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Resilient nations.*

# COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

## UNDP Eswatini

### 2021-2022

#### Country Context

The Kingdom of Eswatini is faced with sluggish economic growth, fiscal crisis, high levels of unemployment, poverty and inequality.<sup>1</sup> Nearly 59 per cent of the population live below the poverty line and 20.1 per cent below the extreme poverty line. The country's Human Development Index (HDI) value grew steadily from 0.545 in 1990 to 0.608 in 2018, placing Eswatini in the medium human development category. However, when the HDI value is discounted for inequality it falls to 0.430.<sup>4</sup> High levels of poverty and extreme poverty combined with inequality are critical impediments to making sustained progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. Women, young people, people living with disabilities and people living with HIV/AIDS are the poorest and most vulnerable members of society.

Eswatini has a Gender Inequality Index value of 0.569, ranking it 141 of 160 countries. Even though 14.7 per cent of parliamentary seats are held by women, only 30 per cent of adult women have reached at least a secondary level of education compared to 32.7 percent of their male counterparts. For every 100,000 live births, 389 women die from pregnancy-related causes and the adolescent birth rate is 77 births per 1,000 women aged 15-19 years.

The rate of female participation in the labour market is 42.7 per cent compared to 67.2 for men, and Swazi women are more likely to own micro-enterprises and less likely to own small and medium-sized firms due to lower educational attainments and hence lesser formal employment prospects.

Eswatini is a landlocked country with an open economy. As a member of the Common Monetary Area with Lesotho, Namibia and South Africa, its currency is pegged at parity with the South African rand. Eswatini is a member of the Southern African Customs Union which includes Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and South Africa, allowing for free movement of goods internally within the Union and distribution of customs and excise taxes among the membership. This is the largest single contributor

to the revenue base, accounting for over 40 per cent of total revenue on average over the past four years.

The National Development Plan (2019/2020-2021/2022) and Strategic Road Map (2019-2022)<sup>7</sup> prioritize sustainable economic growth and inclusive governance to ensure that economic opportunities reach those furthest behind. However, the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has exposed the country to immense vulnerability related to the slow economic performance at the regional level and is expected to exacerbate extreme poverty and inequality.

**(Country programme document for Eswatini (2021-2025))**

## Introduction

The UNDP Eswatini Communications Strategy 2021-2022 provides a framework for articulating the key messages of the Country Programme Document (CPD) 2021-2025. The key portfolios of the UNDP Eswatini CPD are *inclusive economic growth and efficient and participatory governance*. The CPD is guided by the 2021-2025 United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Eswatini. Also informing the CPD is the National Development Plan (2019/2020-2021/2022) and Strategic Road Map (2019-2022) that prioritize sustainable economic growth and inclusive governance to ensure that economic opportunities in Eswatini.

Underpinning the CPD is UNDP's integrator role in supporting the Government in leaving no one behind and strengthening institutions to reach those furthest behind first. Under the UNSDCF, UNDP will work together with other agencies in promoting the UN messages and advocacy for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This strategy highlights key elements of leveraging UNDP's comparative advantage with the intent of increasing institutional visibility and reputation; align towards resource mobilisation and harnessing of partnerships. Implementation of the strategy will prioritize the strengthening of the communication function and key communication activities that keep momentum and resonance with stakeholders.

## Current communication efforts

Within the preceding year, UNDP's visibility in Eswatini has been on the rise with increased understanding of UNDP work in Eswatini. This has been coupled with visibility of other UN agencies especially under the UNCG. The key for the implementing this strategy is maintaining a consistency in messaging UNDP's integrator role in Eswatini. UNDP support in Eswatini cuts across a broad spectrum of areas of technical support that include among others financial and technical support to women and youth to enhance their entrepreneurial skills and access to markets for income generation and employment creation; climate change, economic policy development, capacity development to government and civil society organisations.

