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Eswatini Education Sector Analysis

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Eswatini Education Sector Analysis 2021

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Foreword

The Government of Eswatini recognizes the importance of education and the role it plays in building human capital and transforming the country's economic and social landscape. The country is also committed to achieving Sustainable Development Goals 4 and 5 related to quality education and gender equality. This is evidenced by the high priority the country gives to the education sector in terms of overall public spending and the introduction of Free Primary Education in 2010. The overarching policy goal for the education sector is to provide high quality, inclusive basic and senior secondary education as well as to provide life-long learning opportunities to all citizens.

As a means to deliver to this overarching goal, the Ministry of Education and Training carried out an in-depth education sector analysis (ESA) in order to diagnose the sector's relative strengths and weaknesses. The resulting ESA provides evidence-based information about the sector and identifies key challenges and priority policy areas.

The ESA preparation was led by the Ministry supported by the World Bank. This was a collaborative process with partners active in the education sector in Eswatini which ran over a period of 12 months. The active partners included relevant government ministries, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academics, private providers and development partners. This collaboration allowed for the preparation of this comprehensive ESA drawing on all available data of the Ministry affirmed by insights and inputs from the Ministry's sub-sector teams as well as from a variety of stakeholders.

Based on this ESA report, the Ministry is in the process of preparing its next Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) setting out the direction for changes and investments in early childhood development and education (ECDE), basic education, senior secondary, and post-school education and training over the next ten years.

Recent progress in improving the quality of ECDE services in Eswatini includes the development of quality standards for pre-primary education and of a Multi-Sectoral ECDE Framework as well as the introduction of pre-service training programs for ECDE teachers. Since the introduction of Free Primary Education (FPE) in 2010, there have been substantial improvements in access, participation, and retention at primary and secondary levels and Eswatini is very close to achieving universal access to primary education. To support Eswatini's transition to a knowledge-based economy, a National Curriculum Framework for General Education has been developed as well as a new primary school curriculum which is currently being rolled out grade for grade. Overall access to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is rising with new institutions being established and access to tertiary education has increased substantially, albeit from a low base. To help raise the quality and relevance of TVET and tertiary education, the Eswatini

Higher Education Council (ESHEC) was established and tasked with setting up a comprehensive quality assurance system.

Despite the important education achievements during recent years, several challenges remain looking ahead. Expanding access to and raising the quality of ECDE services is a key priority to better prepare children for school. To keep all boys and girls in school until completion and increasing access to secondary education is another priority, and there is a need to focus on the poorest and most vulnerable children, particularly children who are orphaned. Raising the quality of primary and secondary education will require strengthening of the teacher management and development system, measuring student learning at regular intervals, and the setting of targets to allocate resources to where they are most needed. Equitable access to post-school education and training needs to be further increased and programs need to more strengthened to be more relevant to labor market needs. Establishing systems to regularly collect and analyze data on ECDE, TVET provision and on teachers to inform expansion and improve resource allocation is also a priority.

In addition to these challenges, the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to have a devastating effect on learning levels of students. Schools were closed for about a year in Eswatini and while the MoET was proactive in ensuring remote learning options were available for all children, like other countries, the impact of the pandemic on learning levels are likely to be severe particularly for vulnerable and marginalized children. The Government's education sector response to the COVID-19 pandemic, released in March 2020, places a strong emphasis on early emergency response and recovery. As schools are now open, recovering learning losses and building back the education system stronger to respond to similar crises will be critical.

Given the need for further investments to address the priorities outlined above and pressure to reduce fiscal spending, it will be essential to ensure that the education sector remains a priority in terms of the national budget and to examine options for reallocating spending within the sector to ensure the largest number of children and youth benefit from a quality education.

It is our hope that the key challenges identified by this ESA will be translated into appropriate, implementable policy responses by the next ESSP to further improve education service delivery in Eswatini both in terms of access, equity and quality. Such implementable policy would have positive effects on Eswatini's economic development and poverty alleviation, supporting the country to become a 21st century economy.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who participated in the preparation of this ESA and look forward to your continued support in building human capital in Eswatini by continuing to strengthen the education and training system.

Hon. Lady Howard Mabuza (MP)
Minister for Education and Training

Marie-Francoise Nelly
World Bank Country Director

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the Honorable Minister of Education and Training, Honorable Lady Howard Mabuza for engaging the World Bank to support the second analysis of the Education Sector in Eswatini. The first Education Sector Analysis (ESA) was carried out during 2009/10 and was supported by the World Bank. This ESA builds on the previous education sector analysis and tells the story of education and training which is the cornerstone for the achievement of sustainable economic development, financial stability, and growth and improved quality of life for the people of Eswatini.

The culmination of this ESA report is a joint effort by the World Bank and the Ministry of Education and a number of stakeholders in the education sector such as the Deputy Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Tinkhundla, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, United Nations (UN) agencies, European Union, and the Taiwan Technical Mission amongst others. Working together, they have conducted a diagnosis of the sector that will inform future planning, decisions, and financing of the sector.

The purpose of conducting the sector analysis was to achieve an in-depth understanding of the current status of education and training in Eswatini. The sector analysis paid special attention to access, equality, quality, relevance, and efficiency of education in Eswatini with the aim to provide a foundation for future improvements. The ESA provides a comprehensive assessment covering all levels of education in the formal and non-formal education system from Early Childhood Care and Education to Tertiary Education including cross-cutting and emerging issues such as; poverty, gender, vulnerability, location, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), substance abuse and so on.

Sincere gratitude goes to the Principal Secretary, Mr. Bertram Stewart for his unfailing support and wisdom in guiding the Steering Committee in the preparation of the ESA. Special thanks go to the Director of Education, Dr. Ntombenhle Dlamini, who chaired the ESA Steering committee and provided guidance and support in all stages of the ESA. We would also like to thank all MoET Heads of Departments and stakeholders that contributed in various ways in the preparation of the sector analysis report. Without their inputs, the ESA would not have been achieved. Special appreciation goes to the Education Planning and Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) departments, who provided technical and moral support to the local teams, facilitated data collection, and coordinated the work of the steering committee on the government side. They have liaised with other relevant stakeholders in the education sector such as the Deputy Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labor and Social Security, the Ministry of Tinkhundla, the Examinations Council of Eswatini, the development partners, and non- governmental organizations and

the World Bank team throughout the ESA development process.

Other contributors in Eswatini were: (i) the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development, in particular the Chief Economist, for the support and advice in the various Missions held between the World Bank and the MoET, (ii) the EMIS department for providing data which was crucial for the analysis, (iii) the Central Statistics Office of Eswatini for providing population and household data for the analysis and their availability to engage with the team of consultants, (iv) the Examinations Council of Eswatini for providing data and inputs on the national examinations process, and (v) the MoET Administration and the National Curriculum Centre for providing facilities and equipment to connect the various local teams with the World Bank Team during virtual meetings. Finally, special thanks go to all the MoET colleagues who reviewed the draft ESA report. This is highly appreciated and has contributed significantly to the achievement of the assignment.

Colleagues from the World Bank working together with the Ministry of Education and Training and development partners provided valuable input into the design of the ESA. Our sincere gratitude goes to Elizabeth Ninan Dulvy, Education Team Leader for the World Bank Education for Eswatini who led the team for the data collection, analysis, and report writing. The Ministry highly appreciates the work done by the World Bank team: Gunilla Pettersson Gelander (Lead Author/Co-lead Analyst, Consultant), Mamy Rakotomalala (Lead Analyst, Consultant), Jesal Kika (Author, Consultant), Alasdair Fraser (Analyst, Consultant), Tihtina Zenebe Gebre (Author, Economist), Jutta Franz (Author, Consultant), Marlaine Lockheed (Author, Consultant), Shilpa Challa (Author, Consultant), Melanie Jaya (Program Assistant), Nomagugu Khumalo (Team Assistant), and Simangele Nkambule (Team Assistant). The following World Bank reviewers provided valuable comments: Kaliope Azzi-Huck (Senior Operations/ Education Specialist), Kebede Feda (Senior Economist) and Marko Kwaramba (Economist). The World Bank team worked under the guidance and leadership of the Country Director for Southern Africa, Marie-Francoise Marie-Nelly; the Resident Representative for Eswatini, Nonhlahla Zindela; and the Practice Manager for Education for Eastern and Southern Africa, Muna Meky as well as the former Practice Manager for Education, Halil Dundar.

Finally, the ESA could not have gone forward without financial support from the World Bank. The Ministry is grateful for the financial support and is eager to continue working with the World Bank in the future. In the short- to medium-term, Eswatini hopes to immediately put in place an Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) informed by this ESA that will strengthen the education sector's contribution to increasing employment and productivity, sustainable economic growth and development, financial stability, and improved quality of life for the people of Eswatini.

Executive summary

Eswatini recognizes the importance of education and the role it plays in building human capital and transforming its economic and social landscape. This is evidenced by the high priority given to the education sector in terms of overall public spending and the introduction of Free Primary Education (FPE) in 2010. The overarching policy goal for the education sector is to provide high quality basic and senior secondary education and life-long learning opportunities to all citizens in order to support personal development and promote Eswatini's cultural development, economic growth, and global competitiveness (MoET, 2018a).

The current Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) for 2010-2022 and the first and second National Education and Training Improvement Programs that operationalize the plan, were based on the comprehensive 2010 Education Sector Review (Marope, 2010, MoET, 2010, 2016, 2018b). As the current plan and program come to their end, this education sector analysis (ESA) was undertaken. In addition, complementary studies for the ECDE and TVET sub-sectors will be conducted separately to collect primary data to further help inform the development of the next ESSP. The ESA report examines the recent status of the education system to provide an evidence-based foundation for the Government's preparation of its next ESSP and help guide the country more generally on the priority issues for the education sector looking forward.

During the preparation of the ESA report there were five missions between October 2019 and August 2020. Following the first mission, the MoET established a Steering Committee and technical task teams to work on the ESA preparation with the World Bank ESA team. Throughout the ESA preparation the MoET senior management and technical task teams and World Bank ESA team worked to ensure all available relevant data and information were used for the ESA preparation and discussed the preliminary analysis at each stage to refine and agree on the overall narrative emerging from the analysis. There were remote meetings between the MoET technical task teams and the World Bank ESA team, and national education agencies/institutions and relevant departments in other line ministries to collect additional information and establish the main issues for each sub-sector. After the drafting of each of the ESA chapters was completed, it was shared with the relevant MoET technical task team for comprehensive review and revised to produce the final chapters for the ESA report.

This executive summary begins with a brief description of the general context for education followed by an overview of recent achievements in education. The main part of the summary sets out the priority issues identified by the ESA report. The final section concludes with a discussion of selected policy options that may be considered looking ahead.

General context for education

Eswatini is a lower-middle income country with a relatively diversified economy but economic growth is volatile and has been low in recent years, and job creation is limited. There is a general mismatch between the skills of those exiting the education system and those required by employers. However, the country has a very young population and population growth is relatively low. This provides both an opportunity to reap a demographic dividend and to ensure social and political stability going forward, if the education system can provide young people with the relevant knowledge and skills needed in the labor market. Strategic investments to keep students in school until completion and to improve the quality of education would also endow students with improved general life skills increasing their contribution to social development.

Although poverty levels have been declining, it remains widespread and entrenched. Almost 60% of the population live below the national poverty line (E975 per person per month)) and 20% live below the extreme poverty line (E463 per person per month) which means they cannot afford any consumption other than the minimum required caloric intake (World Bank, 2019). Poverty is disproportionately concentrated in rural areas with 70% of rural residents living below the national poverty line compared to 20% of urban residents, and it is the main driver behind disparities in education. As a vast majority of the school-age population live in rural areas (more than 75%), this leads to stark differences in education opportunities, participation, and outcomes for rural and urban children.

Further exacerbating poverty is the high prevalence of HIV, which impacts the teaching labor force. It also directly limits many children's education opportunities as it has resulted in a large proportion of children who have lost one or both of their parents. An estimated 32% of children of secondary-school age are orphaned, which creates additional challenges for the education system because these children need extra support academically, emotionally, and financially. Compounding this crisis is the large number of children who are considered vulnerable due to illnesses experienced by parents, are abandoned by a parent, or are living in extreme poverty, resulting in more than 58% of the country's children being orphaned and/or vulnerable (WHO, 2019).

The vulnerable situation of girls is evidenced by 33% of females aged 13 to 18 years having experienced sexual violence in their lifetime (UNICEF, 2019). In the education system, 18% of girls drop out of primary school and 35% of girls drop out of junior secondary school because they become pregnant, with rural and poor girls being at much greater risk. Addressing issues related to the empowerment of girls and women will be critical to accelerate the demographic transition and reduce the prevalence of HIV which is almost twice as high

among young women as among young men (Government of Eswatini, 2019). There are also groups of vulnerable boys who lack positive male role models having lost their fathers, and who are expected to become the main providers for their families. In a context of poverty and limited opportunity, these boys are at risk of dropping out of school, exploitation in the form of intergenerational relationships, risky sexual behavior, and substance abuse (Erasmus et al., 2019).

The education system in Eswatini has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. With the massive loss of face-to-face teaching and learning time in schools, and the lack of access to remote learning opportunities, the pandemic will have detrimental effects on student learning. It may also exacerbate existing inequalities in education, with the poorest children likely to be the hardest hit. The Government took early action to alleviate the impact of the pandemic on education by introducing remote learning opportunities, and there are also community initiatives to support students but schools currently remain closed. The coda at the end of this report discusses what impacts COVID-19 is likely to have on education outcomes and ways to mitigate these based on emerging international evidence.

Box 1 Quick overview of the education system

The education system in Eswatini is organized into four key levels: early childhood care, development, and education (ECDE); primary education; secondary education; and post-school education and training (PSET) which comprises tertiary education and technical and vocational education and training (TVET). Education opportunities for those who never enrolled in, or who dropped out of the formal education system, are provided through non-formal adult education and lifelong learning (AELL) programs.

At ECDE level, there are at least 627 community and private preschools with an average of 34 children per preschool, and also Grade 0 classrooms in 80 public primary schools in rural areas. Primary education accounts for the bulk of enrolment and there are 618 primary schools, and 275 secondary schools.[1] A majority of primary and secondary schools are in rural areas where the majority of school-age children live. Most primary and secondary schools are government-aided which means they receive support from the Government. There are five public formal and around 29 private TVET institutions.[2] AELL is provided through the Sebenta National Institute (decentralized service delivery), the Emlalatini Development Centre (distance education), and eight Adult Education Centers. At tertiary level, the University of Eswatini (UNESWA) is the only public university, there are also three private universities and 34 public and private colleges including teacher training institutions (TTIs).

1 Government-aided schools include community schools, mission schools, government schools, and private schools that receive government assistance.

2 The number of TVET institutions does not cover all private providers.

Recent achievements in education

Early childhood development and education

Expanding provision of ECDE services to promote early childhood development and increase school readiness is a key objective of the MoET. Although progress so far on developing the sub-sector has been relatively slow there are some important achievements. Quality standards for preprimary education, *the Swaziland Early Learning and Development and Standards (SELDS),* have been developed and are currently begin revised. A *Multi-Sectoral ECDE Framework 2018-2022* has been developed to facilitate the scaling up of the delivery of essential care and protection services and support systems for children from conception to age eight and their families. This framework has yet to be adopted. Pre-service training programs for ECDE teachers have been introduced at two of the five public teacher training institutions (TTIs). In 2019, the Government introduced a Grade 0 program for 5-year-olds through a pilot program in 80 public primary schools in rural areas to learn how to best implement such a program.

Primary and secondary education

As part of the process to make the education system competency-based and ensure that the curriculum fully supports Eswatini's transition to a knowledge-based economy, a *National Curriculum Framework for General Education* and primary level curriculum have been developed. The new competency-based curriculum responds to changes and challenges in Eswatini. It covers globalization, promotes education on HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment, facilitates access to education by OVCs, covers children's rights and participation of children with special needs, and introduces IT (MoET, 2018c). The new curriculum is being rolled out grade-by grade; it currently covers Grades 1 and 2 and will cover Grades 1 to 3 in the 2021-2022 school year, with all primary grades planned to implement the new curriculum by 2024.

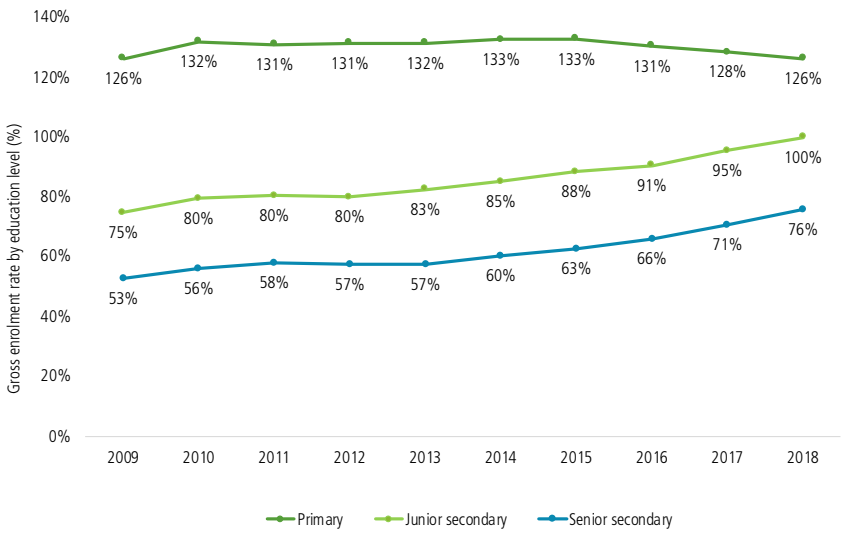
There have been substantial improvements in access, participation, and retention at primary and secondary levels since the introduction of FPE in 2010. Eswatini is now very close to achieving universal access to primary education. The gross enrolment rate (GER) for primary rose from 126% in 2009 to 132% in 2010 after the introduction of the FPE,[3] and is slowly declining as an increasingly larger share of students start school at the appropriate age and repetition rates

3 The GER for primary education is above 100% because of over-age enrolment caused by late school entry and grade repetition. In 2010, 29% of children starting Grade 1 were two or more years older than the official school starting age of six years, an effect of FPE allowing children who were not previously able to enrol to do so. By 2017 this share had declined to 14% as the 'FPE effect' tapers off.

are beginning to go down (Figure 1). For both junior and senior secondary education, the GER has risen substantially (by 25 and 23 percentage points respectively) over the last decade as access has improved. More students also complete primary and junior secondary education. Another major achievement is gender parity in participation in both primary and secondary education, reflecting equality in access for boys and girls.

The school environment has become more favorable in several respects. The allocation of teachers to primary and secondary schools is largely determined by the number of students enrolled. Average student-teacher ratios, 29:1 at primary level and 18:1 at secondary level, are in line with those set out in the current ESSP, and compare favorably in the region, with opportunities for more personalized engagement of teachers and students. In anticipation of the increased demand for education with the introduction of the FPE program in 2010, school infrastructure was expanded through a community participatory approach. As a result, the average number of students per classroom declined from 38 to 31 for primary education and from 41 to 31 for junior secondary education between 2010 and 2017 despite the increase in enrolments.

Figure 1 **Gross enrolment rates by education level before and after the introduction of FPE**



Source: Team calculations based on EMIS and CSO data.

Post-school education and training

To raise the quality and relevance of services provided, the Eswatini Higher Education Council (ESHEC) was established in 2015. It was charged with developing and implementing a quality assurance system for tertiary education and TVET, including registration and accreditation of all institutions, development of standards, quality promotion, and institutional audits.

Access to tertiary education has increased substantially albeit from a low base. In 2017 university education was provided to around 11,400 students, more than half of which were enrolled at the University of Eswatini (UNESWA), an increase of 44% from 2012. Females are well represented in the universities operating in Eswatini accounting for just over half of enrolment. The university participation rate (the number of students per 100,000 inhabitants) was 993 in 2017 and rises to 1,426 when students enrolled abroad, mainly in South Africa, are included. The Government actively funds students to enroll in priority programs in accredited tertiary education institutions abroad, which is a cost-effective way of expanding access to tertiary education.

Recognizing the importance of science, technological innovation, and digital skills, the Government recently established the Royal Science and Technology Park (RSTP) under the Ministry of ICT. The RSTP is divided into two divisions, which are the IT Park and the Biotechnology Park. The Advanced School of IT (ASIT), located at the RSTP IT Park, is operated by private company, Aptech Limited, a global retail and corporate training provider. The goal of ASIT is to have an IT literate Swazi society capacitated in software development, multimedia, cyber security and forensics, and hardworking and networking. The establishment of the ASIT is seen as a way to increase the number of IT graduates in Eswatini and to increase the quality and relevance of graduates' digital skills. The first group of students are set to graduate at the end of 2020.

Overall, access to TVET is increasing with new institutions being added and others in the pipeline to be opened soon. In 2019, the MoET had recorded 34 TVET institutions, five of which are public. Enrolment data are only available for public formal TVET institutions and together these five institutions enrolled some 1,700 students in 2016 representing a modest increase of 17% from three years before.[4]

4 The majority of TVET provider are private but data on enrolment, staffing, training contents, and quality are not available for these which is a major information gap.

Priority issues looking ahead

Despite important education achievements during recent years, several challenges remain looking ahead. The most urgent ones relate to improving education quality at all levels; keeping students in school until completion; strengthening the entry and exit points of the education system; enhancing the management of teachers; and ensuring adequate and equitable education financing as well as spending. Each of these priority issues are discussed in turn below.

Priority 1: Improving student learning

The ultimate objective of the education system is for all students to acquire the knowledge and skills set out in the national curriculum to prepare them for the world of work and enable them to engage in and contribute effectively to society. But many students in Eswatini have not acquired the expected knowledge and skill levels by the time they complete school. There are multiple reasons for this as discussed here and in the remainder of this summary.

There is no systematic national learning assessment to regularly monitor progress. Regular access to representative data on student learning enables effective targeting of resources to improve education quality. However, Eswatini does not have a national learning assessment and only participates in a regional learning assessment (SACMEQ) which is infrequent and has historically only been administered every six years. SACMEQ is limited to comparisons with other participating countries meaning that broader international benchmarking is not possible, and it assesses students in Grade 6 which is late for the purpose of identifying and remedying weaknesses in foundational skills. While there is no national assessment in Eswatini currently, there are plans to implement one in step with the roll-out of the new competency-based curriculum.

In 2007, prior to the introduction of FPE, although students in Eswatini were among the top performers in the region in terms of reading and mathematics skills on the SACMEQ III assessment, learning was below expected levels. The majority of Grade 6 students (72%) had what SACMEQ defines as minimum acceptable reading skills or higher, although among this group only 9% had acquired analytical and critical reading skills which may be considered necessary to effectively learn other subjects. At the same time 7% of Grade 6 students only had basic or emergent reading skills which means they were only a couple of steps from being illiterate. For mathematics, less than one-in-five Grade 6 students were competent in numeracy meaning they could translate verbal, graphic, or tabular information into arithmetic form to solve a problem but had not acquired higher order skills expected at this stage. There was also

a large group of Grade 6 students (22%) who only had acquired emergent numeracy skills equivalent to two-step addition and subtraction involving carrying. Relatively more recent evidence suggests that student performance in reading and mathematics improved between 2000 and 2013 (Shabalala, 2015), but learning levels still remained low.

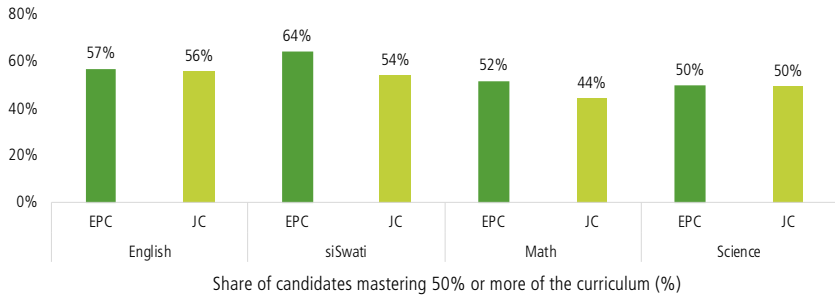
Given that there are no national learning assessments, the ESA report analyzes national examinations results, which is not as effective in measuring student learning levels as they are high stakes in nature. High-stakes assessments are those where results have an important consequence, usually for students, for example, it is not possible to progress to the next level unless passing the assessment. There can also be consequences for schools, for instance, if assessment results are used as the basis for rewards or to rate school performance (UNESCO, 2008). According to some qualitative evidence, schools appear to be holding back students who they expect to do poorly on the final examinations because performance on these is viewed as a measure of how good a school is. As a result, many of these students end up dropping out of school in the penultimate grade or form. This is partly the reason why examinations are not a good measure of learning performance in the education system.

The national examinations results show that overall failure rates are substantial for the cores subjects English, mathematics, siSwati, and science.[5] This is even after weaker performing students have left the education system before being able to sit the final examinations. Around 14% of primary school completers and around one-quarter of junior secondary students fail English, mathematics, siSwati, and science. In addition, many school completers master less than half of the curriculum content. Only 50-57% of candidates for the EPC, depending on the subject, are learning at least half of what is expected for English, mathematics, or science (Figure 2).[6] At the junior secondary level, 44-56% of candidates demonstrate understanding of at least half of the English, mathematics, science, or siSwati curriculum. This signals that there are issues with the quality of education and that a large group of students need extra support.

5 In the absence of other data, the ESA uses national examinations data to analyze student learning levels.

6 Almost all students enrolled in the final grade at each level sit the final examination at that level.

Figure 2 **Only slightly more than half of candidates demonstrate understanding of 50% or more of the curriculum for the core subjects**



Source: Team calculations based on national examinations data from the Examinations Council of Eswatini.
Note: 1) EPC is the Eswatini Primary Certificate and JC is the Junior Secondary Certificate.

Students who do better in English also do better in other subjects. Because the language of assessment is English except for in siSwati examinations, English language proficiency is related to performance in other subjects including mathematics and science. Schools with larger shares of students achieving good passes (A to C) in English also have larger shares of students achieving good passes on other subject examinations illustrating the advantage for students who speak the language of assessment pat home. However, only about 10% of Grade 6 students speak English frequently or all the time, and many teachers are not proficient in English either.[7]

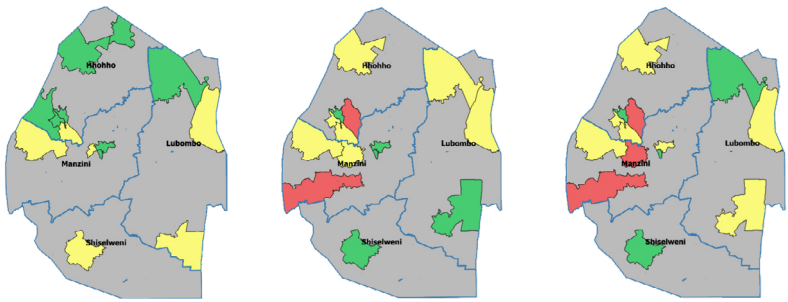
Students in rural schools perform considerably worse in English, mathematics, and science than students in urban schools. Schools located in rural areas have significantly lower shares of students obtaining 'good passes' in the core subjects compared with schools located in urban areas (Box 2). This suggests that the learning environment in rural schools is poorer than in urban schools, for example, the availability of qualified teachers is lower in rural schools. This is in addition to poverty being concentrated in rural areas which also affects student performance. The exception is siSwati for which rural students perform better than urban students at primary level, and rural and urban students perform comparably at junior secondary level. There are also some gender disparities by subject, with girls outperforming boys in English and siSwati examinations and boys outperforming girls in mathematics and science examinations. Regionally, schools in Hhohho have larger shares of students with good passes (A to C) in EPC English, mathematics, and science, as compared with the other three regions. Meanwhile for siSwati, students in schools in Shiselweni region performed much better (and notably worse in English).

