recognises the need for a comprehensive change in the social protection system to alleviate bottlenecks and remove ineligible recipients. It acknowledges the high unemployment among the youth, which has resulted in high dependency on the elderly for economic support, indicating inequality. The NDP also mentions the importance of sustainable development for all, which cannot be achieved without tackling poverty and inequalities.	The NHRDP addresses issues related to reducing inequalities through policies and programs that promote equal access to education, training, and employment opportunities, particularly for marginalized groups such as women, youth, and people with disabilities. It also focuses on developing skills and creating job opportunities in underserved areas or sectors to promote inclusive economic growth.
Africa Union Agenda 2063 The continental agenda highlights the importance of continuous investment in universal early childhood development, primary education, tertiary education, science, technology, research, and innovation. Additionally, it highlights the need to eradicate gender disparities across all educational levels	The plan highlights the need for Eswatini to invest in human capital development, emphasizing education and skills development. However, the skills produced by the education system are not based on anticipated investments in the economy. Responsive skills development needs to be informed by labour supply and demand projections.	The policy encourages private and public sector investment in the development of all human resource skills in the country from early childhood development to higher education. It addresses the need for skills anticipation research to inform investment in education.
SADC Protocol on education and training The protocol ensures equitable access to relevant and high-quality education and training across the SADC region.	Improve the education system to develop current and future skills necessary for economic growth and social cohesion. Enhance access to quality education at all levels.	The policy ensures that the Kingdom of Eswatini has relevant skills and competencies to meet the current and future human resource needed for employment creation and sustainable social and economic growth. It also emphasises the need for the provision of quality education at all levels.

3.1. Key Sectoral Considerations



3.1.1. Education & ICT

With a rising youthful population, and a greater percentage of youth below the age of 24, there is an intensifying demand to expand access to good quality education and ICT infrastructure. The education system is faced with several challenges including the lack of capacity of lecturers, relevance of curricula to industry skills needs, infrastructure, which results in low capacity to churn out youth that can easily integrate into the labour market. Positioning tertiary education in a lifelong learning context with flexible pathways, second-chance options, and greater adaptability to the needs and opportunities afforded by employers and government would increase the employability of graduates and contribute to job creation. This also calls for the integration of both formal and non-formal education and training. The development of relevant skills in the ICT sector is critical for the country to adapt to the changing world of work and to take advantage of the opportunities that come with leveraging ICT for service delivery, job creation – virtual employment, data systems and innovation for business efficiency. This requires extensive investments in reliable, sustainable, affordable, and accessible ICT infrastructure including internet access.



3.1.2. Tourism

As a priority area for Eswatini's economic development, the tourism sector has a great potential to contribute to job creation, GDP growth and improve livelihoods especially for the rural poor, women and the youth. Its relationship to other sectors of the economy, such as retail, agriculture, accommodation and food services contribute to poverty alleviation by supporting domestic production and culture, and thus contributing to job creation. Some of the challenges in the development of skills in the sector are associated with the lack of

diversity in programme offering, low enrolment rates, and inadequate resources to upgrade programmes. There is also a limited supply of skills in conversation, good quality chefs, digital marketing, and others. Some areas of concern are also related to the utilisation and exploitation of natural resources for income generation against the depletion or scarcity of natural resources due to climatic changes in the environment. Biodegradation and the ramifications of climate change are causing havoc to environmental sustainability and affecting the availability of natural resources. Therefore, human resource development in biodiversity, climate change, and environmental management are important for the sector. In addition, skills in arts, culture and entertainment are in low supply yet they play a key role in driving the tourism sector. There is need to build the country's arts and culture, develop good culinary skills, and improve hospitality and management. Building back post COVID requires that the sector builds resilience and develops strategies to support the activities of the sector while increasing other support industries.



3.1.3. Health

The Covid-19 pandemic exposed many structural weaknesses and vulnerabilities in national healthcare systems, including Eswatini. The lack of adequate physical and technological infrastructure was one of the major challenges exposed by the pandemic in tandem with inadequate supply of workers, supplies, and relevant skill for research and development. Looking forward, HRD in Eswatini should consider the development of relevant competencies to support research and development in the health sector, particularly adoption and application of technology in health, and the design and development of innovative health solutions to increase access to quality healthcare services for all EmaSwati. This should strengthen primary healthcare provision and reduce the financial risk associated with ill-health.



3.1.4. Youth

The development challenges for youth empowerment in Eswatini transcend skill development to social support, health and participation in social and political spheres. Targeted interventions to develop informed, engaged and proactive youth will lead to better economic and social outcomes for young people in the country, through relevant technical and social skills. The Skills Audit depicts that more than 67% of graduates still lack practical industry related skills and soft skills post-graduation and 50% of graduates are unemployed. Employers express that soft skills are essential for every young person to navigate the labour market and adapt to changing environments. Therefore, increased access to marketable skills, quality vocational education and skills development for employment creation is important. Increased access to technology and ICT infrastructure, and cultivation of an entrepreneurial culture are also important in skilling young people for the future.

