 

**“STRENGTHENING NATIONAL AND**

**COMMUNITY RESILIENCE**

**TO DISASTER RISKS**

**IN SWAZILAND”**

**END OF PROJECT EVALUATION**

**FINAL REPORT**

**SWAZILAND**

**December 2010**

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

UNDP in partnership with the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) under the Deputy Prime Minister’s Office (DPMO), has implemented a two-year project entitled “Strengthening national and community resilience to disaster risks in Swaziland”. The project sought to support national and local resilience to disaster risks within the context of sustainable development - through strengthening national and local disaster risk reduction capacities. This is an End of Project Evaluation Report.

The purpose of the End of Project Evaluation was to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the project in achieving its intended results. The findings and recommendations of this End of Project Evaluation will inform future DRR programme/projects development and assist UNDP increase its effectiveness and impact.

The evaluation attempted to be as participatory as possible. Apart from the document review, which provided the background and logic of the project, there were consultative meetings with key stakeholders. Besides, key informants interviews were conducted with stakeholders knowledgeable about the project to solicit views on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of the project. An institutional assessment was made of the main partners and community beneficiaries.

The scope of the evaluation covered UNDP, the implementing agency namely the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA), Disaster management institutions/organisations, NGOs, UN Agencies and the communities that benefited from the project.

The findings indicate that:

The project was relevant as it was meant to provide support in building capacity to strengthen national and local resilience to disaster risks. At the national level the governance systems for disaster risk reduction were strengthened through training workshops for NDMA staff, UNDP, government departments, NGOs and other stakeholders. The training workshops covered relevant topics such as the understanding of DRR concept; early recovery including the development of drought emergency response strategic plan; application of DRR tools for mainstreaming in development programmes, plans and policies; and contingency planning.

Most of the project objectives were achieved. There were main challenges in the achievement of project outcomes because of the constraining time frame, resources and the over ambitious nature of the project indicators, which is blamed on the project design.

Capacity development was implemented for most stakeholders including piloted communities but more needs to be done with the NDMA to increase its technical capacity if its mandate is to be fulfilled. Government commitment to the project has to improve. The composite financial data provided was not helpful in determining precisely the efficiency and cost effectiveness of the project because it could not be disaggregated to DRR project components.

It is recommended that the project duration be extended to achieve the major outcomes; the DRR has to incorporate industrial and road accidents; the NDMA be strengthened further and that climate change adaptations have to be integrated with DRR.

Some of the lessons learnt include the impact of partner commitments on the project; the long term nature of achieving community resilience; the need for baseline surveys and stakeholder coordination and collaboration.

It is concluded that project outcomes could not be fully achieved because the time frame was too short and the finances were not committed fully by partners (Government of Swaziland) as planned. Capacity development at NDMA is incomplete as there are staff positions which remain vacant hence cannot fulfil its mandate as required.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**7.1 Recommendations**

**7.1.1 Extend project duration**

Project performance has been constrained by the time frame. The two year period was not adequate to achieve the major outcomes even though there was a six months extension. It is therefore recommended that the project be extended to subsequent phases so that the main outcomes are achieved. This may require a change in project design, which is informed by baseline data and incorporates more communities. Since people living with AIDS remain crucial beneficiaries, the partners should include NERCHA as a key stakeholder. Again, the main hazards have implications on environmental sustainability, hence the Swaziland Environment Authority should be considered a major role player and be included as a stakeholder.

**7.1.2 The National DRR framework should incorporate Industrial/ Road accidents.**

The DRR framework has erroneously been confined to mainly natural hazards although disaster risk is wider than this. For example, there are major accidents which occur on the roads or in industries. The fire contingency plan, for example deals with bushfires only. This is a big omission. It is recommended that the DRR framework should include industrial, chemical / road accidents. Under the DRR National Action Plan (2008-2015), chemical and industrial accidents are expected to be dealt with by the Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs. However, this ministry does not feature prominently among DRR stakeholders. These disasters could be considered more relevant if they were under the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry with the Federation of Swaziland Employers and Chamber of Commerce (FSE&CC) as the DRR focal point. This will extend the focus to manmade disasters which are equally destructive and make substantial contributions to losses of life and property. Furthermore, the incorporation of road and industrial accidents in DRR is likely to attract more private sector involvement.

**7.1.3 The NDMA should be strengthened further**

The NDMA is the main actor in DRR initiatives but is weak in terms of technical capacity and organisational location. It is recommended that the NDMA be strengthened further:

* The NDMA should be empowered to reduce vulnerability and disaster risk better. Some of the key objectives of the agency include setting parameters for disaster mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery measures; supervising and monitoring these aspects; and data analysis and dissemination of information to support these and other functions. These are technical functions which require technical expertise and experience. Proposed positions include those of Deputy Director; Manager - Risk Reduction; Manager - Information Services and Training; Manager - Operations; and Manager - Management Services. The technical positions at the agency should be filled with qualified and experienced personnel hence capacity development remains crucial. Most of the problems faced by NDMA are caused by lack of *technical – know - how* in the agency.
* The agency should be transformed into a parastatal organisation to give it more autonomy to fulfil its mandate without being overshadowed by government bureaucracy. Its performance will be more under public scrutiny hence leadership will have to be more aggressive in order to offer better service delivery. This will only happen if the agency has adequate and properly trained staff with suitable qualifications and experience.
* More NDMA visibility should be established at regional and lower levels by recruiting officers at those levels. Regional managers should be appointed to deal with DRR at regional level.

**7.1.4 DRR Capacity should be strengthened at community level**

The strengthening of community resilience is a major outcome of the project. Since communities are major beneficiaries, it is recommended that capacity be strengthened at this level. It has been demonstrated by World Vision through pilot community involvement that collaboration can enhance community participation. It has been recommended that DRR be extended to more communities; hence the World Vision model can be adopted for all new projects. The NDMA should work with the Ministry of Tinkhundla Administration and Development (MTAD) to enhance DRR implementation at the community level.

**7.1.5 Integrate Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction**

There are two programmes that are being run parallel although they have similar outcomes. The DRR is run parallel with Climate Change Adaptations yet the two aim at similar outcomes. A strong NDMA can manage both DRR and climate change adaptations and it is recommended that the two be integrated and institutionalized under the NDMA to minimize implementation costs.

**8. LESSONS LEARNED**

From the project evaluation a few lessons have been learnt, which can be taken into account as other projects are designed.

8.1 Community resilience is a long term outcome which requires ample time to achieve. Activities towards its achievement have to be planned carefully and systematically. For example, capacity building at community level is crucial and may seem complex to achieve. However, if it is implemented by experts with a good understanding of the basic concepts and their application, an understanding of the community (cultural) context and good knowledge delivery techniques, the outcomes can be fantastic and rewarding.

8.2 Project outcomes depend on the concerted efforts by all partners in fulfilling their commitments to the project. Defaulting by any of the parties jeopardises project outcomes despite good project design. The commitment of the government of Swaziland is an example in this case.

8.3 Collaboration and good coordination with all stakeholders can expedite project outcomes in a cost-effective manner. Stakeholder analysis at the beginning of the project is important in evaluating and understanding resources available that can be contributed to the project by the various stakeholders. The World Vision model in piloting community activities and the contribution of the Swaziland Baphalali Red Cross Society in the design and production of awareness materials were good examples in this project.

8.4 The development of DRR school material for inclusion in the school curriculum can be a long and arduous process because curriculum change takes long to justify and implement.

8.5 Baseline surveys are necessary to provide important data for project implementation. The lack of baseline data may lead to unrealistic expectations of outcomes.