



KINGDOM OF ESWATINI

**DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE
ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2024/25**

FEBRUARY 2025

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

BERCS	:	Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society
CPWA	:	Children’s Protection and Welfare Act of 2012
DGFI	:	Department of Gender and Family Issues
DPMO	:	Deputy Prime Minister’s Office
DRR	:	Disaster Risk Reduction
DSW	:	Department of Social Welfare
IPC	:	Integrated Phase Classification
GBV	:	Gender Based Violence
MTTV	:	Multi Task Team for Violence
NCP	:	Neighbourhood Care Points
NDMA	:	National Disaster Management Agency
OVC	:	Orphan and Vulnerable Children
PWD	:	Persons with Disabilities
RCCFs	:	Residential Child Care Facility
SADC	:	Southern Africa Development Cooperation
UNPRPD	:	United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
UNICEF	:	United Nations International Emergency Fund
VAA	:	Vulnerable Assessment and Analysis

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Deputy Prime Minister's Office (DPMO) presents its Annual Performance Report for the 2024/25 financial year. This report highlights key achievements, financial performance, challenges, and strategic direction for the Office's various departments. The DPMO remains committed to its mandate of coordinating Social Welfare Services which includes Child Protection services, Orphaned and Vulnerable Children, Disability issues, Elderly Persons, Disaster Risk Management, Gender and Family Issues, ensuring the well-being of vulnerable groups.

The Deputy Prime Minister's Office received an annual recurrent budget allocation of E903,349,517.00 for the Financial year 2024/2025. Budget released as at 31st January 2025 amounted to E901,752,482.00. Actual expenditure incurred amounted to E677,386,706.00 leaving a balance of E224,365,776.00 which are committed funds to be paid on the outstanding grants for the months of February and March, 2025. The grants involved are Elderly, Orphaned and Vulnerable Children (OVC), Disability, Umsizi and their widows and the procurement of goods and services which includes Assistive devices.

During this financial year, the Office finalized its five-year Strategic Plan (2023/24 – 2027/28) to improve service delivery which was endorsed and approved by Cabinet. The Strategic Plan gives strategic direction on how the Office will accomplish its set objectives. As part of improving service delivery, the Office is developing a National Dynamic Social Registry (NDSR) which is aimed at improving targeting for social protection programmes. The NDSR was allocated a budget of E5 million by Government and other support came from the World Bank for this financial year. In gearing up for this exercise, the Office has finalized key project documents for the implementation of this project. As a pilot exercise, data collection will begin in the Shiselweni region in the month of March, 2025 before the national roll out.

In an effort to extend its reach and efficiency in service delivery, the DPM's Office was allocated an amount of E1.16 million for the rehabilitation of Manzini Social Welfare Offices. In collaboration with the Ministry of Public Works and Transport (MPWT), the Office has procured building material and the renovation processes will be undertaken by the MPWT.

The Office made significant strides in child protection, processing over 5,025 child maintenance cases, 1,607 abuse cases, and 2,500 counselling sessions. Efforts to provide alternative care for vulnerable children saw 106 children placed in care, with 17 children placed at the Halfway House. Educational support was extended to 62,677 children under the OVC programme, reflecting an increase compared to the previous financial year, where 58,847 OVCs were supported.

The Elderly grants benefited 85,844 elderly citizens in comparison to 83,123 of the last financial year. The Disability grant benefited 16,974 Persons with Disabilities which is an increase from 14,802 of the previous year. A total of around E496.4 million has been spent on the elderly and disability grants for the ten-month period.

As part of Disability mainstreaming and inclusion, the Office in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Social Security hosted the National Job and Entrepreneurial

Expo for Persons with Disabilities. The Objective of the Expo was to promote inclusive employment and economic empowerment of Persons with Disabilities. In addition, the Office launched the National Disability Plan of Action 2024 – 2028, the United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) Phase 2 Project and the Qualification Registry for Persons with Disabilities. As part of service delivery, the Office distributed assistive devices and made referrals of PWDs to rehabilitation services. The Office also conducted trainings on sign language for parents of children with hearing impairment.

The Office played a crucial role in promoting child's rights and welfare. Technical working groups were coordinated to address child protection, and consultations were held on setting minimum standards for Residential Child Care Facilities (RCCFs). Draft Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) were developed to guide the operation of the Neighbourhood Care Points (NCPs) in the country. Efforts to combat Violence Against Children (VAC) included engaging children in discussions and formulating key pledges, such as judicial training and community-based justice initiatives. The 116 Child Helpline also received and processed 1,774 calls, with child neglect and social assistance being the predominant concerns. In an effort to promote children access to education especially the most vulnerable, the Office conducted a back to school campaign which assisted vulnerable children with school uniforms, school shoes, back packs, dignity packs and food items.

Despite the enactment of the Child Protection and Welfare Act (CPWA) of 2012, which amongst other things prevents children from being exposed to the adverse effects of the formal criminal justice system, the Office has noted an increase in the number of children in conflict with the law. The existing gap in the implementation of the CPWA of 2012 poses a risk in children ending up in the formal criminal justice system. The CPWA of 2012 provides for a justice system that ensures children are treated in a specific manner; that deprivation of liberty be the last resort, and promotes restorative justice as an option. Pursuant to the identified gap, the Office embarked on a learning and sharing exercise on Child Justice aimed at upscaling the implementation of some provisions of the CPWA of 2012. Consequently, the Office will conduct a stakeholder consultation exercise to determine the best option for the country.

The Office carried out extensive Gender-Based Violence (GBV) advocacy, reaching approximately 3,000 individuals through community dialogues and awareness campaigns targeting chiefdoms, bus ranks, schools and national events. It also developed and disseminated Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) materials, branding police vehicles and public transport with GBV messages to increase public awareness. Capacity-building initiatives for frontline responders, including law enforcement officers and prosecutors, were undertaken to improve GBV case handling and legal response mechanisms. As part of the initiative to strengthen families, the Office has initiated a family reunification programme which is known as '*Asibambaneni Singumndeni*'. To implement this programme, the Office received support of two vehicles from the Embassy of the Republic of China on Taiwan valued at around E1.2 million. Such initiative is anticipated to amongst others operationalize the Positive Parenting Strategy (2023 – 2027).

Alive to the predicament of the increasing number of vulnerable Child Headed Households (CHH), the Office has continued to provide livelihood support in improving their food and nutrition needs to build their resilience to shocks. The

programme had a budget of E1.7 million which was used to enrol 77 CHH with over three hundred (300) beneficiaries supported with different livelihood interventions. These interventions include crop production, livestock production, roof top water harvesting and skills development training.

In the quest to alleviate immediate hunger in communities at risk, the Government of Eswatini provided funding for the procurement of rice, beans and cooking oil which were distributed to 53,920 households. The Office also implemented Food for Work project in partnership with World Vision Taiwan, which has distributed 879.468 Metric Tonnes of rice, reaching 7,151 households and 35,755 beneficiaries in four distribution cycles. This project was implemented in 13 targeted constituencies throughout the country. In addition, 5412 targeted households received cash transfers in some parts of the Shiselweni region as supported by European Union Civil Protection and humanitarian aid (ECHO).

To minimize future risks and prevent disaster from occurring, the Office has made significant strides towards building climate resilient structures through house construction and rehabilitation interventions. The Office has constructed 93 new houses (30 One rooms, 62 two rooms and one multiple room), 199 rehabilitations and 2 NCPs for the most vulnerable households. In an effort to prevent disaster from occurring and minimizing risk, the Office has been pro-active in identifying stick and mud houses that require immediate attention.

During the period under review, the Office through collaboration with the Ministry of Public Service and the Civil Service Commission recruited 34 Officers into different portfolios: 1 Children Coordination Officer, 25 Social Workers, 2 Orderlies, 1 house maid, 3 Gender Analysts and 2 extra Clerical Officers to enable the Office to effectively deliver on its mandate. The Office also received 6 new vehicles which were distributed to the different departments.

Despite these achievements, the Office still faces challenges such as human resource constraints in view of the Social Worker: Client ratio, which affects service delivery. The rising number of social issues, including child neglect and GBV, highlighted the need for stronger preventive interventions and policy reforms. The decline in funding assistance from partners has a negative effect in the implementation of some key programmes such as 116 Child Help Line, GBV programmes and OVC support.

The DPMO remains dedicated to enhancing social protection services through policy development, resource mobilization, and inter-agency collaboration. Moving forward, the focus will be on strengthening institutional capacity, improving service delivery efficiency, and expanding outreach programs to support vulnerable groups across Eswatini.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE MANDATE

The Deputy Prime Minister's Office is a supportive arm of the Prime Minister's Office entrusted with the responsibility of coordinating Social Welfare, Disability Mainstreaming and inclusion, Children Services, Gender and Family, Disaster Risk Reduction, Mitigation and Response issues. It is guided by the following mandate, vision, mission and values.

Vision

To be a social protection services facilitator of excellence.

Mission Statement

To create a conducive environment through, a comprehensive and well-coordinated social protection services to all vulnerable groups.

Values

- **Patriotism:** Exercise loyalty and uphold allegiance to the Kingdom of Eswatini and its citizens at all times.
- **Integrity and ethical practice:** Embrace transparency and accountability in all operations.
- **Innovation:** Adopt, and encourage initiative and innovation by all.
- **Responsiveness:** Adopt flexible, timely and accurate responses to achieve our customer expectations.
- **Professionalism:** Ensure high-level of professional competence and confidentiality in all their work
- **Team work:** Promote teamwork to enhance service delivery. The Deputy Prime Minister's Office will inculcate a sense of shared and collective responsibility for the execution of our mandate.
- **People first:** We shall always put the interests of the people we serve before our own.
- **Quality Service:** The services we provide shall always be on time and at the highest possible standard.
- **Empathy:** Sensitive to client's requirements.

1.2 DEPARTMENTS

This report presents the performance of the Deputy Prime Minister's Office (DPMO) for annual report of the Financial Year 2023/24. It provides an analysis of the financial performance and details the activities undertaken, challenges faced and lessons learnt

during this reporting period. The Office is comprised of the following departments and parastatals which work together to effectively and efficiently fulfill its mandate:

- a) **The Administration Department:** provides strategic direction and further provides support to the other Departments by providing leadership and promoting of efficient service delivery through effective financial and human resource management, communications and support services. It is responsible for planning, coordinating, and executing the administrative mandate of the Office. The Administration Department comprises of the following Personnel; Principal Secretary, Under Secretary, Planning Officers, Legal Advisor, Human Resource Officers, Accounts Officers, and Communication Officer.
- b) **Department of Social Welfare:** provides holistic, equitable care and support to the most vulnerable people of the population. This is done by offering integrated, comprehensive, and equitable social welfare services to address vulnerability and poverty in partnership with key stakeholders to improve the lives of Emaswati. Social welfare providers include Civil Society Organizations Non-Government Organizations, Faith Based Organizations, Community Based Organizations. The Department of Social Welfare's responsibility is to provide social welfare services and policy in the country. Its mandate is to enhance the well-being of individuals, groups and communities through the provision of relevant, appropriate, high quality social welfare and social development services and programmes.
- c) **Department of Gender and Family Issues:** mainstream gender into all sectors of national development including legislations, policies, programmes and projects for the attainment of gender equality in Eswatini.
- d) **The National Children Services Department:** coordinates all children issues and further ensures that the "Best Interest of the Child" is mainstreamed in all development and societal plans. It also monitors children's programme services in the country.
- e) **National Disaster Management Department:** oversees Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRR/M). It provides an enabling policy and legislative framework for disaster risk management and disaster risk reduction in the country.
- f) **Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society (BERCS):** dedicated to alleviate human suffering through preparing and responding to disasters and epidemics at all times. This is mostly done through partnership and volunteer network.
- g) **National Disaster Management Agency:** This is the Principal Institution in Disaster Risk Reduction at the National Level of government focusing on decreasing vulnerability and increasing preparedness and mitigation capacity on disasters.

2. FINANCIAL REPORT

A. Summary of Recurrent Expenditure

The Deputy Prime Minister's Office received an annual recurrent budget allocation of E903,349,517.00 for the Financial year 2024/2025. Budget released as at 31st January 2025 amounted to E901,752,482.00. Actual expenditure incurred amounted to E677,386,706.00 leaving a balance of E224,365,776.00 which are committed funds to be paid on the outstanding grants for the months of February and March, 2025. The grants involved are Elderly, Orphaned and Vulnerable Children (OVC), Disability, Umsizi and their widows and the procurement of goods and services which includes Assistive devices.

B. SUMMARY OF RECURRENT BUDGET ON CONTROL ITEMS

Table 1: Activity Summary - Control Items

ITEM	BUDGETED ESTIMATES (E)	REALLOCATIONS (E)	RELEASED Budget (E)	ACTUAL EXPENDITURE (E)	VARIANCE (E)	OVER/UNDER %
00 CTA	4 512 016.00	-800 996.00	3 711 016	1 632 182.00	2 078 834.00	56
01 PERSONNEL COSTS	39 148 716.00	0.00	39 148 692.00	39 090 896.00	57 796.00	0
02 TRAVEL AND COMMUNICATION	2 079 559.00	2 223 216.00	4 222 775.00	2 985 168.00	1 237 607.00	29
04 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	14 241 133.00	-703 399.00	13 567 734.00	11 450 118.00	2 117 616.00	16
05 Rentals	-	35 000.00	15 000.00	13 453.00	1 548.00	10
06 CONSUMABLE MATERIALS	948 842.00	4 172 079.00	5 140 921.00	2 269 425.00	2 871 496.00	56
07 DURABLE MATERIALS	2 433 200.00	12 100.00	2 445 300.00	0.00	2 445 300.00	100
10 GRANTS AND SUBSIDIES	839 986 051.00	-4 888 000.00	833 501 044.00	619 945 464.00	213 555 580.00	26
TOTAL ACTIVITY 11	903 349 517.0	0.00	901 752 482.0	677 386 706.0	224 365 776.0	25

C. Summary of Activities by Control Items

Explanatory notes on the expenditure line items of the report as at 31st January, 2025.

i. Item 002 - CTA Charges

The CTA charges caters for the maintenance and repairs of the Office fleet. Budget allocation under this line item finances the maintenance and hiring of vehicles whenever there is a need. Approved budget allocation for the year amounted to E4 512 016.00

for financing expenditure items under this category. Released budget allocation as at 31st January, 2025 amounted to E3 711 016.00 whereby an amount of E800 996.00 was reallocated to items which incurred over expenditures. Actual expenditure incurred as at 31st January, 2025 amounted to E1 632 182.00 leaving a balance of E2 078 834.00 which is equivalent to 56% variance. The variance represents some committed funds on vehicle maintenance and repairs.

ii. Item 01- Personnel Costs

The budget allocation under this line item finances the payment of salaries, allowances and overtime payment when there is a need. Approved budget for the year amounted to E39 148 716.00. Budget released as at 31st January, 2025 amounted to E39 148 692.00 which financed salaries and allowances. Actual expenditure incurred as at 31st January, 2025 amounted to E39 090 896.00 with a variance of E57 796.00. The cost of living adjustment was paid from the originally approved budget which has resulted in an insufficient remaining balance to cover up the salaries of February and March, 2025. A supplementary budget for the cost of living adjustment is yet to be released to cover up the salaries of the two remaining months before the end of the financial year, 2024/2025.

iii. Item 02 - Travel, Transport and Communication

Budget allocation under this line item finances external travel, internal travel, transport and communication. Annual budget allocation is E2 079 559.00 for the above mentioned expenditure line items. Released budget to date amounted to E4 222 775.00 which is inclusive of reallocated funds to boost this budget allocation. Actual expenditure financed to date amounted to E2 985 168.00. The variance of E1 237 607.00 will be used for payment of communication bills and external travel expenditures for official meetings within the remaining months of the financial year 2024/2025.

iv. Item 04 – Professional and Special Services

Budget allocation under this line item finances professional services, namely: printing services, hospitality services, contract repairs to machinery, payment of bills, home improvement/enhancement and security finance and other professional services.

The appropriated budget for the year amounted to E14 241 133.00 to cater for the above mentioned activities. Funds released as at 31st January, 2025 amounted to E13 567 734.00 while actual expenditure incurred amounted to E11 450 118.00. The balance of E2 117 616.00 will be used in financing the above quoted expenditures in the months of February and March, 2025 within the financial year 2024/2025.

v. Item 06 – Consumable Materials and Supplies

The budget allocation under this line item finances the procurement of stationery, cleaning materials, other office supplies, foodstuff and support staff uniform. The item has an annual budget allocation of E948 842.00 for the above expenditures. Funds released as at 31st January 2025 amounted to E5 140 921.00 which includes reallocated funds. Actual expenditure incurred as at 31st January, 2025 amounted to E2 269 425.00. The variance amount of E2 871 496.00 represents some committed amounts on consumable materials to be delivered prior to payment. On another note,

there is pending evaluation of tenders for the procurement of public assistance goods to be procured within the months of February and March, 2025.

vi. Item 07- Materials and Equipment

The allocation of budget under this line item is for the procurement of durable materials. Annual budget approved is E2 433 200.00 for procurement of assistive devices for Persons with Disabilities and for purchasing other equipment and furniture for the office. The budget allocation has been fully released and has been committed to the purchase of assistive devices for Persons with Disabilities. The equipment is expected to be delivered within the months of February and March, 2025 where payment will then be dispersed.

vii. Item 10- Grants

Budget allocation under this line item finances the payment of elderly grants, disability grants, OVC grants, subventions, public assistance, Umsizi pensions and funeral cover for the elderly. Annual budget allocation under this line item is E 839 986 051.00. Funds released to date amounted to E833 501 044.00 while some funds were reallocated to finance other expenditure line items. Actual expenditure incurred amounted to E 677 386 706.00 as at 31st January, 2025. The balance of E213 555 580.00 represents committed funds to be paid on OVC grants, Elderly grants, disability grants, public assistance and as well as Military pensions (Umsizi). The above mentioned commitments will be paid within the months of February and March, 2025.

3. DEPARTMENTS REPORT

This section outlines the activities carried out during the 2023/24 financial year across the five departments of the DPMO.

3.1 ADMINISTRATION

The DPM'S Office Administration Section comprises office of the Principal Secretary, the Under Secretary, the Human Resource Section, the Planning Unit, Legal Office and the Accounts Section. The role of this department is to provide strategic direction to the Office and support to the Office's departments.

3.1.1 Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

D. DPMO's Strategic Plan

The Office has been able to finalise its strategic plan which will give strategic direction for the next five years. The strategic plan has been approved and adopted for implementation. The document gives strategic direction for the five years on how the Office will accomplish its set objectives. Further, it has assisted the Office develop a framework that align and evaluate departments and individual performances to set objectives as per the performance management system.