Provision of more opportunities to pursue alternative learning and financial business/education support is vital to move up the labour market ladder and be industrious. Whereas most young people are found in low wage and informal employment effort towards decent work, social protection and improved productivity should be amplified. The Government of Eswatini should implement a national internship program to develop human resource across the country. Such a program would provide valuable on-the-job training and work experience opportunities for students and recent graduates.



3.1.5. Social Protection & Gender

Extraneous economic circumstances are pushing productivity levels further down in Eswatini and a weak social protection system is exacerbating the problem. According to the World Bank social protection is at the heart of boosting human capital and empowering people to be healthy, pursue their education, and seek opportunities to lift themselves and their families out of poverty. They improve productivity, reduce inequalities, build resilience and end the inter-generational cycle of poverty. Given that Eswatini has a large informal sector and the industry is driven mostly by micro small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) policies to advance HRD needs need to dig deeper to ensure social protection in all sectors of the economy. The NDP advocates for an improved and well-targeted social protection system with focus on gender issues and alleviating poverty. Improvements in labour market outcomes, education and social protection can directly contribute to poverty alleviation. Through promoting equitable access to training opportunities and lifelong learning to all emaSwati the NHRD Policy will reduce the levels of inequality in the country. Comprehensive funding systems to support human resource development must be established to ensure that all emaSwati are given equal opportunities at different levels of their learning journey. When it comes to issues of gender, the number of women found in decision making positions is still lower than that of their male counterparts in most sectors of the economy and even fewer in vocational training and STEM fields. In addition, women are mostly found in low paying jobs and informal employment which creates structural inequality in the labour market and directly leads to income inequality between men and women.



3.1.6. Agriculture & Agro-processing

The agriculture and agro-processing sector have been prioritised by the Government of Eswatini and in regional strategies as a major driver of future economic growth. To achieve sustainable economic development and food security in the continent, the agriculture sector becomes a vital player, especially with its direct linkage to the rural population. The COVID-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine conflict underscore the necessity for countries to bolster their domestic production capabilities and diversify the sources of inputs for critical goods. HRD in the sector needs to be directed towards relevant capacities to drive industrial production and increase economic development. Investment in the production of high-value crops and supporting the development and strengthening of specific value chains in the economy is important. Necessary skills in research and development, technology manipulation and application, climate resilience and mitigation are also critical to continually improve agricultural output and build resilience in the sector.

➤ 3.1.7. Manufacturing

Manufacturing operations in Eswatini vary from textile to food manufacturing, and the processing of sugar-based concentrates (which alone account for about 40% of total exports). Manufacturing is largely agri-based and contributes about 35% to the country's GDP. However, lack of economic diversification is a major constraint for the economy of Eswatini, and the NDP 2022/2023 – 2027/2028 alludes to the need for the country to increase manufacturing sector value addition by leveraging technology, innovation and research and development. Increasing efforts of value addition in all sectors of the economy is essential to increase export potential and increase economic activity. This will enable the country to take advantage of the global markets and regional agreements in line with supporting manufacturing activities in different value chains. It is essential for HRD in this sector to bolster domestic production

capacity and foster the graduation of small-scale informal production potential into the formal economy to increase job creation and industrial competitiveness. Programmes should be designed to widen participation and access to high quality and flexible education, training and learning, leveraging technological advances to strengthen and diversify the skill base for this sector and prioritising STEM professions.

This will enable the country to take advantage of the global markets and regional agreements in line with supporting manufacturing activities in different value chains. It is essential for HRD in this sector to bolster domestic production capacity and foster the graduation of small-scale informal production potential into the formal economy to increase job creation and industrial competitiveness. Programmes should be designed to widen participation and access to high quality and flexible education, training and learning, leveraging technological advances to strengthen and diversify the skill base for this sector and prioritising STEM professions.

➤ 3.1.8. Mining & Energy

The GoE has also prioritised mining and energy as a sector that can boost economic activity in the country. The mining sector is underdeveloped and contributes minimally to GDP. However, opportunities to invest in the sector are driven by development strategies to encourage the exploration and exploitation of Eswatini's natural resources for social and economic development. In mining, the limited number of minerals (coal, quarry, and iron ore) being extracted, combined with the lack of processing industries affects the value-add prospects in the sector. Prioritised as a key sector for growth, the mining sector is an important enabler for development, hence HRD is vital to operationalise the sector and improve productivity in this industry. Despite the lack of local skill supply for the mining industry the NHRD policy should enable the implementation of strategies to adequately supply the sector with relevant skills for industrial performance, productivity, and efficient production. Considerations for training facilitation, labour mobility and financing of high-level skills and specialisations should be made.

04

THE NHRD POLICY CONTEXT

4.1. The Goal of the Policy

The overall goal of the policy is to ensure that the Kingdom of Eswatini has relevant skills and competencies to meet the current and future human resource needed for employment creation and sustainable social and economic growth.