7 Team estimate using Swaziland SACMEQ IV data.

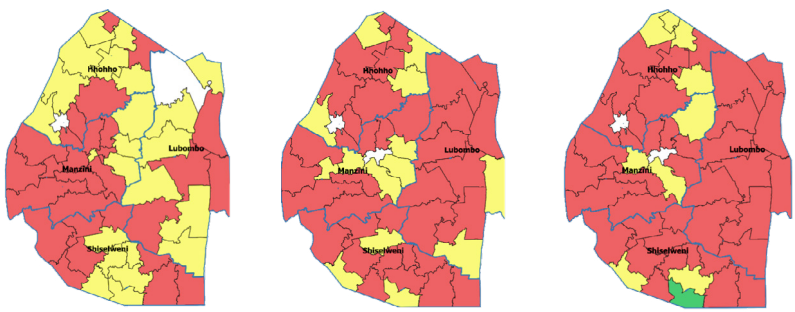
Box 2 Students in urban schools perform much better than students in rural schools in English

Green more than 50% of candidates get a C or better.
Yellow between 25% and 49.9% get a C or better.
Red less than 25% of candidates get a C or better.
Grey no urban schools in this district.
White no rural schools in this district.

EPC Urban 2019 **JC Urban 2019** **EGCSE Urban 2019**



EPC Rural 2019 **JC Rural 2019** **EGCSE Rural 2019**



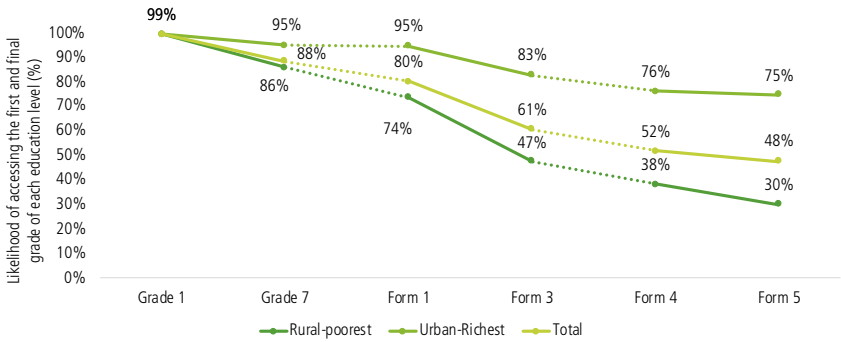
Source: Team calculations based on national examinations data from the Examinations Council of Eswatini.

Priority 2: Keeping boys and girls in school until completion and increasing access to secondary education

In addition to low levels of learning, many students drop out of school before completion which affects their future employment, income, health, and social prospects, and later, also those of their children. High levels of students dropping out is also a concern given the waste of public resources for society that will affect the economic and social development of the country. This makes it critical to understand who drops out of school and why.

Access and retention have improved but many children still drop out before completing school, and those who do are typically from the poorest families. Although there is near universal access to primary education, and access to secondary education has increased for children from all income groups, many are still not accessing or completing secondary education. An estimated 22,000 among those aged 15-19 years, equivalent to 17% of this age group, are out-of-school and many of them have not even completed basic education. The most disadvantaged group of all are children from the poorest 20% of households in rural areas who are significantly less likely to complete each level and to access secondary education than the most advantaged group of children from the richest 20% of households in urban areas (Figure 3).[8] In Form 2, 38% of all students are orphaned, and this group is, on average, twice as likely to drop out of school as non-orphaned students. Access to education and retention is lower for children living in Lubombo and Shiselweni regions than in Hhohho and Manzini regions, but there are no significant differences in access or retention by gender.

Figure 3 **There are massive disparities in access and completion for the most and least advantaged groups**



Source: Weighted estimates based on EHIES 2016/17 data.

8 Weighted estimates based on EHIES 2016/17 data.

The cost of schooling is by far the most common reason for dropping out. This shows that the FPE grants and education grants for Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVCs) which are paid directly to schools are not fully succeeding in removing fee-related barriers to education for OVCs, with many schools charging top-up fees without the required permission from the MoET. The OVC education grant aims to subsidize school fees for children who are orphaned or vulnerable (including those who are poor), to access secondary education which is not free in Eswatini. However, the ESA analysis finds that an estimated 70% of children who are eligible for the grant are not receiving it which requires further investigation. [8] Non-fee costs of attending school such as the costs of uniforms, transport, and learning materials, are a further barrier to staying in school. There is no social assistance program which provides direct financial support poor households to help keep their children in school until completion or to allow them to access higher levels of education. A general cash transfer pilot for households with OVCs that ended in 2018 increased households ability to pay for school fees, uniforms, and stationary which increased school attendance, in addition it increased food purchases and allowed households to pay for transport to health centers. This shows that a well-designed cash transfer program to households can help keep vulnerable children in school (DPMO, 2018).

A major reason for girls dropping out of school, even at primary level, is pregnancy, and it is becoming more common. Around 18% of girls drop out because of pregnancy in primary school and this rises to 35% of girls at junior secondary level. Female students living in rural areas and orphaned students are at much greater risk than their urban peers of dropping out of school because of pregnancy. Main drivers behind the high rates of unwanted early pregnancies include poverty which can force girls to engage in transactional sex and girls' status in society.

Poor performance is another key factor driving students to drop out of school, especially boys. Among boys, poor performance may be related to the other vulnerabilities they face. For example, growing up poor and having to become the main provider at a young age; not having a male role model due to having lost their fathers; engaging in substance abuse; or getting involved in the growing and/or sale of dagga. Among girls, poor performance only emerges as a main reason for dropping out at senior secondary level, which may indicate they have not gained the foundational skills required to keep up with the curriculum requirements at senior secondary level.

Priority 3: Strengthening entry into the education system and improving opportunities on exit

The two previous sections point to low learning levels of students in Eswatini and that many students do not complete school, which raises two main questions. First, are children entering the schooling system prepared for learning? Second, once they leave school (whether they drop out or complete), are there sufficient opportunities for them to gain further skills and knowledge to become active participants in the labor market and contributors to the economic and social development of the country? Given that the ECDE and TVET sub-sectors are under-developed compared to the other education levels and constitute the entry and exit points for the education system, they are discussed together.

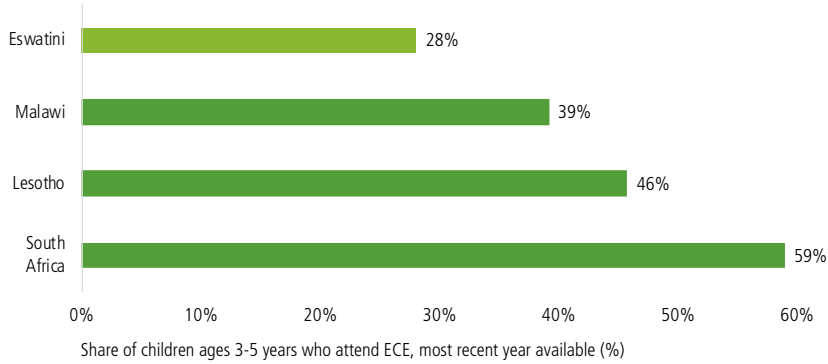
There are very limited opportunities to gain school readiness by attending ECDE programs and to acquire specialist academic or vocational skills after completing school. In a mature education system, the majority of children who start primary school would be expected to have attended at least Grade 0 to gain pre-literacy and pre-numeracy skills. This is not the case in Eswatini where only a small group of children of preprimary age access ECDE services of any tpype. A large number of students either drop out during junior and senior secondary education or complete them but do not proceed to the next level. As a result, only a fraction of students who start primary school eventually make it to post-school education and training.

Most children in Eswatini enter primary school lacking essential school readiness in literacy and numeracy and provision of ECDE services is limited. Only 19% of children aged 36-59 months were developmentally on track for literacy and numeracy in 2014,[9] and there were disparities already at this level signaling that education disadvantage starts at a very young age. A larger share of children in Hhohho and Manzini regions were on track compared to children in Shiselweni and Lubombo regions; girls were more on track than boys; and children in urban areas performed better than children in rural areas. The share of children from the richest household quintile who were developmentally on track for literacy and numeracy was more than six times larger than those in the poorest wealth quintile. This disadvantage in literacy and numeracy carries through to Grade 1, where students are not adequately prepared to take on the national curriculum which affects their academic performance and puts them at higher risk of dropping out of school. ECDE programs are designed to prepare children mentally, physically, socially, and intellectually to enter primary school. Results from Eswatini confirms that children who attend ECDE programs do

9 To be developmentally on track in the literacy-numeracy domain, a child must be able to do two out of three tasks: i) identify/name at least ten letters of the alphabet; ii) read at least four simple, popular words; and iii) know the name and recognize the symbols of all numbers from 1 to 10.

much better in terms of early literacy and numeracy development but access to ECDE services is very limited. Eswatini is behind other countries in the region with only 28% of children aged 3-5 years attending ECDE services compared to 59% of children in the same age group in South Africa (Figure 4).

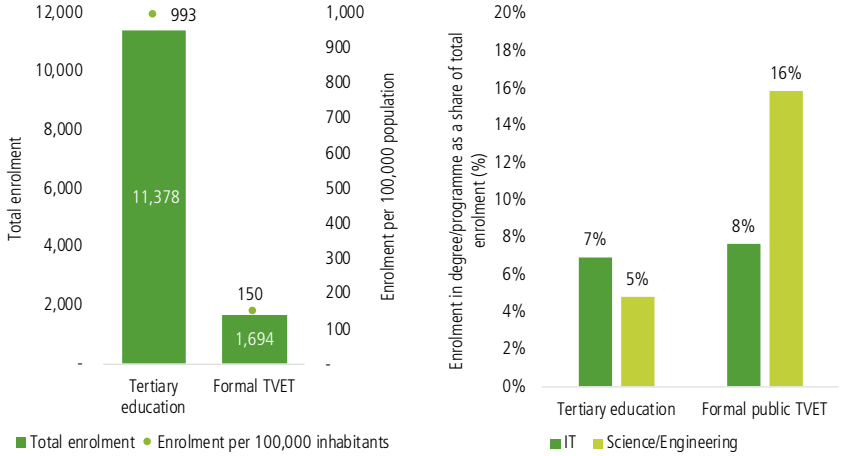
Figure 4 Access to early childhood education In Eswatini is very low



Source: UNICEF MICS multiple years, General Household Survey 2018 for South Africa.

Once students leave school, access to TVET and tertiary education is low and there is a mismatch between the skills of graduates and those required by the labor market. For the students from wealthy families who complete school, tertiary education is an option in a few universities in Eswatini and in the region. However, most students do not have the opportunity to move into tertiary education either because they do not meet the entry requirements in terms of performance at secondary level, or because they cannot afford to attend university. For those who do not enter tertiary education, which is the vast majority of students, the opportunities available in terms of TVET are limited. The Eswatini university participation rate including students enrolled abroad (1,426) is low compared to other countries in the region such as Botswana (1,660), South Africa (1,714), and Namibia (1,724). Enrolment in public formal TVET programs is exceedingly low as is enrolment in AELL institutions that provide pathways to obtaining formal academic qualifications for those who dropped out of school or did not start school to begin with. This is a concern given the extent of student drop out. Among those who attend university or TVET, few go into science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and IT programs which are fields of study with significant demand in the labor market. In 2017, enrolment in science and engineering programs and in IT programs at tertiary level only accounted for 5% and 7% respectively of total enrolment. For formal public TVET the share enrolled in science and engineering was notably higher at 16%, but this is only equivalent to about 270 students, and the share enrolled in IT programs was 8% (Figure 5).

Figure 5 Access to tertiary education and TVET is low and few students go into STEM subjects



Source: Team calculations based on EMIS data.

There is no systematic monitoring of services and systematic collection of data for planning purposes and to assess the quality of ECDE and TVET are lacking. Data on the number of ECDE centers, their location, enrolment, staff, resources, and child development outcomes are currently not systematically collected and documented centrally. For the TVET sub-sector, data on the quality, and relevance of training (as assessed by employment outcomes of graduates and whether employers are satisfied with graduates' skills) is not available for either public or private training providers, and while enrolment and staffing data are available for public formal TVET training providers they are not collected from private training providers that are in a majority. There is some information that points to substantial quality challenges with instructors in public TVET institutions who need substantial skills upgrading, and employers in Eswatini state that most graduates need to be retrained immediately after completion of their studies. However, the lack of a system to regularly collect data for all ECDE and TVET providers means that systematic monitoring and evaluation of services is not possible, which hampers planning for the expansion of these services, as well as regulation of these two sub-sectors.

Both the ECDE and TVET sub-sectors are characterized by weak coordination and collaboration. The sub-sectors are multisectoral in nature and require the engagement of multiple ministries, the private sector, and communities. But coordination and collaboration of the ministries responsible for implementing ECDE services is currently weak, and implementation plans for ECDE frameworks and policies have not yet been developed. However, the

DPMO has recently been made the coordinating agency to help strengthen coordination in the ECDE sub-sector. There is no overarching regulatory and coordination framework for TVET to ensure that different TVET provider systems are planned and implemented in coordination and meet labor market needs. The complexity of these sub-sectors also requires strong leadership and commitment to expand and strengthen them, which is an area that requires urgent attention.

Priority 4: Enhancing teacher development and management

Education is labor intensive and as a result, teacher management and the performance of teachers to a large extent determine the quality of education services. Recruitment, hiring, and deployment of adequately qualified and trained teachers together with appropriate incentives for professional development, to take up hardship postings, and high performance, are all important parts of effective teacher management (Lewis et al., 2009). Given the low levels of learning in the education system it is necessary to understand existing constraints in these areas of teacher management as well as in teacher development. This section focuses on primary and secondary school teachers of which there are 9,000 and 7,700 respectively in the country.

Large groups of teachers do not have any teacher training, lack required qualifications, or have inadequate content knowledge. Among secondary teachers a large group (30%) does not have any teaching qualification, as well as a smaller group of primary teachers (9%), meaning they are not trained on pedagogical methods and are less likely to use effective teaching methods than their peers with teaching qualifications. At primary level, a relatively large group of teachers are not qualified to teach at this level but are secondary school teachers who specialize in two subjects and are therefore not well prepared to teach multiple subjects.[10] There is also a small group (5%) of primary school teachers who only have a PLC or O Level certificate which means they are unlikely to understand all the content of the subjects they teach. This is corroborated by findings from the SACMEQ IV study that many primary school teachers (qualified and unqualified) lack the required content knowledge for mathematics and reading. The latter is of particular concern as that the language of instruction is English, in practice even in the early grades, which will affect these teachers' ability to communicate effectively with students for learning purposes. There is no data available on the use of effective teaching practices in classrooms, which constitutes a major information gap to supporting teachers to teach more effectively.

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10 Around 29% of teachers at primary level do not have the appropriate qualifications to teach at this level (AEC, 2018), and within this group, a majority are teachers with a secondary level qualification.

After entering the teaching service, there are limited opportunities and incentives to attend training to learn about new and more effective ways of teaching. In Eswatini, there is no process to identify teachers who require skills upgrading (either in terms of content knowledge or pedagogical skills), rather invitations to attend in-service training are sent to all schools and teachers choose whether to attend. In addition, for teachers, including those who do not have the appropriate content knowledge or pedagogical training, there is no immediate financial incentive to upgrade their teaching methods since promotions and salary increases are disconnected from teacher performance. In addition, many subjects are not covered by the training programs that are available. As a result, only a small number of teachers benefit from in-service training each year. The training generally consists of short duration workshops away from school with limited follow-up. This is a less effective modality for delivering in-service teacher training according to international evidence which suggests the most effective way to train teachers is through mentoring/coaching support in the classroom and peer-to-peer learning over a longer time period.

While overall there are enough teachers in primary and secondary schools, there is a shortage of teachers who can teach mathematics, science, and IT. The student to teacher ratios for primary and secondary schools in Eswatini are very favorable compared to the SSA region and compared to other lower MICs. Teachers are overall deployed effectively to schools with enrolment largely determining teacher numbers at school-level. But there is no formal mechanism at the national level to regularly collect data on what subjects teachers specialize in which limits the MoET's ability to estimate how many teachers, with the required subject specializations would be needed in the future. One result of the lack of such a mechanism is the shortage of mathematics, science, IT, and design and technology teachers, which in turn results in fewer students qualifying to enter STEM related subjects at the tertiary level.

There are no incentives to attract teachers to rural areas. While overall teacher deployment is efficient, the education system faces challenges in attracting qualified teachers to rural schools largely because compensation packages do not include any hardship allowances. This has led to hiring of unqualified teachers in many rural schools, especially in subjects where there are shortages of qualified teachers.

Key data on teachers and head teachers is currently not available which limits evidence-based planning and program design.[11] In terms of teachers' performance, which is one of the main determinants of student learning, little data exists on their content knowledge, teaching practices, absenteeism, time spent actively engaging with students in the classroom, and constraints faced by

11 The head teacher is the teacher in charge of the school.

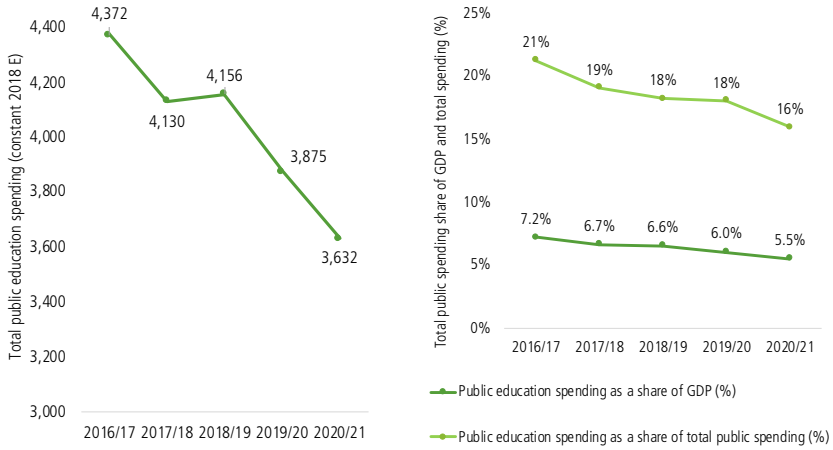
teachers. Without such data it is not possible to provide support for teachers who are lagging behind in terms of knowledge and skills, or to address constraints, for example, large class sizes, lack of teaching and learning materials, or inadequate support, faced by teachers on the job. As the academic leaders of their schools, head teachers play an important role in supporting teachers but data on their knowledge and skills regarding academic leadership and school management are not collected either.

Priority 5: Ensuring adequate and equitable education financing and spending

Eswatini spends more on education than the average for lower-middle-income countries but spends less than the SACU average and spending is declining. Public education spending overall and per school-age individual has declined over the last five years after adjusting for inflation. The shares of GDP (5.5%) and total public spending (16%) assigned to education have also decreased (Figure 6) indicating that although the education sector remains the most important sector in terms of overall government spending, growth in its share of the national budget has stalled compared to several other ministries. Uncertainty about future SACU revenues, coupled with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, makes it unlikely there will be fiscal space to increase public education spending over the next few years. This is a cause for concern given that further investments in education are needed to help keep children in school and to improve quality.

Eswatini allocates a large share of its education budget to tertiary education while spending on ECE and TVET is minimal despite demand for these services. ECE programs account for a mere 0.1% of the total education budget because of very limited public provision and subsidization of ECDE services. Additional financing for this sub-sector is urgently required to scale up the provision of ECE services to help raise children's levels of school readiness. TVET and AELL are also under-financed given the extent of drop-out in the education system which makes it imperative to provide pathways to acquiring formal qualifications for large numbers of students. Meanwhile, tertiary education receives a very large share of public education spending (20%) relative to its enrolment share (3%) and is overall well-financed. This has direct equity implications as most individuals attending tertiary education come from the richest households. In Eswatini, the 10% most educated of the population consume 23% of all public education resources while the 63% least educated of the population consume a mere 13% of resources.

Figure 6 **Public education spending is declining overall and as a share of GDP and public total spending**



Source: Budget books, IMF country report GDP deflator.

Note: 1) Includes OVC education grants and scholarships.

The distribution of education resources is highly inequitable which contributes to student drop-out and reduces access to post-primary education. The representative urban student consumes 40% more education resources than the representative rural students, while the representative student from the richest quintile of households consume 70% more of public education resources than the representative child from the poorest quintile. This is because urban students and students from rich households stay in school longer and account for nearly all participation in tertiary education which is by far the most expensive level. The need for households to spend relatively large shares of their incomes (ranging from 2% to 10% depending on the education level) on primary and secondary education with the largest spending items being school fees, uniforms, and transport, constitutes a main barrier to education and contributes to inequality as poorer households are less able to afford this spending.

Recurrent non-salary spending as well as development spending related to improving the quality of education is inadequate. Salary costs and grants and subsidies constitute a massive 95% of total recurrent spending on education. Spending on materials and supplies account for the remaining 5%, with most of it going toward textbook provision at primary level. Development spending is also very low at around 4% of total public education spending. This is a concern because adequate availability of teaching and learning materials of various kinds is essential for teachers to be able to be effective and for students to learn, and because many schools lack equipment, laboratories, and libraries.

Selected policy options for consideration

This section sets out options in terms of policies to address the priority issues identified by the education sector analysis. Some of the policy options cut across different priorities but are only discussed in one place.

Improving student learning

Student learning is the fundamental goal of the education system and improving it will require effective coordination and implementation of multiple reforms and interventions.

Improving teaching in the foundational grades (ECDE plus grades 1-4) is essential to raise learning levels across the education system. A large group of students do not (regularly) speak the language of instruction. To address this major learning disadvantage, the MoET would need to focus on improving English language instruction in the early grades by increasing the emphasis on English language during pre-service and in-service teacher training and possibly, by raising the English language requirements for new teachers. This should be supplemented by a more general intervention to provide schools with supplementary learning materials such as readers in English and siSwati which are appropriate for the age and reading level of the students. Another measure may include the design and implementation of an affordable, community-based program to raise school readiness that focus on providing basic skills in the language of instruction in target communities.

Teachers are one of the main determinants of student learning and a combination of measures would be needed to improve their ability to teach effectively. Aside from improving teachers' English language knowledge through more stringent criteria for entering teaching service as well as strengthening English language instruction in pre-service teacher training programs, supporting teachers to deliver the new competency-based curriculum with appropriate teaching pedagogy and the provision of relevant instructional materials is critical. To further strengthen teaching practices, new teaching materials including structured lesson plans and teacher guides for early grade English, mathematics, and siSwati would be helpful, especially for the large group of teachers without any teacher training. Training teachers to make their own teaching aids using locally sourced materials (for example, using bottle caps as counters for numeracy) is an affordable approach to enhance teaching practices for the early grades. Lastly, teachers need to be supported to enhance their teaching methods through peer-to-peer learning or one-one coaching/mentoring support in the classroom.

More broadly, there is a need to induce teacher candidates to choose STEM

subjects and to introduce incentives for hardship postings. This would involve developing a teacher management database that is integrated with education management information system to estimate the numbers of teachers required for each subject and incentivizing the training of teachers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects. Shortages of qualified teachers in rural schools could be addressed by introducing teacher incentives for hardship postings such as financial allowances and/or career growth incentives, in consultation with teachers, head teachers, and teacher unions.

The ECDE sub-sector should be expanded to better prepare children to enter the schooling system. The expansion could build on the existing private and public initiatives and direct public resources to support ECDE service providers in underserved communities. Exploring different models to finance the sector through public-private partnerships (PPPs) and support for entrepreneurs in this sub-sector (who are mainly women), would be a key priority moving forward. In addition, developing and implementing a standardized curriculum based on the *Early Learning and Development Standards* for children aged 3 to 5 years, as well as implementing the existing Grade 0 curriculum for children aged 5 to 6 years would be crucial for improving the quality of ECDE services. This should be accompanied by the establishment of a streamlined registration process for ECDE service providers, and a transparent quality assurance and regulation mechanism. A training program for caregivers, ECDE teachers, Rural Health Motivators, and volunteers at Neighborhood Care Points (NCPs) and KaGoGo centers, on how to promote early learning and stimulation would also be needed to improve the quality of ECDE service delivery. This should ideally be complemented by the implementation of low-cost interventions to support early stimulation and development activities at the family level. Investments in infrastructure and goods and services are also required to ensure there are adequate and safe facilities for children attending ECDE programs, including water and sanitation facilities as well as play areas. For those families who cannot afford ECDE services, the Government could consider developing and implementing a needs-based cash transfer program linked to improved child development outcomes.

TVET and tertiary education institutions need to strengthen their engagement with employers to improve the relevance of their training programs to labor market needs and improve the employability of TVET and tertiary graduates. This could include skills demand surveys at regular intervals to inform the development of new training programs and/or the expansion of existing programs that are in high demand by employers. Public private partnerships such as the Advanced School of IT (ASIT), located at the RSTP IT Park, are good examples of delivering employer relevant courses, and employment outcomes of its first batch of students needs to be closely monitored to assess whether this

kind of model should be replicated and scaled up. The strengthening of formal and informal links between training providers and employers and the use of field visits, employer fairs, and internships would help improve the school-to-work transition for graduates. Regular tracer studies would be essential to monitor the labor market outcomes of PSET graduates and verify that courses are responding to market needs. To further expand and strengthen the TVET sub-sector, which is fragmented with a mix of public, private, NGO, community, and church providers, it will be necessary to develop a coherent TVET legislative framework and update the *2010 Technical and Vocational Education and Training and Skills Development policy*.

Keeping boys and girls in school until completion and increasing access to secondary education

To improve retention will require reducing both financial and non-financial barriers to staying in school. Many primary schools charge top-up fees, to address this financial barrier the MoET would need to ensure that schools serving poor students cease this practice. At secondary level, it would not only be important to consider an increase of the OVC education grant amount but also to examine the targeting of the grant ensure more children who are eligible receive it than is currently the case. In addition to the barrier of direct school fees and top up fees, poor families struggle with paying for non-fee schooling costs for uniforms, transport, learning materials, and at secondary level also textbooks. Considering options such as the cash grant pilot that provided general financial support directly to households could help to improve school attendance and other social outcomes for children.

Many students also face non-financial barriers to attending schooling. To address these will require multiple measures to support the student more holistically. This may involve strengthening the life skills training programs that provide information and support on sexual reproductive health, family planning, HIV/AIDS, and substance abuse in the national curriculum, especially at junior secondary level. This should be complemented by a scale-up of After-School Girls Clubs and introduction of After-School Boys Clubs to provide safe spaces for peer support, mentorship, and accessing information, in schools and communities with high drop-out rates. For such programs to be effective would also require programs to engage with communities, including religious apnd traditional leaders and parents to change thinking and behaviors around sexual reproductive health, early marriage, and early pregnancy including supporting girls to return to school after giving birth.

Students need to have access to a safe secondary school close to where they live. Inadequate school infrastructure may contribute both to students dropping out of and not accessing secondary education. Programs to address

the former may comprise rehabilitation of junior secondary schools to ensure they meet the minimum standards, especially related to water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities, and by adding classrooms to overcrowded schools. Access in turn, can be improved by constructing secondary school schools in underserved catchment areas to allow the system to accommodate all primary school graduates who want to continue to junior secondary education.

Poverty is the main driver behind disparities in access, retention and repetition. Poor children often face additional challenges, including living in rural areas with fewer and lower-quality opportunities for education; being orphaned; and living in the Lubombo or Shiselweni regions which lag the other two regions in terms of economic development and opportunities. There are also some gender differences, with boys on average having less access to early childhood education, which in turn affects school readiness and their subsequent schooling careers. Table 1 summarizes the severity of the education situation for vulnerable children, with poverty being the most limiting factor followed by living in a rural area and being orphaned. When these factors interact the situation is even worse, and makes it evident that to improve education outcomes for these groups of children will require a targeted and multi-sectoral approach combined with strong measures to improve education quality.