E. National Dynamic Social Registry

The Deputy Prime Minister's Office is transforming the social safety net programmes (SSNP) by developing a **National Dynamic Social Registry** to efficiently address the needs of poor and vulnerable Emaswati. The initiative aims to adopt a more coordinated approach through measures such as:

- Implementing a **new targeting methodology** using a social welfare score.
- Standardizing **recertification processes**.
- Establishing mechanisms for **complaints and grievances management**.
- Creating a **common communication approach** with communities.
- Monitoring and evaluating programme implementation.

i) Key Achievements

- A Technical Working Team comprising members from strategic ministries and departments was established to spearhead the initiative.
- Consultations were held with Rwanda, leveraging their experience in developing a social registry.
- The Technical Team completed and validated critical documents, including:
 - Draft project document.

- Draft questionnaire.
- Project work plan.

These documents guide the design and development of a **management information system (MIS)**, data collection, and the creation of interoperable systems for the registry.

ii) Collaboration and Support

With assistance from the World Bank, the Office developed additional essential documents:

- Project document.
- MIS project proposal.
- Communication strategy.
- Data collection instrument (questionnaire).
- Memorandum of Agreement with the Royal Science Technology Park.
- Data collection protocol.
- Work plan.

This progress sets a foundation for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of social welfare programmes in Eswatini.

F. Rehabilitation of Manzini Social Welfare Offices

The Deputy Prime Minister's Office (DPMO) was allocated a budget of **E1,164,079** for the rehabilitation of the **Manzini Social Welfare Offices**. Significant progress has been made in the preparation and planning stages of the project, as outlined below:

i) Engagement of Technical Expertise:

- The Office engaged the Ministry of Public Works and Transport – Department of Buildings to develop architectural drawings and prepare a revised bill of quantities for the project.
- The drawings and revised bill of quantities were validated and approved by the DPMO, ensuring compliance with technical and financial standards.

ii) Procurement Process Initiated:

- A detailed material schedule for the renovations was prepared.
- Potential suppliers for the renovation materials were identified to streamline the procurement process.

iii) Collaboration for Implementation:

- The DPMO, in partnership with the Ministry of Public Works and Transport, will jointly oversee the rehabilitation of the Manzini Social Welfare Offices to ensure efficient and quality execution of the project.

iv) Budget Release Request:

- A formal request for the full budget release has been submitted to the Ministry of Finance to facilitate the timely procurement of materials and commencement of rehabilitation work.

This comprehensive approach reflects the Office's commitment to upgrading its infrastructure to enhance service delivery and support for vulnerable communities in Manzini.

G. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Deputy Prime Minister's Office (DPMO) is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the progress of Social Protection programs toward clear and measurable results. This involves regular data collection, analysis, report writing, and communication with program management, stakeholders, and decision-makers. During this reporting period, DPMO introduced the function of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) and is in the process of expanding the Planning Office into a fully-fledged Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation Unit (PM&EU).

i) Coordination and Governance

During this reporting period, the DPMO established a Sector-Wide Monitoring and Evaluation Technical Working Group (TWG), which aims to:

- Provide governance and coordination in the implementation of the National Social Protection Strategic Plan.
- Facilitate the measurement of expected outcomes over time.
- Enable adaptive management by adjusting activities to ensure the achievement of expected results.

The TWG currently consists of 21 members from various line ministries and civil society organizations. Terms of Reference (ToR) have been developed to define the structure and operations of the group.

The M&E Unit follows a sector-wide approach for the coordination of social protection data. This includes collecting and consolidating data from various sector stakeholders to produce Sector Quarterly Progress Reports (QPRs) and Annual Progress Reports (APRs).

During the period under review, the unit conducted an M&E coordination meeting with Social Protection partners, including NATTIC, Bantwana Initiative, Young Heroes, World Vision, Cabrini Ministries, Royal Eswatini Police Services, SWAGAA, and the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs (Department of Public Prosecution). The purpose of these meetings was to:

- Consolidate sector data for the Gender-Based Violence (GBV) report.
- Review and standardize data collection tools and processes.

Through these coordination meetings, the unit successfully produced a GBV report using consolidated partner data.

ii) Capacity Building

The unit conducted M&E capacity assessments within the DPMO to evaluate its ability to conduct M&E activities and assess staff capabilities. The Monitoring and Evaluation Capacity Assessment Toolkit (MECAT) developed by Measure Evaluation was utilized for this purpose.

Key outcomes include:

- Identification of gaps and areas for improvement within the M&E system.
- Prioritization of actions needed to strengthen capacity.
- A capacity-building exercise for NCSD call center agents on updated data collection tools for 116 Child Helpline cases and the classification of reported cases.

iii) Development of the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

A five-day workshop was held at Mananga Country Lodge from 23-27 September 2024, funded by USAID through Young Heroes, to develop a comprehensive M&E plan. This plan outlines:

- Data collection methodologies.
- Data management processes.
- Utilization of social protection information to track progress towards strategic objectives and inform evidence-based decision-making at the program, organizational, and policy levels.

The M&E plan is currently in its draft stage, with a validation exercise scheduled for the next quarter.

iv) Data Collection and Management

Revision of Case Management Data Collection Tools

In response to requests from GBV response partners, the M&E Unit conducted a three-day workshop to review and update the Department of Social Welfare's (DSW) National Case Management data collection tools. The objective was to improve:

- Data quality.

- Indicator standardization.
- Reporting efficiency.

Following the workshop, all forms used to manage reported cases of violence were validated and will be printed by the Department of Social Welfare Services.

Standardizing GBV Data Collection Across the Sector

The unit collaborated with the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs and the Royal Eswatini Police Services to standardize GBV reporting and data collection. This initiative aims to:

- Enhance data consistency and comparability.
- Improve report accuracy.
- Enable more effective monitoring of case outcomes.

v) **Reporting**

The M&E Unit continues to support evidence-based decision-making through ongoing data collection, analysis, and dissemination. Key reporting outputs include:

- **Monthly 116 Child Helpline Reports** detailing:
 - Number of reported violence and social assistance cases.
 - Case typology.
 - Beneficiary profiles.
 - Referral pathways.
- **National Surveillance System on Violence Report:**
 - Aggregates data from all GBV response partners in Eswatini.
 - Provides a comprehensive assessment of the prevalence and patterns of violence in the country.

3.1.2 Communications and Public Engagement

A. Print media and Public Relations

A total 214 news articles were published by the local print media (Times of Eswatini and Eswatini Observer) from April to December 2024. Most of the published stories were positive. Other news outlets that published and broadcasted news from the DPMO include Positive News, Independent News, Channel YeMaswati, Eswatini TV, Eswatini Broadcasting and Information Services, Financial Times and UNESWA FM. However, these are still not yet tracked.

B. Radio program

The DPMO's 45 minutes' weekly program at Eswatini Broadcasting and Information Services (EBIS) reach about 90% of the country's population. This programs covers current affairs issues and the overall programming of the Office. Through this programme, we have been able to engage stakeholders and the public and raised public awareness on key issues such as GBV, disability issues, social welfare programming and many others.

C. Social media

The Facebook page has been the most active with 5 564 followers (52% men and 48 women) from 3 978 followers. A total of 596 061 people were reached as of December 2024.

X (formerly Twitter) followers has reached 928 from 874 and Instagram has increased to 493 393 followers.

D. Campaigns and Publicity

The office has been featuring in a 30 minutes' program known as Sive Sitfutfuka on Thursday at 6.30pm. In this second quarter, the DPMO was featured three times. Interviews for Kusile Breakfast Show (Eswatini TV), Letisematseni and Letishisako (EBIS) have been arranged for the office. This has enabled the office to get coverage for most activities in the office and community outreach program – the Nkwe initiative. Through the coverage, the nation has seen the plight of the elderly, OVCs and disabled. This is also applicable to the UN International Commemoration Days such as International Deaf Day.

An International Deaf Day supplementary was published by the Times of Eswatini, which provided more insight about deaf disability. Through Eswatini TV, the Job and Entrepreneurial Expo for Persons with Disabilities was stream-lived on our Facebook page.

E. Website update

The following documents were uploaded in Government website under the DPMO section:

- National Plan of Action for Children in Eswatini 2023-2027
- Neighbourhood Care Point Strategic Plan
- Eswatini Violence Against Children and Youth Survey 2022
- Organisations of and for Persons with Disabilities Service Director 2024
- The National Strategy to End Violence in Eswatini and Costed Action Plan 2023-2027
- Handbook for Disability Mainstreaming and Disability Inclusion Budget 2024

- Eswatini National Disability Plan of Action 2024-2028

3.1.3 Human Resource Key Activities

A. Employee wellness

As part of its commitment to fostering a healthier and more resilient workforce, the Office implemented several wellness initiatives, including team-building exercises and an end-of-year Christmas party, aimed at enhancing employee well-being. However, these initiatives were conducted on an ad-hoc basis without being guided by any formal study.

Additionally, with the increasing complexity and volume of reported social challenges, many Social Welfare Officers found it increasingly difficult to manage their workload, leading to burnout and related issues. Recognizing this, the Office, through its wellness program, identified the need for a comprehensive wellness policy to support all officers in fulfilling their duties effectively.

During the reporting period, the Office conducted a needs assessment across the four regions in collaboration with the Public Sector HIV/AIDS Coordinating Committee (PSHACC). The primary objective was to identify key factors affecting employee well-being that could potentially impact overall performance. This assessment will serve as the foundation for developing targeted wellness interventions that address the specific needs of employees, ensuring a supportive and sustainable work environment.

B. Recruitment

The Office through the Civil Service Commission has recruited 29 officers into different portfolios:

- A Children Coordination Officer who is responsible for joint planning for children's programmes to ensure successful implementation of quality programmes.
- 25 Social Workers to work for the Social Welfare Department. 20 of the Social Workers were converted from being Social Welfare Interns to permanent and pensionable positions and five Social Workers were also employed.
- Two Orderlies for Mankayane, one house maid for Halfway were hired.
- Approved the employment of one Gender Analyst and two Senior Gender Analysts for the Department of Gender and Family issues.
- Two extra clerical Officers for a period of six months, one to do programme advocacy and one Social Worker.

C. Confirmations

The Office confirmed two Officers to pensionable employment; one House Mother and one House Maid who are stationed at the Halfway House.

D. Transfers

- The Civil Service Commission in collaboration with the Ministry of ICT has approved the transfers of Records staff where by two of the Assistant Records were transferred from the Office to the Ministry of Agriculture and to the Ministry of Education (REO Siteki).
- The Office had also received two transfers of Assistant Records from the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade (MCIT).
- The Civil Service Commission has also approved the cross transfer of PS from the MCIT with PS from the Deputy Prime Minister's Office.
- One Officer from the Children's department was transferred on promotion to the Ministry of Education (Career Guidance Department).
- The Treasury Department has also transferred Senior Accountant and the Office also received a Financial Controller from Parliament.
- The Office had also received an Assistant Accountant from Natural Resources.

E. Secondment

- An extension of contract for one Officer who is working for Young Heroes on Secondment from the Department of National Children Services Department.
- One Social Worker was seconded to ADRA.

F. Variations

- One Officer from the Children's Department has varied on promotion to the Social Welfare Department.

G. Resignation

- The Gender Monitoring and Evaluation Officer has resigned from the Department of Gender and Family Issues to work for the UN.
- One Social Welfare Officer who was based at Malkerns Social Welfare Office resigned.

H. Training

The Department of Social Welfare in trying to professionalise the Cadre has sent Two Assistant Social Welfare Officers to be trained at Christian University for a degree in Social Work.

I. Promotions

- The Office has Promoted Five Social Workers to Senior Social Workers and two Assistant Social Workers to Social Workers.
- An Accountant was promoted to Senior Accountant at the Office.

- A House Maid from Halfway House was also promoted to the post of House Mother for Mankayane Elderly and Disability Home.

J. Abscondment

- One Social Worker absconded after two months' employment.

K. Promotional Events

- The Office has participated in the Baganu ceremony for both Buhleni and Hlane, and Lunkhuntu Hikings and
- Participation at the International Trade Fair 2024: The Office's participation in the Eswatini International Trade Fair 2024 represents a significant initiative in public outreach and economic impact evaluation of the Office's social protection programmes.

L. Transport Office

The Office has received cars from the Ministry of Public Works. There are 3 double cabs and two single cabs from Public Works. The Office has also received support from the Republic of China (Taiwan) which has procured a Kombi and a twin cap to assist in the Khumbulekhaya campaign by the Office.

3.1.4 Administration Challenges

- Shortage of staff and staff turnover has impacted on the service delivery in the Nkwee era.
- Shortage of working tools like internet in the region has also affected the production of the Office.
- Security issue for DSW offices

3.2 DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE

3.2.1 Child Maintenance

During the period under review, 1st April 2024 to 31st December 2024, 5 025 cases were reported, of which 2 767 were resolved, 890 maintenance cases were referred to the Magistrate Courts due to defaulting on maintenance payments, failure to attend mediation sessions, or not agreeing on the maintenance amount to be paid and 1 368 cases are being worked on. A high default rate in maintenance payments has been observed compared to last year 2024/25, where 4015 maintenance cases were recorded, which is attributed to the prevailing harsh economic circumstances. Some maintenance cases are referred to court for adjudication as a result of failure by the parties to have mutual agreement on the schedule for voluntary monthly payments. In other instances, either of the two parties fails to attend the mediation sessions for more than three times, hence the referral to Court to compel the defaulting party to attend the mediation sessions scheduled by the Social Worker.

The following table indicates a general overview of the maintenance cases for the reporting period.

Table 2: Maintenance Cases from April to December 2024

Region	Reported cases	Resolved	Referred to court (Default)	Pending
Lubombo	1771	728	400	643
Hhohho	826	571	140	115
Manzini	1608	800	264	544
Shiselweni	820	668	86	66
Total	5025	2767	890	1368

3.2.2 Custody and Guardianship

The Office received 442 custody and guardianship cases from the Courts to conduct socio-economic reports. Out of the 442 cases, 132 cases were completed and 310 are still ongoing.

For the current reporting period, there has been an increase of 146 cases compared to the last reporting period. Last year the Office received 296 cases as compared to 442 number of cases reported this year.

Cases transferred from the last annual reporting period total 185 and these cases add to the current reporting period for all pending cases. The delay in completing some of the cases is due to among other reasons inadequate transport, inadequate information of the parties and sensitivity of the cases. In addition, in other instances the court processes take long to be finalised. The many pending cases are also a result of failure by either of the parties to attend mediation sessions scheduled by the Social Workers.

Table 3: Custody and Guardianship Cases from April to December 2024

Region	Number of cases received	Completed cases	Pending cases
Lubombo	122	43	79
Hhohho	68	19	49
Manzini	209	47	162
Shiselweni	43	23	20
Total	442	132	310

3.2.3 Abuse Cases

For the period under review, 1607 abuse cases were received between April and December 2024 where neglect was identified to be the highest form of reported abuse with 844 cases being recorded. Some of these cases were identified through assessments undertaken by Social Welfare Officers. Social Welfare Officers work in collaboration with partners in addressing some of the abuse cases. The identified abuse cases included physical, sexual, neglect, emotional, and financial abuse.

Table 4: Abuse Cases from April to December 2024

Region	Physical	Sexual	Neglect	Emotional	Financial	Total
Lubombo	24	25	169	64	85	367
Hhohho	24	18	102	37	15	196
Manzini	46	20	413	214	117	810
Shiselweni	18	12	160	31	13	234
Total	112	75	844	346	230	1607

Reported cases on abuse have declined when compared to last financial year where 2723 abuse cases were received against 1607 recorded this year. According to the assessments conducted, the majority of contributing factors to abuse include disruption of the traditional family structure, unemployment, mental health issues and substance abuse. In comparison to last financial year reported cases, the decline in reported cases during the period under review may be attributed to various awareness campaigns on Gender Based Violence conducted by the Office in many platforms around the country.

Table 5: Cascade of Cases

Region	Cases Reported	Cases Validated	Invalid Cases	Cases followed up	Cases Closed
Lubombo	367	315	52	193	122
Hhohho	196	193	3	78	115
Manzini	810	718	92	263	455
Shiselweni	234	234	0	81	153
Total	1607	1460	147	615	845

Table below demonstrates how cases vary across the different age groups. The highest number of cases were among 5-9-year-old females, with neglect being the most reported form of abuse.

Table 6: Type of Cases by Age Group and Sex

Age group	Sex	Physical	Sexual	Neglect	Emotional	Financial	Total
Below 1 Year	Male	0	0	18	0	0	18
	Female	0	2	23	0	0	25
	Total	0	2	41	0	0	43
1-4years	Male	6	1	114	0	0	121
	Female	9	10	126	0	0	145
	Total	15	11	240	0	0	266
5-9years	Male	14	3	129	8	0	154
	Female	11	13	146	19	0	189
	Total	25	16	275	27	0	343
10-14years	Male	18	4	46	27	0	95
	Female	13	14	87	43	0	157
	Total	31	18	133	70	0	252
15-17years	Male	10	0	48	33	16	107
	Female	11	14	45	42	30	142
	Total	21	14	93	75	46	249
18+years	Male	4	0	23	54	64	145
	Female	7	12	39	66	51	175

	Total	11	12	62	120	115	320
Total	Male	52	8	378	122	67	627
	Female	51	65	466	170	81	833
	Total	103	73	844	292	148	1460

3.2.4 Counselling and Guidance

The Office recorded 2500 cases of counselling and guidance in this financial year, which includes all age groups. A total of 2331 cases were resolved, with 169 ongoing cases for the year. This figure is compared to 2 350 cases reported last year which reflects significant increase in the number of counselling sessions.

Cases that have received counselling and guidance include the following, marriage and family counselling, school and career counselling, nutritional counselling, counselling on disability issues, rehabilitation counselling, mental health counselling, provision of psychosocial support to GBV victims and support to clinical care.

Table 7: Clients Counselling from April to December 2024

Region	Reported Cases	Resolved	Ongoing
Lubombo	766	600	30
Hhohho	620	380	37
Manzini	800	660	50
Shiselweni	314	691	52
Total	2500	2331	169

3.2.5 Children in Need of Alternative Care

The Office attended to 106 children in need of care and protection who were then placed in various places of safety around the country compared to 78 cases that were reported last year. This reflects an increase in the number of children placed in RCCF's. In addition, the Office has reintegrated 41 children with their families. These children are placed in Residential Care Facilities (RCCF's) due to abandonment, neglect and baby dumping.