4.2. Specific Objectives

1	To provide an overarching policy direction in planning for HRD needs and implementation of associated interventions in all sectors of the Eswatini economy
2	To coordinate all HRD initiatives in the country in line with national and global labour market demands and/or needs.
3	To strengthen the HRD institutional framework by building internal capacities and developing a responsive, holistic, and integrated approach to HRD
4	To develop, strengthen, and recognise all forms of lifelong learning and inculcate a creative and innovative culture to HRD.
5	To establish and strengthen adequate and sustainable funding mechanisms for national HRD needs and priorities.
6	To prioritise and improve employability (knowledge, skills, and abilities) of, and employment for Eswatini's youth.
7	To establish a skills anticipation system and mechanism to make projections for future labour market needs. informed by research
8	To promote full participation of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups in the development of their livelihoods and growth of the economy.



4.3. Policy Vision Statement

An economy where every citizen is equipped with the requisite skills, knowledge, and competencies to become globally competitive and enjoy full decent and productive work to achieve sustainable social and economic development by 2030.

4.4. Policy Mission Statement

To establish an effective and responsive HRD environment that will optimise the potential of the people of Eswatini, particularly the youth, through acquisition of knowledge and skills to work productively and competitively to achieve an improved quality of life for all.

4.5. Scope of the NHRD Policy 2023 – 2030

The scope of HRD in this policy focuses at the national level, and pertains to all sectors of the economy, integrating HRD in all aspects of social and economic development, and includes all actions relating to:



- Interventions for education, training and development focused on building relevant competencies, skills, and knowledge required for productivity;
- Prioritisation of HRD for youth empowerment through employability and entrepreneurship;
- Transformation of Eswatini's education system to be competitive in the global markets;
- Ensuring adequate and sustainable investments in all forms of human capital development (formal, informal, and non-formal);
- Aligning skills development in Eswatini with regional and international qualification frameworks to allow for skills mobility;
- Establishing a skills anticipation system to inform human capital development programmes;
- Strengthening institutional capacity to respond to labour market needs;
- Ensuring coordination and collaboration between stakeholders involved in human capital development;
- Enhancing the role of industry in provision of work-based learning and investments in education and training;
- Promoting inclusion and access to quality skills development for equal rights, gender equity, people living with disability, and other vulnerable groups;
- Ensuring mechanism for skilling, re-skilling, up-skilling, cross-skilling, and giving access to life-long learning to cater for changes in the labour market.
- Developing a monitoring and evaluation system for effective and efficient HRD planning and implementation.

4.6. Guiding Principles

The following are the guiding principles and values for the operationalisation of this policy and implementation plan:



Rigor in education and training

Transform the education and training system to produce highly skilled emaswati that can compete at international level. The overall curriculum needs to be reviewed in order to promote a marketable labour force that can create jobs. Human resource development efforts need to ensure quality and confidence in the country's education system.



Creativity and Innovation

Inculcate a culture of creativity and innovation to respond to labour market dynamics and the overall development of human resource.



Promoting a lifelong learning approach

Create an atmosphere where all HRD players become partners in the learning society. This provides opportunities for continuous learning to the people with the objective to optimise human capital development.



Responsiveness (i.e. knowledge, attitudes, competencies, innovation)

Be responsive to the needs or demands of the economy as well as produce the desired results. The knowledge and skills must be aligned to the economic demands as well as attitude that will address the justified needs. The policy must be able to bring about and/or support the desired innovations for use in development of the country's economy.



Inclusiveness

The Policy covers all levels of the human life cycle from early childhood to elderly/death. Education and training will be anchored on equitable access to inclusive life-long quality education and training. No citizenry of Eswatini shall be excluded during the implementation of the policy (gender, youth, people living with disabilities or special needs, and other vulnerable groups).



Quality

In implementing the policy, quality and adherence to national, regional and international standards and practices in HRD should be considered. The NHRD Policy shall ensure that optimal quality and standards are attained at every stage.



Autonomy

Bureaucracy in HRD should be reduced and autonomy over decision making relating to HRD should be promoted and facilitated. Freedom should be given to employees in the public and private sector to influence their own personal and professional development. Industries and stakeholders in the various sectors of the economy must have the ability to influence the contents of HRD programmes.



Partnerships

Create and strengthen partnerships amongst HRD stakeholders for effective human capital development in Eswatini

05 KEY POLICY ISSUES

The National Human Resource Development Policy will address the following key issues.

Industry – Higher education relationships



- Absence of structured relationships between institutions and industry.
- Absence of incentives to support skills development.
- Unresponsive education system to industry needs – leading to skill mismatches and gaps.
- Lack of diversity in skills supply, especially for highly advanced skills.
- Low collaboration in curriculum development and review.
- Inadequate capacity of trainers/lecturers.
- Insufficient financing or funding of higher education institutions.