Table 1 **Multi-dimensional vulnerability and access and retention**

	Access			Retention	
	ECE	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary
Poorest 20% (compared to richest 20%)	Substantially lower	Similar	Substantially lower	Lower	Substantially lower
Live in rural area (compared to urban area)	Substantially lower	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Much lower
Orphaned (compared to non-orphaned children)	No data	Similar	No data	Substantially lower	Substantially lower
Live in Lubombo / Shiselweni (compared to Hhohho)	Lower (Lubombo)	Similar	Lower (Lubombo)	Lower	Lower (Shiselweni)
Boys (compared to girls)	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar

Source: Analysis conducted for this report and MICS 2014.

Note: 1) 'Similar' = 0-3.0 percentage points difference, 'Lower' = 3.1-8.0 percentage points difference, 'Much lower' = 8.1-19.0 percentange points difference and 'Substantially lower' = 19.1 or more percentage points difference.

Strengthening the education system to effectively plan, deliver, monitor, and finance services

Education systems are often poorly aligned with learning goals. These misalignments are driven in part by education systems simultaneously pursuing many (often conflicting) goals and many system actors continually interacting in complex ways. Compounding this challenge is limited policy implementation capacity of many government agencies responsible for education (World Bank, 2018). To strengthen the parts of the education system discussed below is a priority in order to increase the MoET's capacity to deliver education services more effectively.

As a start, to successfully implement the next ESSP the individuals, institutions, and organizations responsible for educational planning and management need to have adequate capacity in the areas of strategic policy planning; governance and management; human resources; financial resource management; ICT; and monitoring and evaluation. Capacity development across the education sector was an integral part of NETIP II, and as the next ESSP is prepared it would be important to undertake another capacity needs assessment to identify areas in which further capacity development may be required.

A national learning assessment system should be established and targets for improvement in learning agreed, and where there are gaps in learning, students and teachers would need to be adequately supported to improve. Learning assessments provide data not only about learning but also on factors at school, teacher, and student level that affect learning, which in turn gives policymakers the evidence required to introduce, expand, amend, or abolish specific interventions. Periodic assessments of learning would also provide an opportunity for the Government to set targets for improvement in learning performance, and these targets should be aligned with catching up with (and eventually, surpassing) the learning levels of other middle-income countries. As Eswatini continues to participate in the SACMEQ regional assessment, it could consider participating in other international assessments. There are several international assessments to choose from in order to benchmark student learning performance while the MoET builds its capacity to administer its own national assessment. One example is the Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (LaNA), which is an assessment for children in Grades 4-6 that assesses literacy and numeracy skills. It reflects the same concepts of reading and mathematics as the internationally known Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) assessments, except that it is pitched at an easier level. LaNA is also a steppingstone to participate in PIRLS and TIMSS.

There is a need to create a teacher management database to better track the qualifications, experience, training, and specializations of teachers in the system and use this to project how many new teachers are required, and with what qualifications and subject specialization. This information on the demand for new teachers would in turn be shared with Teacher Training Institutes (TTIs) to ensure there is an adequate stream of candidates being selected into and receiving the relevant training in the TTIs. This teacher management system would need to be closely linked to the Public Service Management Information System so that teachers' salaries, promotions, transfers, and exit from the teaching force are all captured in the system.

A system to regularly collect and analyze data on ECDE and TVET service provision needs to be developed given that there are a large number of private providers and data is required from all providers who deliver education and training services on a regular basis to ensure they meet the quality and safety standards set by the Government. It will be essential to design and conduct a mapping of all private and public ECDE and TVET providers, and then update these lists annually. Once such lists are in place, a system to regularly collect data from all ECDE and TVET providers on enrolment, graduates, teachers and instructors, facilities, occupational health and safety standards, and quality, that is integrated into the EMIS could be developed (currently only basic data on formal public TVET providers are recorded in EMIS). These data would help to inform the planning for the expansion of the two sub-sectors which is a high priority, as well as the creation of mechanisms to coordinate, monitor, support, and regulate them. An audit of the skills for employability programs for young people in Eswatini is being undertaken, which will begin to help address the information gaps in the TVET sub-sector.

It will be essential to maintain, and if possible given the current economic outlook, increase financing for the education sector to support the policy options outlined above, to raise the quality of education, improve student retention, increase equity, and enhance teacher management. This will require consultations with national education stakeholders to ensure the education sector retains its priority status in terms of the Government budget, and that public resources are reallocated from lower priority sectors to education if needed. How to use new approaches to mobilize more resources domestically, including options for accessing private financing, should also be explored. It may also become necessary to consider reallocating resources within the sector to higher priority areas, for example, from tertiary education to ECDE from which a larger number of children stand to benefit. Measures to increase the efficiency of spending, for instance, improved targeting of tertiary bursaries and assessment of teachers to improve their utilization should also be considered.

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List of abbreviations and acronyms

AEC	Annual Education Census
AELL	Adult Education and Lifelong Learning
ASIT	The Advanced School of IT
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DIVT	Department of Industrial and Vocational Training
DPMO	Deputy Prime Minister's Office
ECDE	Early Childhood Development and Education
ECESWA	The Examinations Council of Eswatini
EDC	Emlalatini Development Centre
EGCSE	Eswatini General Certificate of Secondary Education
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
EHIES	Eswatini Household Income and Expenditure Survey
EMIS	Education Management Information System
EPC	Eswatini Primary Certificate
ESA	Education Sector Analysis
ESHEC	Eswatini Higher Education Council
ESSP	Education Sector Strategic Plan
ETGPS	Education Testing Guidance and Psychological Services
FPE	Free Primary Education
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
HRMIS	Human Resource Management Information System
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IGCSE	Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INSET	In-Service Education and Training
JC	Eswatini Junor Secondary Certificate
LAC	Latin America and Caribbean
LaNA	Literacy and Numeracy Assessment
LMIC	Lower-Middle-Income Countries
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MoET	Ministry of Education and Training
MoLSS	Ministry of Labor and Social Security

NCC	National Curriculum Centre
NCP	Neighborhood Care Point
NER	Net Enrolment Rate
NETIP	The National Education and Training Improvement Program
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OVCs	Orphaned and Vulnerable Children
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
PPPs	Public-Private Partnerships
PSET	Post-School Education and Training
PTD	Primary Teacher's Diploma
REOs	Regional Education Offices
RSTP	Royal Science and Technology Park
SACMEQ	The Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality
SACU	Southern African Customs Union
SADC	The Southern African Development Communit
SANU	Southern Africa Nazarene University
SDI	Service Delivery Indicators Survey
SELDS	Swaziland Early Learning and Development and Standards
SNI	Sebenta National Institute
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
STC	Secondary Teachers' Certificate
STD	Secondary Teacher's Diploma
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
STEP	Skills Towards Employability and Productivity
STR	Student-Teacher Ratio
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
TSC	Teaching Service Commission
TTI	Teacher Training Institutions
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNESWA	University of Eswatini
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	The United Nations Children's Fund
WHO	World Health Organisation

1. Introduction

The Government of Eswatini recognizes the importance of education and the role it plays in building its human capital, reducing poverty, and transforming the economic and social landscape. The ultimate objective is to provide access to quality education at each level to all Swazi citizens (MoET, 2018a). The strong commitment to improve the education sector is evidenced by the high priority given to the sector in terms of overall public spending and the introduction of Free Primary Education (FPE) which have resulted in nearly universal access to primary education and increased access to secondary education since 2010. Having achieved this, based on the findings from this Education Sector Analysis (ESA), the main priorities looking ahead will be to further increase access to early childhood development and education (ECDE) programs, secondary education, and post-school education and training (PSET) and at the same time improve the quality of education to ensure that those who graduate from the education system have acquired the expected knowledge and skills.

1.1 Purpose, scope, and preparation of the ESA

The current Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) for 2010-2022 and the first and second National Education and Training Improvement Programs that operationalize the plan, were based on the comprehensive 2010 Education Sector Review (Marope, 2010; MoET, 2018a, MoET, 2010). As the current plan and program come to their end, an assessment of the current status of the education system to identify priority issues for the further development of the sector was undertaken. The ESA is national in scope and covers all education levels: ECDE, primary, junior secondary, senior secondary, PSET, and adult education and lifelong learning (AELL).

The purpose of the ESA is to:

- Examine the current status of the education sector in Eswatini to identify priority issues at each level.
- Provide an evidence-based foundation for the Government's preparation of its next Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP).
- Help guide the country more generally on the priority issues for the education sector looking forward.
- Enable the Government to make an evidence-based case for additional financing for future education investments.

During the preparation of the ESA report there were five missions between October 2019 and August 2020. Following the first mission, the MoET

established a Steering Committee and technical task teams to work on the ESA preparation with the World Bank ESA team. Throughout the ESA preparation the MoET senior management and technical task teams and World Bank ESA team worked to ensure all available relevant data and information were used for the ESA preparation and discussed the preliminary analysis at each stage to refine and agree on the overall narrative emerging from the analysis. There were remote meetings between the MoET technical task teams and the World Bank ESA team, and national education agencies/institutions and relevant departments in other line ministries to collect additional information and establish the main issues for each sub-sector. After the drafting of each of the ESA chapters was completed, it was shared with the relevant MoET technical task team for comprehensive review and revised to produce the final chapters for the ESA report.

To successfully implement the next ESSP the individuals, institutions, and organizations responsible for educational planning and management need to have adequate capacity in the areas of strategic policy planning; governance and management; human resources; financial resources; ICT; and monitoring and evaluation. Capacity development across the education sector was an integral part of NETIP II. As the next ESSP is prepared it will be important to conduct a capacity needs assessment with specific focus on the MoET, to identify areas in which further capacity development may be required.

Box 3 Main data sources used for the ESA

The ESA draws on six main data sources.

EMIS data on schools, students, and teachers which is published in the Annual Education Census Reports by the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) each year.

National examinations data for Grade 7, Form 3, and Form 5 for various years from the Examinations Council of Eswatini (ECESWA).

Public education spending data from the Ministry of Finance and Planning **Annual Budget Estimates Books**.

Data on various topics such as orphaned students, poverty, educational attainment, reasons for school drop-out, household spending on education and so on from the **Eswatini Household Income and Expenditure Survey (EHIES) 2016/17** conducted by the Eswatini Central Statistics Office (CSO).

The population numbers used for several of the indicators in the report are based on team projections using the **2017 Population Census** conducted by the CSO.

The **2014 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS)** for data on key early children development outcomes, early child development levels, and attendance at early childhood education programs.

1.2 Structure of this report

The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

- **Chapter 2**
  provides an overview of the general context for education in Eswatini including the macroeconomic, political and institutional, demographic, and social settings.

- **Chapter 3**
  set out the structure of the education system; key education legislation, policies, and strategies; and the administration and management of the system.

- **Chapter 4**
  outlines the situation for student learning assessment in Eswatini and analyzes and discusses student learning outcomes at different education levels as well as disparities in performance by rural-urban location, school ownership, region, and gender.

- **Chapter 5**
  discusses the importance of services to promote early childhood development and key early childhood development outcomes in Eswatini, and provides an overview of the different types of service providers. It also examines the provision of and participation in early childhood education programs as well as quality issues. It concludes with a description of approaches to scale up ECDE services that have successfully been used in other countries.

- **Chapter 6**
  starts by providing an overview of primary and secondary school infrastructure and facilities, and then examines participation, the schooling profile, internal efficiency, and the situation with regard to out-of-school children. It also provides analysis of the education situation for orphaned children. Disparities in education access, participation, completion, drop-out, and attainment by gender, income, rural-urban location, and region are discussed throughout the chapter.

- **Chapter 7**
  describes and discusses the main features of the system for managing primary and secondary teachers, including pre- and in-service teacher training; continuous professional development; recruitment, remuneration, and promotion processes; and deployment, transfers, and attrition. It also briefly discusses teacher content knowledge and the main data gaps

for teacher management. The minimal available information on ECDE teachers is also included in this chapter.

- **Chapter 8**
  describes the situation for PSET including the provision of such services, access, labor market outcomes for graduates, and factors that influence the responsiveness of PSET to Eswatini's development needs, including PSET teachers and instructors.

- Finally, **Chapter 9**
  examines public and household spending on education as well as equity issues in spending.

At the start of each of chapters 4 to 9 there are boxes that summarize the main priority issues identified by the analysis presented in the chapters. These boxes are intended to help guide readers through the chapters and to facilitate discussion of education priorities by agencies and organizations active in education in Eswatini.

2. General context

This chapter sets the scene for the education sector analysis by describing key features of the context for education in Eswatini.[12] It presents selected macroeconomic indicators and how these have evolved over time along with the political and institutional context, demographic context, and projections for the preschool and school-age population. This is followed by a discussion of social factors that affect education opportunities and outcomes. These factors include the high incidence of poverty; high HIV/AIDS prevalence; limited empowerment of girls and women; high numbers of children who are orphaned and/or vulnerable; and the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.1 Macroeconomic context

Eswatini is a small landlocked country in Southern Africa bordering South Africa and Mozambique. It is a lower-middle income country with a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita of around E36,400 (equivalent to about US$4,700) in real terms in 2019. Eswatini has close economic linkages with South Africa – the Eswatini Lilangeni is pegged at par to the South African Rand which is also a legal tender in the country. It is a member of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), with SACU being a member of the Common Monetary Area (CMA) along with South Africa, Lesotho, and Namibia.

Table 2 shows selected macroeconomic indicators and how they have evolved since 2015. Real GDP growth has been been low and volatile in recent years and is estimated at 2.2% in 2019. Macroeconomic performance has been hampered by severe drought due to climate change, escalating fiscal challenges, an elevated government salary bill, and continued accumulation of domestic arrears (World Bank, 2019a). Real GDP is estimated to have contracted by 3.5% in 2020 as COVID-containment measures have disrupted supply chains and depressed demand. The spread of the COVID-19 pandemic severely affects trade and supply chains and depresses consumption and demand in affected countries including Eswatini.

12 For more detailed information see World Bank 2019b.

Table 2 Selected macroeconomic indicators 2015 - 2019

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
GDP (constant 2011 E, million)	39,516	39,951	40,760	41,727	42,663
GDP growth (constant, %)	2.2%	1.1%	2.0%	2.4%	2.2%
Total government revenue (% of GDP)	27.5%	25.1%	28.2%	24.8%	26.5%
SACU government revenue (% of GDP)	13.1%	9.2%	11.9%	9.2%	9.5%
Total government spending (% of GDP)	33.0%	33.5%	33.9%	34.7%	33.8%
Total government fiscal balance (% of GDP)	-5.5%	-8.5%	-5.7%	-9.9%	-7.3%
GDP per capita (constant 2011 E)	35,302	35,272	35,568	35,995	36,389

Source: World Bank 2019b

Total government revenue as a share of GDP has fluctuated between 25% and 28% since 2015. Eswatini remains highly dependent on revenues from SACU. While this dependency has decreased over time, SACU revenue accounted for about 36% of total revenue in 2019. Salary increases amid declining SACU revenues in 2016, resulted in an increased fiscal deficit at 8.5% of GDP. Although the deficit had slightly declined by 2019, fiscal space remains limited and given the uncertainty of SACU revenues and the COVID-19 pandemic, financing for education (and other sectors) is likely to be constrained over the next few years (see chapter 9).

Real GDP per capita has only grown slowly and the poverty incidence remains very high (section 2.4.1).

2.2 Political and institutional context

Eswatini has a dual system of governance, with the democratic parliamentary and traditional monarchical system of governance running concurrently. Eswatini has two parallel legal systems since its independence in 1968 as a constitutional monarchy. First, the modern courts which include the Supreme Court, High Court, and the Magistrates' courts – based on Roman-Dutch law with some English law. This court system deals with the more serious criminal and civil cases. Second, the system based on Swazi Customary law which operates through the traditional Swazi National Courts and are funded by the Swazi National Treasury.[13]

The modern system is governed by the 2005 Constitution, which vests executive authority in the King as the head of state. The King cannot initiate legislation

13 The Swazi National Treasury is a traditional funding mechanism that is part of the government budget. Its stated objectives are to administer the Swazi National Courts.

but has the power to withhold assent to parliamentary legislation. The Prime Minister, appointed by the King, is the Head of Government and chairs the Cabinet. The King appoints 10 out of the 70 members of the House of Assembly (the lower house of Parliament) and 20 of the 31 members of the Senate (the upper house of parliament). The Acts of Parliament require approval by both houses as well as royal assent.

The monarchy is an essential feature of Swazi culture and identity. Eswatini is a two-headed monarchy in which the King shares power with the Queen mother who typically plays a moderating role. As the head of state, the King is the head of the modern executive branch of government, as well as the ritual head of the Swazi Nation – the source and guardian of Swazi law and customs. Eswatini has approximately 300 chiefs with between 3,000 and 4,000 followers each. Chieftaincy is hereditary, and family choices for appointment are confirmed by the King. The role of chiefs includes the allocation of Swazi Nation Land and the settlement of disputes. Eswatini practices a Tinkhundla-based[14] electoral system of government whereby 59 Tinkhundla elects a representative to the House of Assembly in Parliament.

The national Government is comprised of 25 Ministries and Departments. These include, for example, Ministries of Education and Training, Health, Planning and Economic Development. The Government is led by the Prime Minister who is appointed by the King after the election of a new parliament. The most senior level of the executive branch of the Government is the Cabinet which includes the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and Ministers of the different departments. Ministers are appointed by the King with guidance and advice from the Minister.

Eswatini is divided into four administrative regions: Hhohho, Manzini, Shiselweni and Lubombo, and within each are urban and rural local government structures. Subnational government is comprised of three layers: regional administration, Tinkhundla, and chiefdoms, and each region is run by a regional administrator appointed by the King in line with the Constitution. Municipalities are located within administrative regions but are governed by the urban councils and not by the regions. In terms of public administration, the Constitution establishes independent and impartial service commissions that oversee public services. Members of these commissions are appointed by the King based on recommendations of a line minister. There are currently 48 State-owned enterprises that play a critical role in the national economy.

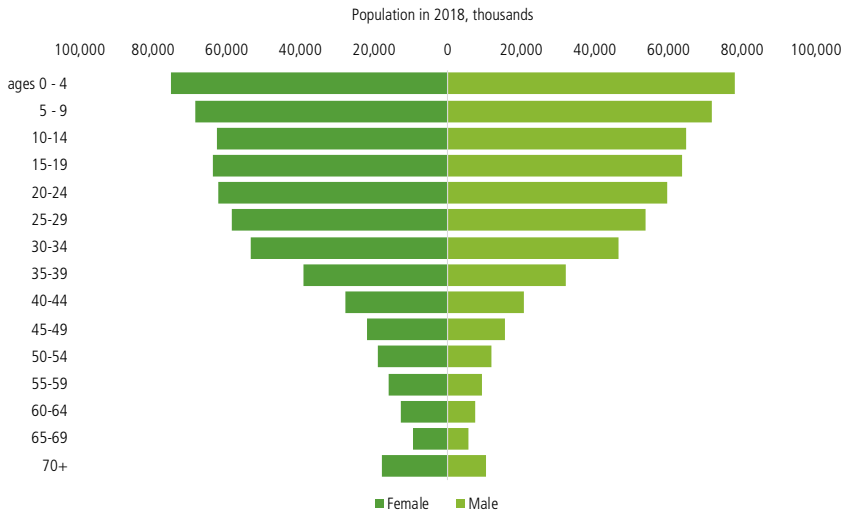
14 Equivalent to community districts.

2.3 Demographic context

Population growth has been relatively slow in Eswatini, with an average annual growth rate of 1.1% (CSO, 2019) and the total population stood at around 1.1 million in 2018. The slow-down in population growth rates are consistent with the declining fertility rates since the 1970s (World Bank, 2019b). However, the fertility rate is still higher (at three births per woman in 2018) than the global average of 2.5 births per woman.

Life expectancy is low in Eswatini even though it has improved in recent years from a low of 43 years in 2004 to 59 years in 2018 (World Bank, 2019b). The country has a very young population with a median age of 22 years in 2017, and 56% of the population were at the time, below the age of 25 (CSO, 2017) (Figure 7). This provides both an opportunity to reap a demographic dividend and to ensure social and political stability going forward, if the education system can provide young people with the relevant knowledge and skills needed in the labor market.

Figure 7 **Population pyramid 2018**



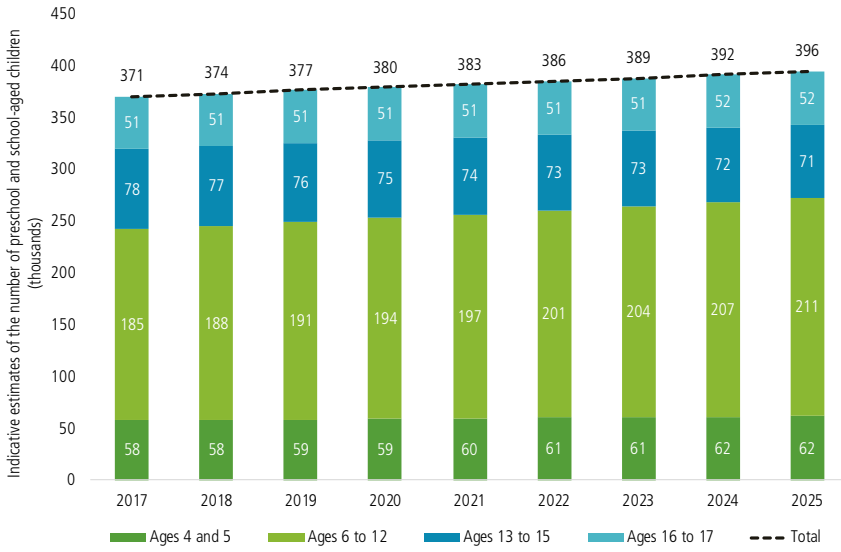
Source: Team calculations based on CSO data.

Over the next five years, the projected average annual growth rate for the preschool and school-aged population is less than 1%, and its share is projected to remain at approximately 32% of the total population in 2025 (Figure 8). This means there will be limited pressure on the education system to expand in order to cater for new entrants into the system, leaving more room to support those in

school with better delivery of education services.

Another key feature of the demographic context is migration to South Africa. Eswatini is among the top three labor-exporting countries in Southern Africa, with the primary destination of emigrants being South Africa (World Bank, 2019). In 2017, there were more than 94,000 Swazis that were international migrants which represents about 8% of Eswatini's total population, and around 93% of these emigrants were residing in South Africa (World Bank, 2017). Further, around 32% of Swazi university students are enrolled in public and private tertiary institutions in South Africa (see chapter 8).

Figure 8 **Indicative estimates of the number of preschool and school-aged children 2017-2025**



Source: Team estimates using CSO data.

2.4 Social context

2.4.1 Poverty

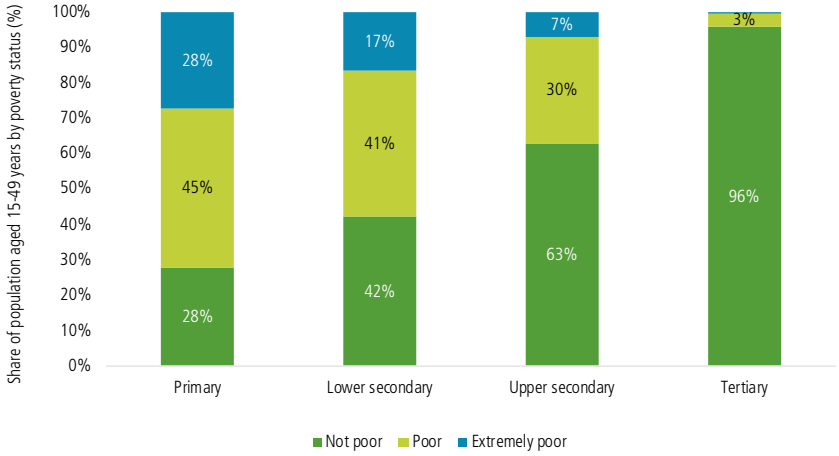
Although declining, poverty remains high and deeply entrenched in Eswatini. A key challenge to accelerating poverty reduction and promoting shared prosperity is high inequality. In 2016, the income Gini coefficient for Eswatini was 0.55 (World Bank, 2020c), representing high levels of inequality and a concentration of income among a small group. This manifests in unequal access to services such as healthcare, education, electricity, water and sanitation, as well as unequal access to markets, assets and rights (World Bank, 2019b), which hinders poverty reduction.

In 2017 59% of the population lived below the national poverty line which is very high albeit a decrease from 69% in 2001 (World Bank, 2019b). At the same time, 20% of the population lived below the extreme/food poverty line which means they cannot afford any consumption other than the minimum required caloric intake. For a lower middle-income country, the share of the population living on less than USD1.90 a day in Eswatini is very high at 28% in 2016 and is almost 4 percentage points higher than the average for lower middle-income countries (World Bank, 2019b, 2020).

Poverty is disproportionately concentrated in rural areas and in two of the four regions. An estimated 84,000 people (76% of the population) live in rural areas (UNSD, 2019). In 2017, about 70% of the rural population lived below the national poverty line compared to 20% of the urban population; and 25% of the rural population were below the extreme poverty line compared to only 3% of the urban population (World Bank, 2019b). Lubombo and Shiselweni regions are the poorest, with 72% of the population in Lubombo and 67% of the population in Shiselweni living below the national poverty line compared to 54% in Hhohho and 52% in Manzini (World Bank, 2019b). There is a strong poverty dimension in terms of education access and outcomes in Eswatini (see chapter 6).

The poverty status of the population is closely related to the highest level of education attended, and the share defined as poor declines as individuals attend higher levels of education. For example, among 15-49-year-olds, 45% of those who have only attended primary education are poor and 28% are extremely poor compared to a mere 3% and 1% respectively of those who have attended tertiary education (Figure 9).

Figure 9 Poverty headcount by highest level of education attended



Source: Weighted estimates based on EHIES 2016/17 data.

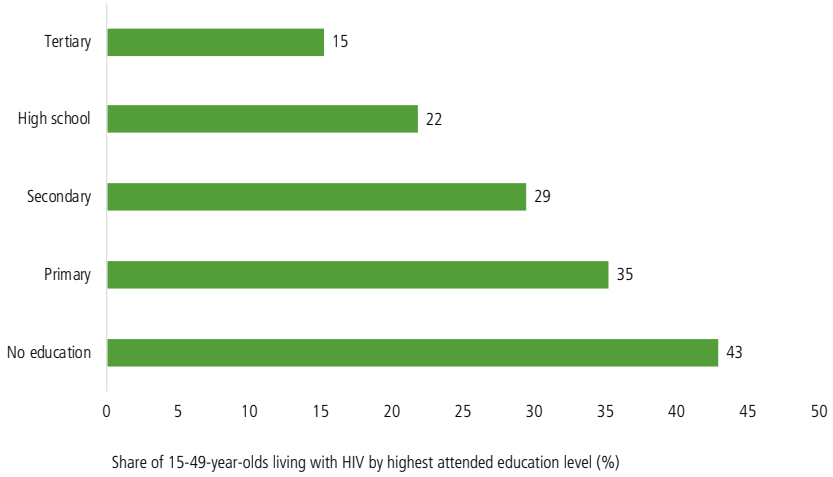
2.4.2 HIV/AIDS

Eswatini has the highest rate of HIV infections in the world with more than a quarter (27%) of its reproductive-age population (15 to 49 years) living with HIV (WHO, 2019; GoE, 2019). Females are at particular risk – 34% of females between in this age group are HIV positive compared to 19% of male, affecting individuals during their most productive years (GoE, 2019).

In 2016/17 the HIV prevalence for children aged 5-9 years was 3% and for those aged 10-14 years it was 4% (SHIMS2, 2016-2017). Among those aged 15 to 19 years the HIV prevalence is higher still at 5.6%, and there are large gender disparities with the share of girls who are HIV positive substantially higher than for boys (7% compared to 4%). Being HIV positive will affect children's school attendance and increases the risk of them dropping out of school (GoE, 2019). While the provision of anti-retroviral treatment (ART) is free, 13% of adults aged 15 and older who need ARTs do not access these services (WHO, 2019). But evidence on the effect of the provision of ART on students and teachers is not available.