Table 8: Number of Children Placed in RCCFs

Region	Total Number of Children in RCCFs	No. of children placed	No. of Reintegrated Children	Number of RCCFs Monitored
Lubombo	173	52	5	5
Hhohho	605	34	32	11
Manzini	534	17	3	8
Shiselweni	635	3	1	6
Total	1947	106	41	29

3.2.6 Report on Halfway House

The Halfway House is a Residential Child Care Facility (RCCF) that is run by the Government of Eswatini. The facility accommodates abandoned and neglected children through collaboration between the Department of Social Welfare and Royal Eswatini Police Services. Currently, the facility has seventeen (17) children who were either dumped or neglected by parents due to inability by the parents to provide support and care. Since this is a halfway house, enrolled children are only accommodated temporarily until a suitable alternative care is identified. For the period under review, the Office reunited fourteen children with their families.

Table 9: Number of Children at the Halfway House

Age Groups	Male	Female	Total
0-5 yrs	5	4	9
5-10 yrs	7	0	7
11-15 yrs	0	1	1
Total	12	5	17

Challenges facing the facility include the urgent need to completely rehabilitate the structure as it is very old and requires major renovations. The Office has submitted a budget request for Financial Year 2025/26 for the rehabilitation of the structure to ensure that it is fit for human habitation. The increasing cases of baby dumping and abandonment overwhelm the facility as this is the only halfway house in the country and only three Officers are available to provide care and support to the abandoned children.

3.2.7 Foster Care Placement Programme

The table below illustrates how the Foster Care Programme has performed during the year 2024/25. Children enrolled in this programme are mostly in informal foster care but more applications are being received for the formal foster care programme. During the reporting period, 44 applications appeared before the committee. This shows a slight decrease compared to last year where 72 applications were received. The reintegration and deinstitutionalization programme for children placed at RCCFs is ongoing. For the reporting period, 20 children are in line for reintegration with their families, consisting of 7 females and 10 males under the partnership between the Office and SOS Children Villages. Bulembu Ministries which partners with the Office on the integration programme has signed up 17 children for reintegration, consisting of 7 males and 7 females. For the reporting period, 6 formal applications for adoption have been received by the Office from the Courts for socio-economic assessments to be undertaken. Of the 6 applications received, 2 applications have been granted by the Courts while the remaining 4 are still pending. The table below shows how the programme performed this year.

Table 10: Children in Foster Care Programme

Region	Families appeared before Placement Committee	No. of Children recommended	Boys	Girls
Lubombo	13	14	8	8
Hhohho	16	16	5	11
Manzini	4	3	1	3

Shiselweni	11	10	5	5
Total	44	43	19	27

In this year the Office managed to train 23 families who are willing to be foster parents and 33 care givers from Bulembu Ministries. The Office also offered Psychosocial support services to 25 families to help them cope and manage every day stress as they live with these children and trained two Tinkhundla Councilors and their Community Child Protection Committees; Mbabane West and Shiselweni One. A National Foster Care Campaign was held in Manzini Somhlolo Park. It is worth noting that all these activities were done with the help of our technical support by SOS Children Villages Eswatini.

3.2.8 Children in Conflict with the Law

During the period under review, the Office handled a total of 363 cases involving children in conflict with the law, referred to the Department of Social Welfare by the Royal Eswatini Police Service (REPS). The Department conducted age assessments, prepared court reports, and facilitated court preparation sessions for children scheduled to appear in court. Additionally, counseling services were provided to ensure psychological and emotional support.

A breakdown of offenses across regions reveals notable trends. Shiselweni had the highest number of cases (119), while Manzini recorded the least (60). Housebreaking and theft emerged as the most common offense, accounting for 209 cases (57.6% of the total), followed by assault (24.5%) and rape (17.9%). These figures suggest that economic hardship and social vulnerabilities may be influencing criminal behaviors among children.

Table 11: Children in Conflict with the Law

Region	Total Cases	Rape	House breaking and theft	Assault
Lubombo	94	13	38	43
Hhohho	90	13	57	20
Manzini	60	7	37	16
Shiselweni	119	32	77	10
Total	363	65	209	89

Further analysis by age group indicates that older juveniles (15-17 years) are more frequently involved in criminal activities, contributing to 68.6% of total cases. Males overwhelmingly dominate the statistics, representing 75% of all cases, reinforcing the need for targeted interventions addressing young boys' behavioural and socio-economic challenges. The presence of female offenders, though lower, signals emerging trends that warrant attention.

Table 12: Type of Cases by Age Group and Sex for Children in conflict with the Law

Age Group	Sex	Rape	House Breaking and Theft	Assault	Total
	Male	7	51	14	71

12-14 years	Female	3	34	14	43
	Total	10	85	28	114
15-17yrs	Male	36	113	53	201
	Female	2	30	26	48
	Total	38	143	68	249
Total	Male	43	145	65	272
	Female	5	64	24	91
	Total	48	209	96	363

3.2.9 Social Grants

A. Orphaned and Vulnerable Children Education Grant

The OVC Education Grant continued to provide crucial financial support to orphaned and vulnerable children enrolled in secondary and high schools. A total of 16,154 children were enrolled in the program, reflecting a significant increase of 3,533 beneficiaries (28%) from the previous financial year.

Enrollment figures highlight that Form 1 students accounted for 58% of total beneficiaries, underscoring a strong demand for early secondary education assistance. Manzini recorded the highest number of beneficiaries (5,313), while Shiselweni had the lowest (3,149). This trend suggests that economic disparities across regions influence application rates, with urbanized areas experiencing higher demand.

Table 13: Enrolled OVC Beneficiaries by Class and Region

Region	Form 1	Form 2	Form 3	Form 4	Form 5	Total
Hhohho	2166	744	449	417	253	4029
Manzini	2889	995	483	538	408	5313
Lubombo	2331	553	235	351	193	3663
Shiselweni	1997	451	204	301	196	3149
Total	9383	2743	1371	1607	1050	16 154

A concerning observation is the apparent shift of financial responsibility from parents to the government, as some parents neglect their obligation to pay school fees. This pattern emphasizes the need for community sensitization programs and reinforced parental accountability measures.

i) Payment of School Fees Deposits

During this financial year, the Office received a high volume of vulnerable out of school children that were unable to pay deposits before admission. In fulfilment of its mandate, the Office invited all out of school children to register in all DSW offices nationally. The response was overwhelming as 6113 children applied for the deposit payment. A sum of E13,708,788.00 was spent in paying the deposits fees.

Table 14: Number of Children Benefited from Back to School Drive

REGION	NUMBER OF CHILDREN	AMOUNT
Hhohho	1460	4,261,696.00

Manzini	1769	4,795,618.00
Lubombo	1106	2,596,067.00
Shiselweni	1778	2,065,407.00
TOTALS	6113	13,708,788.00

The total balance of E86,430,610.00 was paid for 62 677 Children in 287 schools in respect of tuition fee. The Office has realised an increase in the number of beneficiaries from 58 847 last financial years to 62 677 in 2024/2025 and this shows an increase by 3 830 beneficiaries (6.5%). Even schools have also been added from 282 to 287 this financial year. The table below shows the number of Children, and Amount entitled to schools in regions.

Table 15: Number of OVC Beneficiaries

Region	No. of Schools	No. of Beneficiaries	Total Amount (E)	One-Third Deposit Paid (E)	Total Balance (E)
Hhohho	70	14 673	30,026,417.00	9,850,379.00	20,176,038.00
Manzini	76	16 102	33,232,050.00	10,964,912.00	22,267,138.00
Lubombo	69	15 861	32,728,100.00	10,961,745.00	21,766,355.00
Shiselweni	72	16 041	33,229,950.00	11,008,871.00	22,221,079.00
Totals	287	62 677	129,216,517.00	42,785,907.00	86,430,610.00

ii) Examination Fee

A total of Fifty- Five Million Nine Hundred and Eleven Thousand Ninety-Nine Emalangenani (E55, 911,099.00) has been paid in respect of examination fees for OVC Education Grant beneficiaries in form 3 and form 5.

Table 16: Number of OVC Candidates

Grade	No. of Candidates 2023	No. of Candidates 2024	Amount (E)
Form 3	10 720	10 709	14,878,164.00
Form 5	9 196	10 189	41,032,935.00
Totals	19 889	20 898	55,911,099.00

The decline in the number of candidates in form 3 this financial year is due to the four - year syllabus programme introduced by the Ministry of Education and Training two years back. The schools that are piloting the new syllabus have no Junior Certificate. The increase in the amount paid for examination is due to the fact that examination registration and subject fees had also gone up.

B. Elderly Grant

Elderly grant beneficiaries are currently 85,844 and each beneficiary receives E500.00 per month. The payment modes for the Elderly grant is through Mobile Money with a charge of E9 per beneficiary while Commercial Banks charge E25 per beneficiary.

Table 17: Elderly Grant Payments from April to December 2024

MODE OF PAYMENT	TOTAL NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES	AMOUNT PAID (E)
MOBILE MONEY PLATFORM	70 673	359,722,007.00
COMMERCIAL BANKS	14 227	74,698,575.00
TOTAL	84 900	434,420,582.00

C. Disability Grants

Currently, there are 14 812 beneficiaries of Disability grant as shown in the table below. The Office for this reporting period implemented the increase of the disability grant from E280 to E400, effective from April 2024.

Table 18: Disability Grants Payments from April to December 2024

Number of Beneficiaries	Amount (E)
16 974	E61,981,510.00

D. Ex-Servicemen and their widows

The following table shows the amounts paid to Ex-Servicemen and their widows for the reporting period 2024/2025.

Table 19: Ex-Servicemen and their widows Payments from April to December 2024

Ex servicemen	Amount	Widows	Amount	Total
1	E5,400	162	583,200	E588,600.00

During this reporting period, the only remaining Umsizi, Mr. Mhushile Khumalo passed on. The Office provided assistance to the family towards the affording him a decent funeral. The Ex-Servicemen was receiving E600 per month. The E5 400 is a cumulative figure of the grant received with effect from April 2024. Each widow under the Umsizi grant receives E300 per month. To date, there are 162 widows enrolled for the grant.

3.2.10 Mankayane Old Age Home and the Facility for Persons With Disabilities (PWD)

Currently, the facility has enrolled 31 clients. During this reporting period, three clients had to be removed from the facility due failure to adhere to facility standards. These clients were further reintegrated with their families. The facility recorded six deaths during this reporting period.

Table 20: Number of Clients Admitted in Mankayane Facility

Clients Type	Male	Female	Total
Disability	7	9	16
Elderly	2	13	15
Total	9	22	31

3.2.11 Elderly Funeral Assistance

For this reporting period, the Office processed 225 claims from the four regions amounting to E675 000.00.

Table 21: Elderly Funeral Assistance

Region	Male	Female	Number of Received claims
Hhohho	41	30	71
Manzini	23	20	43
Lubombo	24	19	43
Shiselweni	28	40	68
Total	116	109	225

3.2.12 Community Outreach Programme - Nkwe Programme

The Office continues to respond to His Majesty's clarion call of Nkwe by executing various activities within the DPMO mandate which is to reduce poverty and improve the quality of life for all Eswatini and bringing essential government services closer to the people.

Through the Nkwe Program, the Office in collaboration with the Ministry of Home Affairs (Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Department) facilitated the issuance of 99 birth certificates and 13 temporal pins for children at Maphiveni, Khomba-so and Mgidzangcunu in order to enable them to enrol in school for the first time and to also access other essential government services. During the Nkwe Program, the Office also conducted enquiry assessments for vulnerable groups and conducted referrals to relevant stakeholders.

Commemoration of the International Elderly Day

3.2.13 Disability

The Office through the National Disability Unit has the portfolio responsibility to improve the quality of life for Persons with Disabilities by promoting and protecting their welfare. The Disability Unit collaborates with different Ministries, Government Departments, Organizations of Persons with Disabilities and other key stakeholders to support and champion the cause for Persons with Disabilities through raising public awareness, developing programmes aimed at empowering Persons with Disabilities.

A. Commemorations of International Days

i) International Albinism awareness Day (IAAD)

International Albinism Awareness day was Commemorated on the 13th June 2024 at the Millennium Park in Manzini. The theme for 2024 was: "A Decade of Collective Progress", which encourages that all individuals, families, communities, public and private institutions reflect and celebrate the strides made with renewed commitment for the future in ensuring that Persons with Albinism have full enjoyment of their rights.

ii) International Day of Sign Language

The International Day of Deaf people was commemorated on the 25th September 2024 at Siteki School for the Deaf Primary. During this Financial year, the Deputy Prime Minister's Office observed the International week of Deaf people through various awareness activities which were build ups to the main event. The theme for 2024 was: **"Eswatini: Sign Up for Sign Language Rights"**, encouraged all Countries, Leaders, Government Officials and all persons to sign up for Sign Language Rights in their National Sign Language in support and protection of all Deaf people. This was also an opportunity for the country to protect linguistic identity and cultural diversity of all Deaf People and sign language users.

iii) White Cane Day

The White Cane day was held on the 15th of October 2024 at Matsapha City Council. The theme for the commemoration was "Promoting inclusion, celebrating abilities and advocating for meaningful access of Persons With Visual Impairment". The emphasis was on the need for pedestrian safety and respect for the rights of people with visual disabilities. It served as an opportunity to educate the public about the challenges faced by individuals with visual impairments and to promote inclusion and accessibility in Society.

iv) International Day of Persons with Disabilities

The International Day of Persons with Disabilities commemoration was held at the Mavuso Trade and Exhibition Center, Manzini 2nd December 2024. The theme of the day was 'Amplifying the leadership of Persons with Disabilities for an inclusive and sustainable future'. This theme recognizes the important role that Persons with Disabilities play in creating a more inclusive and sustainable world as part of promoting disability mainstreaming and inclusion.

B. United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Programs (UNPRPD)

Following the conclusion of the UNPRPD Project Phase 1, the Office launched Phase 2 of the UNPRPD programme on the 2nd of December 2024 at Mavuso Trade and Exhibition Centre. Phase 2 builds on the achievements made in phase 1 which focused on strengthening disability mainstreaming by addressing critical gaps and accelerating the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities' building blocks. Specific goals under Phase 2 include:

- Operationalizing the national disability plan of action through comprehensive costing and implementation strategies.
- Piloting inclusive service delivery models at Piggs Peak government hospital and Mkhuzweni health Center for disability screening of newborns.
- Enhancing data systems to integrate disability indicators in national health and education management systems.

C. Disability Mainstreaming and Inclusion

During the period under the review, the Office as part of promoting disability mainstreaming and Inclusion organised trainings and other activities aimed at creating awareness to the public on disability issues.

D. Basic Literacy Sign Language Training

The Deputy Prime Minister's Office conducted a basic literacy sign language training for parents of deaf children at Matsetsa High School for the Deaf in the Lubombo region. This training aimed to bridge the communication gap between children from the school, who use structured sign language for communication, and their parents, who typically employ unstructured sign language and dialects. This discrepancy often results in confusion and frustration for both deaf children and their parents. The training proved to be highly successful, with 140 parents in attendance.

The majority of parents achieved the expected competency level desired by the training which equipped them with basic communication signs to interact more effectively with their children. Many parents had been experiencing challenging behaviours from their children due to an inability to express themselves and communicate effectively.

E. Disability Unit and the National Advisory Council for Persons with Disabilities Training.

The collaboration with Young Heroes organized a one-day capacity and empowerment workshop. This workshop was aimed at strengthening and capacitating two key organizations in Eswatini which included the Disability Unit and the National Advisory Council for Persons with Disabilities. The primary objectives of the workshop were:

- To enhance understanding of their roles for better performance of their responsibilities and duties.
- To improve comprehension of the Persons with Disability Act of 2018.

This initiative sought to empower these organizations to more effectively serve and advocate for persons with disabilities in Eswatini, grounded in a thorough understanding of the relevant legislation.

i) FODSWA Training

In collaboration with Young Heroes held a one-day capacity and empowerment workshop aimed at strengthening and capacitating the Federation of Organizations of Disabled Persons in Eswatini in understanding their role for better performance of their responsibilities and duties and understanding of the Persons with Disability Act of 2018.

F. Advocacy meeting Meeting with Mbabane City Council

During this reporting period, the office conducted a meeting with Mbabane City Council in an effort to share the aspect of Universal Design which is a Philosophy that aims to make environments accessible to people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds. This philosophy can become practical through public spaces and buildings in order to create environments that are accessible to everyone. The Eswatini National Disability Plan of action so that they are able to know their thematic area and their role in disability mainstreaming.

G. Job Expo

The Job and Entrepreneurial Expo for Persons with Disabilities, held on October 9, 2024, at the Mavuso Trade and Exhibition Centre, was a collaborative effort between the Deputy Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and other partners. The event aimed at promoting employment and entrepreneurial opportunities for persons with disabilities. The Labour Force Survey (2021) estimated that there were 15,529 persons with disabilities of working age who were unemployed (5,667 males and 9,862 females). The emphasis of this event was on promoting inclusivity and diversity in the workforce by showcasing the talents and capabilities of persons with disabilities, thereby creating a more equitable society.

The entire event was live streamed on YouTube and Eswatini TV allowing a broader audience, including those who were unable to attend. The live stream increased accessibility, it also allowed individuals with disabilities, stakeholders, nationwide and worldwide to participate virtually, thereby expanding the event's reach and impact. The following table has a representation of participation:

The Office procured assistive devices and were distributed in all regions as shown in table below.

Table 22: Number of Assistive Devices Distributed by Region

Assistive devices	Description	Quantity Received	Lubo,	Shise.	Hhoh.	Manz	Mank.	DPM	Disab.	Total Distributed
Wheel chair	Light Duty (18")	140	20	20	20	20	5	5	50	140
	Heavy Duty (22")	25	4	4	10	4	3	2	4	25
	Light Duty Children (12")	25	4	4	4	4	2	2	5	25
	Heavy Duty Children (18")	25	4	4	4	4	2	2	5	25
Crutches	Aluminum Elbow for Adults	250	30	30	30	30	20	10	100	250
	Aluminum Elbow for Children	150	20	20	20	20	5	5	60	150
Walking sticks	Non-folder Aluminum	50	10	10	10	5	5	5	5	50
Walking Frames	Aluminum	40	5	5	5	5	5	5	2	32
Rubber Farrows	-	400	60	60	60	60	20	20	20	300
White canes	Size 40	7	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
	Size 42	7	1	1	3	2	0	0	2	7
	Size 44	7	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7
	Size 46	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	9	
	Size 48	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	

	Size 50	57	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Protection Screen	SPF50-100 for Children	100	100	100	100	100	20	20	20	
	SPF50-100 for Adults	700	100	100	380	120		20	260	
Childrens diapers	Large	200	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	

3.3 NATIONAL CHILDREN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

3.3.1 Children Coordination

A. Technical Working Group Coordination Meetings

The Office through the National Children Services Department (NCSD) facilitated the establishment of Technical Working Groups (TWG) to ensure that the implementation of the National Plan of Action (NPA) 2023-2028, which guides the delivery of services for children by sectors. These TWGs are the coordination, survival, Child development, child protection, and child participation. Meetings for the different TWGs have been held to pursue different purposes of the NPA.