Continuous learning and skills upgrading



- Limited life long learning opportunities and training programmes.
- Lack of recognition of prior learning within NQF (formal/informal), experience and competencies.
- Inadequate support for work place training.
- Insufficient policies to encourage work-based learning environments.
- Transition for Form 5 students to higher education institutions in other countries requires further education and assessments that maybe inhibiting for economically disadvantaged learners.
- Weak career guidance programmes due to the lack of insufficient information on labour market opportunities and demand.

Guiding policies and strategies



- Weak coordination between stakeholders involved in HRD.
- Weak linkages between national development objectives and training or skills development.
- Absence of timely and consistent information on skills demand, and skills anticipation.
- Limited understanding of HRD priorities and needs

Skills development and training



- High youth unemployment among graduates.
- Low wage jobs especially for TVET graduates.
- Insufficient support for TVET skills development.
- Graduates have inadequate industry specific skills.
- Gender disparities in management skills and STEM related jobs.
- Unstructured internship and mentorship programmes.
- Lack of quality and updated infrastructure (ICT, machinery and equipment) to enhance learning.
- Lack of mind-set altering programmes and weak entrepreneurial culture.
- Insufficient quality assurance and other measures to promote efficiency in training at primary, secondary, high school, and tertiary level.

06

STRATEGIC POLICY INTERVENTION AREAS

To achieve the objectives of the policy and address the challenges in human resource development, the NHRD Policy will promote the implementation of nine strategic policy areas and interventions. Table 6.1 describes the policy area and interventions that will be implemented by the different public and private stakeholders in the implementation of the policy.

Table 6.1: NHRD Policy interventions

POLICY AREA	INTERVENTIONS
1. Transforming education and training The education system needs to be rigorous to ensure quality of output that will enable all eSwati to be recognised as the most competitive nation in knowledge, skills, and competencies.	Review curriculum and programmes in education and training in consultation with industry/private sector to make it more relevant, rigorous, and competitive. Review and align education curriculum with the scarce and priority skills for Eswatini and the global economy. Strengthen Eswatini Higher Education Council to enhance accreditation and quality of institutions of higher learning. Adopt international external assessment equivalent to A-levels/ AS-levels at high school/secondary level. Ensure alignment of the National Qualifications Framework with regional, continental, and global institutional frameworks. Capacitate educators and trainers towards effective implementation of new curriculum. Update IP rights to promote creativity and innovation among professionals. Improve the quality of learning and raise competencies in areas of research, innovation, green skills, commercial application and high-level STEM fields.
2. Youth empowerment and entrepreneurship Ensure youth can make informed choices about education and are able to successfully enter productive employment, including working for themselves. The Policy will ensure that appropriate education for sustainable development shall be provided to all young people at all levels (primary, secondary, and tertiary) and all types of education (formal, informal, non-formal, and vocational) in accordance with their capabilities.	Create opportunities for the youth through internship, fellowships, and mentorship programmes. Promote a culture of creativity and innovation among the youth. Establish career and information centres to equip youth with labour market information and soft skills. Develop an entrepreneurship education curriculum (entrepreneurship from as early as ECCDE). Enhance access to start-up capital for self-employment or entrepreneurship ventures. Establish a quota for youth businesses to participate in public procurement, particularly manufacturing companies Conduct systematic assessments for the youth labour market. Upscale support to youth participating in creative industry such as visual and fine arts, media, sports and entertainment, handicraft, etc. Professionalise the creative industry to recognise competencies of professionals, and influence wage level, etc.