There is a clear relationship between HIV status and highest level of education attended (SHIMS2, 2016-17). HIV prevalence among adults aged 15-49 years was higher among those with no education (43%), followed by those who only attended the primary education level (35%) which is more than double for those who attended tertiary education (15%) (Figure 10). That is, the more education an individual has, the less likely he/she is to be HIV positive.

Figure 10 15-49-year-olds living with HIV by highest attended education level



Source: SHIMS2 2016-17.

2.4.3 Human capital development

The Human Capital Index (HCI) is a composite measure of survival of children under the age of five, educational attainment, stunting, and the adult survival rate. An examination of the individual components of the HCI show that 94 of 100 children born in Eswatini survive to age 5. Close to 60% of 15-year-olds will survive until age 60 and approximately 26 of 100 children are stunted, implying that these children are at risk of cognitive and physical limitations that can last a lifetime. Preliminary calculations for the ESA, show that children who start school at age four can expect to complete 11 years of schooling by age 18. When years of schooling are adjusted for quality of learning, the 11 years become equivalent to only 7.7 years. This raises concerns about the quality of schooling that children are receiving in Eswatini (see chapter 4).

The preliminary HCI for Eswatini computed for the ESA report is 0.48 in 2020 (Table 3). This implies that a child born in Eswatini will only be 48% as productive when growing up as she could have been if she had attained good health and complete education by the age of 18.

Table 3 Human Capital Index for Eswatini 2020

Indicator	Score
Probability of survival to age 5	0.94
Expected years of schooling	11.0
Harmonized test score	440
Learning-adjusted years of schooling	7.7
Adult survival rate	0.59
Proportion of children under 5 not stunted	0.74
HCI	0.48

Source: World Bank 2020a.

Note: 1) Expected years of schooling and learning-adjusted years of schooling, and therefore, the overall HCI are preliminary.

2.4.4 Orphaned and vulnerable children

The HIV epidemic has resulted in a generation of children and youth who have lost one or both of their parents and who are living with grandparents, other extended family, or community caregivers. In 2017 just over 16% of children aged 0-17 years were single or double orphans (Table 4). The shares of children who are single and double orphans increase as they grow older, with almost one-in-three (32%) of secondary-school aged youths being orphaned. The share of orphaned students creates an additional challenge for the education system since these children tend to need extra support – both financially and academically (see primary and secondary education chapter).

Table 4 Share of orphaned children by age group

	Age group			
	Younger than 18	0-5 years	6-12 years	13-17 years
Single orphan	14%	3.5%	15%	26%
Double orphan	2.3%	0.1%	2%	6%

Source: Weighted estimates based on EHIES 2016/17 data.

Compounding this crisis is the large number of children who are considered vulnerable due to illnesses experienced by parents, are abandoned by a parent, or are living in extreme poverty resulting in a staggering 58% of the country's children being orphaned and/or vulnerable (WFP, 2019). There is, however, some uncertainty around the number of OVCs in Eswatini, with UNICEF estimates being much higher than those of the World Food Programme at 71% of all children. The socio-economic situation of OVCs is not well studied. But

OVCs are more likely to drop out of school and lack close relationships with their caregivers. Those who attend secondary school are less likely to be in the correct grade-for-age, and often have poor attendance which further hampers their education outcomes (Pufall et al., 2014; section 6.4).

A recent study of the main reasons for why boys drop out of school, undertaken by the MoET and Media in Education Trust (MIET) Africa found that in the context of poverty, broken family structures leads to the expectation of boys being the main providers of their families, and in several instances, the absence of fathers or male role models leaves them vulnerable. This vulnerability leads some boys to drop out of school (see chapter 6), engage in substance abuse, exploitation in the form of intergenerational relationships, and risky sexual behavior (Erasmus et al. 2019).

Girls are a highly vulnerable group. According to a 2008 national study (Reza et al. 2009), 48% of girls and women between the ages of 13 to 24 reported having experienced some form of sexual violence, with 33% of girls experiencing some form of sexual violence before the age of 18. A 2013 UNICEF study estimated that 28% of females aged 13 to 18 years have experienced sexual violence in their lifetime (UNICEF, 2019). A recent World Bank study looked at the relationship between violence, social norms and HIV, and highlighted that many countries with high prevalence of sexual violence, most often committed by a partner or spouse, also have higher shares of women living with HIV (Bunker and Kashiwase, 2020). Harmful social norms promoting men's authority over female behavior makes women vulnerable to violence and restricts their control over sexual decision making. These norms are often not only held by and perpetuated by men, but are also held by women, especially in poorer households. In the poorest 20% of households in Sub-Saharan Africa, 40% of women believe that they are unable to refuse sex if their partners have had sex with other women (Bunker and Kashiwase, 2020). This has a direct bearing on HIV reduction; women's empowerment; and adolescent development and well-being.

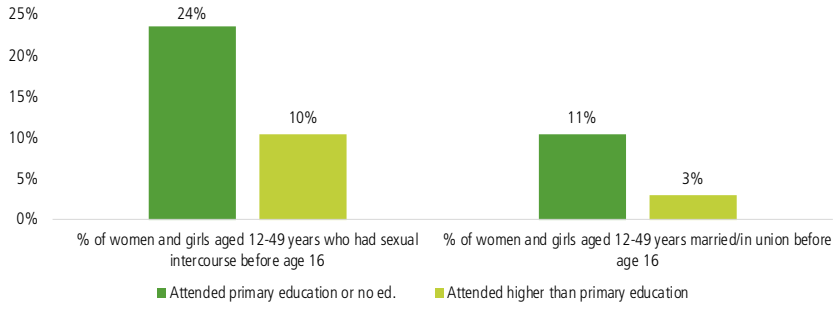
Box 4 Legislative reforms to protect girls and women in Eswatini

Eswatini has made legislative reforms in recent years to further the promotion and protection of women and girls' rights. In August 2019, the Eswatini High Court ruled that the common law doctrine of marital power (giving a husband the ultimate decision-making power over his wife and the matrimonial property) is unconstitutional as it discriminates against women and denies their constitutional right to equality.

The ruling builds on Eswatini's ongoing law reform process that included the passing of the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Act of 2018, which provides a framework to curb sexual and gender-based violence in the country. In 2018, the Election of Women Act was also enacted, designed to fulfil the constitutional requirement for quotas for the representation of women and marginalized groups in parliament. But in practice the situation for girls and women in Eswatini has not improved.

Around 18% of girls drop out of primary school and a staggering 35% of girls drop out of junior secondary education because they become pregnant (EHIES, 2016/17). Leaving school early is associated with a greater incidence of early union and early and unintended pregnancy. In 2014, 11% of women and girls aged 12 to 49 years who had completed Grade 7 or less were married or in a union before the age of 16 compared to 3% of those who had more than a primary education (Figure 11). About 24% of women and girls who completed Grade 7 or less, reported having sexual intercourse before the age of 16, compared to 10% of those who had completed more than primary education. The share of females aged 15 to 19 years who experienced an early and unintended pregnancy was 17% in 2014, and this share was slightly larger in urban than in rural areas (UNESCO, 2017).

Figure 11 Early union and sexual intercourse by educational achievement for women



Source: Weighted estimates based on MICS 2014 data.

2.5 Initiatives to protect learning during the COVID-19 pandemic

The education system in Eswatini has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, with all schools and institutions of higher learning instructed to close on 17 March 2020 when the country instituted national lockdown measures. Working with the Ministry of Health, the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA), and development partners, the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) put in place measures to mitigate the impact of the pandemic and ensure continuity of education.

In terms of basic education, the government has responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by:

- developing necessary documents to assist schools with preparation to reopen.
- providing training of teachers to teach lessons on radio and television broadcasts.
- developing and broadcasting lessons (radio, television, and print) for students targeting Grade 7, Form 3, and Form 5 classes first from 6 April 2020.
- broadcasting weekly programs on mental health and psychosocial programs for learners.
- engaging mobile network providers to upload multi-media lessons and ensure educational websites are zero-rated.15
- providing water and sanitation facilities to schools without these services.
- providing radios to most vulnerable households with support from UNICEF.

Tertiary and TVET institutions are using tech-enabled platforms to continue to teach students remotely.

There are also community initiatives to mitigate the effects of COVID-19. Some schools (mostly private) and education volunteers provide lessons through e-learning platforms such as Google classroom, WhatsApp, Telegram, emails, Zoom, student portal, and blackboard. Students have used these online platforms to organize communities of practice to ensure continuity of learning

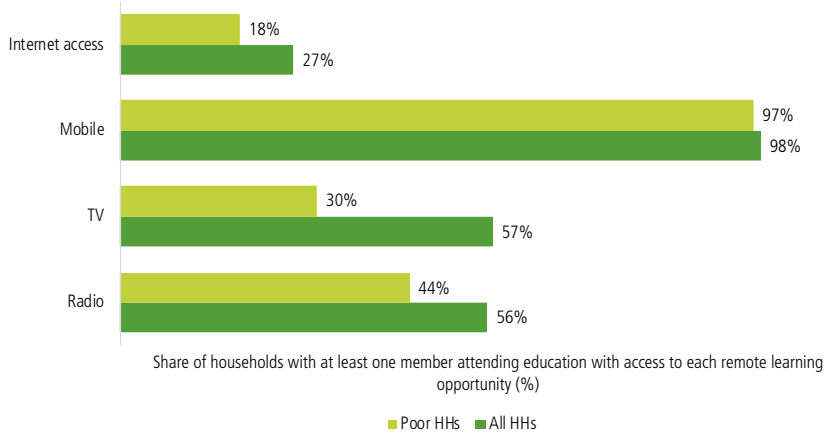
To date, only the three examination grades have reopened. Form 5 students returned to school on 6 July 2020, followed by Form 3 students on 24 August

15 Mobile service providers offer customers an opportunity to consume content from certain app services or websites without it counting against their data plans.

2020, and Grade 7 students on 1 September 2020. Schools have not yet opened for the other grades which are being catered for through radio, TV and print media, with Grades 0 to 4 lessons only being offered on television. The remaining grades are set to restart on 26 January 2021, with a fused curriculum to cover lost teaching and learning time in 2020. This implies that children in the grades which have not reopened will be promoted to the next grade in 2021, with a compressed curriculum covering aspects for the current academic year the child is enrolled in and the grade they will be enrolled in during the 2021 academic year.

While the swift actions of the Government to ensure continuity of learning are commendable, students' differential access to remote learning opportunities are likely to widen the existing education inequalities in Eswatini. For households with children attending primary, secondary, or post-secondary education, access to the internet is low (27%) and much lower still for poor households (17%) (Figure 12). Access to other remote learning avenues is limited, with those from poorer households being at a clear disadvantage. Only 30% of children from poor households have access to a television (TV) and 44% have access to a radio – the two largest avenues used to reach children in primary and secondary school (EHIES 2016/17). This suggests that for any remote learning strategy to successfully reach the largest possible group of students it will need to consider which means of transmission are more widely available to students, and in the case of the internet, the cost of using it.[16]

Figure 12 Household access to remote learning opportunities 2016/17



Source: Weighted estimates based on EHIES 2016/17 data.

16 In 2016, only 29% of the population were using the internet, with the main barriers to access being poor telecommunications infrastructure and affordability (World Bank, 2019b).

With the massive loss of face-to-face learning time in schools, and the lack of access to remote learning opportunities, the COVID-19 pandemic is likely to have large detrimental effects on student retention and learning. The pandemic may also exacerbate existing inequalities in education, with the poorest likely to be the hardest hit. The coda at the end of this report discusses what impacts COVID-19 is likely to have on education outcomes and ways to mitigate these based on emerging international evidence.

3. Education context

This chapter presents an overview of the education and training context for Eswatini. The chapter begins by describing the structure of the education system. It then outlines the key strategies, policies, and legislation governing the sector, Finally, it gives an overview of the organizational structure of the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) as it applies to the overall management and administration of the education system in Eswatini.

3.1 Structure of the education system

The education system in Eswatini is organized into four key levels: early childhood development and education (ECDE); primary education; secondary education; and post-school education and training (PSET) which includes TVET, tertiary education, and adult education and lifelong learning (AELL). The structure of the system, including the different grade levels, theoretical age ranges, curriculum phases, and alternative pathways are presented in Figure 13.

3.1.1 Early childhood development and education (ECDE)

ECDE programs in Eswatini are not compulsory and target children between the ages of 0-5 years. These programs are mainly provided by communities and the private sector, including individuals, churches, and non-government organizations. The ECDE sub-sector is comprised of the following service delivery platforms:

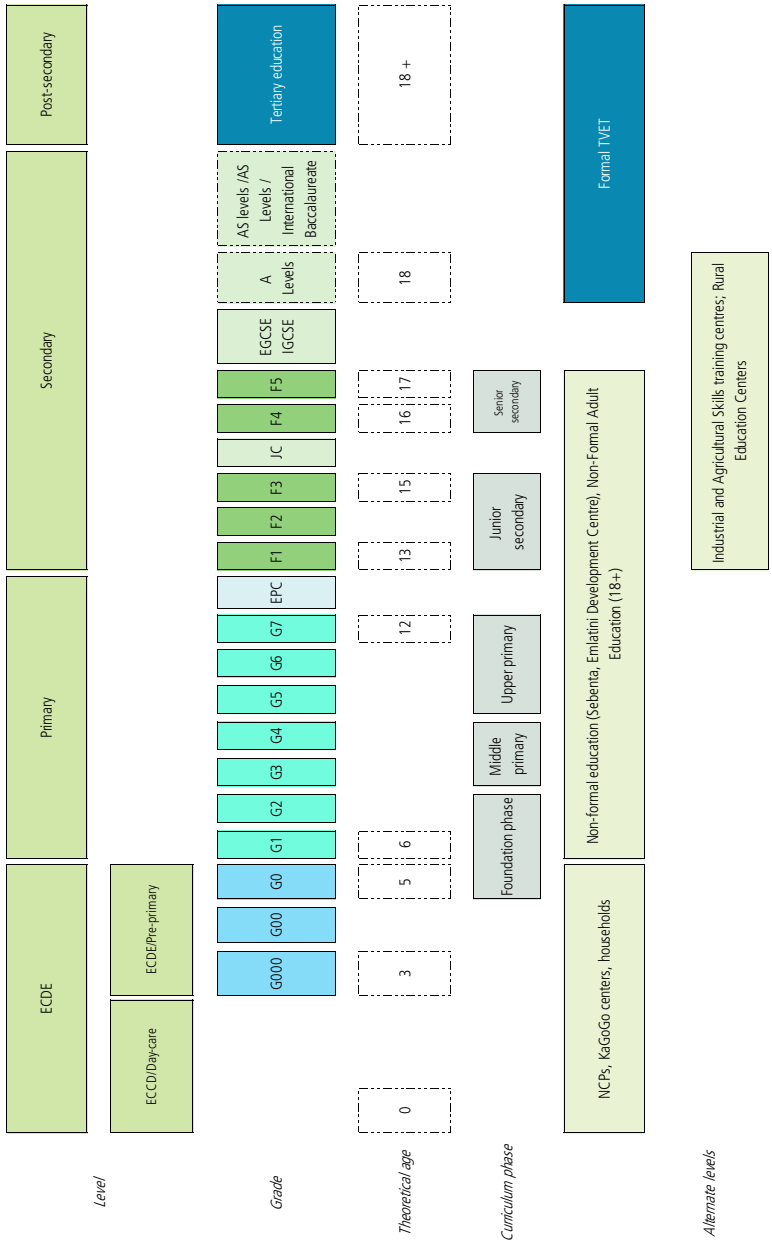
- **Day-care centers** targeting children between 0-3 years. These centers offer childcare services while parents are at work or school. Structured learning does not take place in day-care centers, but children follow some form of routine to achieve certain development goals while also learning positive behaviors.
- **Private and community preschools** target 3-5-year-old children and prepare them for formal entry into primary education. Preschool education is also offered at special schools, and two primary schools in Eswatini provide preprimary education for children with special needs.
- **Grade 0** targets children aged 5-6-years-old and is currently being offered in selected rural primary schools throughout the country and in some private preschools.
- **Neighborhood Care Points (NCPs) and KaGoGo centers ('Grandmother's houses')** were initially established to provide feeding services for children, but recently began providing some early stimulation

and/or education for children who are of preprimary school age but are not enrolled in any of the above categories.

A preliminary survey undertaken by the MoET in 2020, with support from Regional Education Officers, indicate that there are around 627 Early Childhood Education (ECE) centers in Eswatini targeting 3-5-year-old children, 63% of which are community-based preschools and 37% are private (see chapter 5). These centers enroll 21,192 children, which accounts for 24% of the eligible age cohort.

A Grade 0 pilot was rolled out across 80 primary schools in Eswatini in 2018 for 5-6-year-old children and enrolled approximately 2,300 children, which accounts for less than 4% of the eligible age cohort.

Figure 13 Structure of the education system in Eswatini



Source: ESA team.

3.1.2 Primary and secondary education

In Eswatini, primary and secondary education is offered through formal and non-formal settings. In 2018, there were a total of 618 primary schools and 275 secondary schools in Eswatini. Primary enrolment was at 237,000 while 77,000 students were enrolled in junior secondary education and approximately 39,0000 in senior secondary education (see chapter 6). The types of schools, based on institutional governance, include:

- **Community schools** account for the largest proportion of schools at 63% of all primary and secondary schools. While these schools are community owned, they are supported by the government financially.
- **Government-aided mission schools** account for 29% of primary and secondary schools and receive financial support from the government.
- **Government schools** account for only 2% of all primary and secondary schools. They are constructed and owned by the government and are generally referred to as national or central schools.
- **Government-aided private schools** account for 2% of all primary and secondary schools and receive support from the government in the form of teacher salaries.
- **Private non-government aided schools** account for 4% of all primary and secondary schools. They do not receive financial assistance from the government but are regulated by the MoET and fall under its portfolio.

Primary education

Primary education starts at age six and lasts for seven years. It seeks to ensure that learners acquire skills, knowledge, values, and attitudes which are required for general and vocational education and for the execution of basic life roles. This level of education addresses learners' emotional and intellectual development, the development of their creativity and the acquisition of social, cultural, and physical skills. At the end of primary education (Grade 7), learners have to pass the national examination to obtain the Eswatini Primary Certificate (EPC) in order to proceed to junior secondary education.

Eswatini is very close to achieving universal access to primary education (see chapter 6), and much of this can be attributed to the Free Primary Education (FPE) program that was introduced in 2010 following the adoption of the FPE Act which stipulates that *"every Swazi child enrolled at a public primary school is entitled to free education at the public primary school beginning with grade 1 up to and including grade 7"* (Kingdom of Swaziland, 2010). FPE has been viewed as a consolidated program aimed at creating a conducive learning environment

characterized by minimum barriers to access primary education. The FPE program specifically aims to reduce financial (school fees), physical (distance to school): and socio-cultural barriers to education.

The FPE program comprises the following key elements: 1) provision of appropriately qualified teachers; 2) provision of infrastructure such as classrooms, facilities suitable for students with special needs and accommodation for teachers; 3) provision of teaching and learning materials such as textbooks, workbooks, exercise books, and stationery; and 4) school grants to cover operational costs, school feeding, and administrative duties.

Secondary education

Secondary education is comprised of five years – three years of junior secondary and two years of senior secondary. Secondary education is neither compulsory nor free in Eswatini, and the theoretical age group for this level of children is children between the ages of 13-17 years. The purpose of secondary education in Eswatini is to equip learners with the knowledge and skills required for post-secondary education, to find employment, or to start a business. Fee exemptions for secondary education are targeted at orphaned and vulnerable children through the orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) education grant (see chapter 6).

At the end of junior secondary education (Form 3), students sit for the high stakes Junior Certificate (JC) examination which they are required to pass to proceed to senior secondary education. At the end of senior secondary education (Form 5), students sit for the Eswatini General Certificate of Secondary Education (EGCSE) which qualifies them for entry into tertiary institutions. In 2006, the Cambridge International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) was adopted but has since been fully localized to the ECGSE.

Four public secondary schools and a small number of private secondary schools offer Form 6, at the end of which students sit for the A/AS Level General Certificate of Secondary Education examination which is required by most universities in the region. Some secondary schools in Eswatini also enable students to sit for the South African Matric examination and examinations set by the Independent Examinations Board.

3.1.3 Post-school education and training (PSET)

The purpose of tertiary education, TVET, and AELL in Eswatini is to equip students with skills and competencies that are demanded by the labor market to further economic growth. The overall regulatory function of PSET rests with the MoET.

Tertiary education

Tertiary education includes public and private universities which typically offer three to four-year courses for students aged 18 years and older. These are complemented by public and private colleges, a majority of which are specialized learning institutions focusing on one professional area, such as teacher training colleges. The private institutions are mainly operating branches of foreign tertiary institutions, originating, for example, in South Africa.

The largest tertiary institution in Eswatini is the public University of Eswatini (UNESWA), and there are three younger, and smaller private institutions: the Southern Africa Nazarene University (SANU), Limkokwing University of Technology, and Eswatini Christian University (ECU). The regulatory responsibility for tertiary education rests with the Eswatini Higher Education Council (ESHEC) through the Higher Education Act of 2013 (ESHEC, 2013), with a focus on learning programs that commence after the completion of secondary education and lead to higher qualifications. Students also access tertiary education by pursuing distance education, mainly through South African universities (49%), and a large number of students also study in South Africa. Over the past decade, university enrolments have increased, but participation rates are still low compared to other countries (see chapter 8).

TVET

TVET is provided both at the secondary and tertiary level. What is considered to be formal public TVET falls under the MoET, while industrial training is regulated by the Department of Industrial and Vocational Training (DIVT) in the Ministry of Labor and Social Security (MoLSS).

There are two points of entry into TVET: following the EPC for entry into the industrial and agricultural colleges; and following the completion of the secondary education certificates for entry into public or private formal TVET institutions for youths aged 18 and above.

In 2019, the MoET had recorded 34 TVET institutions, five of which were public. The public institutions enrolled about 1,700 students in 2016. Public formal TVET is limited to ten occupational fields focusing on traditional technical trades, education, business professions, ICT, and agriculture. Private TVET provision is significant in terms of enrolment and the range of programs offered but recent data are unavailable.

The TVET providers covered in the EMIS only represent a fraction of the overall TVET provider landscape (see chapter 8). There are additional public institutions run by other line ministries, and a significant number of private institutions,

which may be registered as organizations but not formally accredited as training institutions.

Students can also access public non-formal vocational training through the MoET's Rural Education and Skills Centers (RECs) and the Sebenta National Institute (SNI) which is managed by the Adult and Non-Formal Education Program of the MoET. These non-formal vocational training programs offer short courses such as carpentry, sewing, catering, and computing. While these courses were originally targeted to those who had completed adult education programs, students from the general education with an interest in these courses are also accepted into the programs (see chapter 8).

Adult education and lifelong learning (AELL)

AELL caters for out-of-school children and youth, as well as adults who have never enrolled in, or dropped out of the formal education system. The aim of AELL is to empower the more vulnerable in society in accordance with their needs and interests, and to prepare them for the world of work. These individuals can access non-formal primary and secondary education through the Sebenta National Institute (SNI) and the Emlalatini Development Center (EDC) respectively (see chapter 8).

The SNI program offers free non-formal primary education delivered by volunteer primary teachers across various locations and enables learners to complete the primary curriculum (aligned to the national curriculum) in five years, after which they can sit for the EPC. The EDC assists learners to complete secondary education and is delivered through distance learning combined with some face-to-face teaching provided by recruited subject tutors. Enrolment rates in non-formal adult programs are very low relative to the number of out-of-school individuals without a completed education.

3.2 Education legislation, policies, and strategies

Eswatini recognizes the importance of education, particularly the role it plays in building human capital and transforming the economic and social landscape. This is articulated in the following national and education specific strategies and plans:

National Development Strategy Vision 2022 (1999) states that "By the Year 2022, the Kingdom of Swaziland will be in the top 10% of the medium human development group of countries founded on sustainable economic development, social justice and political stability". The specific strategies articulated to promote sustainable and high levels of employment and averting wastages in human resources are around improvements in quality, relevance, efficiency, science

and technology, eliminating distortions in wage differentials, human resource planning and scholarships, and focusing on special education and accessibility.

Kingdom of Eswatini Strategic Roadmap 2019-2023: The Government has committed to a 'turnaround strategy' to attain macro-fiscal stabilization and growth. One focus area of the Roadmap is to improve the delivery of services and foster a culture of excellence through improved efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector and technological innovation.

National Development Plan (2019/20-2021/22): Towards Economic Recovery: Outcome 3 focuses on enhanced social and human capital development, with one of the sector specific outcomes being improved access to quality, relevant and inclusive education, and lifelong learning opportunities. Targets for key sectoral outcomes by 2022 include increased ECDE net enrolments from 29% to 50%, increased secondary net enrolments from 46% to 55%, increased TVET enrolments by 20%, qualified teacher-student ratios increased across all levels, and an increase in the proportion of tertiary education graduates absorbed in the labor market within the first year of completion (MoEPD, 2019)

Education Sector Strategic Plan (2010 – 2022) includes a broad range of activities from ECDE to tertiary education and takes cognizance of cross-cutting issues such HIV/AIDS, gender, and inclusiveness. It emphasizes the improvement of quality education at all levels with the main goal being the production of adequate skills to support economic growth and improved standards of living for the entire Swazi nation.

National Education and Training Sector Policy (2018) has an over-arching goal that contextualizes all sub-sectors which is the "Provision of an equitable and inclusive education and training system that affords all learners access to free and compulsory basic education and senior secondary education of high quality, followed by the opportunity to continue with life-long education and training, so enhancing their personal development and contributing to Eswatini's cultural development, socio-economic growth and global competitiveness". The policy is aligned to the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through the Sustainable Development Goals and includes regional cooperation and integration through the African Union's Agenda for 2063 for Africa's socio-economic transformation, the SADC Revised Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan 2015-2020 and the SADC Industrialisation Strategy and Roadmap 2015-2063.

National Education and Training Improvement Plan (NETIP) II (2018/19 – 2020/21) defines the strategic objectives, priorities, strategies, and key activities to be achieved in the education sector over a three-year period. These are defined for ECDE, primary and secondary education, Technical and Vocational Education and Training, teacher education, tertiary education, and non-formal

adult education and life-long learning. The document guides the programming, financing, and monitoring, of key sector interventions from 2018 to 2021.

National Technical and Vocational Education and Skills Development (TVETSD) Policy (2010) was initiated to create a TVETSD system responsive to market demands; establish an effective governance, management and training system; establish mechanisms for the portability of formal, non-formal and informal qualifications; and establish equitable access to skills for formal sector or self-employment.

Key legislation governing the education sector in Eswatini includes: The Constitution of the Kingdom of Eswatini Act 2005; the Education Act No. 9 1981; the Free Primary Education Act 2010; the Teaching Services Act 1982; the Industrial and Vocational Training Act 1982; the Children Act 2012; the Higher Education Act, 2013; and the National Disability Act, 2018.

Other key policies, rules, guidelines, and regulations include:

- The 1983 Teaching Service Commission Regulations;
- The 1992 School Accounting Regulations and Procedures;
- The 2009 National Children's Policy;
- The 2009 Education Establishment and Registration of Private Educational Institutions Regulations Notice;
- The 2011 School Committee Constitution;
- The 2011 Scholarships Policy;
- The 2016 Higher Education General Regulations; and
- The 2018 National Curriculum Framework.

There are additional policies and legislation under development which are soon to be approved. This includes the Council of Educators' Bill 2019; the Sebenta National Institute Bill 2019; the Examinations Council of Eswatini Bill 2019; and the Teaching Service Amendment Bill 2019.

Apart from national strategies, policies, and legislation, Eswatini is a signatory or subscribes to international and regional commitments and agreements that champion the right to education, including the United Nations Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development 2015 (Annex A).