- The Coordination Technical Working Group (TWG) successfully drafted a standard operations procedure manual to guide Neighborhood Care Points (NCPs). This manual addresses several key aspects of NCP operations; daily management practices, procedures for establishing new NCPs and roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders.
- The Child Participation Technical Working Group (TWG) successfully developed terms of reference to guide its operations. Additionally, a formal structure was established to coordinate all child participation activities, with the aim of addressing any gaps in these initiatives. In order to implement the strategy of ending violence, the DPMO and the Ministry of Education and Training is working in collaboration with Young Heroes and Bantwana.

B. The African Union (AU) Commission on Children Mission to Eswatini

The Department facilitated a mission by the African Union Commission - Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development Department in July 2024. The AU Department is responsible for ensuring the protection of children and women rights in African States. The objectives of the mission were:

- to assess and document progress on implementation of National Child Protection strategies,
- to note challenges encountered, and provide technical recommendations for overcoming them.

A series of high-level engagements were held with different stakeholders dealing with child protection such as Ministries responsible for children, International Organizations,

Civil Society Organizations, and National Human Rights Commission among others, to learn more on:

- the education systems in the Kingdom of Eswatini, in particular empowering girls and young women for a sustainable future including access to education structures and safety in schools,
- implementation and effectiveness of online learning in schools,
- strategies used in the protection of children against exposure to online harmful content and cyber bullying.

Other issues discussed include the importance of improving data collection, children’s parliament, legislation, capacity of law enforcement and enhancement of accountability mechanisms. The AU Delegation also paid a courtesy visit to the Honourable Deputy Prime Minister where achievements and strides taken by Eswatini to address social ills that affect children were discussed.

C. Children’s Month Activities

Day of the African Child

In 2007, the Government of the Kingdom of Eswatini declared June as the children’s month. This was a deliberate move to ensure that children’s issues are not lagging behind, and are given the utmost attention. This period gives stakeholders an opportunity to reflect on their commitments to the delivery of children services in the country. The Office launched the children’s month on 30th May, 2024, under the theme “*Inclusive, Quality and Transformative Education for All Children in Eswatini: The time is now*”. In the spirit of Child Participation, the Office held dialogues in twelve (12) schools in the four administrative regions of the country to get children’s views on how best the country can attain inclusive, quality and transformative education.

Table 23: Schools Visited During the children's Month

Manzini Region	Hhohho Region	Shiselweni Region	Lubombo Region
St Joseph’s High (252 children)	Londunduma High (462 children)	Hlathikhulu Central High(624 children)	School for the Deaf High (86 children)
Boyane High(177 children)	Fundukuwela High(children 487)	Eqinisweni High(children 174)	Malindza High(439 children)
Nokuthula High(540 children)	Enhlitiyweni High(170 children)	Mbukwane High (420 children)	Good Shepherd High(268 children)
			Gamula High(166 children)

Children raised views which include, but are not limited to:

- digitizing the learning process (including e-books)
- provision of more skills-based education
- introduction of sign language as a subject

- investment in extra-curricular activities to expand future career opportunities for children, which entails ensuring that adequate sporting resources are available.
- provision of more in-school and out-of-school support for children with disabilities, especially because most of their parents do not have sustainable jobs.
- Improving infrastructure in schools to accommodate children with disabilities

Furthermore, the Office pursued advocacy campaigns through radio talk shows, television talk shows, and newspaper articles. The Office also participated in the commemoration of the Day of the African Child, on invitation, at Vulamasango School and Ngwenya Town Board.

Commemoration of the International Children's Day

The International Children's Day is universally commemorated on 20th November every year to promote international togetherness, awareness among children, and commitment to improving children's welfare. This is the day on which the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was adopted by the UN General Assembly, and this year marks its 35th anniversary. This day is therefore significant in reflecting on gains countries make to protect children whilst also reflecting on what remains to be done to ensure that children's welfare is prioritised. Since 2024 was the Year of Education, the Office collaborated with UNICEF and Civil Society Organisation to continue to push the education agenda by convening children and experts in the Education sector to engage in a dialogue on the issues raised by children during the children's month to discuss possible solutions and forge a way forward. The DPMO in collaboration with partners compiled a booklet containing all the issues and recommendations children shared on how education can be enhanced. The book was handed to the Ministry of Education who, with the support and guidance of the established task team will take the recommendations, work on strategies to ensure that they are implemented, together with other views raised on Education.

Resource Mobilization and Support Towards Vulnerable Children

During the period under review, facilitated support for vulnerable children. The Department distributed 350 school shoes and socks, 151 school bags, over 151 school uniforms (tunics/ shirts/trousers) and 151 tracksuits.

The recipients were children from the newly established Emaphiveni Primary School, Mbosi Primary, Mcolo Primary, Esitjeni Primary, Manzini Practising Primary School and others. Through support from Partners the Office has also provided full year transport fees for 15 vulnerable learners in the Maphiveni to Lomahasha corridor.

The Office also received support for the 2025 campaign from private sector stakeholders as follows: 100 hygiene kits from FINCORP valued at E9960, 47 school tunics for Embosi Primary school from OK Foods (Pty) Ltd valued at E15260, and E150 000 from Select Limited for the procurement of school items for the most vulnerable school-going children in at least four schools in the country. A donation of food items was also received for Maphiveni Primary School from UNIFOODS (maize meal) and Parmalat (emasi and yoghurt), as well as other donations for the same school.

3.3.2 Child Protection

A. Development of National Minimum Standards for Child Residential Facilities

The Department has a mandate to develop normative frameworks that ensure the protection and welfare of children. These frameworks guide the delivery of quality services for children by all stakeholders. During the period under review, the Department held consultations with 105 stakeholders (residential care facilities and the Department of Social Welfare), to develop National Minimum Standards for Child Residential Facilities.

Residential Child Care Facilities (RCCFs) have a legal and organizational identity clearly defined in the Child Protection and Welfare Act of 2012 in Eswatini. They are monitored to ensure proper residential care activities, and their good standing and reputation in the communities as child care service providers for children in need of protection. The Standards are part of the Government's commitment to delivering a coherent national agenda to support facilities in providing quality services for children.

The Draft Standards were submitted to the Attorney General's Office in September, for legal endorsement and eventual publication in the government gazette. Dissemination of the Standards to stakeholders will be conducted in the second quarter of 2025.

B. Eswatini State Party Report to the Committee of Experts on the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC)

The Government of Eswatini ratified the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, and further domesticated the Convention through the Children's Protection and Welfare Act of 2012. Subsequent to the ratification, the State submits periodic reports to the Committee of Experts on the Rights of the Child. The Kingdom of Eswatini is expected to submit its first periodic report to the Committee.

The report was developed, in collaboration with the National Mechanism for Reporting and Follow up (NMRF), and other stakeholders. The report addresses the Committee of Experts on Children's Rights' concluding observations and recommendations, which include:

- the use of lawful and moderate chastisement of a child for the purpose of correction;
- prioritization of wage-spending in the education and other social sectors; and
- The draft has been developed for further consultation with stakeholders, which will be conducted in the first quarter of 2025. This will follow its presentation to Cabinet in the second quarter.

C. Implementation of VACS Data Project

The Deputy Prime Minister's Office in partnership with UNICEF and CDC undertook a project called data to action, which aimed to promote the use the Violence Against Children Survey data to develop, improve, and enhance prevention and response strategies to address violence against children and youth. A number of activities have been undertaken, including:

Collecting Children's voices on Violence

In preparation for the Colombia Ministerial Conference on VAC which was held on 7-8 November, 2024, twelve (12) focus group discussions were conducted with children in the four regions, including those in the rural and peri-urban areas. A report on their views was compiled. Amongst other things that were raised by the children was introducing higher sentences for perpetrators. Moreover, they suggested introduction of legislation which will protect reporters of Violence and deals with those who do not report violence on children yet they witnessed it. This report informed the Honourable Deputy Prime Minister's remarks She made on behalf of Eswatini during the conference on Violence Against Children. The children's experiences and views also informed some of the pledges that Eswatini made to protect children from experiencing any form of violence. Pledges made include:

- To accelerate capacity building of 2000 judicial and law enforcement service providers to respond to violence against children by 2026.
- To establish least 80 communities Community Child Justice Committees in at by 2028.
- To conduct research on the impact of online harms on children by 2027.
- To accelerate programmes meant to address violence against children with disabilities in school and in the home settings.
- To establish the Office of the Registrar of Sex Offenders by 2025.
- To finalize costing of the National Violence Against Children Action Plan by 2025.
- To strengthen the capacity of the Childline 116 by allocating resources for 24-hour response service by 2026.
- To conduct training of 10 000 teachers on the Schools Discipline Guidelines, that promote positive discipline by 2028.
- To implement the National Strategy and Plan of Action on Positive Parenting for care givers in 100 communities by 2028.
- To establish places of safety in at least 10 police stations by 2027.
- To promote fatherhood by engaging 500 men in parenting, fostering a supportive environment for children by 2026.
- Dissemination of the VACS key findings

The Office also convened key children stakeholders and Heads of departments to disseminate the Violence against children study. The targeted Ministries and stakeholders are those who deal direct with either Child or Violence issues in the society. Such findings are expected to inform their plans of action when coming to Violence Amongst Children.

Implementation of the Child Protection and Welfare Act (2012)

The Office also embarked on a benchmarking activity aimed at facilitating the implementation of the Child Welfare and Protection Act (2012), which prevents children from being exposed to the adverse effects of the formal criminal justice system. With regards to children in conflict with the law and at risk of offending, the Act provides for a justice system that ensures: children are treated in a specific manner; that deprivation of liberty to be a last resort, and promotes restorative justice as an option. The Act also calls for the establishment of appropriate institutions for child justice, including Probation Hostels, Approved Schools and Umphakatsi Child Justice Committees for purposes of rehabilitation for children at risk of offending.

The exercise sought to achieve the following objectives;

- Establish the most relevant and appropriate programme interventions, with a focus on prevention of juvenile offences, diversion, prevention of reoffending, reintegration, and alternatives to deprivation of liberty;
- Sharing best practice on child protection and juvenile justice programming
- Develop and agree upon a common framework for action and key priority actions for advocacy and action on children in conflict with the law, and stakeholders' role in promoting these programme interventions at the national levels.

The process is ongoing and involves various stakeholders like Ministry of Justice, REPS, Correctional Services, PPCU and UNICEF.

These measures are in line with the UN General Comment No.24 (2019) stating that early intervention for children who are below the minimum age of criminal responsibility requires child-friendly and multidisciplinary responses to the first signs of behaviour that would, if the child were above the minimum age of criminal responsibility, be considered an offence.

3.3.3 Child Development

A. Eswatini National Child Helpline 116

In the past financial year, the call centre received a total of 1774. Neglect of children emerges as the most dominant type of case reported by clients. This indicates that parents or guardians are failing to provide for their children's basic needs, including food, shelter, and emotional support. Concurrently, there's an increase in calls requesting various forms of social assistance from the government, such as food parcels, housing assistance, and school fees for children.

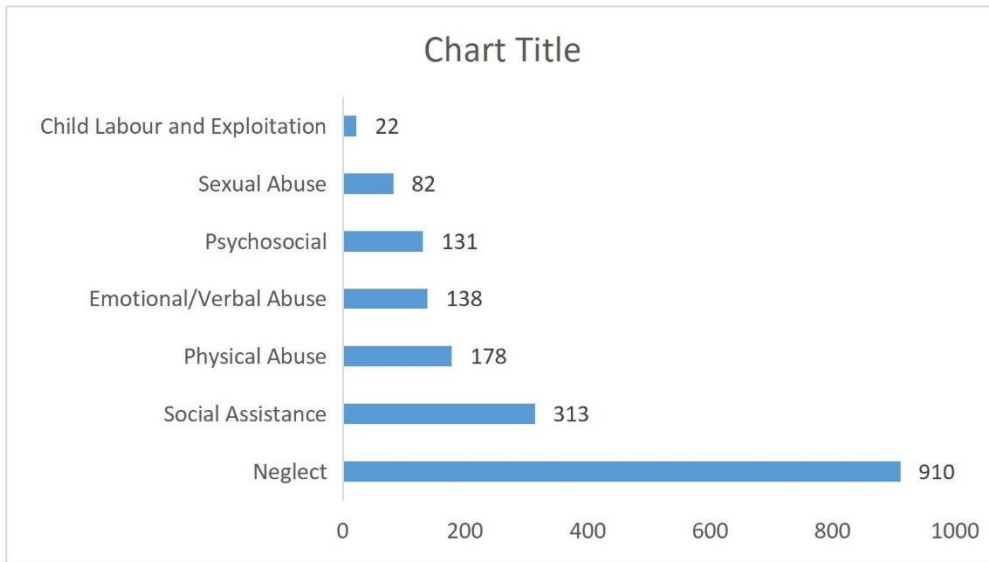


Figure 1: 116 Calls

The data presented by the call centre shows that there is an increase in social assistance and violence against children. It is against this backdrop that the call center tables the following recommendations:

- There is need to enhance positive interactions and relationships between parents/caregivers and teenagers;
- In collaboration with DSW and DGFI, strengthen advocacy campaigns for communities on child protection issues;
- Foster strong community networks to support families and children
- To continue coordinating efforts between government, NGO, Development partners and the community.
- Facilitate capacity building trainings to professionals such as teachers, health care and law enforcement to improve their ability to respond to child abuse and violence.

3.3.4 Child Survival

A. Neighborhood Care Points (NCPs)

NCP are a social security system that provides a strong safety net for vulnerable children in communities. In the period under review, in an effort of ensuring that the Department understands the needs of NCPs, the Department undertook a mapping of 20 NCPs, in the Hhohho and Manzini regions, to understand the nature and programmes offered by each NCP. The mapping identified the need for coordination and support for NCPs.

Between September-October, 2024, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for NCP were developed and validated. The SOPs not only addresses the coordination of the NCP programme, but also seeks to standardises the services offered by the centres in collaboration with communities. In the first quarter of 2025, the Department will conduct an analysis of the cost of supporting NCP with feeding.

3.3.5 NCSD Challenges

- Some programmes which the Department had planned to implement were funded by partners, with some partners having funding challenges thus, shifting focus.
- Lack of a comprehensive database for children to inform programming.
- Supporting the operations of 116 children by partners.
- Shortage of (clerical, support and programme) staff, due to deployments and resignations.

3.4 DEPARTMENT OF GENDER AND FAMILY ISSUES

3.4.1 Gender Based Violence Advocacy

Under the current year, the Office has carried out several advocacy activities aimed at creating GBV awareness targeting the public, parents and guardians including young persons.

Advocacy Activities

- Bus rank Awareness Drives- the office conducted 8 GBV awareness campaigns targeting bus terminals, namely Mbabane, Hlathikhulu, Matsanjeni, Pigg's Peak, Manzini, Siteki, Nhlanguano and Mankayane. This initiative has reached out to approximately 3000 people inclusive of Vendors, bus conductors and marshals and the general members of the public including Persons with Disabilities. This activity will continue in the next financial year.
- The Office further conducted 4 community dialogues covering Ntontozi Inkhundla (Empini and Encabaneni umphakatsi) and two from Hhukwini inkhundla (Kalamgabhi and Dlangeni). This intervention was carried out in partnership with Khulis'umntfwana and reached out to 640 parents and young people.
- Participants actively engaged in discussions, grouped by their age and gender. All groups were sharing their experiences and perspectives on GBV/ VAC, positive parenting and contributing to the development of effective strategies to end GBV in their communities.
- The Office participated 4 national and social events (Mahamba Gorge Hiking, Bushfire festival, Trade Fair, Umhlanga ceremony) to sensitize the public and young people on GBV/VAC issues, prevention of Teenage Pregnancy, and on positive parenting.

- The Office launched the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence Campaign at the UN House in Mbabane. During the launch, the Office presented on the milestones achieved in the implementation of the National Strategy on ending Violence of 2023-2027 as well having statements from other players, i.e UN, EU, Gender Consortium and Government. This launch was attended by 100 stakeholders. The launch was then followed by a roadshow held at Mhlaleni where different stakeholders engaged with the public on GBV prevention and response messages. An analysis shows that most of the participants appreciated and contributed meaningfully to these engagements as they actively raised questions and suggestion towards ending GBV.

Findings from the advocacy campaigns

The targeted groups highlighted the following factors and concerns around GBV and VAC;

- Weak economic stability among young people and some women is the reason why people commercialize relationships leading to GBV, some gave examples such as youth unemployment, lack of scholarships for tertiary students among other factors were quoted to contribute emmersely to transactional and commercialized relationships. In this cases some recommended that issues there is need to relook at and support livelihoods and income-generating projects within our communities.
- Poor parenting has increased, thus parents have abdicated responsibilities to teachers, elderly parents while others have substituted it with phones; Some targeted groups called for educating parents on better parenting. Others emphasized on that parents need to actively monitor their children's cell phones and ensure that they (children) are safe from cyberbullying and cybercrimes of any form.
- There was a general observation on the misconceptions of the SODV Act were the public often referred to the SODV to the law that only protects women and girls. This brought an understanding that there is a continuous need for more advocacy on the Act.
- There was a concern that perpetrators often justify their abusive behaviour by attributing it to external factors such as demonic influences, anger, or a loss of self-control, rather than taking responsibility for their actions. The public also shared that perpetrators often attempt to alleviate the effects of their abuse by offering material gifts as a form of remorse. However, this practice contributes to a harmful cycle of abuse, as it repeatedly occurs until a tragic outcome, such as death, transpires.

3.4.2 IEC Development and Dissemination

The Office branded two (2) public transport vehicles, two (2) DPMO mini-buses, and ten (10) police vehicles with GBV and VAC messages, as a strategy for disseminating messages to the masses as well as sharing reporting lines. In addition, the office produced IEC materials branded in VAC and GBV messages. These included Water bottles, T-shirts, Caps, key holders, and cups; these materials were distributed

throughout the campaigns. Ans were distributed during the GBV Campaigns held in the current year.