3. Mainstreaming TVET as an attractive career pathway Leverage and strengthen the TVET system to provide attractive career pathways that integrate the youth in productive economic activities. It should be a demand-driven TVET system responsive to, and contributing to the realisation of the national, social, and economic development strategies of the Government of Eswatini.	Modernise the TVET sector and its delivery to make it attractive to the youth, particularly the girl child. Introduce TVET Occupational Standards and incorporate TVET qualifications in the NQF. Establish a funding mechanism for the TVET sector. Engage industry in the development and planning of TVET curriculum and accreditation options. Introduce skill upgrading programmes for existing TVET teachers/lecturers and make sure they have continuous industry experience. Create a robust system for trade testing and recognition of TVET skills and competences for both formal and informal training. Leverage DIVT for the coordination of TVET skills development. Support TVET graduates, particularly aspiring entrepreneurs through the provision of toolkits and incubation. Upgrade and modernize training equipment and infrastructure in TVET training institutions to match industry standards. Upscale trade testing of TVET graduates and skilled persons. Update Intellectual Property (IP) rights to promote creativity and innovation among TVET professionals. Establish centres of excellence in niche areas for institutions with relevant capacity to commercialise TVET outputs Mainstream and professionalise TVET sector as a lucrative career option.
4. Establishing an effective mechanism for funding HRD Ensure that the Government in partnership with the private sector and all other relevant stakeholders develop a framework and instruments for funding HRD in all its forms and levels. The funding instruments should be performance based and respond to current and anticipated skills in the local and global economy.	Develop appropriate funding models (levy, scholarship fund, etc.) for implementing HRD programmes. Intensify efforts to improve the efficiency of higher education institutions by introducing performance measurement systems linked to quality outcomes and resource efficiency.
5. Promoting life-long learning that integrates all forms of education and training, that is, formal, informal, and non-formal Equip emaSwati with the right attitudes and capabilities to enable them to adapt to labour market shifts and transition effectively through the education and training system at all stages of their career development. Beyond the formal and conventional education and training, Eswatini needs to also ensure that non-formal and informal education receive equal attention to support integration of informal sector into mainstream economy.	Strengthen and establish mechanisms that encourage continuous learning and create pathways for career advancement. Develop a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) mechanism that will recognise all forms of learning (informal, non-formal, formal, and alternative education) and enable articulation through the post-secondary education system. Broaden the base of higher education to increase access to workers, professionals, and the unemployed in pursuit of skilling, reskilling, upskilling, cross and multi-skilling. Ensure life-long learning programmes deliberately target and include all disadvantaged and vulnerable groups (such as women, people living with disabilities, out of school youth, and people with special needs, etc).
6. Strengthening Institutional capacities Design and implement demand-driven education and training programmes that will improve organisational performance and realise national development objectives. Eswatini needs to build/develop robust institutional capacities to ensure effective planning and coordination of human resource development.	Improve the governance of HRD institutions and create a flexible HRD system that quickly responds to labour market dynamics as informed by evidence-based research. Capacitate national HRD planning practitioners for effective planning, monitoring, evaluation, coordination, and implementation of HRD frameworks. Encourage private and public entities to develop human resource development plans and policies. Develop a relevant, efficient and effective public service by strengthening human resource planning and policy in government. Develop systems for monitoring HRD in the country.

7. Enable and implement evidence-based decisions in HRD Eswatini should establish a proactive HRD system that can continuously assess and anticipate skills development needs to promote relevance of labour force and productivity. Ensure improved intelligence is produced on trends in the labour market and that it is used as a basis for making more informed decisions about the type of human resources that should be developed.	Conduct skills audits at least every five years and tracer surveys in between. Strengthen labour market information system (LMIS) and develop a national skills masterplan for informed decision making. Conduct labour market assessments to understand sectoral labour demand and supply to inform skills anticipation, skills development priority lists, and scarce skills for evidence-based HRD. Leverage modern technology and diverse information platforms to make labour market information easily accessible and available to all eSwatini, especially the youth. Intensify efforts to collect and document exported and imported skills – create a database of migrant skills
8. Work-based learning Government and private sector should partner to provide opportunities for work-based learning through the development and implementation of a national internship and apprenticeship programme.	Strengthen the regulatory framework for work-based learning. Balance curricula to ensure that a significant portion of learning involves work-based learning and experience. Develop a national internship and apprenticeship programme for the unemployed, recent graduates, and trainees. Develop a mentorship and fellowship programmes. Enhance collaboration between business associations and the private sector to collaborate with training providers to develop and implement work-based learning
9. Effective coordination and collaboration Leveraging the diverse networks of partners, full range of knowledge, expertise, and resource to deepen understanding of sector needs, performance, and advancement in life-long learning.	Develop systematic, coordinated, and guided approaches to HRD planning in line with the national development agenda. Establish a legal framework for coordinating human resource and skills development in Eswatini, by establishing an Act and regulations. Establish and strengthen structured mechanisms for PPPs to enable HRD coordination, funding, and implementation. Conduct stakeholder mapping and network analysis to define clear roles and responsibilities of HRD players. Develop a communication strategy for information sharing, assimilation, collaboration, knowledge management, and accountability. Establish relationships with regional and international stakeholders and affiliate with accredited HRD institutions.



6.1. Strategic Policy Statements

The Government of Eswatini recognises the value of human resources in achieving sustainable socio-economic development. The Government also acknowledges the need for institutional and human capacity building interventions to support its goal of improving the quality and delivery of the services provided in the country

The Government, in liaison with its key stakeholders, is committed to play a catalytic role to provide all citizens with opportunities for optimum development of competencies for the achievement of their goals and aspirations in a rapidly evolving world environment.s

To accelerate more and better investments in people for greater equity and economic growth, through targeted investments in human capital development, Eswatini can alleviate extreme poverty and create a more inclusive society for current and future generations. This requires investing in people through nutrition, health care, quality education, jobs and skills. In addition, the GoE will also endeavour to shine light and invest in professions that have been previously overlooked, such as the creative arts, sports, and culture & entertainment.



The Government and its partners are committed to developing a learning culture that promotes life-long learning, personal/self-development, learning organisations in which people at all levels, individually and collectively, are continually encouraged to learn and enhance productivity.

The education and training system provides a broad competency-based set of curricula at the appropriate level, oriented to the practical utilisation of knowledge which will be a sound foundation for the development of a variety of skills.