3.3 Administration and management of the education system

The Education sector in Eswatini is governed by the MoET and operates through a centralized administration system. The MoET provides decentralized services through the Regional Education Offices. The organogram below (Figure 14) represents the institutional structure of the MoET.

The Minister is the political head of the MoET which is responsible for ECDE, primary and secondary education, as well as PSET. The 2005 Constitution of the Kingdom of Eswatini establishes Public Service Commissions in Chapter X, Part 1 and this includes the Eswatini Higher Education Council (ESHEC), the Teaching Service Commission (TSC), the Examinations Council of Eswatini (ECESWA), the University of Eswatini (UNESWA), Sebenta National Institute (SNI), and the siSwati Language Board. The boards (and their respective chairmen) of these semi-autonomous institutions report directly to the Minister's office.

The Principal Secretary (PS) is responsible for the overall management and administration of the Ministry. The PS supervises Heads of Departments which include: the Under Secretary for Administration, the Under Secretary for School Management, and the Director of Education. The Under Secretary for Administration is responsible for the running of the Ministry including issues of personnel and finances, through the Human Resource, Finance, and Communications departments. The Ministry has extended its services to the grassroots through the establishment of Regional Education Offices (REOs) in the four regions: Hhohho, Manzini, Lubombo, and Shiselweni. These have various units that are responsible for implementing the policies of the Ministry, as well as dealing with schools at the local level. The Under Secretary of School Management is responsible for the effective management and running of schools and works with the REOs across the four regions. These REOs report to the Under Secretary of Administration regarding administrative matters and to the Director of Education regarding technical matters. Further, the Under Secretary of School Management works with the Teaching Service Commission (TSC).

The Regional Education Office is positioned at the local level and plays a strategic role in the successful implementation of decentralization policies. It is responsible for monitoring administrative, educational, and legal activities for schools in the region. One of the key functions of the regional education offices is monitoring the quality of education through inspections. The role of the Regional Education Office is limited in terms of allocating resources to schools, mainly because the government system is centralized. Resources such as grants to schools, teaching and learning materials, and posting of teachers is done centrally, with the REOs acting as a link between the schools and the Ministry. REOs also work with regional education advisory boards which advise the

Ministry in terms of determining the need for and making recommendations on the establishment of new schools in the region.

The Director of Education is responsible for all education developments in the sector. Under the Director of Education are three Chief Inspectors responsible for each of primary, secondary, and tertiary education, as well as institutions such as the National Curriculum Centre (NCC), and the In-Service Education and Training (INSET) Department. Departments responsible for cross-cutting issues such as Career Guidance and Counselling, Curriculum Development, Special Education, Examinations, ICT, Nutrition, Open and Distance Learning, Teacher Management and Quality Assurance and Accreditation (Tertiary Education) report to the Director of Education technically, but are dedicated functions of other officials, such as Chief Inspectors, the Director of Education, or the Director for ETGPS.

The Chief Inspector Primary is responsible for all matters related to primary education, including Free Primary Education (FPE), as well as ECDE. There are Regional Inspectors across all four regions who are accountable to the REOs. These are extending functions of the office of the Chief Inspector Primary. The Regional Inspectors are responsible for monitoring all matters related to primary education, including curriculum implementation, quality of teaching and learning, FPE, provision of nutrition etc. These Regional Inspectors are not subject specific. In addition, there are Ministry staff who are specifically recruited to look at cross-cutting issues, for example, Special Education Needs, ICT, and Guidance and Counselling.

The Chief Inspector Secondary is responsible for all matters related to junior and senior secondary education. The Chief Inspector Secondary leads a pool of subject specific Regional Inspectors at the secondary level, some of which are placed at the ministry level (Senior Inspectors) and others at the regional level (Regional Inspectors). The Inspectors report to the Chief Inspector Secondary, however, Regional Inspectors also report administratively to the REOs. There are also Regional Inspectors who are recruited to look at cross-cutting issues. Further, there are Rural Education and Skills centers (RECs) which fall under the MoET's secondary education department. These RECs offer public non-formal basic vocation training and are attached to the schools and administered by school principals.

The Chief Inspector Tertiary is responsible for TVET and Tertiary Education, open and distance learning (for example, the EDC), and also supervises college principals, the NCC, and the MoET INSET unit. All technical matters go to the Director of Education and are then delegated to the Chief Inspector Tertiary.

The following support departments in the MoET report directly to the PS and work in collaboration with the office of the Director of Education: the UNESCO

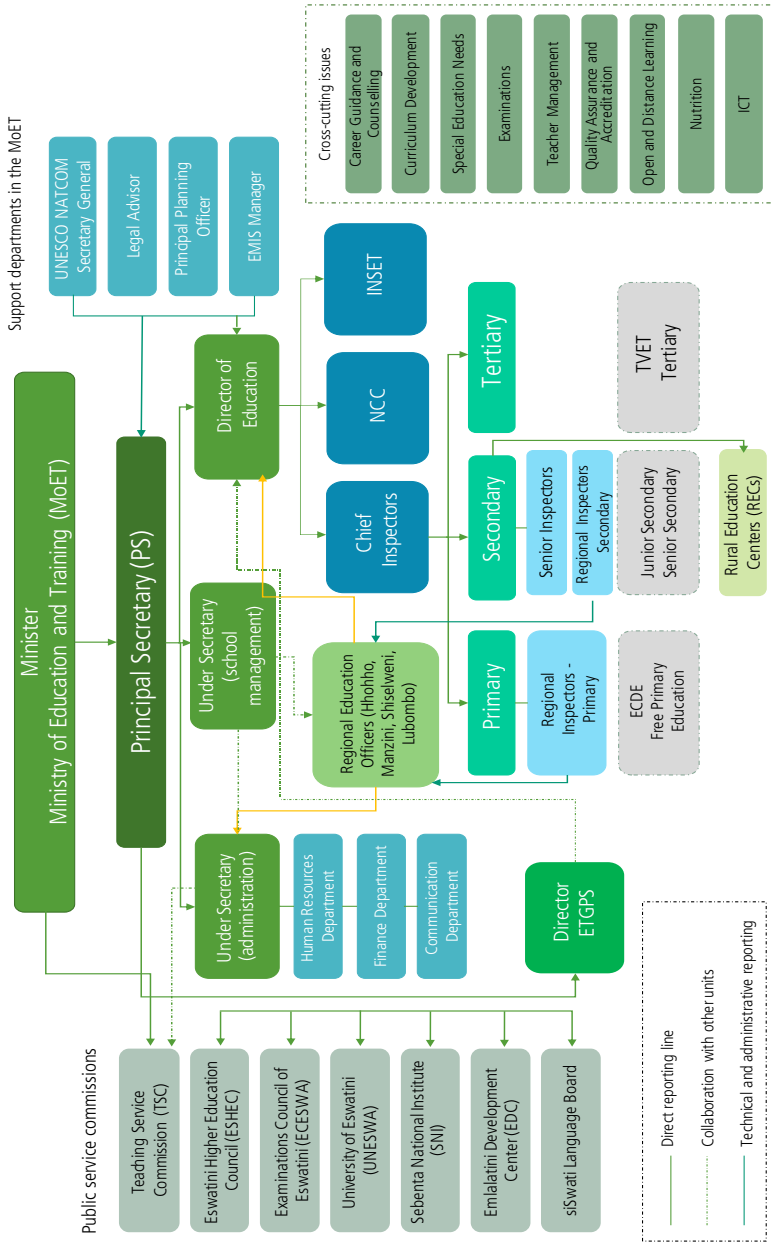
NATCOM Secretary General, the Legal Advisor, the Principal Planning Officer, and the Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) Manager. At times, the UNESCO NATCOM reports directly to the Ministry.

The Director of Education Testing Guidance and Psychological Services (ETGPS) is responsible for issues of Career Guidance and Counselling for all learners and is supervising the Guidance regional officers. The ETGPS unit collaborates with the office of the Director of Education but is accountable to the PS.

While the MoET is the primary agency responsible for education in Eswatini, the sector is also supported by several other ministries as indicated throughout the report.

The development partners who are active in the education sector include: the European Union, the World Bank, Global Partnership for Education, the Government of Japan, the Taiwan Technical Mission, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNFPA, and the World Food Program (also see chapter 9). The role of some these partners and their involvement in education and skills training in Eswatini is summarized in Annex table 1.

Figure 14 Organogram for the Ministry of Education and Training



Source: MoET 2020.

4. Student learning assessment and achievement

The ultimate objective of the education system is for all students to achieve the knowledge and skills set out in the national curriculum to prepare them for the world of work and enable them to engage in and contribute to society. While Eswatini has made major progress in improving access to education over the last decade, upon completion of their studies many students have not acquired the expected knowledge and skill levels.

This chapter begins with a brief discussion of the different types of learning assessments available in Eswatini and an overview of existing regional and international assessments. Next, the available evidence on pre-literacy and pre-numeracy skills of children of preschool age is presented. This is followed by new analysis of learning levels for Grade 7, Form 3, and Form 5 students using national examinations data.

The priority issues related to learning assessment and achievement identified by the ESA are set out in Box 5 and are discussed in detail in the remainder of the chapter.

Box 5 Priority issues for learning assessment and achievement

There is no systematic national learning assessment or regional/international assessment to regularly monitor student progress and to benchmark Eswatini's student learning against other middle-income countries

Most children in Eswatini enter primary school lacking essential school readiness in pre-literacy and pre-numeracy

Many students in Eswatini have not acquired the knowledge and skills expected by the end of primary, junior secondary, and senior secondary education

Students who do better in English language also do better in other subjects

Students in rural schools perform considerably worse in English, mathematics, and science than students in urban schools, and there are some disparities by gender and regionally

4.1 Student learning assessment

Student learning assessment systems include classroom assessments, large-scale national assessments, large-scale regional and international assessments, and examinations. School-level continuous classroom assessments are important, as they provide information for teachers and parents and are useful for improving instruction. But they seldom provide data that is comparable across schools such data on student learning levels can come from large-scale sample-based learning assessments and, under certain conditions, examinations.

Eswatini has participated in Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS), which provide data on preschool-age children's pre-literacy and pre-numeracy skills. However, currently, the country does not have a national learning assessment for students at any grade of primary or secondary education. However, Eswatini has drafted a National Assessment Framework, and plans to implement a national assessment in step with the roll-out of the new competency-based curriculum (see Box 8).

National end-of-cycle examinations can provide comparable data for assessing student performance. But high stakes examinations that affect a student's opportunities for continuing education may be skewed toward higher levels of performance, rather than covering all performance levels. In Eswatini, examinations are given at Grade 7, Form 3, and Form 5, and cover the national curriculum in various subjects. English is the language of assessment for all formal examinations except siSwati.

Eswatini has only participated in the regional sample-based learning assessment, the Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ), which covers reading and mathematics for Grade 6 students, and reflects the curricula of the participating countries. Eswatini has participated in three rounds: SACMEQ II (2001), III (2007), and IV (2013) (MOET, 2015a) but has not participated in any other large-scale learning assessments of reading, mathematics, and science, which have covered grades 4, 8, or 9 (see below).

Box 6 Performance of Grade 6 students in Eswatini on reading and mathematics

Student performance in both reading and mathematics improved between 2000 and 2013 according to SACMEQ results (Shabalala, 2015). Further, a comparison of student learning levels based on harmonized combined reading and mathematics scores, placed students in Eswatini (440) ahead of their peers in Namibia (407), Lesotho (393), Botswana (391), and South Africa (343) in 2013.[17]

In 2007, prior to the introduction of FPE, although students in Eswatini were among the top performers in the region in terms of reading and mathematics on the SACMEQ III assessment, learning was below expected levels.[18] The majority of Grade 6 students (72%) had what SACMEQ defines as minimum acceptable reading skills or higher, although among this group only 9% had acquired analytical and critical reading skills which may be considered necessary to effectively learn other subjects. At the same time 7% of Grade 6 students only had basic or emergent reading skills which means they were only a couple of steps from being illiterate. For mathematics, less than one-in-five Grade 6 students were competent in numeracy meaning they could translate verbal, graphic, or tabular information into arithmetic form to solve a problem but had not acquired higher order skills expected at this stage. There was also a large group of Grade 6 students (22%) who only had acquired emergent numeracy skills equivalent to two-step addition and subtraction involving carrying.

Some research based on SACMEQ III data examined factors that influence student learning in Eswatini. Student characteristics significantly associated with higher reading and mathematics scores were coming from a more socioeconomically advantaged home, having fewer siblings, and not repeating a grade. For reading, speaking the language of instruction at home was also significant. Schools with higher scores were located in urban areas and had more instructional resources and lower student-teacher ratios, while teacher content knowledge was important for mathematics (Hungi, 2011).

More recent research in Eswatini reinforces these findings (MOET, 2015b). Teachers of grades 1, 3, and 6 at the 60 schools with the highest repetition rates (a student-level factor related to lower performance) were surveyed in 2015. They agreed or strongly agreed that the following factors contributed to grade repetition: learners having insufficient grasp of English; large class sizes, particularly in grades 1 and 3; as well as lack of support from parents, and inability of parents to assist learners with their school work.

There are several regional and international learning assessments that other countries in the region have participated in that cover learning at other grades or ages, some of which allow for international benchmarking. These include the

17 World Bank Human Capital Index Database, https://databank.worldbank.org/reports.aspx?source=3698&series=HD.HCI.HLOS#

18 Data issues for the student item response scores for the 2013 SACMEQ IV assessment means these cannot be presented, instead this chapter reports reading and mathematics competency levels from the 2007 SACMEQ III assessment.

Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA), Service Delivery Indicators Surveys (SDI), Skills Towards Employability and Productivity (STEP), Uwezo, Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), and Progress in Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS). Six of the nine countries shown have participated in two or more large-scale learning assessments in recent years (Table 5).

Table 5 Participation in large-scale assessments by Eswatini and other SSA countries

	Eswatini	Lesotho	Zimbabwe	Malawi	South Africa	Uganda	Tanzania	Botswana	Kenya
EGRA				X		X	X		
PIRLS								X	
SACMEQ	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X
SDI						X	X		X
STEP									X
TIMSS					X			X	
UWEZO						X	X		X

Source: Bashir, Lockheed, Ninan, and Tan 2018.

The costs for a regional or international large-scale student learning assessment consists of participation fees and implementation costs. Participation fees allow the experts of the assessment agencies (such as IEA, OECD, PASEC, and SACMEQ) to provide technical assistance related to:

- project implementation
- item writing
- sampling
- training on field operations
- scoring open-ended responses
- data processing
- analysis and reporting

Implementation costs include: (i) salaries for additional staff needed for implementation of the assessment (field operations including piloting and final surveys, sampling, item writing, translation, scoring, data processing and reporting); (ii) the production, distribution and collection of assessment materials; and (iii) travel and per diem for field staff and supervision. Some overhead costs for assessment-related equipment (scanners or computers, for example) may also be incurred.

The costs for participating in a regional or international large-scale student learning assessment in sub-Saharan Africa vary considerably, from around USD75,000-200,000 for EGRA to USD800,000 for SACMEQ V to around USD1.4 million for PISA-D. On average, around one-third of the costs cover participation fees, while the remainder covers the costs associated with implementation of the assessment, which can vary substantially across countries. A new assessment, the Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (LaNA), designed for use in middle-income countries, is currently inviting country participation. Estimated costs are USD100,000-150,000 for the participation fee and USD120,000 for in-country implementation.

Financing for regional or international assessments comes from national budgets, loans or credits to the government or the international agency, and international donations.[19] For lower middle-income countries, over 55% of financing is from the national budget, while more than 30% is from international donations; a small share comes from loans or credits (UIS Technical Cooperation Group, 2018).

4.2 Pre-literacy and pre-numeracy skills of young children

The MICS in 2010 and 2014 are the most recent assessments of preschool children's school readiness in Eswatini. These assessments covered 4,865 households and 2,711 children under five years of age in 2010 and 5,200 households and 2,693 children under 5 in 2014 (CSO and UNICEF, 2011 and 2016).

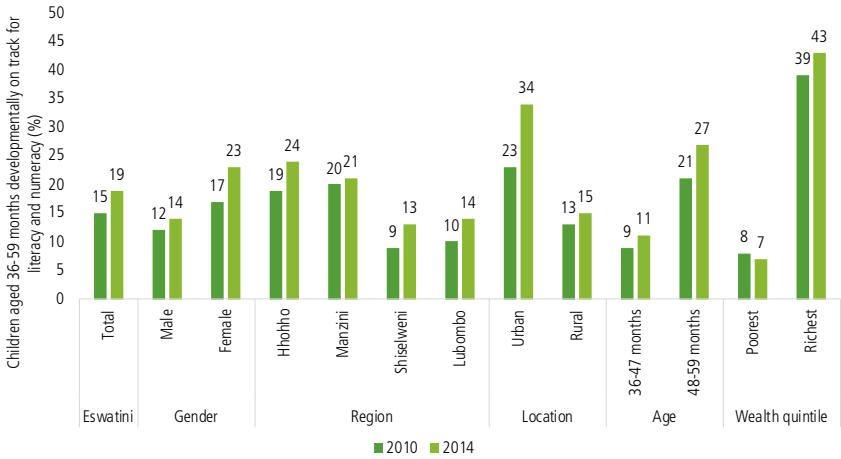
Preschool children's skills improved between 2010 and 2014 but the large majority in this age group did not have the expected pre-literacy and pre-numeracy skills. Less than 20% of children ages 36-59 months were developmentally on track for literacy-numeracy in 2014, up from 15% in 2010. Children are identified as being developmentally on track for literacy and numeracy if they can do two of the following three tasks: (i) identify/name at least ten letters of the alphabet, (ii) read at least four simple popular words, or (iii) name/recognize the numbers one to ten. As expected, a higher share of the older children – ages 48-59 months – were developmentally on track for literacy and numeracy, as compared with those ages 36-47 months, and improvements in literacy and numeracy over time were greater for the older children.

There are large gender, regional, rural-urban, and wealth disparities in pre-literacy and pre-numeracy skills. In both 2010 and 2014, a larger share of girls were on track developmentally for literacy and numeracy, as compared with boys, with the gender gap increasing from five percentage points in 2010 to nine

19 Most agencies either provide direct financial assistance or help countries get assistance from funding agencies to cover costs.

percentage points in 2014 (Figure 15). A larger share of children in Hhohho and Manzini were developmentally on track for literacy and numeracy, as compared with children from Shiselweni and Lubombo. In addition, a larger share of children in urban areas were developmentally on track compared with those in rural areas, and the rural-urban gap increased from ten percentage points in 2010 to 19 percentage points in 2014. The share of children from the richest household wealth quintile who were developmentally on track for literacy and numeracy was more than six times the share of those in the poorest wealth quintile in 2014. Moreover, the share of the poorest children who were developmentally on track for literacy and numeracy declined from 9% in 2010 to 7% in 2014, while that for the richest children increased from 39% to 43%. These improvements among richest children may be due to larger share of wealthier children attending preschool in 2014 (44%) as compared with 2010 (31%).

Figure 15 Young children developmentally on track for literacy and numeracy by selected characteristics 2010 and 2014



Source: CSO and UNICEF 2011, 2016.

School readiness in literacy and numeracy comes from child development experiences at home and in preschool. The MICS data indicates that young children in Eswatini often lack many of these experiences. They are generally not exposed to print materials; only 6% of children under the age of five live in households that have three or more children's books. Parents seldom engage in activities to promote learning and school readiness; only 16% of mothers and 2% of fathers do so. In addition, only 30% of children aged 36-59 months attended an organized early childhood education program in 2014 and 28% in 2016/17 (CSO and UNICEF, 2016). This is discussed further in chapter 5.

Box 7 The learning advantage of speaking the language of instruction

There is strong evidence that there is a clear learning advantage for children who speak the language of instruction (Evans and Mendez Acosta, 2020; UNESCO, 2015). By constrast, children who start school but are not familar with the language of instruction must learn a new language before they can learn to read, which is a foundational skill required to learn other subjects (Bashier et al. 2018).

Evidence shows that for children to achieve adequate literacy skills to 'read to learn' they need to be taught in a language they are familiar with for the first few years of schooling (Ouane and Glanz, 2011; Trudell, 2016). Recent evidence from Cameroon, Kenya and Uganda, shows that childen who are taught to read in the language they speak at home learn to read faster, and also that instructing children in the language they speak at home, improves their ability to later learn a second language (Evans and Mendez Acosta, 2020).

Early grade reading assessments (EGRA) in various countries in Sub-Saharan Africa also show that when students in the early grades of primary school are assessed in a language that is different from the language they speak at home, a large share get zero scores on basic literacy, and an even larger share do on reading comprehension. Meanwhile, in countries where the language of instruction is the same as the language students speak at home, students perform much better, including on reading comprehension (Bashir et al., 2018).

4.4 Performance on the end-of-cycle examinations in core subjects

On behalf of the MoET, the Examinations Council of Eswatini (ECESWA) administers end-of-cycle examinations to students completing primary, junior secondary, and senior secondary education. Examinations for most subjects (including mathematics and science) are administered in English. These examinations can be considered 'high stakes' both for schools and students, as students and schools with the highest marks are publicly announced, and students must pass the examinations in order to advance to the next level.

This chapter analyzes examination results for two reasons. First, as noted above, no large-scale assessment data other than from SACMEQ is available for Eswatini; but it is dated; only assesses Grade 6 students; and there are some technical issues outstanding with the latest round. Second, a review found that the questions on the national examinations are well aligned with the existing curriculum,[20] which indicates that the exams are assessing what students should have learned against the curriculum. The drawback to high stakes examinations, however, is that they are subject to various distortions while 'low

20 The alignment of the examination with the curriculum is not always the case in other countries.

stake' assessments typically provide unbiased estimates and are therefore more useful for policy analysis.

ECESWA examinations are generally well designed and reflect the curriculum for each level. Examination marking processes follow professional practices and include a number of quality assurance steps. Training for markers is provided, with practice sessions and review. Marking is carried out in teams, and markers, team leaders, and principal examiners concur on marks. Keys are provided for scoring of multiple-choice questions, and sample rubrics guide marking of constructed responses. Subject data are key-entered and algorithms score for final grades.

Box 8 Overview of the national curriculum

As part of the process to make the education system competency-based and ensure that the curriculum fully supports Eswatini's transition to a knowledge-based economy, a National Curriculum Framework for General Education and revised primary level curriculum have been developed. The new competency-based curriculum responds to changes and challenges in Eswatini. It covers globalization, promotes education on HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment, facilitates access to education by OVCs, covers children's rights and participation of children with special needs, and introduces IT. The new curriculum is being rolled out grade-by grade; it currently covers grades 1-2 and will cover grades 1-3 in the 2021-2022 school year, with all primary grades planned to implement the new curriculum by 2024.

The national curriculum spells out competencies in broad terms for all levels**.** The new competency-based curriculum includes classroom continuous and summative assessments. Syllabi for the final grades only of primary, junior secondary, and senior secondary are freely available and are aligned with the examinations at each of these levels. Current curriculum expectations specific to grades 3-6 and Forms 1-2 and 4 are less clear. Textbooks are provided at no cost for primary students while secondary students are expected to purchase their own textbooks for subjects other than religious education. Concern has been raised about frequent revision of textbooks and their alignment with the curriculum (NETIP, 2018).

The 'old' national curriculum comprises core subjects plus electives at the secondary level. The curriculum structure calls for 7-11 subjects at the primary level, seven core subjects and two or three elective subjects at the junior secondary level, and five core and four elective subjects at the senior secondary level. The syllabi are similar to the Cambridge syllabi, and in some cases were developed with Cambridge International Examinations. The core subjects for all levels are English, mathematics, siSwati, and science (MoET, 2018).[21] As the new curriculum has not yet reached Grade 7, it is not yet used to develop examinations.

21 Religious Education is also one of the required subjects but is not included in this chapter.

Table 6 Curriculum overview by education level

Phase	Grade(s)	Number of subjects	Expected competencies defined by
Foundation	0	-	Early Learning and Development Standards
	1-2	7	-
Middle primary	3-4	9	-
Upper primary	5-7	11 (select 10 to 11)*	The EPC syllabus
Junior secondary	1-3	24 (select 10)*	The JC syllabus
Senior secondary	4-5(6)	27 (select 9)*	The EGCSE syllabus**

Source: MoET 2018a, MoET 2018b.

Note: *Not all subjects are available in every school. EPC candidates sit all available subjects. **Very few children progress to Form 6, which uses the AS or A level syllabi.

4.4.1 Overall examination performance

Depending on the cycle, students sit a variety of subject-matter tests and their highest grades are aggregated for a total grade. Examinations are graded A to F (fail) for EPC and A to H (fail) for JC, in letter score bands that correspond to percentage marks. For both examinations, a score of less than 40% receives the failing grade. Pass grades are given to students with scores of 40% or higher (grades A-E or A-G), and 'good passes' (A-C) are given to students with scores of 56% or higher for EPC and 60% or higher for JC.[22] Examinations in social studies, art, and agriculture include a practical paper worth up to 40% of the total examination mark. In addition, 5% of each EPC subject is continuously assessed, so that the effective exam threshold for a pass is 35%.

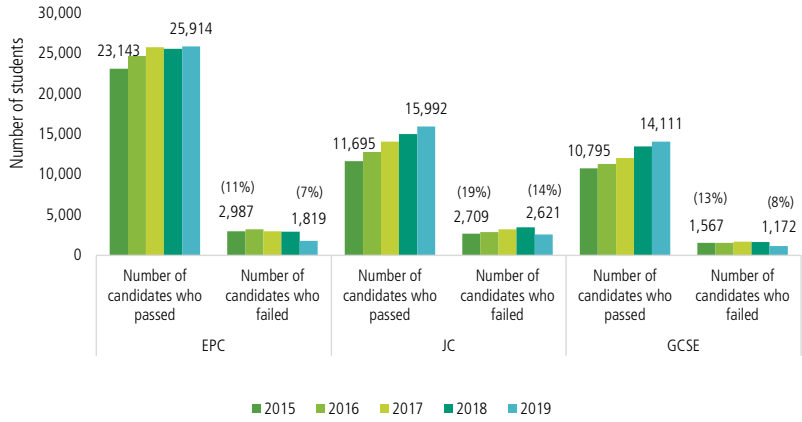
A student's final status for the certificate is based on the subject examination grades, a continuous assessment completed by a teacher, and a practical examination supervised by a teacher. To pass the EPC certificate, a student must pass four subjects and attain an aggregate grade of at least 40% in at least five subjects. Passing the JC requires five subject passes and six subjects which aggregate to at least 40%.

This section, except for Figure 16, focuses on the examination grades for the core subjects: English language, mathematics, science, and siSwati.

22 The link between letter grade and percentage score for EGCSE is assessed ex post annually, based on actual performance in the exams.

Most students who sit the Eswatini Primary Certificate, (EPC) Junior Certificate (JC), and General Certificate for Secondary Education (EGCSE) examinations pass. In absolute numbers, relatively few students receive a certificate 'fail' grade on any of the three examinations, and failure rates have fallen for all examinations since 2015 (Figure 16).[23] In 2019, failure rates were higher for JC examinations (14%) as compared with end of primary examinations (7%) or EGCSE (8%).

Figure 16 Number of passes and fails by examination 2015-2019



Source: MoET direct communication 2020.

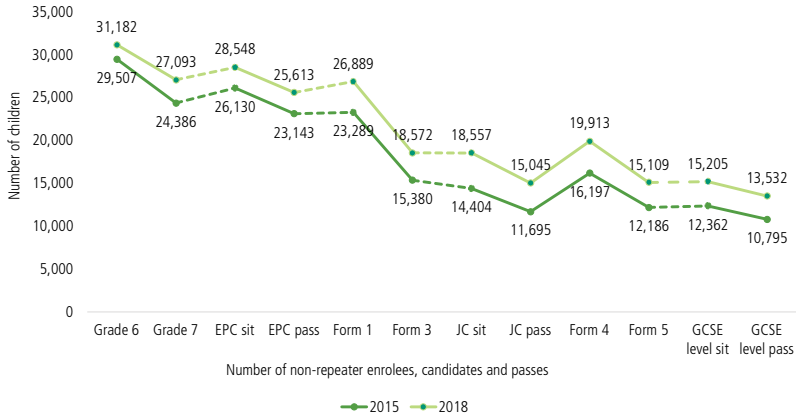
Note: 1) For 2019 English was dropped from the list of required subjects.