3.4.3 Capacity Building for Frontline Responders

The Office conducted five (5) capacity-building workshops targeting two (2) sessions with Prosecutors, two (2) sessions with Magistrates, and one (1) session with Social Workers and DCS officers. The workshop aimed at training them on the application of the SODV Act and the SODV regulations while also addressing challenges identified during court processes. During the workshops, the officers highlighted several issues that limit the full implementation of the Act. These include:

- Bridging of protection orders by applicants especially among intimate partners, which further contributes to the cycle of violence.
- Backlog of GBV/ VAC cases in courts, police and among social workers resulting in fatigue and burn out. These officers recommended de-briefing sessions approximately twice a year.
- The lack of courtrooms and judicial staff for such cases. During these workshops it was noted that most prosecutors were given acting roles.

The Department has officially launched the “No Means No Program” which is supported by PEPFAR and CDC and is implemented by Georgetown together with the department. The program seeks to address the findings of VACS 2023 through skills building for boys and girls on GBV prevention. Thirty trainers have been identified and trained after successfully adapting the training curriculum. The trainers are working in Lamgabhi and Lubulini and since the launch of the project, a decline in cases of violence among the youth has reduced while knowledge on prevention has increased.

3.4.4 GBV Coordination and Programs:

The Office hosted 4 regional networks on violence meetings, 2 Multi-sectoral Task Teams on Violence, and 1 Directors’ Forum meeting. These committees are aimed at coordinating GBV prevention and response nationally. Under the current year, these quarterly progress reviews and update meetings focused on the implementation of the National Strategy on ending Violence of 2023-2027 and progress on its implementation, updates on the challenges and emerging issues. Some of the highlighted issues were:

A. Health:

- **Teenage pregnancy:** There are high teenage pregnancies, especially in the lower Lubombo region. There is a need to increase awareness sessions amongst teenagers within schools and those who are out of school. Strengthen collaboration between MOH, MOET, DSW, and partners.
- **Regional Psychologists:** There are fewer Psychologists within the region, which affects post-abuse care service delivery. Stakeholders proposed that the Ministry of Health must be engaged to increase the number of psychologists in the regions.

B. Justice:

- There is a lack of harmony between legal provisions and health policies, which affects the collection and documentation of evidence for survivors of sexual violence aged 12 years and above. This issue needs to be addressed at a higher (policy level) by decision-makers.
- There are challenges regarding issuing bail. Sometimes bail is granted without the knowledge of the Investigating officer and or the Social Worker involved in the case. This makes it impossible for all relevant stakeholders to provide relevant information for opposition to bail. Furthermore, this may expose the survivor to violence by the accused when released on Bail.
- Delayed Trials lead to overcrowding in the correctional facilities. The number of accused who are awaiting trial is very high and this affects the rehabilitation processes and compromises the welfare and well-being of the accused persons. It may also be the reason for granting bail.

C. Education:

- In the Shiselweni region, stakeholders indicated a high number of cases that occur within the schools. Through working with the Ministry of Education and Training on this issue, there remains to be more challenges in effectively responding to the cases. One of the contributing factor quoted was the closing of World Vision office in the region.
- The Ministry has observed increased cases of Gangsterism within the schools and has officially launched a campaign with the police to engage with families, schools, and children to address the issues

D. High levels of alcohol use within the across the 4 regions is linked to high cases of femicide, sexual violence and teenage pregnancy in that. This issue is specifically common within Siphofaneni. During the briefing meetings, stakeholders recommended the need to address this through community engagement programmes. They further advised the Department to engage the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade on the issuance of liquor licenses, and the enforcing the age restriction clauses.

3.4.5 International Reporting

The Office produced and submitted the Beijing +30 report as an obligation that the country report on the implementation of this declaration. The report has highlighted that the country has improved in the advancement of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment nationally. The improvement is noted in the following areas:

- Increase in women's participation in politics (29%),
- Increase in women and girl's empowerment programmes which also include men and boys.
- New programmes have been implemented to mainstream gender such as Gender and energy, Gender and climate change, Gender and trade

3.4.6 Gender mainstreaming

- **Training of planning officers:** The Office conducted a training for planning officers from Government Ministries and parastatals on gender statistics collection and management. The gender statistics training aimed to capacitate partners on how to produce gender-disaggregated data for their various sectors, focusing on policy makers, practitioners, and program experts. This training will also help improve gender-responsive data collection and utilization in informing programming across all government ministries.
- The Office, held 3 workshops on women and trade. These workshops aimed to enhance the integration of gender considerations into trade policies, offering a platform for both public and private sector stakeholders to engage in meaningful dialogue and training. The workshops targeted trade and gender policymakers, including staff from the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade and State Business Relations in Eswatini. The overall aim was to enhance women's participation in trade activities within Africa and globally. This training reached out to 100 participants from both public and private sector.

3.5 NATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

3.5.1 Vulnerability Assessment and Analysis (VAA)

The primary objective of the 2024 Vulnerability Assessment and Analysis was to provide an update on the status of livelihoods, food security and vulnerability of both rural and urban households and generate information on nutrition status and health situation of households in the Kingdom of Eswatini. In May 2024 data collection teams were trained on the household questionnaire followed by data collection fieldwork. Data preparation and analysis was carried out in June 2024. This was followed by the Integrated food security Phase Classification (IPC) analysis. The IPC analysis was for classification of the country's population into the different levels of severity of acute food insecurity.

In 2023/24 the country was exposed to frequent and extreme weather events including dry spells, floods and tropical cyclones which worsen livelihood and food insecurity, thereby compounding vulnerabilities. Extreme weather events further stressed the already vulnerable sectors such as water, energy, agriculture, health, tourism and human settlements. Furthermore, climate change also accentuated existing risks, particularly for the most vulnerable groups such as the rural and urban poor and small-scale farmers that have little access to alternative livelihoods. The elderly, sick, women, boys and girls were disproportionately affected due to unequal access to productive assets, such as land and water, and to decision-making processes.

Food insecurity has continued to deteriorate in the country due to a combination of the impacts of dry spells, reduction in income, rise in prices and other socio-economic shocks.

The 2024 Vulnerability Assessment and Analysis revealed that between June and September 243,500 people were estimated to be in IPC Phase 3+ (Crisis) which is characterised by food consumption gaps that are reflected by high or above-usual acute

malnutrition. For the projected period (October 2024 to March 2025), the food insecure population was expected to rise to an estimated 304,000 people classified in IPC Phase 3+. These people facing acute food insecurity require urgent humanitarian assistance to reduce food consumption gaps as well as to protect their livelihoods.

3.5.2 Child Headed Household Programme

The child headed household programme has continued to improve acute food security for child-headed households (CHH) in the country. The purpose of this intervention is to ensure that vulnerable households are supported to produce their own food in order to increase access to nutritious food as opposed to depending on handouts thus building their resilience to shocks. A summary of activities undertaken through the programme is provided in the following table:

Table 24: Households Benefited from the Livelihood Interventions Undertaken

Intervention	Total
Fencing of homesteads	12
Provision of indigenous chickens	13
Provision of laying nests	13
Rainwater harvesting system	72
Provision of goats	66
Irrigation materials	1
Dairy cow farming	2
Skills training	6

Through the programme, fencing material has been procured and delivered for 12 child headed households that have been identified. Community members were engaged for erecting the fence. The fencing will protect crop fields found within the homesteads from livestock invasion during the farming season as well as enable households to establish vegetable gardens.

A. A total of 78 Indigenous chickens have been procured and delivered to 13 households across the four regions of Eswatini.

- Each household have received five (5) hens and one (1) roaster.
- Each household received five (5) laying nests.
- two 50kg bags of chicken feed have been procured for each household.
- Households will be linked to Agricultural Extension Officers on best agricultural practises.
- The Office has also procured and distributed rainwater harvesting system to 72 households, across the four regions of Eswatini, with a capacity of 5000 litres.

B. The Office has procured and distributed 198 goats to 66 child headed households found in all the regions of the country.

- Each household received three (3) goats; one male (buck) and two females (does).
- During procurement of the goats, first preference was given to local farmers who met the minimum requirements and specification (12 months indigenous Nguni goats, with the buck coming from a different kraal to avoid in-breeding).

C. Dairy Cow Farming

- Two institutions which house vulnerable people in Eswatini were provided with dairy farming livelihood support.
- These institutions are Mankayane Old Age Home, and Matsetsa School for the Deaf.
- At Mankayane Old Age Home: a crush pen, milking palour and paddocks have been constructed since it will be hosting a dairy cow for the first time.
- An irrigation system has been installed and pasture established at Mankayane. In addition, milking utensils, hay and dairy meal have been procured. Continuous readiness assessment is being conducted at Matsetsa School for the Deaf towards rehabilitation of dairy infrastructure and pasture.
- Six (6) beneficiaries have been enrolled for skills development based on their skills preference. Five beneficiaries (from four households) have been enrolled for hairdressing and nails training while one has been enrolled for catering training. This component was launched by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in partnership with Standard Bank Eswatini who has pledged to provide entrepreneurship skills for the beneficiaries as well as enrol them as Unayo agents in a bid to diversify their source of income. Beneficiaries will also be given start up seed capital.

D. Harvest for 2023/24 ploughing season

Under the programme, a total of 62 child headed households, in Manzini and Hhohho regions, were enrolled on crop production for the 2023/24 farming season. During the reporting period, field monitoring was carried out for the purpose of estimating maize yields per household. This was done with assistance from Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society and National Disaster Management Agency volunteers. The estimated yield is as shown in the following table.

Table 25: Households Maize Yields Performance in tonnes per Hectare

Region	Yield per hectare
Manzini	0.85
Hhohho	0.90

Based on the post-harvest monitoring conducted, it was observed that maize yield was generally lower than the previous year in both regions. Normal rains were received in

the first half of the season while below rains were received in the second half of the season. Erratic rainfall patterns (prolonged dry spells) in the second half coupled with hailstorms resulted in crop failure for a majority of households.

The best performing household in Hhohho region obtained 950 kg while the worst recorded 75 kg. Households in the Hhohho region recorded an average of 450 kg which is equivalent to 0.90 tonnes per hectare. Manzini region recorded an average of 425 kg, translating to 0.85 tonnes per hectare; with the highest harvesting 1,000 kg and the lowest 150 kg. The average maize yield for the child headed households is below this year’s national average of 1.1 tonnes per hectare.

E. 2024/25 Farming Season

For the farming season (2024/25), a total of 50 Child Headed Households have been enrolled under crop production (20 for maize and 30 for beans) in the four regions of the country. A participatory and transparent beneficiary identification process was used to identify food insecure child – headed and vulnerable households. This was done through community structures (Inkhundla council and Rural Health Motivators). Verification of beneficiaries using a ranking tool was then carried out to ensure that the most vulnerable households receive support.

Each household was provided two (2) tractor hours for tillage. Under maize production, each household received 10kg maize seed, two 50kg bags of fertilizer and one 50kg bags of LA. Households under beans production received 10kg beans seeds, one 50kg bag of fertilizer and one 50kg bags of LAN. Pesticides were kept at RDAs, volunteers and other community leaders for safety, and only go to beneficiaries’ fields for application.

A summary of the total inputs procured and distributed to households is presented in the following table.

Table 26: Farm Inputs Procured and Distributed under CHH Programme

Commodity	Total
10kg Maize Seeds	20
10kg Beans Seeds	30
50kg 2:3:3 (37) Fertilizer	100
50kg LAN	50

Community leadership ensured that during distribution of inputs, the rightful beneficiaries received farm inputs designated to them. Government structures, such as Tinkhundla Centres, RDAs, Gogo Centres and Imiphakatsi were used as points of delivery due to proximity to the children and ease of pick up.

3.5.3 Legal Framework

A. Review of the Disaster Management Act 2006

The Disaster Risk Management Bill 2024 which repeals the Disaster Management Act of 2006 has been tabled in both Houses of Parliament.

B. National Drought Policy Development

A National Drought Policy is being developed under the World Bank-financed Water Supply and Sanitation Access Project implemented by the Government of the Kingdom of Eswatini. Terms of Reference have been developed and a consultant engaged to develop the policy which will provide a framework for embedding drought risk management within appropriate structures of the country to strengthen national capacities for effective drought preparedness, prevention, response, mitigation, and recovery, to protect lives and livelihoods, environment and the economy at large.

An inception workshop was organized to introduce the policy development process to stakeholders. The purpose of this phase was to gain insight into the proposed approach, methodology, and structure for the National Drought Policy development process. The final deliverable was a comprehensive inception report.

Stakeholder consultations have been done mostly at national level. These represent various sectors such as agriculture and food security, water sanitation and hygiene, health, social protection, environment and education, amongst others. A drought diagnosis report was submitted by the consultant based on stakeholder consultations and literature review. This diagnostic report serves as a crucial tool and foundational element in the development of the drought risk management policy for the Kingdom of Eswatini. The report identified the challenges, strengths, and gaps within the current frameworks, drought vulnerabilities and resilience thereby provide an informed basis from which policy recommendations are drawn. The Drought Policy is at its final stages awaiting stakeholders' validation.

3.5.4 Humanitarian Support Facilitation

To support humanitarian activities countrywide by disaster stakeholders, the Department facilitated the issuance of import permits to the following organizations for the commodities shown in the following table.

Table 27: Imports Permits Facilitated from April 2024 to January 2025

Organization	Item	Quantity
World Food Programme	Rice	1095 MT
	Sunflower oil	17.501 MT
	Corn soya blend	18.468 MT
Embassy of the Republic of China (Taiwan)	Rice	800 MT

3.6 NATIONAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT AGENCY

The National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA), established through the Disaster Management Act of 2006, operates as the leading authority on disaster risk management in Eswatini. Tasked with fostering a unified and systematic approach to disaster management. The NDMA prioritizes reducing vulnerabilities, advancing early warning systems, and enhancing preparedness and mitigation efforts. These initiatives aim to ensure that the country is well-prepared to respond effectively to disasters. This report outlines the NDMA's achievements and progress during the 2024/25 financial year, showcasing its unwavering dedication to protecting communities and building national resilience against potential threats.

3.6.1 Disaster Risk Management and Governance

A. Strategy and Policies

In 2024, the NDMA achieved significant milestones in strengthening disaster governance. The Disaster Risk Management Bill, 2024, which seeks to enhance the existing legislative framework, was tabled in Parliament and underwent rigorous consultation with portfolio committees. This bill is expected to modernize Eswatini's approach to disaster management, emphasizing preparedness, mitigation, rapid response, and recovery. The Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Coordination Framework was finalized, offering a structured approach for national and chiefdom-level disaster risk management.

Additionally, the NDMA progressed on its National DRR Strategy, conducting stakeholder validation sessions and aligning its efforts with global best practices. During this reporting period, progress continued on the development of the Disaster Risk Management curriculum and the NDMA completed the development of the course modules which are pending approval by Eswatini Higher Education Council (ESHEC). These strategies underscore the NDMA's significant commitment to strengthen its ability to effectively manage and mitigate disaster risks.

B. Enterprise-Wide Risk Management

During the financial year 2023-24, the NDMA continued to undertake several strategic initiatives to enhance its risk management strategy. These included a comprehensive enterprise-wide risk monitoring system across all departments aimed at identifying potential risks, deviations, and opportunities for improvement. The NDMA has also prioritized capacity building as a cornerstone of its risk management efforts. Staff training on risk identification and mitigation, coupled with the development of guidelines and frameworks, has ensured that all departments operate with a risk-aware culture. Periodic reviews and evaluation of the Agency's risk register were conducted to ensure relevance and updated register throughout the year.

C. Resource mobilization

Through the Program Management Unit (PMU) the NDMA continued with resource mobilization, submitting proposal and concept notes for funding. The NDMA is in the final stage of funding agreement negotiations with African Development Bank Group for an ACCF proposal which was submitted last year. The main aim of the project is to support women and youth empowerment through small-scale or pilot adaptation

initiatives to build resilience of vulnerable communities in climate resilient activities with a focus on promoting climate-resilient agriculture and economic diversification, creating opportunities and supporting youth and women including men and women working together to address development needs in low-carbon sectors. The project has a budget of \$596 000 to be implemented in 2 years.

The development of the SURE project which won the most innovative concept is still ongoing and it is anticipated that the project will be awarded in the next fiscal year.

The Agency is working on Phase 2 of India, Brazil, and South Africa (IBSA) project with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) which has a budget funding request on \$1 million. The phase 2 project is designed to build upon the success of Phase 1, with a focus on strengthening “Food, Water and Energy Nexus for Climate Change Adaptation, Poverty and Hunger Alleviation in Eswatini”.

3.6.2 Quality Management System- ISO 9001:2015

To ensure continuous improvement and compliance with established quality standards for ISO 9001, NDMA organized and facilitated the QMS Surveillance Audit from the 18-20th of November 2024 which was led by SGS. The audit was a success as only 2 minor non-conformities were identified and no major non-conformities were identified.

As part of its commitment to continuous improvement, the NDMA conducted a comprehensive customer and stakeholder satisfaction survey to gather actionable feedback on its services and processes. This feedback will inform targeted enhancements, with the survey report anticipated in the next reporting period. Further demonstrating its dedication to excellence, the NDMA participated in the Eswatini Quality Awards under the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise category to benchmark organizational practices against industry standards and foster credibility.

3.6.3 Early Warning

A. Disaster Risk Knowledge

The NDMA made significant advancements in disaster risk knowledge through comprehensive profiling, mapping initiatives, and innovative platforms for information sharing. A Hazards, Exposure, and Vulnerability Profiles Report was completed, offering a detailed understanding of Eswatini's risk landscape. This report identifies hazard-prone areas, vulnerable populations, and critical infrastructure, providing essential data for strategic planning, resource allocation, and disaster risk reduction measures. To enhance regional risk assessment and preparedness, the NDMA, in collaboration with the, conducted an UAV Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) mapping operation for Manzini Municipal Council and Pigg's Peak Town Council. This initiative generated high-resolution geospatial imagery, vital for vulnerability analysis and infrastructure monitoring in Manzini municipality. The data was processed into Ortho-mosaic maps, offering comprehensive terrain and infrastructure views that improve disaster risk assessments for natural hazards like floods and landslides. These maps, combined with additional geographic layers, are instrumental in refining early warning systems.

The agency also established an Early Warning Technical Working Group (EWTWG) and further launched the “Multi-Hazard Early Warning (MHEW) Power Hour,” a weekly

virtual platform held every Thursday, providing real-time updates on emerging threats and addressing misinformation. These focused sessions have significantly enhanced coordination and communication among Early Warning Technical Working Group (EWTWG) members. With four sessions conducted during the reporting period, the platform has improved the accuracy of hazard messaging and encouraged active stakeholder engagement.

B. Hazard/Risk Monitoring, forecasting and Analysis

A key achievement in strengthening hazards and risk monitoring, forecasting and analysis was the establishment of the Early Warning Technical Working Group (EWTWG), which operationalized the Multi-Hazard Early Warning System (MHEWS). This group, comprising experts from various sectors, enhances the country's capacity to anticipate and mitigate disaster risks.