The Government of Eswatini is committed to promoting full participation of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups for their development and growth of the economy.



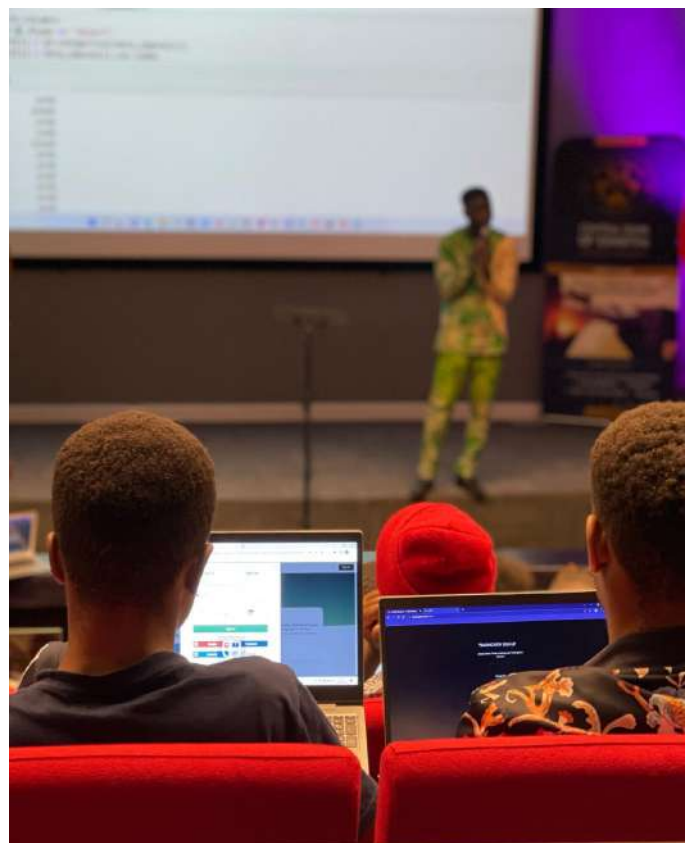
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IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE POLICY

7.1. RESOURCE MOBILISATION

To mobilise resources for the effective implementation of the policy, the following activities shall be undertaken:

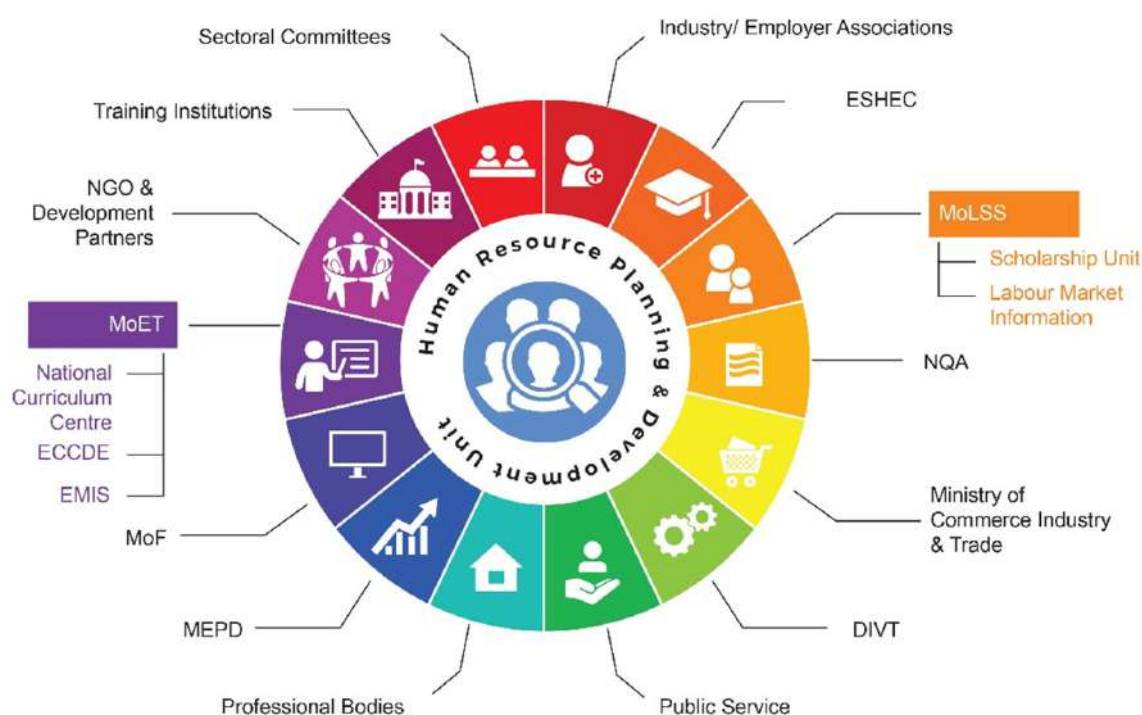
- The MoLSS shall undertake proactive measures to identify and mobilise untapped resources from private sector organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), international organisations, and development partners for human resource development.
- The Ministry of Labour and Social Security shall undertake proactive measures to identify and mobilise untapped resources from private sector organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and development partners for human resource development.
- Funding for supporting and establishing the government universities and institutions shall come from the Government with joint efforts from the private sector, while funding for other institutions shall come from private sources, fees, endowments, etc.
- Public-Public, Public-Private, and Private-Private partnerships shall be utilised as a mechanism for resource sharing and funding of national human resource development initiatives.
- The Government shall allow training institutions to retain part of the revenue from their income generating activities to develop their staff capacities and support curriculum review and development processes, including the upgrading of learning tools.
- Employers shall pay a training levy to Government to support skills development, through apprenticeships, work-based training, scholarships, internships, etc.
- A Scholarship Loan Revolving Fund shall fund qualifying eSwati in local and international tertiary institutions. The MoLSS shall enhance the uptake, recovery, efficiency, and effectiveness of the Scholarship Loan Revolving Fund.
- The Government together with the private sector have the responsibility to mobilise resources to upgrade and modernise technical institutes, especially public institutions.
- The Government has a primary responsibility to introduce curriculum relevant to the new global market trends at all levels of education (ECCE, primary and high school, and tertiary levels).