More students sit the end of primary (EPC) examination in Grade 7 than sit either the junior certificate (JC) examination in Form 3 or the EGCSE examination in Form 5. This is because post-primary dropout rates are high. Most students who reach Form 3 sit the JC examination, and over 80% pass it (Figure 17). Likewise, most students who reach Form 5 sit the EGSCE examination and pass it (89%). 'High stakes' examinations do not appear to affect transition to either junior secondary or senior secondary education.[24] However, they seem to affect drop-out within each cycle as students perceived as weaker candidates appear to be stopped from progressing to the final grade (see chapter 6).

23 The decline in failure rates may be attributed to the elimination of English as a mandatory subject in 2019.

24 The reason for higher enrolment in Form 1 than in Grade 7 and in Form 4 than in Form 3 is restarters, students who either drop out of a grade and after a period away return to the same grade, or who complete a grade and leave school to later return to start the subsequent grade. See chapter 6 for details.

Figure 17 Enrolment and examination candidates and passes 2015 and 2018



Sources: MoET direct communication 2020, EMIS 2018.

4.4.2 Examination performance by subject

Examination grades provide a rough estimate of curriculum understanding. Since the subject examinations are well aligned with the curriculum for that subject, and examination grades are aligned with the amount of the examination that is graded as correct, the grades provide a rough estimate of how much of the subject curriculum the students have learned. A 'good pass' in mathematics, for example, which is a grade of A-C (or a score of 56% or better for EPC and 60% or better for JC) suggests that the students learned 56-60% or more of the curriculum. Grades of F or below indicate that the student learned less than 40% of the curriculum. Other grades represent intermediate amounts of curriculum understanding.

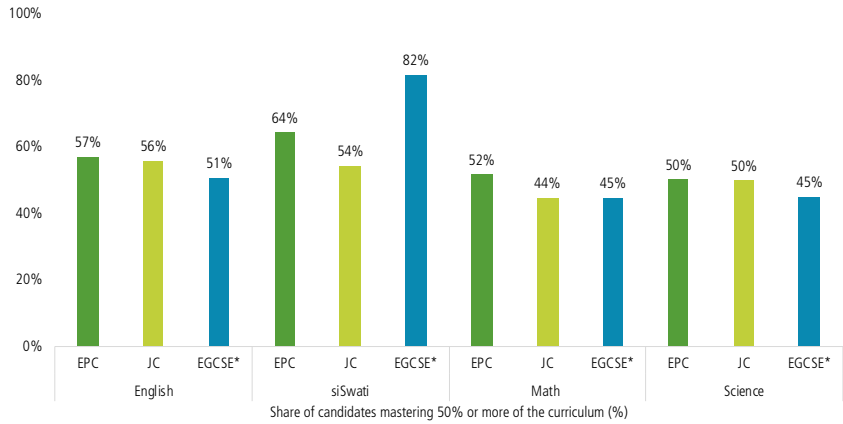
Although most students pass their examinations overall, failure rates are substantial for the core subjects English, mathematics, siSwati, and science. Around 14% of primary school completers and around one-quarter of junior secondary students fail English, mathematics, and science. Nearly 40% of senior secondary students fail the examinations for English, mathematics, and science.

Only around half of students demonstrate that they understand at least 50% of the curriculum in core subjects, which is a serious concern. Figure 18 shows that only 50-57% of primary students, depending on the subject, are learning at least half of what is expected for English, mathematics, or science.[25] At the junior secondary level, 44-56% of students demonstrate mastery of at least

25 Almost all students in the final grade at each level sit the final examination for that level.

half of the English, mathematics, or science curriculum. At the highest level, EGCSE, even fewer students demonstrate their understanding of these subjects. On all three examinations, a higher share of students (54-82%) demonstrate their understanding of Siswati. Identifying the causes of this performance and providing solutions will be needed to improve student learning.

Figure 18 Students demonstrating their understanding of half or more of the curriculum by subject and examination 2019



Source: Examinations Council of Eswatini examscouncil.org.sz

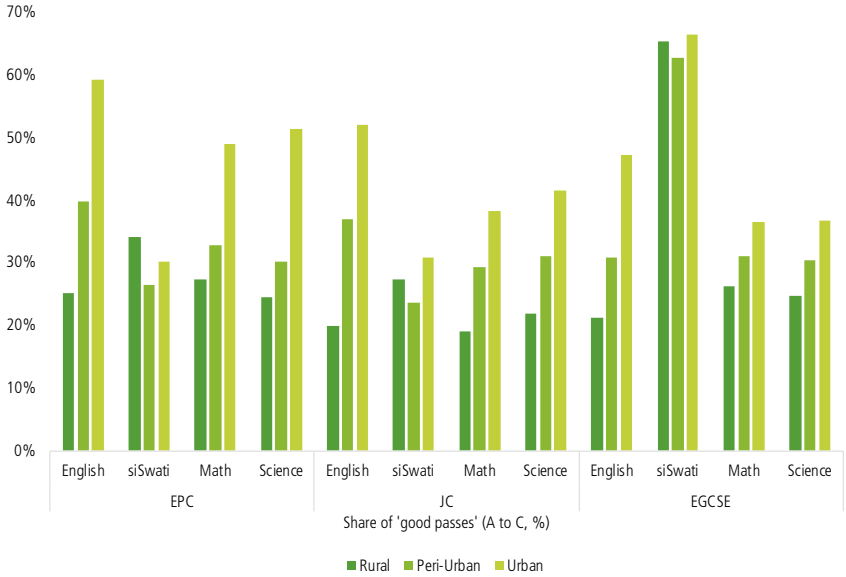
Note: 1) 'English' is English language. 2) 'siSwati' is siSwati as a first language at GSCE level. 3) 'Science' is general science for JC level and Biology for EGCSE level (Physics results are similar). 4) Exact cut-off for the EGCSE not known at the time of the writing of this report.

4.4.3 Disparities in student performance

Examinations provide little information about the characteristics of either schools or students, to investigate disparities. At the school level, information is available about location, ownership, and region. At the student level, pass rates by gender are available, but other indicators for student home background – such as family socioeconomic status – are not available, so disparities by wealth or most other student characteristics cannot be examined.

Schools located in rural areas have significantly lower shares of students obtaining 'good passes' in the core subjects compared with schools located in urban areas. On the mathematics examinations in 2019, for example, the rural school average for the share of students obtaining 'good passes' was 27% for EPC, 19% for JC, and 26% for EGCSE; these shares are significantly lower than the urban school averages: 49% for EPC, 38% for JC and 37% for EGCSE (Figure 19).

Figure 19 Share of 'good passes' (grades A-C) by location, examination, and subject 2019



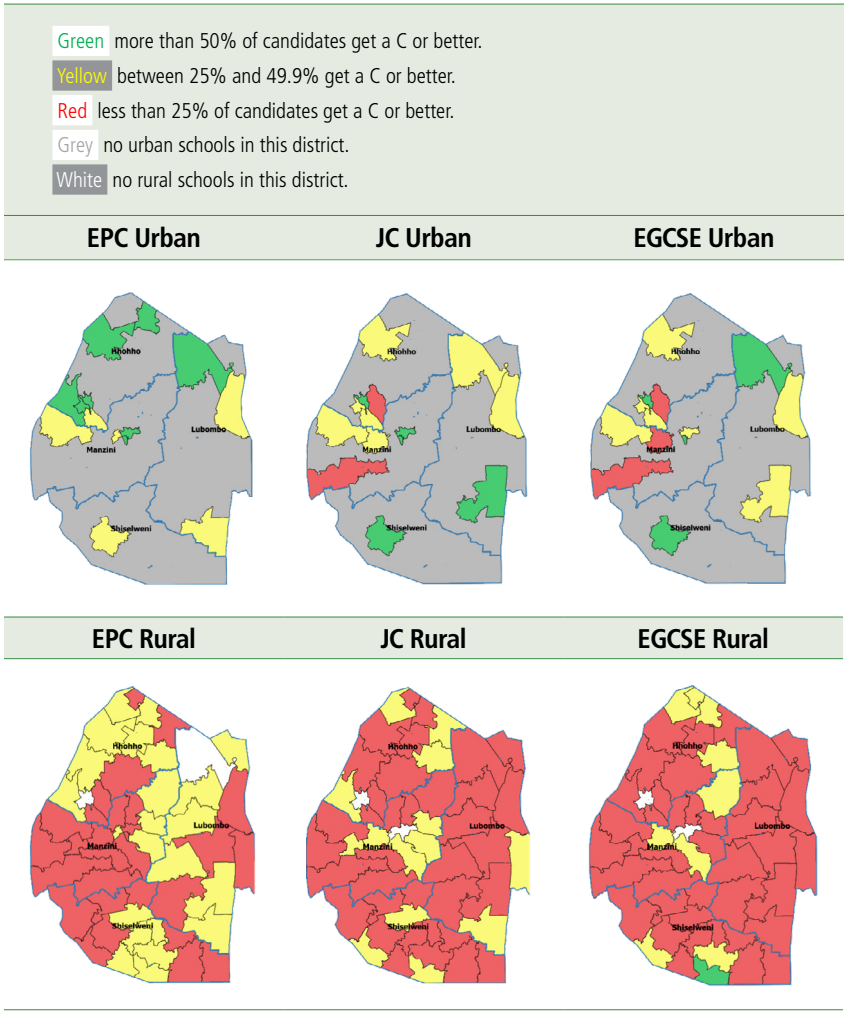
Source: Examinations Council of Eswatini examscouncil.org.sz

Note: 1) 'English' is English language. 2) 'siSwati' is siSwati as a first language at GSCE level. 3) 'Science' is general science for JC level and Biology for EGCSE level. 4) EMIS and examinations data were matched to obtain the rural-urban location of each school.

Controlling for other factors, these rural-urban performance gaps are substantial**:** more than 20 percentage points on the EPC and JC exams, and 11 percentage points for the EGCSE.[26] This suggests that the learning environment in rural schools is significantly poorer than the learning environment in urban schools. For example, disproportionate shares of unqualified teachers are posted to rural schools (see chapter 7). These stark rural versus urban differences in student examination performance at all levels are abundantly clear for English in Figure 20. The same pattern is observed for other subjects.

26 Regression analysis, controlling for region and school ownership, estimates these gaps at around 20 percentage points for English exams at all levels.

Figure 20 'Good passes' in English by rural-urban location 2019 (school average per tinkhundla, government-aided schools)

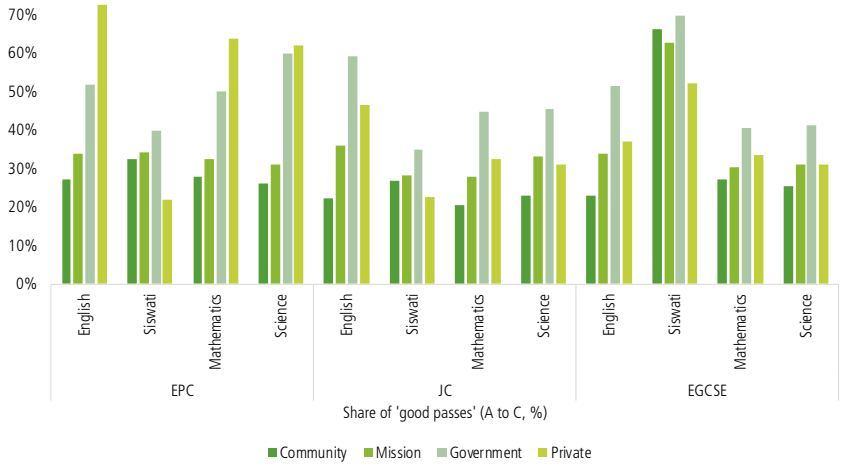


There are large disparities in the share of 'good passes' by school ownership[27], which likely reflects differences in the socioeconomic background of students and the large number of community schools in rural areas. The share of students receiving 'good passes' was lowest in community schools, for all subjects and examinations with the exception of the EGCSE siSwati examination (Figure 21). For the EPC, the share of students obtaining 'good passes' in private schools

27 Ownership is unidentified for 114 schools.

(both government-aided and non-government-aided[28]) and in the selective government schools[29] was approximately double the share of students obtaining 'good passes' in community or mission schools for English, mathematics, and science. For siSwati, students in government schools outperformed those in other types of schools, including private schools. For the JC and the EGCSE examinations, students in the government schools outperformed those in all other types of schools in all subjects.

Figure 21 Share of 'good passes' by school ownership, examination, and subject 2019



Source: Examinations Council of Eswatini examscouncil.org.sz

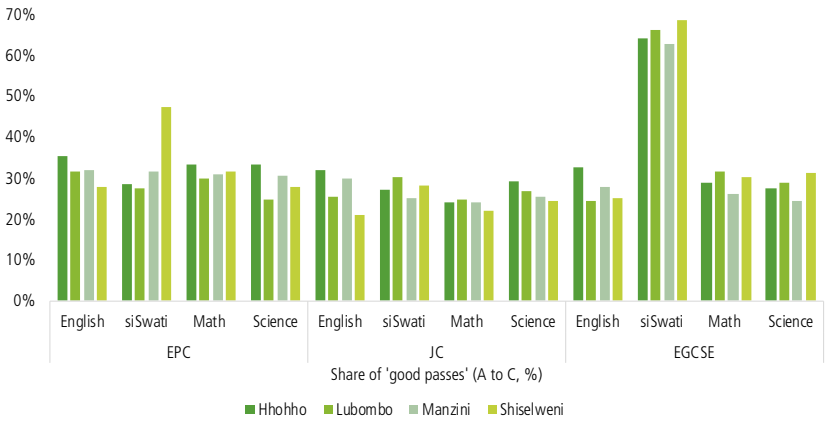
Note: 1) 'English' is English language. 2) 'siSwati' is siSwati as a first language at GSCE level. 3) 'Science' is general science for JC level and Biology for EGCSE level. 4) EMIS and examinations data were matched to obtain the rural-urban location of each school. 5) Private schools include government-aided and non-government-aided schools.

Regional differences in exam performance are modest. In general, students in Hhohho obtained higher shares of 'good passes' in EPC English, mathematics, and science, as compared with other regions. Most of the regional performance gaps for the EPC were small, averaging less than five percentage points for English, mathematics, and science. For siSwati, however, the gap was large, with students in Shiselweni outperforming their peers in other regions by an average of 19 percentage points. Regional performance gaps on JC and EGCSE examinations were quite small, averaging six percentage points for all four subjects on both examinations.

28 Several non-government aided schools 'opt out' of the ECESWA examination system at secondary level.

29 Government schools account for only 2% of the total number of primary and secondary schools: 3 primary schools, 11 junior secondary schools, and 11 senior secondary schools.

Figure 22 Share of 'good passes' by region, examination, and subject 2019



Source: Examinations Council of Eswatini examscouncil.org.sz

Note: 1) 'English' is English language. 2) 'siSwati' is siSwati as a first language at GSCE level. 3) 'Science' is general science for JC level and Biology for EGCSE level.

Females outperform males in English and siSwati examinations whereas males outperform females in mathematics and science examinations. For both English and siSwati examinations, girls receive a higher share of 'good passes' than boys. For example, 41% of female candidates receive grades of A, B, or C on the EPC English examination, whereas only 31% of male candidates do (Figure 23). By comparison, 27% of girls receive 'good passes' on the EPC mathematics examination compared with 32% of male candidates. The gender differences for the two language examinations are larger than those for mathematics and science both for EPC and JC.

Figure 23 Share of 'good passes' by gender, examination, and subject 2019

Source: Examinations Council of Eswatini examscouncil.org.sz

Note: 1) 'English' is English language. 2) 'siSwati' is siSwati as a first language at GSCE level. 3) 'Science' is general science for JC level and Biology for EGCSE level.

4.4.4 Factors affecting performance

Available examination data provides little evidence about factors that influence performance other than location and gender. English language proficiency, however, is likely to be important. At the school level it affects performance in other subjects assessed in English, such as mathematics. Eswatini policy is to have the mother tongue siSwati used as the medium of instruction in the first four grades of primary school, with English used as the medium of instruction for upper primary and subsequent education (MoET, 2018b, p.39). In practice, however, for the first four grades most teachers use English and switch to siSwati only as needed. Moreover, pedagogical materials are in English.

At school level, average English language proficiency is a strong predictor of average proficiency in mathematics and siSwati, as well as in EPC science and EGCSE physics. Because examination papers other than siSwati and foreign languages (for example, French) are written in English, schools where students excel in English also tend to excel in mathematics and science. Regression analysis indicates that schools in which higher shares of students obtain 'good passes' in English also have higher shares of students obtaining 'good passes' in mathematics and siSwati (Table 7). For every additional share of students obtaining 'good passes' in English, the share of students obtaining 'good passes' in mathematics increases by approximately half a percentage point, which is a relatively strong relationship. In part, this may be due to the language of assessment being English for mathematics.

Table 7 Regression analysis of school-level shares of students obtaining 'good passes' in siSwati and mathematics 2019

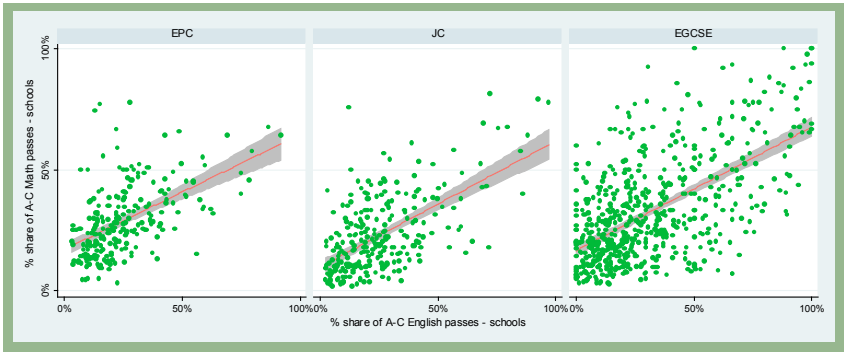
Dependent variable: Share of students with a 'good pass' in mathematics or siSwati	EPC			JC		EGCSE		
	Math	siSwati	Science	Math	siSwati	Math	siSwati	Physics
Share of candidates with 'good pass' English	**0.47**	**0.45**	**0.22**	**0.53**	**0.42**	**0.53**	**0.26**	**0.57**
	(14.9)	**(11.3)**	**(4.8)**	**(10.1)**	**(5.9)**	**(9.3)**	**(3.2)**	**(6.7)**
Constant	0.17	0.22	0.25	-0.04	0.04	0.14	0.58	0.11
Adjusted R^2	0.40	0.27	0.10	0.39	0.13	0.31	0.12	0.24
Number of schools	550	550	550	259	258	247	246	246
Controls for school ownership, region, and location are included in the model specifications.								

Source: ECESWA, EMIS.

Note: 1) T-statistics shown in parentheses. 2) Coefficients in bold font indicate statistical significance at 5% level or less. 3) JC and EGCSE English examinations are for English Language. 4) The sample consists of matched exam centers, that is, those for which region, ownership type, and rural/peri-urban/urban location were available in the EMIS data. Including non-matched exam centers in the sample does not change the results.

From descriptive analysis it can be seen that schools with low shares of 'good passes' in English tend to have lower shares of 'good passes' in mathematics at all levels (Figure 24).

Figure 24 School-level shares of 'good passes' in English and mathematics by examination 2019



Source: Team calculations based on national examinations data form the Examinations Council of Eswatini examscouncil.org.sz

4.5 Looking ahead – learning assessment and achievement

Many students in Eswatini have not acquired the expected knowledge and skill levels by the time they complete school, and multiple interventions will be needed to improve the quality of education and raise student learning levels.

A national learning assessment system should be established and targets for improvement in learning agreed. Such assessments provide data not only about learning but also on factors at school, teacher, and student level that affect learning, which in turn gives policymakers the evidence required to introduce, expand, amend, or abolish specific interventions to improve quality. Periodic assessments of learning would also provide an opportunity for the Government to set targets for improvement in learning performance, and these targets should be aligned with catching up with (and eventually, surpassing) the learning levels of other middle-income countries. As Eswatini continues to participate in the SACMEQ regional assessment, it could consider participating in other international assessments in order to benchmark student learning performance, while the MoET builds its capacity to administer its own national assessment. One example is the Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (LaNA), which is an assessment for children in Grades 4-6 that assesses literacy and numeracy skills and is a steppingstone to participate in PIRLS and TIMSS.

Improving teaching in the foundational grades (ECDE plus grades 1-4) is essential to raise learning levels across the education system. A large group of students do not (regularly) speak the language of instruction. To address this

major learning disadvantage, the MoET would need to focus on improving English language instruction in the early grades by increasing the emphasis on English language during pre-service and in-service teacher training and possibly, by raising the English language requirements for new teachers. This should be supplemented by a more general intervention to provide schools with supplementary learning materials such as readers in English and siSwati which are appropriate for the age and reading level of the students. Another measure may include the design and implementation of an affordable, community-based program to raise school readiness that focus on providing basic skills in the language of instruction in target communities.

Table 8 summarizes the ESA findings on learning levels for children facing different vulnerabilities. As discussed earlier, living in a rural area is associated with substantially lower learning levels in English, math and science. Children belonging to the poorest households have substantially lower early childhood development outcomes than those belonging to the richest households, as do boys which will adversely affect their subsequent schooling careers. For children facing two or more of the vulnerabilities set out in Table 8, learning levels would be expected to be even lower. As a result, to succesfully address the multiple challenges faced by poor children will require a targeted, coordinated and multi-sectoral approach.

Table 8 Multi-dimensional vulnerability and learning

	Learning levels		
	ECE	Primary	Secondary
Poorest 20% (compared to richest 20%)	Substantially lower	No data	No data
Live in rural area (compared to urban area)	Substantially lower	Substantially lower	Much lower
Orphaned (compared to non-orphaned children)	No data	No data	No data
Boys (compared to girls)	Much lower (pre-literacy and pre-numeracy)	Much lower	Lower (English)
		Higher (Math and Science)	Higher (Math and Science)
Live in Lubombo / Shiselweni (compared to Hhohho)	Lower (Lubombo)	Lower	Similar

Source: Analysis conducted for this report and MICS 2014.

Note: 1) 'Similar' = 0-3.0 percentage points difference, 'Lower' = 3.1-8.0 percentage points difference, 'Much lower' = 8.1-19.0 percentange points difference and 'Substantially lower' = 19.1 or more percentage points difference.

Other policy options to be considered to improve student learning, are discussed in more detail in other chapters, and include:

- Expanding the ECDE sub-sector to better prepare children to enter the schooling system (see chapter 5).
- Programs to increase teachers' ability to teach effectively; inducing more candidates to choose science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) subjects; and introducing teacher incentives for rural/hardship postings (see chapter 7).
- Improving the quality and relevance of TVET and tertiary education (see chapter 8).

5. Early childhood care and development

Investing in young children is one of the greatest investments that countries can make. The earliest years of a child's life presents a unique window of opportunity to address inequality, break the cycle of poverty, and improve a wide range of outcomes for education, health, and economic productivity (Heckman, 2008a; 2008b; Naudeau, et al. 2011). To fully benefit from future opportunities in life and become productive members of society, by the end of early childhood young children must be: healthy and well-nourished; securely attached to caregivers; and live in a safe environment free from violence able to interact positively with families, teachers and peers; and ready to learn throughout primary school (Naudeau et al., 2011).

There is a broad consensus that the return on investments in early childhood development interventions are often higher than the return on investments in human capital formation later in life (Heckman and Masterov, 2007). While it is possible to remediate disadvantage to some extent later in a child's development cycle, it becomes more costly the longer a society waits to intervene in the life cycle of a disadvantaged child (Heckman, 2008).

Adequate and well-targeted government support for ECDE has several benefits across an individual's life. It has been shown to reduce grade repetition and school dropout rates; enhance social mobility for poor households; improve later successes in life through higher wage-earning potential; and reduce the cost burden on the social welfare system (Karoyl et al., 2005; Lynch, 2005; Hoddinott et al., 2008; Schweinhard et al., 2005). Evidence reveals that the rate of return per dollar invested could be as high as 6-17% annually from high quality ECDE programs targeting vulnerable children and families (Schweinhard et al., 2005; and Reynolds et al., 2011).

This chapter acknowledges the multi-sectoral nature of ECDE provisioning, which includes health, nutrition, water and sanitation, education, and social protection; but the focus is largely on education in terms of early development and learning. The first section provides an overview of key early childhood development outcomes in Eswatini over time and regionally. This is followed by an overview of ECDE provision and attendance. Next analysis on ECE availability and participation for 3-5-year-old children is presented before the limited evidence on the quality of ECE services is discussed. Finally, some approaches that have been used to successfully scale up ECDE services in other countries are described.

The priority issues related to ECDE from and education perspective identified by the ESA are set out in Box 9 and are discussed in detail in the remainder of the chapter.

Box 9 Priority issues in ECDE from an education perspective

- Most children in Eswatini enter primary school lacking essential school readiness in literacy and numeracy.
- There are very limited opportunities to gain school readiness by attending ECE programs.
- The home environment is critical to early childhood development but there is a lack of support for learning from household members.
- There is no standardized ECDE curriculum based on the Early Learning and Development Standards.
- Coordination and collaboration of ministries responsible for implementing ECDE services is weak.
- A streamlined registration process and a quality assurance and regulation mechanism for ECDE service providers do not exist.
- Monitoring of ECDE services is not systematized and there is a lack of data on the scale, scope, and quality of ECDE services.

5.1 Key early childhood development outcomes in Eswatini

While there have been improvements in outcomes for infants and young children in Eswatini since the previous Education Sector Analysis in 2010 (World Bank, 2010), many children still have a poor start in life.

Eswatini is performing better in terms of child survival compared to other Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries but does not do as well as other lower-middle income countries (LMICs). In particular, infant and child mortality rates remain high as compared to other LMICs. Infant mortality (0-24 months) has improved from 59 deaths per 1,000 live births in Eswatini in 2010 but is still high at 43 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2018 compared to an average of 37 across other LMICs (Table 9). These infant mortality rates could be related to low birth weight, poor nutrition in the first 1,000 days of life, and the quality of integrated management of childhood illnesses (Heckman and Masterov, 2007; Shekar et al., 2017). Teenage pregnancy also contributes to maternal and child morbidity and mortality. Infants born to adolescent mothers are more likely to be pre-term, have a low birth weight, and die as infants compared to infants born to older mothers (Botting et al., 1998; WHO, 2015). Improvements in child survival could, to some extent, be attributed to reductions in adolescent fertility rates over the years, even though this is still high at 75 births per 1,000 girls in 2018 (World Bank, 2018). In comparison, the global adolescent fertility rate in 2018 was 44 births per 1,000 girls aged 15 to 19.

Overall, the under-five mortality rate has been improving but it is still high. Under-five mortality in Eswatini has declined from 89 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2010 to 54 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2018. This is high compared to the average of 49 across LMICS, but better than the average in SSA at 78 deaths per 1,000 live births. The leading cause of death for children under five is currently diarrhea (accounting for nearly 20% of all deaths for this age group). This can largely be attributed to 38% of households not having access to improved drinking water sources, and 47% of households not having access to improved sanitation (CSO and UNICEF, 2016).

Neonatal mortality rates have been improving and are better in Eswatini compared to SSA and LMICs. In Eswatini, it has declined from 20 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2010 to 17 deaths per 1, 000 live births in 2018. While this is better than the average of 28 across SSA, and an average of 24 across LMICs, it still accounts for a third of total under-five deaths. Newborn health and survival could be improved through quality antenatal care; improved postnatal care for mother and baby; and improved care for small and sick newborn children (UNICEF et al. 2019).