In Collaborating with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security, NDMA conducted a pre-harvest assessment to estimate crop yields and evaluate the impact of seasonal weather on food production. This critical information supports policymakers in planning for potential food insecurity by enabling early preparedness and contingency actions. Additionally, the NDMA developed a Composite Drought Index (CDI) map for March through May 2024, offering stakeholders a valuable tool for proactive drought management by highlighting areas of vulnerability and guiding timely interventions to protect agriculture, water resources, and livelihoods.

The agency issued advisories on severe thunderstorms and heatwaves, enabling communities to take precautionary measures to reduce risks. Four detailed hazard specific situational updates were disseminated, providing stakeholders and affected communities with actionable insights on storm impacts, planned response measures, and recommendations for minimizing hazards. These updates facilitated improved coordination, informed decision-making, and ensured swift and effective responses while reducing duplication of efforts among stakeholders. Additionally, NDMA conducted eight Open Street Map (OSM) sessions with 27 participants, including staff, university students, and volunteers, to validate data for high-risk areas. These efforts significantly improved the accuracy and reliability of Eswatini's GIS database, strengthening disaster preparedness and response planning nationwide.

C. Preparedness and Response Capabilities

The NDMA made substantial advancements in disaster preparedness and management through targeted initiatives and strategic partnerships. A key achievement was the completion of the 2024 Multi-Hazard Contingency Plan (MHCP) costing exercise, ensuring efficient resource allocation and maximizing the impact of disaster response operations. The MHCP was also instrumental in Joint External Evaluations (JEE) with the Ministry of Health, enhancing health emergency response frameworks. In Matsapha, the NDMA facilitated a fire hazard simulation for Lactalis to bolster workplace safety and emergency response. Collaborating with the Shiselweni Fire and Timber Association, the NDMA launched campaigns to address forest fires and timber theft in Shiselweni and Hhohho Regions, involving stakeholders like the Royal Eswatini Police and smallholder farmers. To strengthen regional disaster response capabilities, five officials underwent training on the African Multi-Hazard Early Warning and Action System (AMHEWAS).

The World Food Programme donated thermal camera drones, significantly enhancing aerial surveillance and real-time hazard monitoring during emergencies. Efforts to combat drought risks were bolstered by the development of the Composite Drought Index-Eswatini (CDI-E), integrating meteorological, hydrological, and agricultural data to enable timely interventions and evidence-based decision-making. Additionally, NDMA's application to join the Flying Labs Network aims to position Eswatini as a hub for innovation in disaster management technology, leveraging advanced drone systems and fostering global collaboration. These initiatives underscore NDMA's commitment to proactive disaster management, community resilience, and technological innovation.

3.6.4 Emergency Response, Mitigation and Adaptation Programs

A. Sector Wide Coordination Mechanism

In enhancing DRR coordination in the country, the NDMA supported the development of Drought Management Plans (DMPs) across municipalities, engaging stakeholders in reviews to refine and validate these plans, and fostering ownership through inclusive consultations. The plans will strengthen urban areas preparedness and response to drought in the country thus reducing the overall impact of disasters. Furthermore, NDMA conducted community engagements nationwide to educate local leaders and form Community Disaster Risk Reduction Committees, thereby strengthening grassroots preparedness. This effort was complemented by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Vuvulane Town Board and capacitating the Manzini City Council DRM Portfolio Committee, demonstrating NDMA's commitment to enhancing local disaster resilience. In addition to these initiatives, the NDMA convened Regional Disaster Management Committees to tackle critical issues such as heatwaves, food insecurity, and delayed rainfall. These meetings provided tailored advisories to farmers and communities, ensuring timely responses to evolving challenges. To further raise awareness, NDMA organized outreach programs in the Lubombo and Hhohho regions, empowering students and communities with knowledge about early warning systems and hazard preparedness.

Collaboration with Shiselweni Fire Stakeholders led to impactful fire awareness campaigns and assessments of fire damages, promoting forest conservation and refining fire prevention strategies. Moreover, NDMA enhanced its regional and international disaster response capabilities by participating in the inaugural SADC Emergency Response Team training in Botswana. This training equipped staff with advanced skills in international disaster response, rapid deployment, situational analysis, and resource mobilization. Building on this capacity, the agency secured funding from the African Union to rehabilitate infrastructure impacted by Cyclone Eloise, addressing ongoing food insecurity worsened by El Niño-induced drought. In response to the political unrest in Mozambique, NDMA activated its Camp Coordination and Management Cluster to support the influx of refugees. The agency conducted multi-sectoral assessments and developed comprehensive response plans to address the needs of refugees housed in Malindza Refugees Reception Centre and further provided emergency relief interventions (food and non-food items).

B. Hazard Incidents, Assessments and Response

The country experienced an unprecedented multiple hazards during the reporting period which included cyclones, fires and severe storms, characterized by heavy

thunder, strong winds, hail. The hazards caused significant damage to residential areas, businesses, critical infrastructure, and the agricultural sector across the country. Wildfires that affected the country on July 2024 caused the most damages, impacting approximately 20% of its land, causing extensive damage to household shelters, assets, businesses, and rangelands. The NDMA conducted rapid assessments to ascertain the extent of damage and provided tailored emergency response interventions. During this period, 1060 households were directly affected by the disasters with over 6 038 people. The NDMA responded by distributing 14 tents, 143 tarpaulins, 84 mattresses and 29 blankets. Food Items that were distributed includes rice (4 454kg), beans (475kg), and 492.5 liters of cooking oil to support the affected families.

Table 28: People Affected by Localized Hazards and Emergency Response Materials Provided

Region	Hazard	# of Hh	# of Bens	# of tents	# of Tarpaulins	# of mattresses	# of Blankets	Rice (KG's)	Beans (KGs)	Cooking oil (L)
Manzini	Storm/fire	465	2255	1	111	50	15	882	185	102
Hhohho	Storm/fire	192	822	11	20	0	5	298	145	66
Shiselweni	Storm/Fire	195	1940	0	12	34	9	3045	115	296
Lubombo	Storm/fire	208	1021	2	0	0	0	229	30	28.5
TOTAL		1060	6038	14	143	84	29	4454	475	492.5



Picture 1: A low laying bridge in Nkhwe Community under Nkwene Inkhundla completely submerged as a result of 6-8 January 2025 Torrential rains.

C. House Rehabilitation and Reconstruction

The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) achieved significant progress in supporting disaster-affected households through house construction and rehabilitation interventions. During the reporting period, the NDMA supported 256 households with

new constructions and rehabilitations of houses affected by disaster. These efforts primarily targeted households affected by various disasters, with a focus on regions severely impacted by a devastating hailstorm on December 8, 2023. The supported houses included single-room, two-room, and multiple-room configurations, with the majority located in the Manzini Region. The “building back better” methodology remained central to these initiatives, emphasizing durability and climate resilience in all construction and rehabilitation efforts.

Table 29: Total Number of Houses Reconstructed by Size of Houses

Type of construction	1 room	2 room	Multiple room	Total
New structures	19	37	1	57
Rehabilitation	71	104	24	199
Total	90	141	25	256

3.6.5 Philip Morris Project

The Deputy Prime Minister’s Office through the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) successfully completed the implementation of a Philip Morris Products S.A. funded grant aimed at providing immediate disaster relief support to vulnerable households across the country. The project constructed a total of 20 houses and 2 NCPs across the country for the most vulnerable families who do not have adequate shelter. The houses were officially handed over to beneficiaries by the Deputy Prime Minister.

Table 30: Houses Constructed under the Phillip Moris Project

Type of construction	1 room	2 room	Total
New structures	7	14	21
Rehabilitation	0	1	1
Total	7	15	22



Picture 2: A one-room house constructed under the Philip Morris Project

3.6.6 Food for Work Project

The NDMA successfully completed the implementation of the Food for Asset project which was implemented in partnership with World Vision Eswatini, ACAT and Women Farmer Foundation. In total the project distributed 879.468 metric tons (MT) of food

rice, reaching 7,151 households and 35,755 beneficiaries across four distribution cycles. The project was implemented in 13 targeted constituencies throughout the country and benefitted 127 projects during the lifecycle of the project. The Food for Asset project did not only provide support in immediate food relief but also contributed to the long-term sustainability of food systems within the communities served.

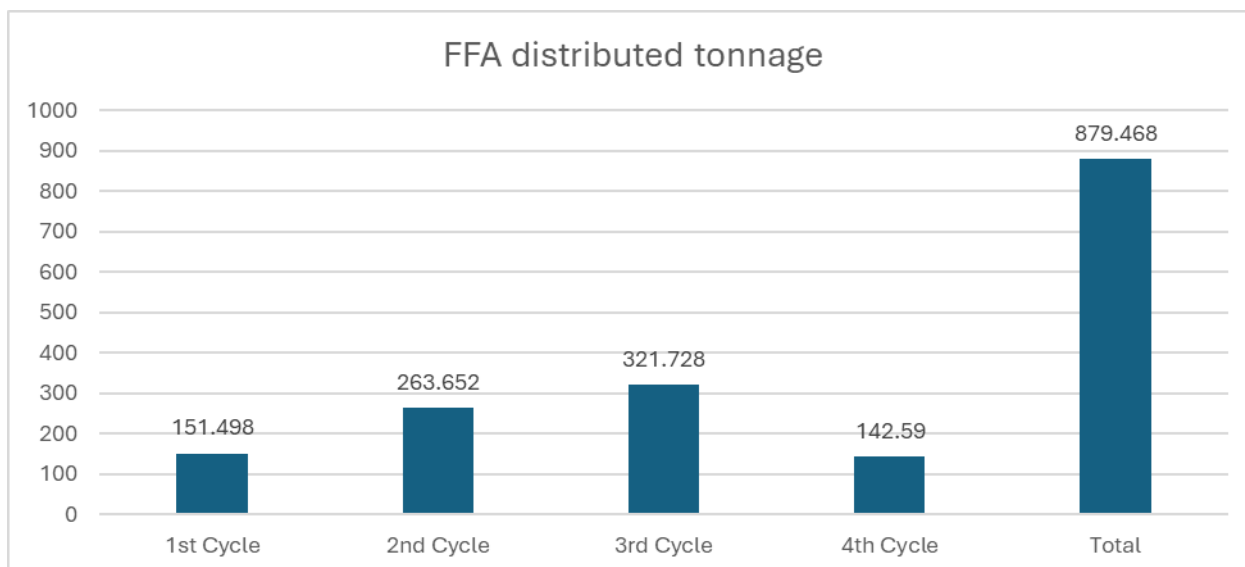


Figure 2: Food for Assets/Work Project



Picture 3: Inauguration of Mankantimane Suspended Foot Bridge at Luhlanyeni Chiefdom under Sithobela Constituency.

3.6.7 General Food Assistance Project

The NDMA has started food distribution as part of the General Food Assistance Project funded by the Government of Eswatini. This initiative is being implemented in 40 constituencies in collaboration with six implementing partners, namely BERCS, ACAT, WFF, E-NCM, WVE, and ADRA. The primary goal of the project is to reach 53,920 households, which translates to over 269,600 individuals, across four distribution cycles. The project aims to provide essential food items, including rice, beans, and cooking oil, specifically targeting households that have been severely affected by the ongoing food insecurity crisis in the country. This comprehensive approach is designed

to alleviate immediate hunger while also supporting the nutritional needs of the most at-risk communities.



Picture 4: Food distribution at Mpolonjeni and Lomahasha constituency

3.6.8 African Union Commission – Schools Rehabilitation Project

The rehabilitation of 4 schools that were affected by cyclone Eloise through a relief and rehabilitation donation from the African Union Commission continued during the reporting period. The project is implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Training and Micro-Project unit under the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development. It is anticipated that the rehabilitation of the schools will be completed in the next reporting period. Below is a list of the supported schools and progress of the rehabilitation status.

Table 31: List of Schools Supported by AUC

Region	Name of School	Status
Hhohho	Mndlunkulu primary	Ongoing
Lubombo	Mampempeni Primary	Ongoing
Manzini	Lwandle R.C Primary	Ongoing
Shiselweni	Ekuphakameni High School	Ongoing



Picture 5: Ongoing rehabilitation at Lwandle RC Primary School under the AUC Project.

3.6.9 Communications Management

The NDMA continued to disseminate DRR and DRM information through the radio, print media and social media, focusing on several critical topics such as fire prevention, windstorm prevention and anticipated heatwaves. Collaborating with key organizations such as Eswatini Fire and Emergency Services and Montigny Investments, the department provided expertise on fire hazards, response strategies, and environmental protection during dissemination of DRR information. To further enhance public engagement, NDMA participated in the Eswatini International Trade Fair, where its public stand attracted approximately 2,000 visitors. The exhibit showcased the importance of disaster preparedness and early warning systems, reinforcing NDMA's role in fostering community resilience. This initiative not only broadened public awareness but also led to increased social media following and interactions. NDMA's efforts were recognized with an award for the best exhibit under the NGOs and Social Support Institutions category, highlighting the impact of its outreach strategies. The consistent use of media has proven invaluable in bridging information gaps and ensuring that disaster risk reduction messages reach even the most underserved communities. Through these comprehensive communication efforts, NDMA has significantly enhanced public awareness and empowered citizens to take informed actions to build resilience against disasters.

3.6.10 Information Technology

The NDMA successfully completed the implementation of Sunsystem for financial management, M365 SharePoint (Intranet) and document management system, along with the successful implementation of the Wide Area Network (WAN), firewall installation, and Local Area Network (LAN) setup for all NDMA sites, including regional offices. Additionally, a robust systems backup mechanism was installed to enhance data security. These developments contributed to an impressive 98% availability for the Local Area Network and server infrastructure, as well as 97% internet uptime, meeting the organization's availability targets. The NDMA also progressed on the development of its Electronic Beneficiary Management System (eBMS), which is expected to be completed in the next reporting period. To ensure effective network monitoring, the WAN network monitoring tool, WhatsUp Gold Net App, was successfully deployed. Endpoint security and M365 licenses were renewed, further strengthening the agency's digital operations. A VoIP network was established across all regions, improving communication efficiency within the organization.

3.6.11 Human Capital and Development

As of the end of the fiscal year, the NDMA staff complement consisted of 58 employees, including 7 Graduate Trainees, 1 Consultant, and 3 Temporary Employees, with a gender breakdown of 36 males and 22 females. Furthermore, the NDMA was able to fill vacant positions which included CEO, Legal Advisor/Board Secretary, Communications Manager, Grants and Finance Manager, Risk Management Officer, Director of Operations and Procurement Officer. There were also a few separations which included Risk Management Officer, procurement officer, and grants and finance manager which were replaced in a timely manner. Staff wellness remained a priority, with female employees participating in a Women's Month session focused on the power of femininity and emotional intelligence in the workplace. Additionally, a Spring Day wellness program, facilitated by Ekuphileni Clinic, emphasized sexual health and

overall well-being. Performance management efforts included rescheduling half-yearly reviews to October 2024, while organizational policy reviews are underway, with completion expected in the next quarter.

Table 32: Staff Development and capacity building initiatives

Workshop/Training name	Date	No of Staff
SADAC Emergency Response Training (ERT) Induction in Maun, Botswana.	6-16 Jul 2024	3
Impact Based Forecasting by South African Weather Service in Pretoria, South Africa	26 – 31 July 2025	1
29th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 29) – Baku, Azerbaijan.	11 – 22 Nov 2025	2
AVoHC Surge Training	Nov-Dec 2025	5
3rd Biennial Report on the Implementation of the action for Sendai Framework for DRR(2015 -2030) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia	31 Jul – 02 Aug 2025	1
MASHAV Local Disaster Management training, Israel	4-16 Aug 2024	1
Cyber Security in Johannesburg, South Africa	6-16 Aug 2025	1
Income Tax Changes and Amendments workshop	Sep 2024	6
Defensive Driving Training for NDMA Drivers, Esibayeni Lodge	23-27 Sep 2024	23
Forecast-based Financing (FbF) Early Action Protocol (EAP)	18-20 Sep 2025	1

3.6.12 Financial Report

A. Summary Financial Analysis

For the year 2024/2025 the NDMA has continued to fulfil its mandate of providing support to the Public on Disaster Risk Reduction, Mitigation and Response issues. It has operated with a total budget of SZL135,712,271. SZL 33,681,160 is Subvention budget whilst SZL17,006,924 are Grants funds carried over from the previous year and SZL85,024,187 is Grants budget planned to be received in the year.

B. Subvention performance

From the SZL 33,681,160 approved Subvention budget for the year, a total income of SZL 25,263,671 has been received to date from the Eswatini Government. In addition, the Entity has made an interest of SZL981 plus SZL 1,820 on the sale of obsolete assets. In executing its mandate, the NDMA has expensed SZL 23,082,674 resulting to an SZL 2,180,997 surplus. The entity has also made building improvements to a tune of SZL 383,480.69 at the warehouse in Matsapha, procured computer equipment for the Information Centre of E343,149.09 and office furniture of SZL 20,297.

A detailed performance analysis of Subvention Funding is provided in the table below. Variances and way forward actions for above and below 15% and -15% respectively will be provided further below.