7.2. STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of this Policy will be led by the MoLSS through the National Human Resource Planning and Development Unit. The MoLSS will create awareness amongst the public and private sector about the NHRD Policy and obtain feedback to refine and build up relevant strategies and action plans for implementation. A strong level of ownership, commitment, and active participation of all stakeholders is required for successful implementation of the policy. Workers' and employers' organisations will play a fundamental role in the successful implementation of the NHRD Policy; hence their commitment is essential. A close liaison among industry, the MoLSS, and training institutions is crucial. At the Government level, coordination among many ministries, departments, and other public sector agencies is necessary. An implementation plan for the policy has been developed and will be implemented according to the activities as described in the document

To implement this policy the MoLSS through the NHRPD Unit will establish a coordination committee that is representative of all key stakeholders in human resource development. The committee will constitute representatives from the supply and demand side of skills development in Eswatini. Some of the institutions that will be represented are the MoET, MoSCYA, ESHEC, Public Service, institutions of higher learning, private sector, workers' and employers' associations, Ministry of Public Service - MoPS, development partners, and others. Relevant subcommittees will be set up, as and when required.



The fundamental roles of the entities involved in supporting human resource development in the country are as follows:

- ✓ National Human Resource Planning and Development (NHRPD) Unit is responsible for human resource planning, coordination, monitoring and evaluation, and developing human resource policies in line with national economic and social objectives. The functions of the department are to:
 - To ensure that the Human Capital base both at the national level and within the Public Service in particular is of good quality, as a means of meeting national and Government priorities under the National Development Strategy (NDS).

- To ensure the best use of the country's human capital in a holistic manner through effective human resource planning.
 - To develop, monitor, evaluate, and ensure the implementation of integrated national human resource development policies and procedures.
 - To coordinate human resource development activities in the public and private sectors.
 - To ensure, in collaboration with stakeholders that training programmes aligned to national development priorities are undertaken and that their impact is assessed and evaluated.
 - To conduct periodic research and labour statistics to inform skills development and training priorities in the country.
- ✓ Eswatini Higher Education Council (ESHEC) is responsible for the development and implementation of a quality assurance system for higher education, covering, among other areas, registration, accreditation, institutional audits, quality promotion, and setting of standards.
 - ✓ Eswatini Qualifications Authority (EQA) is responsible for the qualifications system in Eswatini.
 - ✓ Directorate of Industrial and Vocational Training (DIVT) is responsible for promoting, enhancing and monitoring industrial and vocational training and skills development as well as validation of skills proficiency levels for skilled labour force through the apprenticeship and trade testing programmes.
 - ✓ Ministry of Economic Planning and Development – is responsible for the provision of macro and micro social and economic indicators for national development, such as national development plans, and other strategic documents. The MEPD also provides all national statistical data through the Central Statistics Office to inform HRD planning in the country.
 - ✓ Ministry of Education and Training – the ministry guides and invests in the development of all human resource skills in the country from early childhood development to higher education.
 - ✓ Industry/Industry Associations – the industry is a significant stakeholder in human resource planning, determining the demand, employability, and job creation.
 - ✓ Public Service is responsible for effective public service management, training, performance, and development of civil servants.