While stunting in children below the age of five is lower than in SSA and LMICs, it is still high in Eswatini. The share of children under 5 who are stunted has decreased from 31% in 2010 to 26% in 2014 (MICS, 2014). Stunting occurs as a result of chronic malnutrition –children not receiving adequate nutrition over a long period of time – and may also occur as a result of recurrent or chronic illness. In Eswatini, this may partly be attributable to low exclusive breastfeeding rates (UNICEF, 2020). Because stunting compromises overall child development, in the long run it reduces affected children's potential for gainful employment and their overall ability to contribute to the socioeconomic development of the country.

The proportion of children aged 36 to 59 months who are not developmentally on track is slightly higher in Eswatini than the SSA average but lower than in LMICs. In Eswatini, 34% of children in this age cohort are not developmentally on track compared to 39% in SSA; but in LMICs, only 27% are not developmentally on track (Gil et al., 2020). An Early Childhood Development Index (ECDI) is used to inform public policy regarding the development status of children in Eswatini. The index is based on selected milestones that children are expected to achieve in between the ages of three and four years in the following domains: literacy and numeracy, physical and socioemotional development, and learning (MICS, 2014). Eswatini's performance on each of these domains is discussed below (section 5.5).

In Eswatini, early identification and intervention programs to provide screening and assessments of childhood disabilities from pre-conception and beyond – with the purpose of identifying levels of development, learning abilities, and needs are not currently available.[30]

Table 9 Early childhood mortality, stunting, and early development levels in Eswatini, 2010 and 2014/2018

ECD Indicators	Eswatini	Average for Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA)	Average for Lower Middle-Income Countries
Neonatal mortality (within the first 28 days), per 1,000 live births	2010: 20 2018: 17	2010: 32 2018: 28	2010: 30 2018: 24
Infant mortality (0-24 months), per 1,000 live births	2010: 59 2018: 43	2010: 65 2018: 53	2010: 48 2018: 37
Under- five mortality, per 1,000 live births	2010: 89 2018: 54	2010: 101 2018: 78	2010: 65 2018: 49
Proportion of children under 5 who are stunted	2010: 31% 2014: 26%	2010: 38% 2014: 36%	2010: 37% 2014: 34%
ECD Index	**Eswatini**	**Average for Eastern and Southern Africa**	**Average for Lower Middle-Income Countries**
Share of children aged 36-59 months NOT developmentally on track in at least three of the following domains: literacy and numeracy, physical, social-emotional, and learning[31]	2014: 34%	2010-2016: 39%	2010-2016: 27%

Sources: EHIES 2016/17, MICS 2014, UNICEF data warehouse (last accessed: August 2020), World Bank Database 2018.

30 There is a national Early Identification and Intervention (EII) Strategy for Children with Disabilities (2016-2020) which has not yet been implemented.

31 Proportion of children with suspected developmental delays using combined index of early childhood development.

5.3 Overview of the ECDE sector

ECDE is a national priority for Eswatini and is articulated in some of its key policy documents. The legal and policy instruments guiding the sector includes the Constitution of Eswatini of 2005, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), and the National Children's Policy of 2009. The National Education and Training Sector Policy (MoET, 2018) includes an Early Childhood Care, Development and Education (ECCDE) section with the specific policy goal of prioritizing the expansion of equitable access to early learning and quality ECDE for all children in Eswatini between the ages of 0 and 8 years, and ensure the full integration of the nation's most vulnerable children. The draft Multi-Sectoral ECDE Framework 2018-2022 (Kingdom of Eswatini, 2018) which is yet to be approved, aims to build on current service delivery and support systems, promoting cost-effective synergies and coordination of efforts. It necessitates full collaboration among ECDE stakeholders, including government officials, line ministry staff, service providers, civil society, development partners, academia, and the private sector.

At national level, the Deputy Prime Minister's Office (DPMO) is responsible for the overall coordination of multi-sectoral ECDE services across ministries and other implementing entities. ECDE services are coordinated through the National Children's Coordination Unit (NCCU) in the DPMO. The DPMO works closely with the Ministry of Education and Training, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Tinkhundla Administration and Development, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture, and Ministry of Natural resources to ensure the provision of quality services. The services offered by each of these Ministries are shown in Table 10 below.

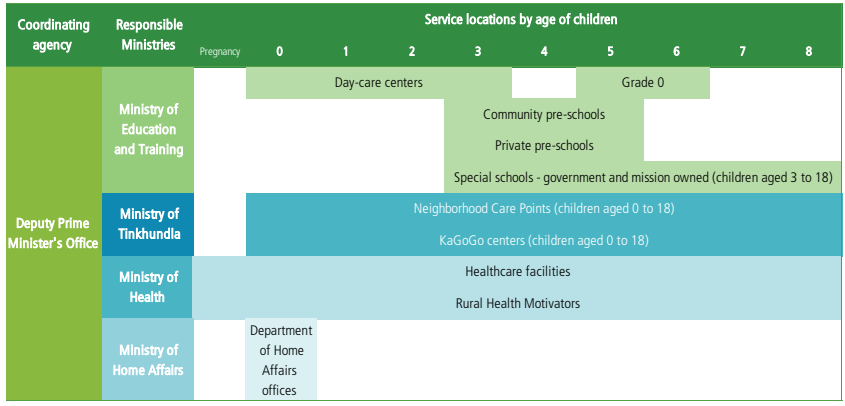
Table 10 ECDE services in Eswatini

Key interventions	Implementation agencies	Services offered
Nutrition	Ministry of Education and Training Ministry of Tinkhundla Ministry of Health Ministry of Agriculture	School feeding Feeding at NCPs and KaGoGo centers Nutrition services to mothers in health centers and at home
Health	Ministry of Health	Antenatal care, Postnatal care and delivery services Immunization, Deworming Integrated management of childhood illness Family planning, Sexual and reproductive health

Key interventions	Implementation agencies	Services offered
Water and Sanitation	Ministry of Natural Resources	Access to safe water Adequate sanitation Hygiene/hand washing
Education	Ministry of Education and Training	Maternal education Early stimulation Preprimary services
Social protection	Ministry of Home Affairs Deputy Prime Minister's Office	Birth registration Provision of OVC grants

ECDE services in Eswatini are to a large extent provided by the private sector, including non-governmental organizations, communities, churches, and individuals, and are delivered through the following platforms shown in Figure 25.

Figure 25 Platforms for delivery of ECDE services in Eswatini



There are preschools and day-care centers in Eswatini that provide care and education services for children under the age of seven. In addition, at some centers children are provided with a daily nutritious meal, and teachers are responsible for ensuring that children have received the appropriate vaccinations upon registration. However, the supply of a nutritious meal is not guaranteed and depends on the availability of resources. The preschools (private and community) serves children aged 3-5 years while day-care centers serve children aged 0-3 years and are privately financed and managed but are required to register with the MoET. These centers receive support from the MoET in the form of inspections. Preschool education is also provided in special schools such as School for the Deaf Primary and St Josephs, and inclusive model schools such as Eqinisweni and Embasheni primary schools.

Separately, and financed through the Government's education budget, the MoET is currently piloting Grade 0 classrooms (one year of preschool) in some public primary schools in rural communities (see section 5.4).

Neighborhood Care Points (NCPs) were established to support families dealing with the HIV/AIDS crisis, as well as orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs). There are about 1,700 NCP centers located in communities and providing services for about 52,000 children under the age of eight. An 'ideal NCP' is one which provides emotional support and care, along with a regular balanced meal. In 2019, the World Food Programme (WFP) provided feeding for children between the ages of 2-8 years in most of these sites, while the Taiwan Technical Mission supported feeding programs for children in another 30 NCPs. There is no data available on whether organized learning takes place at NCPs.

'KaGoGo centers' ('Grandmothers' house) were built and managed by communities – and were largely revived to mobilize communities in response to the HIV/AIDS crisis. Their main role is to provide HIV prevention, care and support services, and they often provide nutrition and education services for children with support from the National Emergency Response Council to HIV/AIDS (NERCHA).[32] The supply of a nutritious meal is not guaranteed and depends on the availability of resources. Similar to NCPs, there is no indication of whether organized learning takes place at KaGoGo centers. Both NCPs and KaGoGo centers fall under the Ministry of Tinkhundla (local government).

There are also Primary Health Care facilities in Eswatini that provide health and nutrition services to children. There are about 224 Primary Health Care facilities in Eswatini as well as a large cadre of paid Rural Health Motivators (RHM), who are respected members of the community, and provide similar services to mothers and young children in their homes. This falls under the Ministry of Health.

Across these service provision platforms, complete information on the number and types of providers and data on the services provided is not available. There is no consolidated and complete list of ECDE service providers, nor the type of services offered to children. There is insufficient information on the scale, scope, and quality of services offered, that is, where these programs are located; what specific services are offered – and at what frequency; information about the care and learning environment; teacher qualifications/ caregiver information; availability of learning materials such as books and play areas; costs

32 NERCHA was established in 2003 by the Government of Eswatini to coordinate and facilitate the national multisectoral response to HIV/AIDS and oversee the implementation of the national strategic plans and frameworks. NERCHA is not an implementing body but rather a funding body that works with NGOs and community-based organizations at the local level.

of service provision; and early learning and development outcomes for children. In addition, many of the service platforms fall under different Ministries, such as the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and Training, Ministry of Tinkhundla, Ministry of Natural Resources and Ministry of Home Affairs, but the coordination and monitoring of services is not systematized.

The DPMO is responsible for the overall coordination of ECDE services across different ministries and service platforms but the coordination mechanism and regulations to ensure integrated service delivery need to be strengthened. In 2007, the Government of Eswatini established the National Children Coordination Unit (NCCU) in the DPMO. Currently, there is no ECDE policy to guide the sector in Eswatini, although there are several frameworks and guidelines being developed with support from UNESCO (institutional, financing, legal, programmatic, and monitoring and evaluation), there are no directives on the interlinkages between these various frameworks or clearly defined implementation plans. Given the number of ministries and types of ECDE providers, it is not yet clear whether the DPMO will have the capacity or resources to effectively manage and coordinate ECDE services.

Box 10 Key elements of effective multi-sectoral ECDE systems and their status in Eswatini

Experience from other countries shows that an effective multi-sectoral ECDE system has the elements shown below. For each of these elements it is indicated whether it is in place in Eswatini.

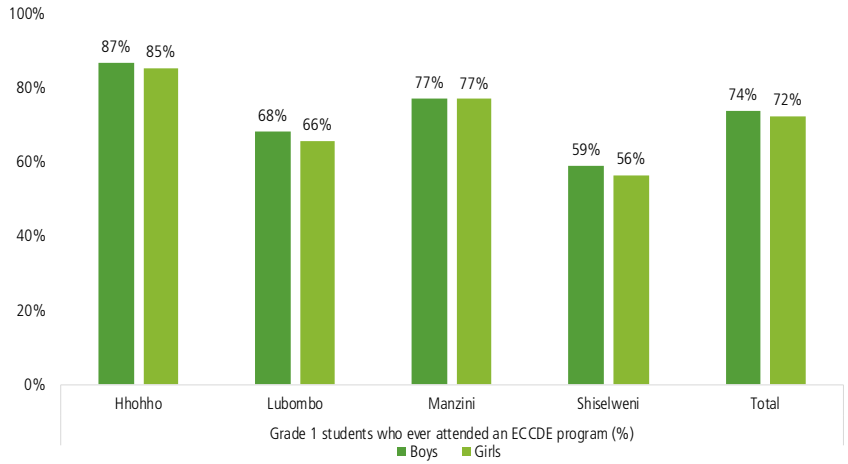
Eswatini status	Element
Emerging	Establishing an enabling environment with commitment and adequate budget from the Government.
Latent	Policies in place for early childhood development.
No	A multi-sectoral ECDE strategy and implementation plan.
Latent	Multi-sectoral coordination between ministries and stakeholders and a minimum package of multi-sectoral interventions for specific age groups.
No	Regular and systematized monitoring and evaluation.
Emerging	Standards for teacher training, the curriculum, learning environment are in place and known by all relevant parties.
No	Advocacy and sensitization for ECCD programs at the community and household level.

Source: Adapted from the World Bank SABER.

5.5 ECDE program attendance

In 2017, a relatively large share of children in Grade 1 had attended some form of ECDE program. While this share is relatively high at 73%, there is no data on the type of ECDE program attended, duration, contents, or the age at which children were exposed to these programs (Figure 26). The programs attended may include any of private and community preschools, support from Rural Health Motivators, healthcare facilities, using nutrition services at KaGoGO centers, NCPs, or Day-Care Centers which vary widely in the activities and services provided. Some do not include any early learning stimulation but focus on solely on non-educational aspects of ECDE.

Figure 26 Ever attended an ECDE program by region 2017



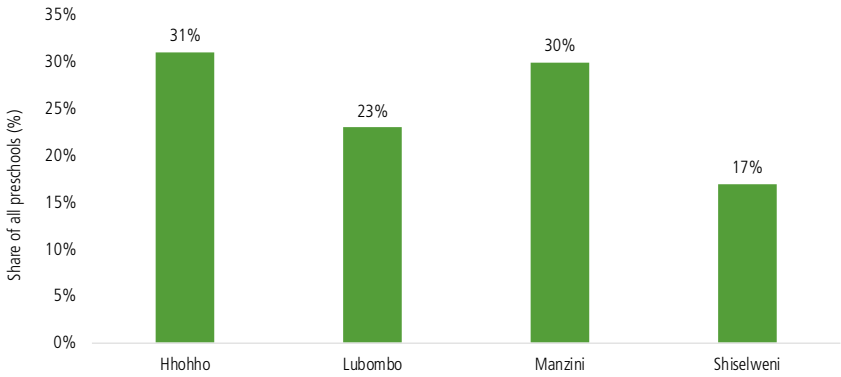
Source: EMIS.

Access to ECDE services is lower in Lubombo and Shiselweni than in Hhohho and Manzini. Although gender parity has essentially been reached, disparities in ECDE access prevails across regions, with children from Shiselweni and Lubombo (regions with the highest poverty incidence) reporting lower levels of access to ECDE services (58% and 67% respectively) compared to Hhohho and Manzini (86% and 77% respectively). This could be attributed to wealthier parents being able to afford fees charged at private centers, the distance to facilities, parents' knowledge about services offered, and their perception of the quality of these services.

5.6 ECE availability and participation

The availability of preschools for children aged 3-5 differs across the four regions. A preliminary survey undertaken by the MoET in 2020, with support from Regional Education Officers, report that there are at least 627 preschools in Eswatini, 63% of which are community-based and 37% private.[33] A greater proportion of the preschools are located in Hhohho and Manzini, 31% and 30% respectively, compared to 23% in Lubombo, and only 17% in Shiselweni (Figure 27). In Manzini the share of private preschools is highest (54%) followed by Hhohho (36%) and far behind, Shiselweni (28%), and Lubombo (24%). This is likely related to the former two regions having a lower poverty incidence and parents/guardians being better able to afford the generally higher fees at private preschools. Both Hhohho and Manzini are also more populated than Lubombo and Shiselweni, indicating potentially more demand for preschool in these two regions. While there are fewer private preschools than community preschools, enrollment is nearly evenly distributed among the two types of preschools at 49% and 51% respectively.[34]

Figure 27 Share of all preschools by region 2020



Source: MoET 2020.

Participation in ECE is very low in Eswatini and the capacity of the system to accommodate all eligible children is far from adequate. The 627 preschools enroll just over 21,000 children, which accounts for 24% of the eligible age cohort. This shows that substantial investments will be needed for the education system to be able to accommodate all eligible children.

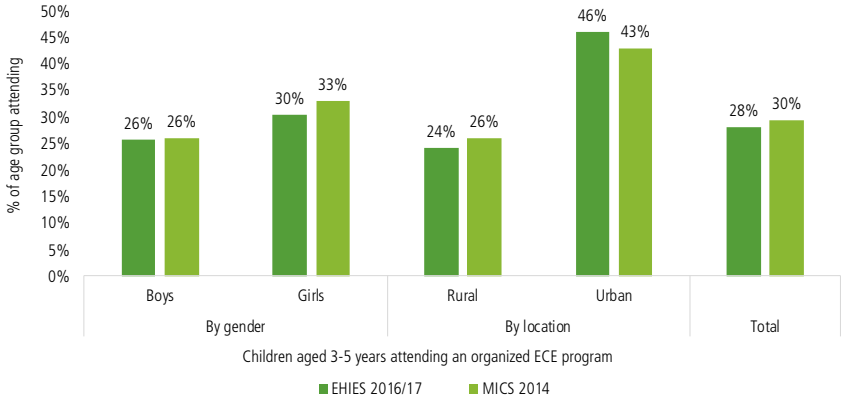
33 This data collection exercise was undertaken during the national lockdown in 2020 and may not include all preschools.

34 Team calculations using the preschool data collected by the MoET in 2020.

ECE attendance has not increased since 2014. In 2014, around 30% of children aged 3 to 5 years were attending an organized ECE program which declined slightly to 28% in 2016/17. This is largely in line with the findings from the MoET ECDE survey (which may not capture all ECE service providers and therefore be lower), according to which 24% of children aged 3-5 years were enrolled in preschools in 2020. The gender parity index for ECE attendance for this age group was 1.3 in 2014 and 1.2 in 2016/17, indicating that girls are somewhat more likely to attend ECE than boys.

There is a large disparity in ECE attendance for children in rural areas and their urban peers. In 2016/17, 46% of children in urban locations attended ECE compared to only 24% in rural locations (Figure 28). Over the period 2014 and 2016/17, ECE attendance for urban children decreased somewhat while it declined for rural children. Together these findings show that despite the Government's efforts to improve access to ECE, much more remains to be done, and that additional measures may be needed in rural areas.

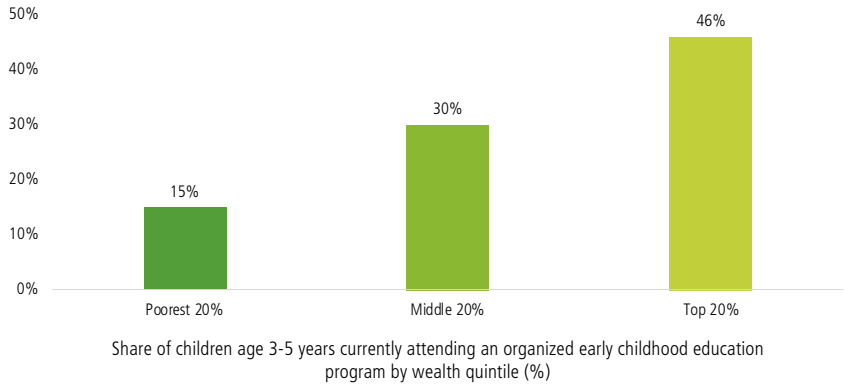
Figure 28 ECE attendance in 2014 and 2016/17



Source: MICS 2014, Team estimates based on EHIES 2016/17 data.

Young children belonging to the richest 20% of households are three times as likely to attend early childhood education as those in the poorest 20% of households. Among 3-5-year-olds in the poorest 20% of households in Eswatini, only 15% attend an organized ECE program. This share rises gradually as householdes become richer. An estimated 30% of children in households in the middle 20% of the wealth distribution attend ECE while among children in the richest 20% of households, 46% do. These large disparities in ECE attendance reflect amongst other things, differences in access to ECE services by location; in the ability to pay fees; and in the knowlege of the importance of ECE for early child development.

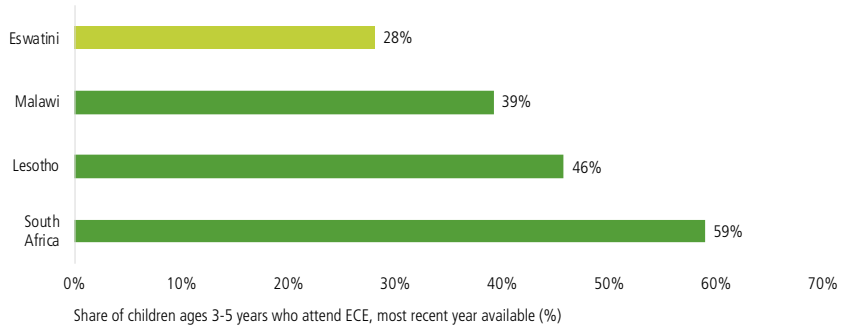
Figure 29 ECE attendance by wealth quintile



Source: Team estimates based on EHIES 2016/17 data.

Eswatini is lagging behind its regional peers on ECE attendance. Among children aged 3-5 years in Eswatini only 28% attend an organized ECE program compared to 59% in South Africa, 46% in Lesotho and 39% in Malawi (Figure 30).

Figure 30 Regional comparison of ECE attendance, most recent year available



Source: UNICEF MICS multiple years, General Household Survey 2018 for South Africa.

There is demand for Grade 0. As discussed earlier, to improve access to ECE, the Government started to roll out a Grade 0 pilot across 80 public primary schools in Eswatini in 2018 (13% of all primary schools in the country). The MoET with support from UNICEF carried out a rapid assessment of the pilot (MoET, 2020), and found that there is demand for Grade 0 programs. The plan was to enroll 2,000 children (25 children per Grade 0 classroom) but approximately 2,300 children were enrolled. The MoET prepared for the pilot by training a pool of ECDE teachers; procuring learning materials; developing a standard curriculum for Grade 0 which still needs to be finalized; and identifying primary schools

where there was space for Grade 0 classrooms in rural communities. Parents were paying school fees to cover teacher salaries and Lubombo and Shiselweni had the highest average costs. School fees were not standardized across the pilot schools but ranged from E500 to E3,000.

Several challenges were identified by the assessment of the Grade 0 pilot:

- Grade 0 fees were quite high, and this cost was borne by households.
- Only 53% of children were of the appropriate age (5 years). Approximately, 8.5% were under-age (2-4 years) and 0.3% were over-age (7 years) making it hard for teachers to teach given the wide age range.
- Birth registration remains low, 53% of children did not have any form of personal identification.
- Only a little over half of the schools implemented the Swaziland Early Learning and Development Standards (SELDS) for Grade 0 whereas all should have done so to track students.
- Approximately, 63% of teachers were not appropriately qualified (did not hold a diploma or certificate in ECDE).
- The majority of teachers were not trained on the Grade 0 syllabus.

5.7 Quality of ECDE service provisioning

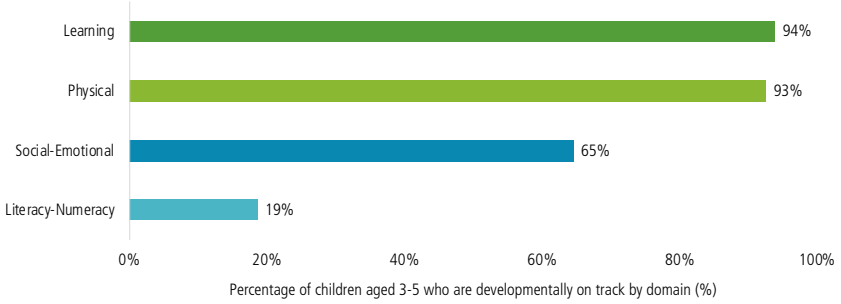
Currently Eswatini does not have an assessment to measure early child development outcomes. The 2013 SELDS domains cover all the critical areas of a child's development in the early years: physical well-being, health and motor development, cognitive development, language and literacy, socioemotional development, and cultural heritage. The SELDS were developed with the purpose of encouraging standardization of learning and development benchmarks across different providers of preprimary education. However, this proceeded without clear policy and strategic direction, and the standards are currently being revised.

A large majority of children aged 3-5 years are not developmentally on track for early literacy and numeracy. According to the most recent available information on the development levels of young children (MICS, 2014), 65% of 3-5-year-old children can be considered to be developmentally on track in at least three of the following four domains:[35] literacy-numeracy, physical, social-emotional, and learning (CSO and UNICEF, 2016) (Figure 31). Most children

35 These are based on subjective opinions of mothers/caregivers who live with these children and are not the results of an observation of children. The four domains for being developmentally on track are: literacy-numeracy, physical, socioemotional, and learning. The ECDI is then calculated as the percentage of children who are developmentally on track in at least three of these four domains.

were considered developmentally on track in the learning domain (94%), which refers to children being able to follow simple directions and do things correctly and independently when given instructions. Children were also largely on track in the physical domain (93%), if they could pick up small objects with two fingers, and the mother/caregiver had not indicated that the child was too sick to play sometimes. About 65% of children could get along well with other children, do not kick, bite or hit other children, and do not get distracted easily meaning they were on track in the socioemotional domain. However, only 19% of children were developmentally on track in the literacy-numeracy domain, meaning they could do two of the three following things: name at least ten letters of the alphabet, read at least four simple, popular words, and know the name of and recognize the symbols of all numbers from one to ten.

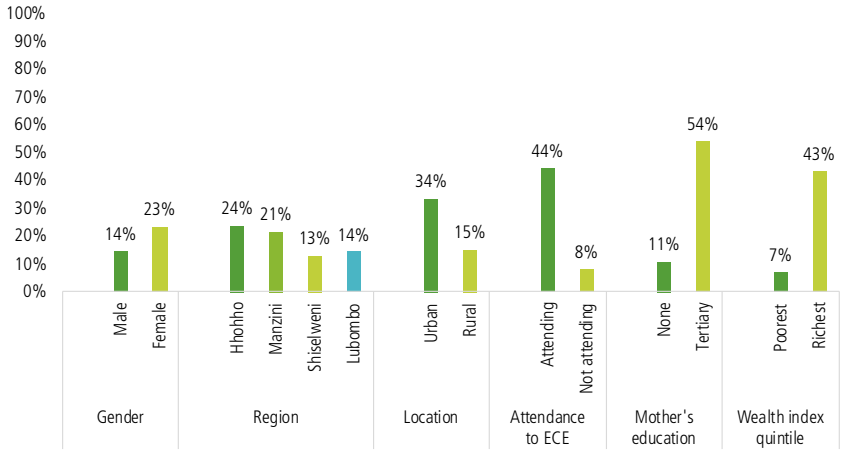
Figure 31 Children aged 3-5 years developmentally on track by domain 2014



Source: MICS 2014.

There are clear gender, rural-urban, and regional disparities among children in the literacy-numeracy domain but the differences are much larger by mother's education, wealth, and ECE attendance. Whether a child attends an ECE program or not makes a significant difference to their literacy and numeracy outcomes. About 44% of children who are reported to be developmentally on track in this domain had attended an ECE program compared to 8% who are not (Figure 32). Having a mother whose highest education level is tertiary education is also strongly associated with better performance (54%) compared to mothers with no education (8%). The richest 20% of children who are developmentally on track (43%) far out-numbers the performance of the poorest 20% (7%). A much larger share of girls is developmentally on track (23%) in the literacy-numeracy domain compared to boys (14%). The share of children developmentally on track in this domain in urban areas (34%) is more than double that of children in rural areas (15%). Further, children in poorer regions such as Lubombo (14%) and Shiselweni (13%) are at a clear disadvantage in this domain compared to Hhohho (24%) and Manzini (21%).

Figure 32 Children aged 3-5 years developmentally on track in literacy and numeracy by group 2014



Source: MICS 2014.

Support for early learning by household members is low in Eswatini. Only 39% of children aged 3-5 years had engaged with an adult household member in four or more activities that promote learning and school readiness;[36] very few children have books at home (6% of households own three books or more); and nearly 17% of children under the age of five are left alone or with an older sibling who is only ten years or younger (CSO and UNICEF, 2016).

Some examples of countries that have successfully scaled up ECDE services using different approaches are described in Box 11.

36 The four activities included reading books or looking at picture books, telling stories, singing songs, taking children outside the home, compound or yard, playing with children, and spending time with children naming, counting, or drawing things.