C. Subvention

Table 33: Performance Analysis as at End of December 2024

	INCOMERECEIVED	Annual Budget SZL	Year To date Budget SZL	Prior Period Reported Expenses SZL	Current Period Expenses SZL	Accumulated Expenses SZL	Variance SZL	Variance %
		A	B	C	D	E=C+D	F=E-B	% of F/B
Cash Income								
300-01	Unrestricted Funding	33,681,160	25,260,870	16,840,580	8,420,290	25,260,870	0	0%
300-03	Interest Received	-	-	651	331	981	981	0%
300-04	Asset Disposal	-	-	-	1,820	1,820	1,820	0%
	Sub-total	33,681,160	25,260,870	16,841,231	8,422,441	25,263,671	2,801	0%
5xx Project Expenditures								
500	Staff Salaries	18,747,000	14,060,250	8,249,032	4,097,854	12,346,886	- 1,713,364	-12%
501	Staff Wellness	360,000	360,000	79,006	100,363	179,369	- 180,631	-50%
502	Staff Training	904,000	778,000	362,386	476,028	838,414	60,414	8%
503	Governance	560,000	470,000	275,652	172,796	448,448	- 21,552	-5%
510	Supplies and Materials	664,000	556,814	325,752	29,001	354,753	- 202,061	-36%
511	Computer software and equipment	400,000	300,000	145,010	56,245	201,256	- 98,744	-33%
515	Program Activities	1,705,100	1,138,000	365,818	410,723	776,541	- 361,459	-32%
520	Travel Expenses	525,000	368,800	196,289	476,294	672,582	303,782	82%
521	Vehicle Operating Costs	1,445,124	1,172,639	810,411	351,573	1,161,985	- 10,654	-1%
525	Ware house stock Transportation Costs	127,000	80,000	-	78,083	78,083	- 1,917	-2%
540	Occupancy / Office	3,584,420	2,824,340	1,486,542	830,771	2,317,313	- 507,027	-18%
550	Telecommunications Services and Postage	881,000	610,750	378,417	203,826	582,243	- 28,507	-5%
560	Hospitality	180,000	165,000	32,998	151,879	184,877	19,877	12%
564	Printing Services	50,000	50,000	38,838	12,283	51,122	1,122	2%
565	Advertising and Brand Promotion/Identity	740,000	737,500	382,738	479,943	862,681	125,181	17%
570	Fees and Taxes	1,763,171	1,678,671	1,523,824	259,631	1,783,455	104,784	6%
575	Consultancy	375,345	356,502	133,731	108,286	242,016	- 114,486	-32%
580	Capital Expenditures	670,000	670,000	-	650	650	- 669,350	-100%
	GRANT TOTAL EXPENSES	33,681,160	26,377,266	14,786,445	8,296,229	23,082,674	- 3,294,592	-12%
	Surplus					2,180,997		

D. Variance Explanations and Way Forward Actions

The overall year to date performance variance for the Subvention project stands at 9% underspent. The variance explanations for each category expenditure are based on the comparison of the year-to-date budget versus the year-to-date expenditure for the above and below the 15% and -15% respectively are as follows:

- a) **Staff Wellness (50) %, SZL180,631** - The under expenditure is due to the Staff Team building exercise that could not take place in December due to high number of emergency response activities that the team had to attend to. Activity will be conducted mid- February.

- b) **Supplies and Materials (36) %, SZL 202,061.** The under-expenditure is due to delayed deliveries of office stationery amounting to SZL 156,400 and teas of SZL 9,500 by suppliers.
- c) **IT infrastructure software and equipment (33) %, SZL98,744.** The under expenditure is due to low IT maintenance and repairs costs incurred than anticipated. The spending will be closely monitored and procure IT related items to support next year's activities eg cartridges if the situation continues as is till year end.
- d) **Program Activities (32) % SZL361,459** – The under expenditure is due the postponement of implementing the Early warning systems trainings at schools and communities, development of DRM plans for Tinkhundla, development and implementation of gender, disability and youth inclusive DRR, Regional dissemination of NACOF and conduct the collection of disaster loss and damage data and Sendai reporting which all are aimed to be implemented by Mid- March. The activities postponements were due to the number of disasters faced in the year which diverted the teams focus to address the emergencies.
- e) **Travels expenses 82 %, SZL147,660** - this is due to the introduction of the transit allowance which was not budgeted for whereas staff have been recommended to undertake several sponsored travels in the year requiring the NDMA to pay the transit allowances. This over expenditure will be covered by the under expenditure on personnel costs.
- f) **Office occupancy (18) % SZL 507,027.** The water, electricity and security costs for the warehouse for the months of July to December were charged to the World Vision Food for Work project thus making savings from the subvention budget.
- g) **Advertising 17% SZL125,181** – This is due to high procurement adverts costs incurred than anticipated. Direct newspaper adverts will now be done only for special open tenders supplied by a wide range of suppliers and for those whom we know the possible suppliers we shall notify them of the ESPPRA adverts.
- h) **Consultants (32) %, SZL114,486.** These are the remaining funds to be used for the recruitment of the executive position that may open in the year. The funds were initially planned for the salary review exercise that was taken over by PEU
- i) **Capital Items-** In the income statement reflect a 100% underspent due to that the assets bought were not expensed but captured in the balance. A total of SZL 746,926.78 has been spent to date.

E. Grant Projects Performance

The Response Projects had carried over funds from 2024 of SZL 17,006,924 in value of cash and commodities. Grants funding received in the year stands at SZL 64,745,840 (SZL36,051,595 cash SZL 28,694,244.33 commodities). Grants expenses for the year amount to SZL 55,650,317 (SZL 33,457,309 cash and SZL 22,193,007.57 commodities).

In total the balance stands at SZL 26,102,447 which is SZL 17,648,855 and SZL 8,453,592.

Table 34: Grants Projects Analysis as of 31st December 2024

Project code	Project Name	Opening Balance SZL A	YTD Income Received SZL B	YTD Income Available SZL C= A+B	YTD Expensed SZL D	Remaining Funds / deferred Funds SZL	Funding Type
NDMA-PR-02	Storms Project	16,351,722	680,557	17,032,279	11,043,787	5,988,492	Cash
NDMA-PR-03	General food Distribution Project- Taiwan	1,952,355	9,016,914	10,969,269	3,819,716	7,149,553	Commodities- Rice
NDMA-PR-04	George Town - Covid	230,852		230,852	52,800	178,052	Commodity- Health supplies
NDMA-PR-05	WASH Initiatives for COVID-19 and climate change- IBSA	(332,173)		(332,173)		(332,173)	Cash
NDMA-PR-06	SERO VIDA	(56,355)		(56,355)		(56,355)	Cash
NDMA-PR-07	Schools Rehabilitation- AUC Eloise		2,784,040	2,784,040	1,595,403	1,188,637	Cash
NDMA-PR-08	Vulnerable household house construction	1,752,050	597,335	2,349,385	1,591,762	757,623	Cash
NDMA-PR-09	WV Food for Assets project	(5,333,718)	26,335,787	21,002,069	20,063,025	939,044	Cash & rice. Balance is cash
NDMA-PR-10	Civil Disturbance	(99,699)	25,237,357	25,137,658	17,328,931	7,808,727	Cash
NDMA-PR-11	Humanitarian Open-Street Map Team		93,849	93,849	63,564	30,285	Cash
NDMA-PR-12	Child Headed Household			-	91,328	(91,328)	Cash
NDMA-PR-13	Targeted Food Assistance - SZL60M			-		-	
	Interest	2,541,890		2,541,890		2,541,890	Cash
	TOTAL	17,006,924	64,745,840	81,752,764	55,650,317	26,102,447	

Table 35: NDMA Statement of Financial Position as at December 2024

		Sep-24 SZL	Dec-24 SZL
Non and Cash Assets			
Non Current Assets			
	Property, Plant and Equipment	16,487,624	16,892,524
Current Assets			
Inventory			
	180 Warehouse Inventory Material	12,132,960	9,949,735
Trade Receivables			
	170 Prepayments to Suppliers	2,685,974	2,726,290
	172 Advances to Implementing Partners	0	0
	150 Business Advances	534,628	217,494
	Total Receivables	3,220,602	2,943,784
Cash and Cash Equivalents			
	120-01 Standard Current Account	3,278,507	2,999,472
	120-02 Standard Call Account	46,227	46,558
	121-01 Nedfleet Fuel Account	92,706	(287,503)
	121-02 Nedbank Special Project Account	(463,406)	5,043,642
	121-03 Project's Account- Non Govt Funding	1,708,772	1,599,420
	121-04 Emergency Response- Govt Funding Account	2,886,202	786,524
	121-05 Nedbank Call Account	1,009,829	223,383
	121-06 Eswatini Bank Current Account	979,754	1,131,922
	121-07 Eswatini Bank Call Account	8,700,238	3,938,662
	110-01 MTN Fintech Momo Account	(31,234)	(29,468)
	100-01 Petty Cash Fund	2,000	2,000
	Total cash and cash equivalents	18,209,595	15,454,612
	TOTAL ASSETS	50,050,782	45,240,654
Equity and Liabilities			
Equity			
	275-01 Capital Grants/Reserves	8,239,607	8,239,607
	275-02 Share Holders Capital	3,438,400	3,438,400
	290-01 Accumulated Retained Earnings	3,523,675	3,019,646
	280-01 Retained Earnings/ Deferred Funds (current Year)	32,560,731	28,283,444
	Total Equity	47,762,413	42,981,097
Current Liabilities			
	200 Trade Payables	2,045,984	2,012,584
	230 Payroll and Taxes Payables	2,026	6,615
	235 Leave Provisions	240,359	240,359
	Total Current liabilities	2,288,368	2,259,557
	TOTAL LIABILITIES	50,050,781	45,240,654

3.7 BAPHALALI ESWATINI RED CROSS SOCIETY

The period of April 2024 to March 2025 Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society (BERCS) continued working in collaboration with different stakeholders, under the guidance of the DPMO in providing humanitarian services to the people of Eswatini. Baphalali provided the services through the five Red Cross Branch offices and three clinics. All the Red Cross activities were coordinated by the head office in Mbabane. Activities carried out include response to emergencies, capacity building for personnel (staff and volunteers), disaster risk reduction activities (including food security activities), First Aid services, and health care services. It was noted that this year the country had an influx of asylum seekers from the Republic of Mozambique, as from November 2024 and they were accommodated at Malindza reception centre.

Though the period under review had a lot of challenges, Baphalali with the support from the DPMO, Red Cross Movement partners, and local companies was able to implement most of the planned activities.

3.7.1 Disaster Management

A. Emergency Fire Incidences

In this reporting period, Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society (BERCS) responded to eighty-seven fire incidences that were reported to the five Branch offices. In most of the fire incidences reported, the cases involved houses that were burnt down by fire, reducing all valuables inside the houses into ashes. In most cases, unattended candles were said to be the major cause of the fire. Items destroyed by the fire include clothing, bedding, books, school uniforms, furniture, and food commodities. These incidences affected a total of 350 people. Baphalali were able to carry out assessments to ascertain the extent of the damage in the affected households, then provided response material to some of the most vulnerable and severely affected households. The response material included: tents, sleeping mats, blankets, mixed clothing, food parcels (10kg rice, 5kg beans and 750ml cooking oil), and tarpaulin. Table 1 provides a graphical representation of people affected by region.

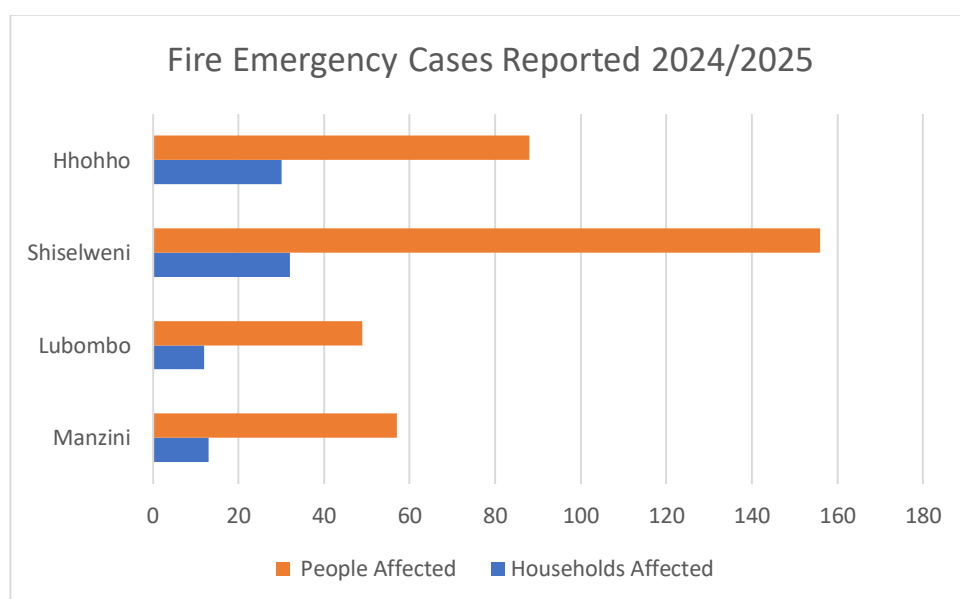


Figure 3: Households Affected by Fire and Attended by BERCS Rapid Response Team

B. Hailstorms and Heavy Rains

Eswatini once again experienced hailstorm and heavy rains even this financial year, which left a trail of destruction especially in houses and on the roads. All the four regions of the country were affected by the storm and heavy rains. The hailstorm mainly damaged the roofing in the houses and left over 200 families with 1 055 people without a shelter. The damage caused by the windstorm was blowing-off some rooftops while the heavy rains resulted in collapsing of stick and mud houses and damaging bridges and roads. The severely affected households had many of the items inside the affected houses being spoiled. Items spoiled include furniture, clothing, food items, books, and many other items. The National Society helped most of the severely affected households by providing tents, tarpaulins, blankets, mixed clothing, and food parcels.

Figure 2 below provides some additional data on the number of people impacted by the storms. Shiselweni Region was leading in terms of people affected by windstorms due to the high average household size. Despite the household size, the number of households affected were relatively higher followed by Hhohho Region.

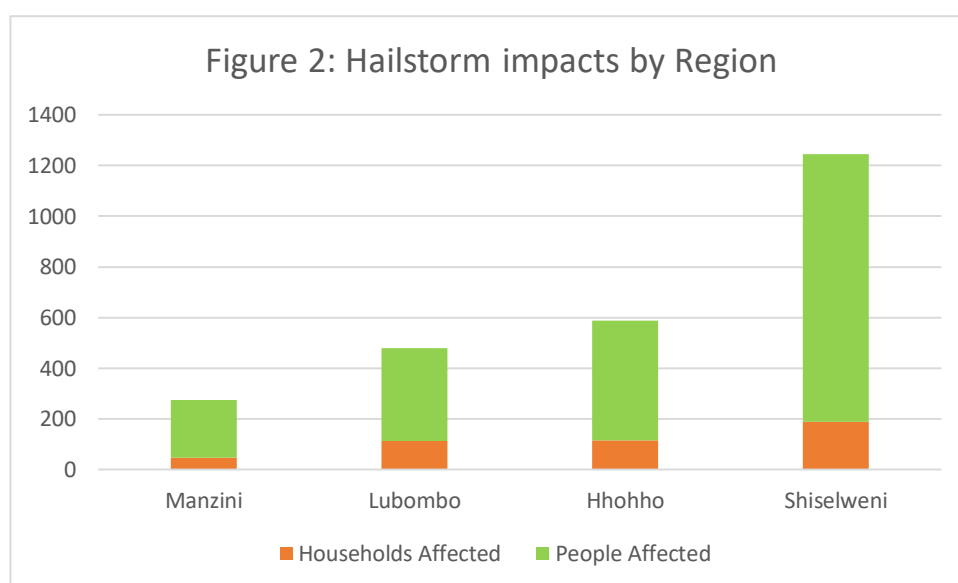


Figure 4: Households Affected by Windstorms and Attended by BERCS Rapid Response Team

C. Food Security

i) Livelihood Activities

In the period under review, the country continued to experience different challenges such as recurrent disasters in the form of storms, heavy rains, fires, combined with poverty, and the impact of COVID-19, contributed to making several households in the country to be food insecure. The food insecurity issues have also been confirmed by the annual VAC report of 2024.

Baphalali responded to the food insecurity situation in the country by collaborating with the Red Cross Movement (Finnish Red Cross, British Red Cross and the International Federation of Red Cross (IFRC) have and implemented food security projects which covered part of Shiselweni, Lubombo and Hhohho regions, assisting a

total of 10367 households (5 412 for cash transfers & livelihoods, and 4 955 for general food distribution), benefiting a total of 43 233 people. The projects were funded by British Red Cross, Finnish Red Cross, the Japan Government (through IFRC), and European Union Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid (ECHO). The project beneficiaries were coming from Somntongo, Matsanjeni South, Sigwe, Hosea, Lubulini, Nkilongo, and Mhlangatane constituencies. All these constituencies were selected based on their vulnerability in food security, as reflected in the VAC report of 2024.

The response by the Red Cross on food security interventions has benefited a total of 68 488 people, comprised of 11 010 on farming inputs, 3 382 on fruit trees, 18 041 on multipurpose cash, and 36 055 on general food distribution. On the multipurpose cash, the beneficiaries were getting cash transfers for food, at a cash value of E320.00 per person per month. However, if family members are more than one, they were given E160.00 per member per month, but with a capping of eight members in a family, giving a maximum of E1 280.00 per month.

In all livelihood activities, Baphalali worked closely with the Extension Officers from Ministry of Agriculture. The Ministry of Agriculture provided training to all benefiting households prior to them receiving the assistance. The Extension officers went on to support to the beneficiaries to ensure their agricultural initiatives were effectively managed. Details about the beneficiaries are shown in the table below.

Table 36: Beneficiary Households for Multipurpose Cash, Livelihoods and General Food Distribution

Constituency	Agro seeds & livestock	Fruit trees	Multipurpose cash	General food distribution	Total HH
Matsanjeni	203	94	495	0	792
Somntongo	182	63	423	0	668
Hosea	844	92	568	0	1504
Sigwe	219	111	545	0	875
Lubulini	212	115	551	0	878
Nkilongo	175	90	430	0	695
Mhlangatane	0	0	0	4 955	4 955
Total	1835	565	3012	4 955	10 367

ii) General food distribution (GFD)

To assist the food insecure households, as indicated in the VAC report of 2024, Baphalali identified Mhlangatane Inkhundla to be one of the Tinkhundla to be supported on general food distribution. Assessments of vulnerable households was done at Mhlangatane and a total of 4 955 households were registered to receive food assistance. The food assistance which the people were getting include 10kg cereals, 2kg pulses and 750ml of vegetable oil per person. This was a once-off food distribution with financial support from the government of Japanese Government.

In addition to Mhlangatane, Baphalali have been assigned by NDMA to continue with general food distribution in 13 more constituencies which were: Nkilongo, Lubulini, Somntongo, Matsanjeni South, Hosea, Sigwe, Methula, Sandleni, Piggs Peak, Ntfonjeni, Timphisini, Mayiwane, and Ndzingeni. In these constituencies the total number of households is 7 886 and the distribution will have three rounds. The distribution was done in the last quarter of the financial year.

iii) Promotion of vegetable production

Baphalali continued to promote and assist community members around Silele clinic in Hosea to produce their own vegetables by providing training on vegetable production and managing of seedlings in a nursery. The National Society has trained a total of 250 community people on vegetable production through demonstrations in a vegetable garden and a nursery next to the clinic. The training was facilitated by officers from the National Marketing Board (NAMBOARD) and the government Extension officers. The training has resulted in 250 households under Hosea Inkhundla, assisted to establish their backyard gardens where they produce vegetables.