With the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, UNDP's support increased to response through community emergency responses for social protection, increasing capacity for emergency response within national institutions, procurement of health equipment, supporting digitalisation of government institutions and socio-economic assessments and establishing partnerships for a better and faster response to the needs of stakeholders. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has exposed the country to immense vulnerability related to the slow economic performance at the regional level and is expected to exacerbate extreme poverty and inequality.

Internally team dynamics for communication have also shifted with the use of digital platforms and working modalities. This also presented a new dynamic in the delivering of activities with stakeholders.

Under the shift to address the COVID-19 response, UNDP has earned trust with the media and partners in its flexibility in the partnership framework and a clear message of UNDP support being anchored in national priorities as articulated through national documents such as the National Disaster Plan. Evidence has been through unsolicited media engagement and response through social media platforms on UNDP COVID-19 activities. This approach has given the UNDP leverage with the media to better understand UNDP's role and interface easier with different ministries, especially in the provision of building solutions and adapting to the pandemic.

Against this background there are both opportunities and challenges for communicating UNDP's integrator role. There has been exponential increase in the use of social media in Eswatini, however traditional press remains a key element in reaching certain demographics, including the strength of the use of radio a medium. UNDP will continue to explore for more innovative communication through the UNCG, invest in partnerships will amplify UNDP's advocacy and promote effective application of tools, expertise and resources for coherence and consistency of messaging. Internally there is opportunity for increasing communication capacities of the country office for better and aligned streams for communication amongst the team and external stakeholders.

### **Strengthening the CO's Communication capacities**

**Internal:** It is important that communication be an integral part of the internal communications within the country office. The strengthening of communication capacities and appreciation of the role communication plays in delivering on results and impact of the UNDP activities is important. Key communication capacities and understanding such as communication protocols or understanding the overall messaging for external stakeholders will greatly improve the UNDP's outreach and networking externally and internally foster synergies for teamwork and working environment

**External:** Great opportunities exist for the country office to harness the media space with the accurate key messaging linked with activities and combined voices with partners and stakeholders, timely distribution and maintained relationship with the media in Eswatini. Opportunities for capacity building the media in reporting accurately also exist thereby building a critical mass for accurate reporting. Digital platforms especially twitter, Facebook and YouTube are widely used in Eswatini.

### **Goal**

The goal for the communication strategy is to create awareness of UNDP's mandate and work in supporting the development agenda in Eswatini

### **Objectives**

- i. Position UNDP as an integrator in leaving no one behind and strengthening institutions to reach those furthest behind first
- ii. Contribute to the UN common messages within Eswatini
- iii. Communicate UNDP activities and programmes in Eswatini
- iv. Improve internal communication capacities

### **Key messaging**

Drawing from the CPD and in alignment with future programmatic interventions under the CPD, the key messages are as follows:

- i. Thought leadership in integrating policy design and implementation with capacity development of front-line institutions, in partnership with national and United Nations partners;

- ii. Human rights-based approaches while offering innovative “next generation UNDP” solutions which ensure that women, persons with disabilities, persons living with HIV/AIDS, the poor and marginalized groups receive support;
- iii. Strengthen public sector institutions
- iv. Strengthen institutional partnerships nationally and regionally
- v. Innovative financing options, technology-based solutions and innovations led by the Accelerator Lab;
- vi. Leverage UNDP national, regional and global networks and expertise to strengthen resilience to drought, climate change, vulnerability to poverty and the impacts of COVID-19.
- vii. Socio-economic response to COVID-19: working with national leadership and the UNCT under the overall United Nations framework for the immediate socioeconomic response to COVID-19.
- viii. Strengthen institutional partnerships nationally and regionally

### **Target Audiences**

- Government including policy makers, key line ministries, local government
- Sectoral partners including civil society organisations, private sector associations, traditional chiefs, youth organisation, women organisations, informal sector players local community leaders
- Media
- Development partners – UN agencies, UNCT, UNCG
- Regional and continental bodies such as the SADC, African Union, AfDB
- Academic
- Other UNDP Country Offices