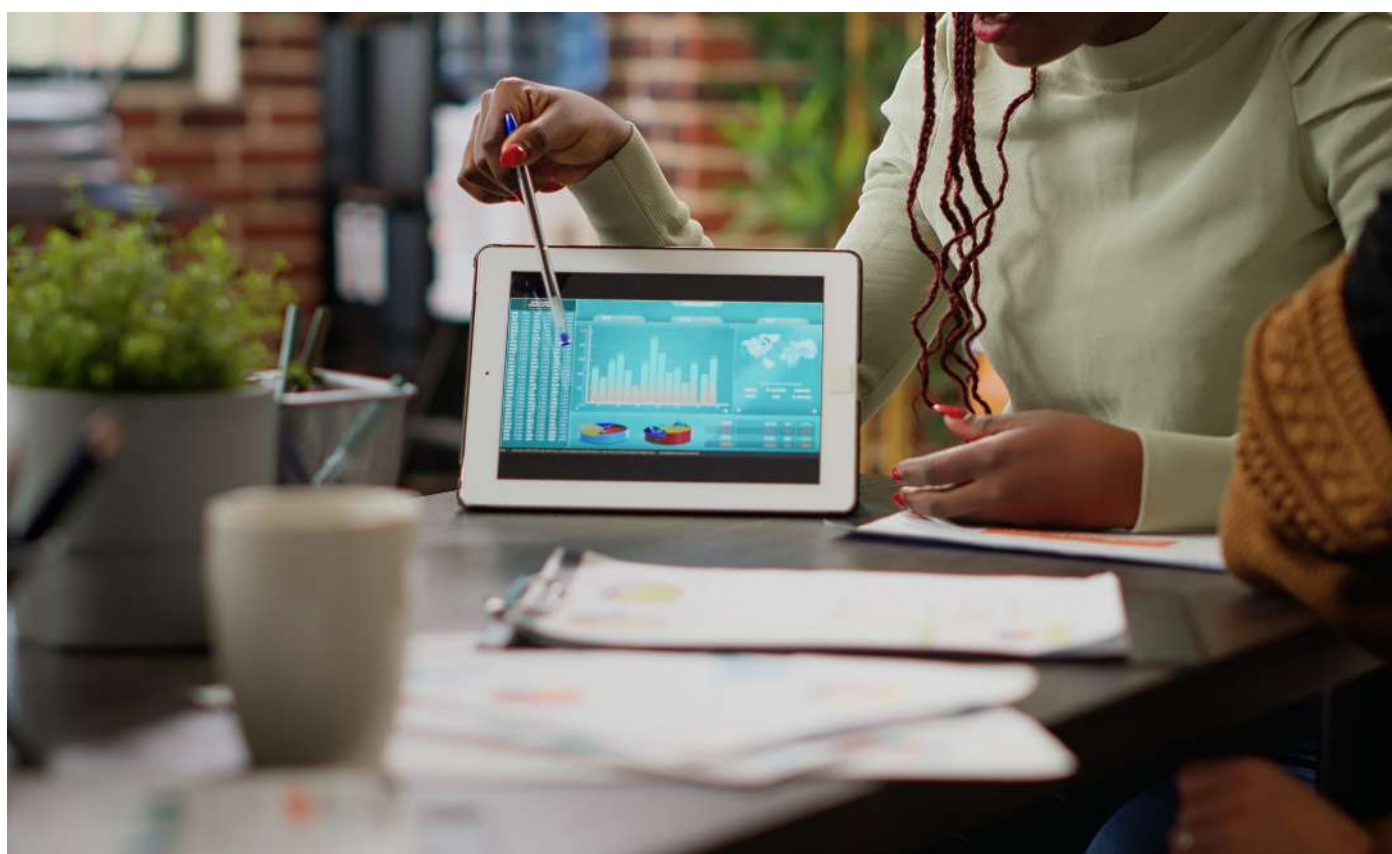


The policy will use a results-based monitoring and evaluation framework, to assess and track progress of activities, outputs, and outcomes in-line with strategic policy areas. The M&E system will focus on accessing the implementation of activities and evaluating their outcomes and impact on human resource development in Eswatini. Workplan achievements, targets, and performance indicators shall be determined bi-annually with stakeholders and periodic evaluation surveys shall be conducted. The NHRPD Unit will be responsible for monitoring, and evaluation of the policy in accordance with government monitoring and evaluation strategies. An officer within the NHRPD unit will be tasked with the responsibility to collect and collate data from different institutions to inform the monitoring and evaluation process. The monitoring and evaluation system will be developed in line with the following objectives:

- To examine the quality and effectiveness of HRD services provided by different agencies;
- To ensure accountability amongst entrusted institutions for effective implementation of the HRD activities;
- To evaluate effectiveness in the implementation of HRD activities before, after and during interventions with the aim of ensuring quality service delivery in the education and training sector;
- To monitor the HRD activities through evidence from reports which may be monthly/ annually/ bi-annually/ every three (3) years/ every five (5) years; and
- To make follow ups and evaluate activities presented and inform the MoLSS accordingly.

8.4 REVIEW OF THE POLICY

The NHRD Policy shall be comprehensively reviewed every three (3) years or as need arises to consider emerging issues on labour market demands in the Kingdom of Eswatini and international trends. The review shall be informed by monitoring and evaluation results and will be led by the MoLSS in the Kingdom of Eswatini.





Ministry of Labour & Social Security

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