Picture 6: Vegetable nursery at Silele and demo garden at Silele Clinic

D. House Construction for Vulnerable Households

The country continued to suffer a lot of damages because of the hailstorms and heavy rains experienced in 2023 /2024 that affected many households and some of them had their houses collapsing, and some of the vulnerable families were unable to reconstruct the houses. Baphalali with financial assistance from local companies then assisted 15 vulnerable households to construct 15 new houses for these families. Eleven (11) of the houses were two rooms while four (4) were one room houses, and they were constructed across all the regions of Eswatini. The 15 houses benefited a total of 84 people. The companies that provided the financial support were Eswatini Electricity company (4 houses) and Eswatini Sugar Association (11 houses). The house construction was being done by local builders with support from Red Cross volunteers. Community members were also mobilized to assist in providing local material such as stones, water, and other small material. The table below present details on where the houses were constructed.

Table 37: Families Assisted with House Constructions in the Financial Year 2024/25

Inkhundla	Community	No. of Houses	Family members
Motshane	Motshane	1	5
Nkhaba	Mnyokane	1	7
Sithobela	Mabhensane	1	3
Mpolonjeni	Ndzangu, Ngcina	2	11
Lomasha	Mongwenya	1	6
Nkwene	Buseleni	1	4
Mtsambama	Magele	1	2
Sandleni	Ngololweni	1	5

Methula	Nzameya	1	8
Mahlangatsha	Mambatfweni	1	9
Ngwempisi	Dudusini	1	5
Ntfontjeni	Evusweni	1	7
Piggs Peak	Luhlangotsini	1	10
Mayiwane	Mavula	1	2
Total		15	84

Below are illustrations of other constructions done through the National Society with support from partners.



Picture 7: Newly constructed one room house for the elderly at Mnyokane and a two-room house for OVC at Motjane



Picture 8: Two-room house handed over at Dudusini, Ngwempisi Constituency

E. Restoring Family Links and Dignity.

Baphalali continued to support a cumulative number of 216 people with telephone services to connect with their loved ones through Red Cross telephone facility at the Malindza reception centre. A sizable number of the calls were being made by people from the Republic of Burundi, Rwanda, DRC and the republic of Mozambique. When making the phone call, each person is given a maximum of five minutes to call his or her relatives, for purposes of repatriation.

However, towards the end of 2024, there was a noticeable increase in the number of asylum seekers received at the Malindza reception centre, and this influx was triggered by post-election conflicts in the neighbouring Republic of Mozambique. Currently, the Malindza reception centre has the capacity to hold less than 400 people; however,

since October 2024, it has started receiving over 900 asylum seekers from Mozambique, leading to increased needs beyond telephone services, such as shelter, food, health care, and WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene). Responding to the increase of arrivals in the Malindza refugee camp, Baphalali provided 240 blankets, 1000 sleeping mats, hygiene packs and other material.

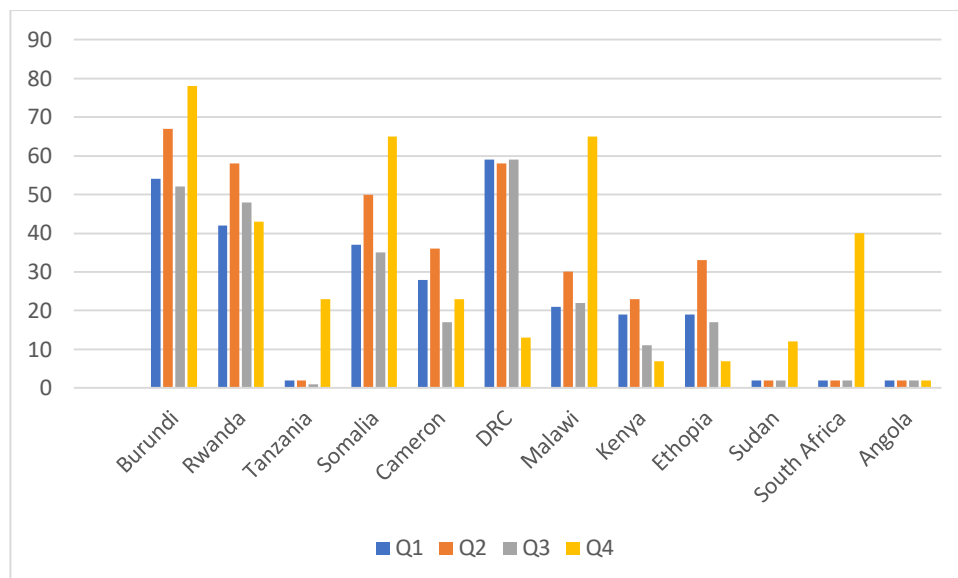


Figure 5: Calls Made by Country

F. Vulnerability Assessments

i) Annual Vulnerability Assessment (VAC) 2024

The Red Cross participated in the Government’s annual vulnerability assessment exercise in 2024. The National Society provided technical and financial support towards this assessment. The exercise targeted the Highveld Cattle and Maize, Timber Highlands, Moist Middleveld, Dry Middleveld, Lowveld Cattle and Maize, Lubombo Plateau livelihood zones that cut across all the administrative regions of the country.

ii) Enhanced Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (EVCA)

During this reporting period the National Society has conducted an Enhanced Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (EVCA) in two constituencies (Mhlume and Lomahasha) in the Lubombo region to develop baseline information for a livelihood project that will commence in April 2025. The EVCA is a participatory process designed to empower communities by improving their resilience against various hazards. It builds upon the traditional Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA) methodology, integrating lessons learned and enhancing its framework to better address the complexities of risk management in diverse contexts. Five communities were targeted: Mangwenya, Mkhangala, Tigodzini, Maphiveni, and Shewula.

3.7.2 Health Care Services

A. Health facility-based services

The National Society continued to provide health care services to the people of Eswatini through the three Red Cross clinics (Mahwalala, Sigombeni and Silele clinic). The clinics

were providing primary health care services which include prevention, treatment, care & support for people with acute and chronic illnesses. A total number of 145 065 (one hundred and forty-five thousand and sixty-five) people, was reached through the three health facilities. Most services recorded a positive variance, and these include preventive, care and curative services. In the previous reporting periods, the stock for family planning commodities was in shortfall. However, the Ministry of Health was able to close this gap even in the Red Cross clinics by providing all the necessary family planning commodities, which then increased the uptake of family planning material. Some of the strategies that increased the uptake of these services include regular outreach services to community events and meetings. For examples, visiting the cattle dipping tank sessions where males mostly participate and clinics staff together with volunteers disseminated information and distributed the condoms. The clinic health committee provides support towards the success of outreach services. Table 3 below provides a breakdown of the clinic services.

Table 38: Statistics on Services Provided and People Assisted in Red Cross Clinics

Programme/Services	Projections	Annual reached	Variance
Antiretroviral therapy	5600	5618	18
Child Welfare	2270	7838	5568
Curative	16308	19176	2868
Family Planning	1463	3139	1676
HTC/VCT*	1930	3266	1336
PMTCT/Antenatal Care**	748	2132	1384
Post Natal Care	597	2242	1645
COVID-19 Screening	18989	32311	13322
COVID-19 Suspected and tested	149	983	834
COVID-19 Confirmed Cases	98	0	-98
COVID-19 Immunization	237	0	-237
Patients Screened for TB	30109	62684	32575
Patients who screen Positive to TB	523	4237	3714
T.B Tested using gene X-per	100	251	151
Patients confirmed with TB	75	52	-23
TB patients Initiated on treatment	34	49	15
TB- ongoing treatment	35	17	-18
TB-Rx Completed and evaluated	24	0	-24
Cancer Screening – VIA	165	716	551
Cancer Screening – positive results	79	45	-34
Pap smear done	200	198	-2
Pap smear positive	10	5	-5
Pap smear services	40	106	66
Total consultations/ppl reached	79 783	145 065	65 282
Immunisations (routine)	9251	14270	5019
Health education (people reached)	19787	61755	41968
Condom (Female)	2629	23008	20379
Condom (Male)	55000	37108	-17892
* HIV testing and counselling (HTC)/Voluntary Counselling and testing (VCT)			

*Prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT)
*Visual inspection of cervix with acetic acid (VIA)

B. Other activities carried out within the clinic catchment areas include the following.

i) Protection of wetlands

A community awareness and commemoration of the biodiversity day was held at Ngololweni Sports Ground, close to the wetland, and it was attended by 150 community members. The theme for this year's commemoration was "Be Part of The Plan". In collaboration with the people of Ngololweni (Sandleni Inkhundla) BERCS fenced the wetland to protect it from being damaged by animals. The enclosed area is about 4 hacters, and it was designated by the local authority. It is envisaged that from the protected wetland, the community will benefit high volume of clean water. The wetland will also produce cyperus latifolius (likhwane) and cyperus marginatus (inchoboza) grasses for making sleeping mats, which could be sold for income.



Picture 9: Wetland protection

ii) Provision of household water harvesting materials, storage materials & tools

Forty-four (44) water tanks with capacity of 5000 litres were purchased and distributed to 44 vulnerable households in Hosea Inkhundla (Ka-Liba, Ondiyaneni and Lushini chiefdoms). The main objective of distributing the water tanks was to assist the selected households harvest rainwater to improve their access to clean water for domestic use and watering their backyard gardens.



Picture 10: Water harvesting material distributed

iii) Training of Peer-to-peer support group for PLHIV at the clinic

A peer group of fifty-five (55) pregnant women was established and this was a group of mothers for the children under five. Supporting this new group aims to foster its

growth and sustainability, directly benefiting the project's efforts to combat child malnutrition. The mothers were trained on proper nutrition practices, especially for children under the age of five years. In addition, the focus was also on how they can better their care-taking skills, especially for children living with HIV. The training was done in Silele clinic, and it was facilitated by the nurses and a nutrition specialist from the Ministry of Agriculture.

iv) Support MoH towards the recruitment of blood donor.

Blood donor recruitment: A total number of 504 volunteers was trained on blood donor recruitment as blood donor mobilizers. These volunteers were trained by 5 BERCS Blood Donor Training of Trainers and 504 blood donor recruitment volunteers. During a blood donor recruitment drive, the volunteers support the activity and the Eswatini National Blood Transfusion (ENBTS). Table 4 below shows disaggregation by branch, ToT and the Blood Donor recruiter volunteer.

Table 39: ToT and Trained Blood Donor Mobilisers Disaggregated by Branch

Branch	Training Trainers Trained	Blood donor recruiters trained
Mbabane	1	100
Manzini	1	95
Piggs Peak	1	97
Nhlangano	1	111
Siteki	1	101
Total	5	504

3.7.3 First AID

A. Community First Aid

Baphalali were able to provide first aid services to 19 251 people during this reporting period. First aid services provided include help in different events and gatherings such as Umhlanga, Incwala, Buganu, Soccer games, Good Friday, Sibaya and others. As per our First Aid protocols, help provided to the people included: wound cleaning & dressing through application of either zinc oxide or render wound dressing using bandages, control coughing by giving cough mixture, providing pain control medication such as pain killers & myogel, rehydration by giving water and oral rehydration solution and referrals. Below is table 4 showing the statistics of the people who received help during the different events in the reporting period.

Table 40: First Aid Posts and People Assisted

First Aid Posts	Number of people assisted
Good Friday Services	1462
King's Birthday	2100
Shembe Prayer Services	1765
Etjendlovu High School official opening	391
Correctional Day	274
Hiking at Mahamba Gorge and Gobolondlo	566
Eswatini International Trade Fair 2024	257
World Aids Day Campaign	218
Umhlanga (Ludzidzini & Mbangweni)	5900

Ngwane Graduation at Ngwane Teacher Training College	83
Soccer Games	323
Incwala	2232
Buganu (Buhleni & Hlane)	3680
Grand total	19 251

B. Workplace and Community First Aid Training

In the period under review, the National Society provided first aid training (both at workplace and in communities), sold first aid kits and conducted first aid drills in institutions. Baphalali conducted a total of 68 (57 commercials and 11 community) First Aid training sessions and reached a total number of 1048 people. Baphalali conducted the training in all the National Society Branches (Manzini, Mbabane, Nhlangano, Pigg's Peak and Siteki). Companies trained on first aid include Eswatini Electricity Company, Mbabane City Council, Simunye and Mhlume Sugar Mills, Ubombo Sugar Limited, and others. During this reporting period, the National Society conducted First Aid drills only in Siteki Branch. The first aid drills were conducted at the requests of the different companies. Details on the first aid training are provided in the table below.

Table 41: Commercial and Community First Aid Trainings from April 2024 to March 2025

BRANCH	COMMERCIAL FIRST AID				COMMUNITY FIRST AID		Total trained
	No. of Trainings	People Trained	First Aid Kits Sold	First Aid Drills	No. of Trainings	People Trained	
Manzini	13	184	0	0	2	44	228
Mbabane	12	180	4	0	3	64	244
Nhlangano	5	88	1	0	1	16	104
Siteki	21	294	4	12	3	54	348
Pigg's Peak	6	78	8	0	2	46	124
Totals	57	824	17	12	11	224	1048

C. Capacity Building on First Aid

BERCS provided 2 communities first aid training for 36 people from two branches. BERCS provides these trainings to all first responders, staff and volunteers in readiness for any emergency. When new staff and volunteers join the NS, they are enrolled for first aid training as novices. When their certificates expire, they get refresher training.

Table 42: Community First Aid Trainings Conducted

COMMUNITY FIRST AID		
Site	No. of Trainings	People Trained
Mbabane	1	27
Siteki	1	9
Totals	2	36

3.7.4 Corporate Communications

Baphalali Eswatini Red Cross Society were able to disseminate information to the public using different modalities which include: the 15 minutes' radio slot allocated to

Baphalali in the national radio; running designed messages in the national radio, distribution of information education & communication (IEC) material, face-to-face communications in community meetings and in national events. In the period under review, Baphalali had forty-six sessions of 15 minutes' slots in the national radio (SiSwati channel) through which information and key messages was disseminated to the public.

Baphalali in collaboration with other agencies and Government Ministries developed key relevant messages and run them in the national radio. Messages create awareness and capacity to the public on different issues which include food security, importance of nutrition at household level, HIV/AIDS, and health related messages. The impact of the dissemination was observed through the number of calls from the public who needed more information on the programmes offered by BERCS and possibilities to come and assist in their communities. It is believed that these messages reached a bigger population of people of Eswatini considering the Eswatini Broadcasting and information Services listenership rates.

3.7.5 National Society Development (NSD)

A. Board Training

During this reporting period, the Board had a one-day training on International Humanitarian Law (IHL) which was facilitated by the International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC). The training was conducted in Mbabane and all Board members were in attendance. Immediately after the IHL training, the Board had a two-day refresher training on their oversight responsibilities. This training was facilitated by the International Federation of Red Cross (IFRC). The refresher training was also to orient two new Board members who replaced those who left the NS due to retirement.

B. Coordination and International Meetings

In this reporting period, the National Society was able to host a Red Cross meeting for Southern Africa, known as the Southern Africa Partnership Red Cross Societies (SAPRCS), which was held in Eswatini. This meeting was attended by 10 Southern Africa countries, donor partners for the local Red Cross, the President and Vice President of the International Red Cross, and many other Red Cross movement members.

While in the country, the IFRC President and Vice President were able to pay a courtesy call to His Majesty the King Mswati III. The SAPRCS meeting was officially opened by His Excellency the Honourable Prime Minister.

Baphalali also attended and participated in a Red Cross conference which was held in Geneva in October 2024. This meeting was attended by the Baphalali together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs who were representing the Government of Eswatini.

C. STAFF Training on Protection, Gender & disability Inclusion (PGI)

Baphalali conducted a refresher training for 55 staff members and 100 volunteers on the seven Red Cross Fundamental Principles. The training aimed at enforcing the Fundamental principles so that they could be observed at all levels of the National Society. In addition, the National Society organized training for staff and volunteers on protection gender and inclusion (PGI) and Inclusive Disability. A total of 48 BERCS staff (24 Males: 24 females) were trained on prevention and protection against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse policy. The aim of the training was to orient staff on how they

can acknowledge, report and refer cases of abuse in the workplace. Main topics covered include protection gender and Inclusion/disability (PGI/D), how to work with people with disabilities, protection and dignity considerations linked to taking pictures, videos for reporting. The training helped participants to understand how to recognise, respond and report incidents linked to breach of safeguarding policies when they occur. The training was facilitated by the IFRC PGI Office and BERCS Safe & Inclusive Officer.

Table 43: BERCS Annual Financial Report

Project Details	Budget2024/2025	Actuals	Variances	Percentage
103107 Red Cross Clinics				
Personnel Costs	4,825,956.00	4,824,687.56	1,268.44	0%
Transport costs	128,000.00	125,483.80	2,516.20	2%
First aid events	200,000.00	202,000.00	-2,000.00	-1%
Medical suppliers	1,060,000.00	1,048,098.28	11,901.72	1%
Utilities	180,000.00	177,059.52	2,940.48	2%
Consumables Materials and suppliers	192,000.00	192,403.36	-403.36	0%
Administration fees	40,000.00	40,236.00	-236	-1%
Sub Total	6,625,956.00	6,609,968.52	15,987.48	0%
10333 Disaster Management				
Personnel Costs	4,329,488.00	4,230,756.44	98,731.56	2%
Transport costs	560,464.00	563,133.28	-2,669.28	0%
Rapid Assessments	162,000.00	162,740	-740	0%
Set Disaster Committees & build capacity	80,000.00	78,460.00	1,540.00	-2%
Utilities	230,000.00	231,366.36	-1,366.36	-1%
Administration Fees	240,000.00	239,958.00	42	0%
Subtotal	5,601,952.00	5,506,414.08	95,537.92	2%
Total	12,227,908.00	12,116,382.60	111,525.40	1%

103107 Clinics

- 1 Personnel costs:** Within acceptable range.
- 2. Transport Costs:** Within acceptable range.
- 3. First Aid events:** The National Society provided First Aid posts services during the Eswatini National events which include the Umhlanga Reed Dance, Mini and Main Incwala Ceremonies as well as the weeding ceremonies at Ludzidzini and Buganu at Buhleni and Hlane.
- 4. Medical Suppliers:** The three clinics Mahwalala, Sigombeni, and Silele were able to procure medical drugs this financial year.
- 5. Utilities:** Baphalali were able to pay for the utility bills which include electricity, water and telephone.
- 6. Consumables Materials and Supplies:** BERCS procured protective clothing for some staff nurses and support staff.
- 7. Administration Fees:** The office paid all the administration costs that were incurred during the reporting period.

10333 Disaster Management

- 1 **Personnel costs:** Within acceptable range.
 2. **Transport Costs:** Within acceptable range
 3. **Rapid Assessments:** BERCS has been able to conduct emergency rapid assessments and provided support to affected households during this financial year.
 4. **Set Disaster committees & Capacity building:** The office did set up disaster committees and capacity building to staff and volunteers this financial year.
 - 5 **Utilities:** Within acceptable range.
 6. **Administration Fees:** The office paid all the administration costs that were incurred during the financial reporting financial year.
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