### **Key communication activities**

The key communication activities will maintain UNDP’s presence in the media and general public understanding of UNDP’s role and mandate. It is important that a momentum be maintained. The following are the key activities:

- Social media: Twitter, Facebook, YouTube
- Press engagements (press releases, interview on TV/Radio)
- Website (both the UNDP and UN websites share stories for further reach)
- Publications: blogs, policy briefs UN newsletter and Annual Report
- Visual communications: infographics, motion graphics, short videos, documentary production, photo
- Partnership activities such as national dialogues or UN supported dialogues
- UNCG joint activities (commemoration days)
- Campaigns such as SDGs campaigns
- Articles for RBA news on website

### **Measuring success**

- Social media metrics – Twitter, Facebook, YouTube
- Website – Google analytics
- Local Press monitoring
- Engagement activities including shared and joint activities with other UN agencies and partners
- C4D: analysing behaviour change, especially for internal communication procedures and interaction

- Publishing: Number of blogs, articles, policy briefs
- Adherence to communication workplan and reporting

## ANNEX 1: WORKPLAN

Objective 1: Position UNDP as an integrator in leaving no one behind and strengthening institutions to reach those furthest behind first					
Objective 3: Communicate UNDP activities and programmes in Eswatini					
No	Activity	Timeframe	Target Audience	Output	Responsible parties/persons
1.	Media engagement plan	All year round	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Government including policy makers, key line ministries, local government</li> <li>•Sectoral partners including civil society organisations, private sector associations, traditional chiefs, youth organisation, women organisations, informal sector players local community leaders</li> <li>•Media</li> <li>•Development partners – UN agencies, UNCT, UNCG</li> <li>•Regional and continental bodies such as the SADC, African Union, AfDB</li> <li>•Academic</li> <li>•Other UNDP Country Offices</li> </ul>	Press briefings/ releases/ op-eds Social media plan Photography, short videos,	Communication with guidance from RR as institutional spokesperson
2.	Website maintenance	All year		Human interest stories News and stories Blogs, Publications (policy briefs, economic assessment reports etc.)	Communications
3.	Joint partner activities	As and when opportunity is availed		Dialogue series that supports advocacy and enables voices of different actors Collaborative advantages of different United Nations agencies by providing an integrator platform	Communication/ programme staff
4.	Publications	Annually		Annual Report Brochures Infographics Motion graphics Policy briefs	Communications/ programme staff
5.	Advocacy activities	All year		Use of annual UNDP global publications such as the HDR Launch, Human Rights Report Sustainable Development Goals Decade of Action-advocacy events, at the national and international levels/ enhancing capacities for digital communications in government	Communications/programme s and RR's Office
6.	Thematic activities	All year		Deepened partnerships in the country office through the implementation programmatic activities	Communications/ programme staff

### Objective 2: Contribute to the UN common messages within Eswatini

No	Activity	Timeframe	Target Audience	Output	Responsible parties/persons
1.	UN Newsletter	All year	Combined target audiences of all agencies in UN Eswatini	Articles articulating UNDP's contribution towards Delivering as One and highlighting partnership with UN agencies towards delivery	Communications
2.	Commemoration Days – messaging and activities	Defined days		Appropriate commemoration social media messaging (guidance from global office)	UNCG and Communications
3.	UNCG Outreach activities	Defined Days		UNDP visible presence in outreach activities including all communication platforms – digital and print	UNCG and Communications

### Objective 4: Improve internal communication capacities

No	Activity	Timeframe	Target Audience	Output	Responsible parties/persons
1.	Internal communication training for country office	2 annual internal communication capacity development sessions	Internal – Country Office	Better internal protocols for communication Understanding of the role of communication to external publics	RR, DRR and communications
2.	Internal communication update mechanism	Quarterly		Internal quarterly update on programmatic activities/ human resources changes etc	Communications