Box 11 Lessons learnt from other countries on scaling up ECDE services

Chile - Prioritizing ECCD through budget, law, and political champions

The Chile Crece Contigo (ChCC), established in 2007, helps all children (from gestation to age 4) reach their full development potential. Initiatives under the program include a public and family education, maternal and child healthcare, age appropriate stimulation and education for children living in vulnerable circumstances, as well as preferential social protection services for these children. (Torres et al., 2017 and Perez-Escamilla et al., 2017).

The successful emergence and rollout of the program at scale can be attributed to a political champion; strong interdependence among sectors (health, education, social development) from a national to local level; local level implementation allowing for continued functioning during shifts in political priorities; a strong research, monitoring and evaluation system; and ChCC is supported by a law that allocates a permanent line item in the national budget which prioritizes and supports long-term sustainability (Torres et al., 2017).

Jamaica and Madagascar - Multi-sectoral interventions

The Jamaica home visiting program (1986-1987) tested separate and a combination of nutrition and stimulation interventions. The nutrition intervention consisted of weekly nutritional supplements and for the stimulation intervention, trained community health workers encouraged and showed mothers how to play and interact with their children. Children who received early stimulation had greater parental investment, improved cognitive skills, and lower drop-out rates than children who did not receive it. Further, participants who received stimulation earned around 25% more than those who did not receive stimulation (Gertler et al., 2017). The nutrition intervention was found to have no impact on later life outcomes, perhaps because uptake was low, and the supplement may have been shared within the family.

Working within an existing community-based program, researchers evaluated the effects of a lipid based nutritional supplement (LNS) and home visiting program on the growth and development of young children in Madagascar (Galasso et al., 2019). Overall, the research confirms the benefits of incorporating nutritious supplements that prevent stunting and promote linear growth for very young children (6 to 18 months) in an integrated health and nutrition package. The study was integrated within a well-run community-based health and nutrition program. Although LNS supplementation was helpful for young children, the home school visits had no real impact on child growth and development. This may be related to the difficulty in accessing remote areas, limited interactions between community health workers and caregivers and the lack of access to books/toys at the household/community level. Results from this study are critical in understanding when LNS supplementation is most useful in preventing stunting and the difficulty in rolling out home visits and caregiver education at the community level especially in extremely rural areas.

Tanzania – Improving school readiness through a community-based approach

The Education Quality Improvement Programme EQUIP-Tanzania School Readiness Program (SRP) – launched in 2015, is a 16-week program aimed at preparing children for primary school through a focus on oral communication skills, confidence in the classroom and socioemotional competencies The SRP supports parents and community leaders to set up and establish School Readiness Centres within around two hours' walk from a primary school. The use of drama, play, stories, song along with the use of low-cost learning aids and story books were utilized to promote the development of core competencies needed for learning in primary school. Children attending SRCs performed better than children who didn't attend any preschool program and had performed modestly better than children who had attended one year of preschool. Results from the study led to an expansion of SRCs in rural areas and also the adoption of SRCs learning aids/story books in the preschool curriculum. The success of SRCs can be attributed to strong community ownership. Volunteers and parents committed to the rollout of the program by volunteering their time, developing low cost learning aids and identifying community structures to house SRCs at the local level keeping costs low.

5.8 Looking ahead – ECDE

The ECDE sub-sector should be expanded to better prepare children to enter the schooling system. The expansion could build on the existing private and public initiatives and direct public resources to support ECDE service providers in underserved communities. Exploring different models to finance the sector through public-private partnerships (PPPs) and support for entrepreneurs in this sub-sector (who are mainly women), would be a key priority moving forward.

In addition, developing and implementing a standardized curriculum based on the Early Learning and Development Standards (SELDS) for children aged 3 to 5 years, as well as implementing the existing Grade 0 curriculum for children aged 5 to 6 years would be crucial for improving the quality of ECDE services.[37] This should be accompanied by the establishment of a streamlined registration process for ECDE service providers, and a transparent quality assurance and regulation mechanism. Going forward, an instutitional assessment would be helpful in understanding whether the MoET currently has the technical capacity to roll out a new ECDE curriculum, or some capacity building would be needed.

A training program for caregivers, ECDE teachers, Rural Health Motivators, and volunteers at Neighborhood Care Points (NCPs) and KaGoGo centers, on how to promote early learning and stimulation would also be needed to improve

37 Officially, children enroll in Grade 1 at age six but with high repetition rates in Grade 1, the Ministry piloted Grade 0 for children who are 5 and 6 years to help prepare children for school.

the quality of ECDE service delivery. This should ideally be complemented by the implementation of low-cost interventions to support early stimulation and development activities at the family level. For those families who cannot afford ECDE services, the Government could consider developing and implementing a needs-based cash transfer program linked to improved child development outcomes. Investments in infrastructure and goods and services are also required to ensure there are adequate and safe facilities for children attending ECDE programs, including water and sanitation facilities as well as play areas.

As discussed above, institutional assessments of both the DPMO and MoET would be helpful to understand how ECDE services can be better integrated and rolled out across the many ministries and service platforms. In addition, a system to regularly collect and analyze data on ECDE service provision needs to be developed to ensure providers meet the quality and safety standards set by the Government. It will also be essential to design and conduct a mapping of all private and public ECDE providers, and then update this provider list annually. Once such a list is in place, a system to regularly collect data from all ECDE providers on enrolment, teachers, facilities, and quality, that is integrated into the EMIS could be developed. Once the system is set up, it will be especially helpful in supporting and monitoring both public and private ECDE providers. This data will also be helpful in planning for the expansion of the ECDE sub-sector and the creation of a mechanism to coordinate, monitor, support, and regulate it.

6. Primary and secondary education

This chapter builds on and extends the comprehensive analyses in the *Annual Education Census (AEC) Reports of 2017 and 2018*. Its purpose is to describe the primary and secondary education situation in Eswatini and highlight education priorities for these two levels. It begins by providing an overview of school infrastructure and selected facilities. Next it describes participation in education – currently, over time, and in a regional perspective. The schooling profile is then examined together with internal efficiency, and disparities in access and retention are discussed as relevant. This is followed by analysis of the education situation for orphaned children who comprise a large share of all students. The chapter concludes by pointing out some key policy areas looking ahead.

The priority issues in primary and secondary education identified by the ESA are set out in Box 12 and are discussed in detail in the remainder of the chapter.

Box 12 Priority issues in primary and secondary education

- Access remains an issue for junior and senior secondary education.
- Many students drop out of school and/or repeat grades at each education level.
- There are large disparities in access, participation, and retention for different groups of children
- Some schools lack access to basic services and many schools are not digitally connected (COVID-19 relevant)

6.2 School infrastructure and facilities

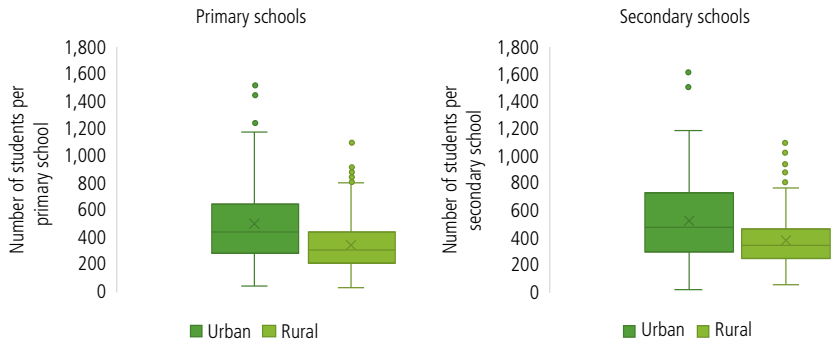
A majority of primary and secondary schools are located in rural areas, and on average urban schools are much larger than rural schools both at primary and secondary level. On average, rural primary schools have 352 students compared to 508 students for urban schools, and rural secondary schools have 378 students while urban ones have 530 students (Table 11). Still, there is a small number of rural primary and secondary schools that have 800 or more students, this means their catchment areas are large which can make it hard for students to reach these schools (Figure 33). There are also some rural schools that are very small and therefore costly to operate, but this is a necessity to ensure access to education in certain areas given to their geography.

Table 11 Number of schools and average school size 2018

		Number of schools			Average number of students per school		
		All	Rural	Urban	All	Rural	Urban
Primary	Government-aided	595	491	104	390	354	559
	Private non-government aided	23	3	20	228	139	241
	Total	618	494	124	384	352	508
Secondary	Government-aided	262	201	61	427	378	589
	Private non-government aided	13	2	11	231	384	203
	Total	275	203	72	418	378	530

Source: EMIS. Note: 1) The 2018 EMIS data were not fully finalized at the time of the writing of this report and therefore a small number of schools is missing. 2) Government-aided schools include community schools, mission schools, government schools, and private schools that receive government assistance (see chapter 3 for details).

Figure 33 Primary and secondary school sizes 2018



Source: EMIS.

Past investment in classroom construction has led to better school conditions for students. This is largely the result of investment in the primary school infrastructure to support FPE implementation (Figure 34),[38] combined with relatively low growth of the school-age population. Although the number of primary schools has remained stable over the last five years, the addition of new classrooms led to a decrease from an average of 38 to 31 students per classroom

38 Most of the school infrastructure projects are implemented through a community participatory approach. Parents/communities typically finance the construction of classrooms up to roof height with supervision from the MoET implementing Agency (Micro-Projects Coordination Unit). The Ministry through the education capital budget then complete the structure - roofing, painting and finishing (MoET correspondence, September 2020).

in primary schools between 2010 and 2017, despite the increase in primary enrolment over the period (section 6.2).[39] This is well within the national standard of 40 students per classroom (AEC, 2010 and 2017).

The increase in the number of classrooms since 2010 leaves room to accommodate more students at secondary level. Enrolment in Form 4 is higher than enrolment in Form 3 because of repeaters and restarters (Box 13), which means for the time being there is enough capacity. However, retention at junior secondary level is relatively low (section 6.3). If it continues to improve, there would be three main options to accommodate junior secondary graduates who want to transition to senior secondary level: allow the number of students per classroom to increase; add more classrooms or schools while maintaining current class sizes; or a combination of the two. The average number of students per secondary classroom has declined from 41 in 2010 to 31 in 2017,[40] which is below the national standard, and would leave scope to have more students per classroom in many but not all schools (Figure 33).[41]

The availability of toilet facilities in primary and secondary schools has improved over time. This is important as shortages of proper toilet facilities, including gender separated, screened off toilets, is one cause of reduced attendance and drop-out, especially for girls**.** In 2010, on average, 45 primary students shared a toilet while at secondary level the corresponding number was 40. By 2017 the situation had improved with 27 students per toilet in primary schools and 24 students in secondary schools.[42] This is largely consistent with the recommendation of 25 girls per seat and 30 boys per seat under the Inqaba (child friendly schools) program that has as one of its pillars to ensure primary schools have adequate sanitation facilities (MoET, 2011).[43] This does not mean that all schools have adequate facilities, especially in rural areas some schools lack sufficient facilities.

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39 Data to examine differences in class size across schools were not available.

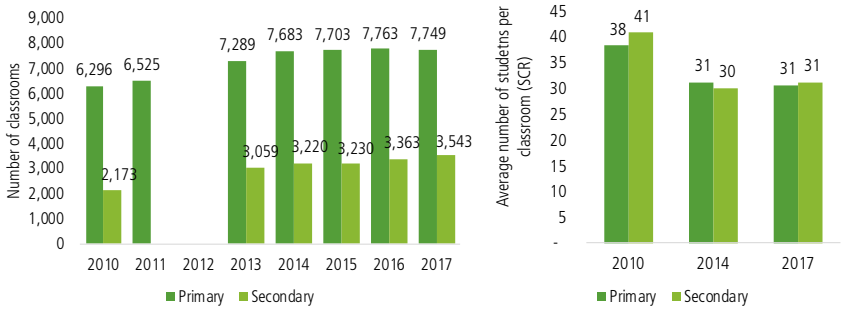
40 Data not available separately for junior and senior secondary levels.

41 For a simple illustration, by allowing the average class size for secondary level to increase from the average 31:1 to 40:1 (the national standard), the system would be able to accommodate an estimated 93% of the secondary school-age population. This does not take into account variation in class sizes across schools.

42 Whether these toilets are functional is not captured by the collected data.

43 Planning in schools is meant to be based on the seven pillars of the Inqaba Framework: health care; food security; psycho-social support; safety and protection; quality teaching and learning; (6) HIV and AIDS, gender, and life skills; and water, sanitation and hygiene

Figure 34 Number of classrooms and average student-classroom ratios 2010-2017



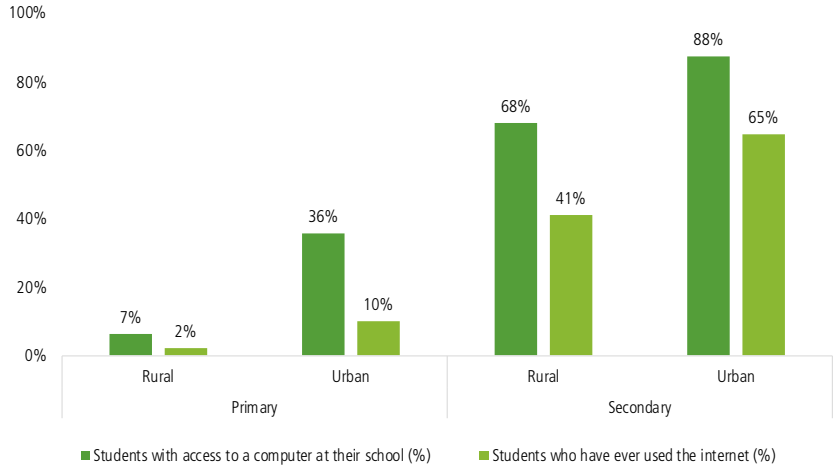
Source: Team calculations based on EMIS data.

Note: 1) Data on primary classrooms not available for 2012 and on secondary classrooms for 2011 and 2012.

A group of primary and secondary schools do not have any source of water, which poses a risk to student and teacher health, especially given the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2017, 24% of primary and 8% of secondary schools did not have any source of water on their premises. The lack of facilities for hand washing poses a risk to students' and teachers' health, and even more so in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. There is also a group of primary schools that do not have safe drinking water, which is a further risk to health, and larger numbers of these are located in Lubombo and Shiselweni, the two poorest regions (AEC, 2018). This is despite the Inqaba program under which all primary schools are meant to have a safe source of water for drinking, cooking, and washing (MoET, 2011).

Access to computers at school is limited and many students have never used the internet, especially in rural areas. Although almost all primary (97%) and secondary (98%) school have access to electricity through the main grid, at primary level only 7% of rural students and 36% of urban students have access to a computer at their schools (Figure 35). Access is better at secondary level, where 68% of rural and 88% of urban students have access to a computer at school. But the shares of primary students who have ever used the internet are very low – 2% for rural students and 10% for urban students. For secondary students this rises to 41% of rural students and 65% of urban students. This suggests that any internet-based strategy for teaching and learning during the COVID-19 pandemic would be unsuccessful for a majority of students, even without taking other considerations into account such as parents' ability to support learning at home (see chapter 2).

Figure 35 Student access to a computer at school and use of internet 2016/17



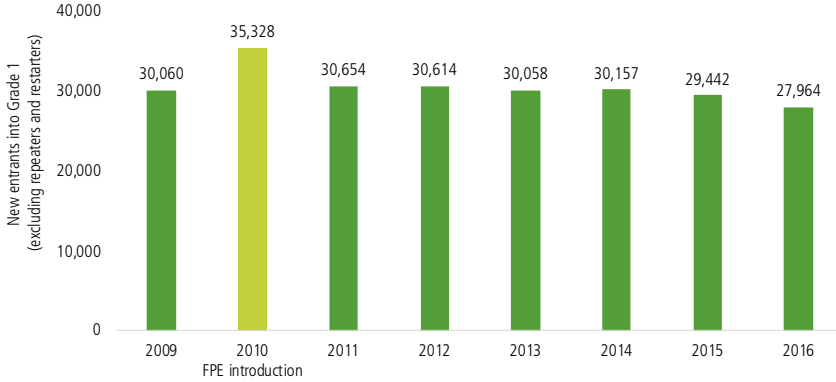
Source: Weighted estimates based on EHIES 2016/17 data.

6.3 Participation

There has been notable improvement in participation in primary and secondary education since the introduction of FPE in 2010. The implementation of the FPE program was gradual and started with Grades 1 and 2 in January 2010 in all public schools, followed by Grade 3 in 2011, Grade 4 in 2012 and so on until all the primary grades were covered by 2015 (MoET, 2014). As a result, the number of new entrants into Grade 1 jumped from 30,000 in 2009 to just over 35,000 in 2010, equivalent to an 18% increase (Figure 36). In 2011 the number of new entrants declined to about 30,600 before returning in 2013 to roughly the same level as in 2009, indicating that the FPE program enabled children who were previously unable to start primary school because of fees, to enroll. A very large share of these children were older than the official school-starting age of six years.[44] But despite the FPE grants, some schools have been charging top-up fees, which can restrict access and reduce retention, particularly for orphaned and other vulnerable children (section 6.3).

44 Only 32% were six years.

Figure 36 New entrants into Grade 1 before and after FPE introduction in 2010



Source: EMIS.

Box 13 Restarters and repeaters

Restarters are students who either drop out of a grade and after a period away return to the same grade, or who complete a grade and leave school to later return to start the subsequent grade, who are not accurately captured in school records.[45]

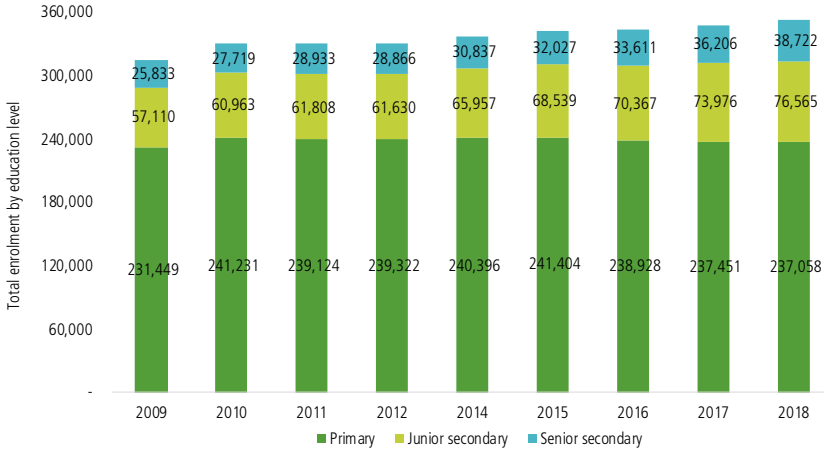
Inaccurate reporting on restarters and to some extent repeaters by schools, means caution is needed when interpreting some of the education indicators. When this is the case, it is indicated in the text below, and if household survey estimates are available, they are presented together with the administrative data as they are not affected by these two issues.

Since 2010 there has been a substantial increase in enrolment in junior and senior secondary education. This is largely the result of the larger than normal cohort of students that started Grade 1 in 2010 when the FPE program was introduced, moving through the education system. Primary enrolment jumped from 231,449 in 2009 to 241,231 in 2010, and then gradually declined to 237,058 by 2018 (Figure 37). Junior secondary enrolment remained largely stable the first few years after FPE was introduced but then started to rise and reached 76,565 in 2018 – a 26% increase. Enrolment in senior secondary education increased by

45 Further study is needed to understand reasons for restarting but possible reasons may include: i) Students who need to repeat a grade more than once may enroll at a new school to avoid paying fees (according to the policy on repetition if a student repeats a grade more than once the parents cover the cost); ii) Girls who become pregnant and stop school to later return; iii) Students who become orphaned may leave school for a period because of the great trauma of losing a parent, and while new living arrangements are organized; iv) Children from poor families who temporarily stop school to help at home or work for pay or when their parents cannot afford to pay school related expenses, and then restart when the household's economic situation improves; and v) Students attending upgrading classes or who were previously in schools not formally recorded with the MoET (AEC, 2018).

even more (40%) to 8,722 students in 2018.These large rises in enrolment were accommodated by the construction of new classrooms (section 6.1)

Figure 37 Enrolment by education level 2009-2018



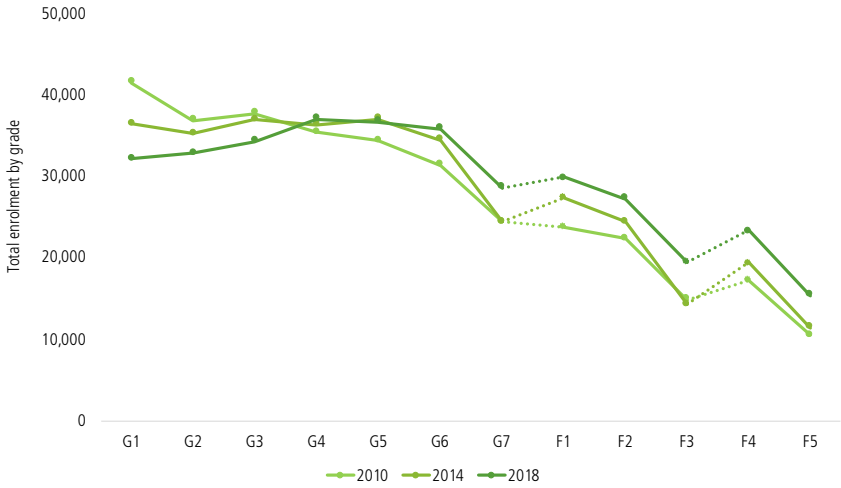
Source: EMIS.

There is a large decline in enrolment between Grade 6 and Grade 7, largely because of students dropping out when nearing completion of the primary cycle. This is a persistent feature of primary education (Figure 38). This is not only a serious problem for students who drop out and therefore do not acquire the full set of skills expected at the completion of the primary cycle nor a formal qualification, but also for the education system due to wasted resources and for the country as it reduces the human capital needed for economic and social development. Reasons for the high drop-out from Grade 6 are not clear and require further investigation (AEC, 2018). But one explanation according to some qualitative evidence, is that schools hold back students who they expect to do poorly on the final examinations because performance on these is viewed as a measure of how good a school is. As a result, many of these students end up dropping out of school in the penultimate grade.

Larger number of students are enrolled in the first grades of the junior and senior secondary cycles than in the final grades of the preceding cycles. This is because of restarters and underreporting of repeaters (Box 13). In 2010, the excess number of students in Form 1 compared to Grade 7 was around 600, by 2018 it had more than doubled to roughly 1,300 students (Figure 38). Similarly, the excess number of students in Form 4 compared to Form 3 was around 1,200 in 2010 but more than tripled to 3,800 by 2018.

Enrolment in both Form 3 and Form 5 has increased substantially since 2010 but large numbers of students drop out before completing the full cycles. The large numbers of students lost before completing the junior and secondary cycles is a major problem for the affected students: in terms of wasted education resources; and also for the country as fewer people will have the skills in demand by the labor market and needed to continue on to tertiary education (see chapter 8). The main reasons for students dropping out included: not being able to afford the costs associated with attending school; pregnancy; and poor performance (further discussed below).

Figure 38 Enrolment by grade 2010, 2014 and 2018



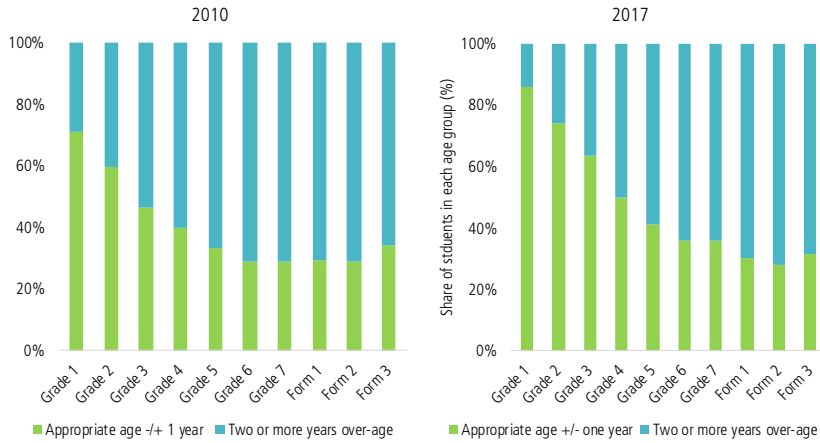
Source: EMIS.

Note: 1) The substantially higher Grade 1 enrolment in 2010 coincides with the start of the FPE program.

There is also Form 6 at the end of which a very small number of students sit for the A/AS level GCE examination. At the end of Form 5 students can take the EGCSE and the Cambridge IGCSE O level examinations, and at the end of Form 6 students sit for the A/AS level GCE examination which qualifies students to apply to tertiary institutions in the SADC region (MoET, 2018a). However, Form 6 is only offered by four public secondary schools, all located in Hhohho, plus some private secondary schools. Over the last five years, the number of students enrolled in Form 6 in public secondary schools was very low, ranging from a high of 94 in 2012 to a low of 73 in 2016. Another small group of students attended Form 6 in private secondary schools. This means that most graduates from senior secondary schools in Eswatini are precluded from applying to several of the universities in the region, and their ability to work in other countries in the region is reduced.

A very large share of students enrolled in primary and junior secondary education are over-age because of extensive grade repetition and late entry to primary education. In 2010 at the time of the introduction of the FPE program, 29% of students enrolled in Grade 1 were eight years or older compared to the official school starting age of six. By 2018 this share had more than halved to 14% (Figure 39).[46] By contrast, at junior secondary level, the age appropriate shares by grade have not changed much over time. After Grade 1, the share of over-age students rises steadily, peaking at 64% of all Grade 6 and Grade 7 students respectively, and at 72% of all Form 2 students,[47] and the main reason is grade repetition.[48] That repetition rates increase as students move through the cycle is shown by the decline in the share of students enrolled at the appropriate age for each grade.

Figure 39 Age for grade 2010 and 2017



Source: Team calculations based on EMIS data.

The net enrolment rates (NERs) for junior and senior secondary levels are low because of the extensive over-age enrolment. For primary education the NER for 2018 was 92% because of near universal access at this level. Meanwhile, at junior secondary level the NER is only 35% and at senior secondary level it is 14%.

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46 This is consistent with estimates based on EHIES 2016/17 data, which show that 15% of students attending Grade 1 in 2016/17 were eight years or older. One reason for late entry to primary education is if the nearest school is located far away. In 2016/17 among children aged 6-8 years, 30% had a walk of 30 minutes or more to school while 15% had a walk of more than 45 minutes.

47 Girls are more likely than boys to be of appropriate age by grade (AEC, 2017).

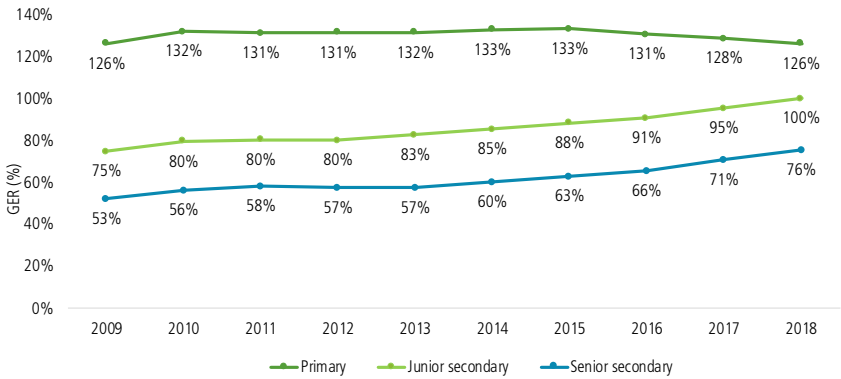
48 The presence of restarters (see Box 13) further contributes to over-age enrolment.

The net enrolment measures the coverage for a given level of education for children of the official age group for that level.[49] In cases where there is widespread over-age enrolment the NER therefore needs to be examined together with other measures such as the gross enrolment rate (GER) that captures the general level of participation in education, and the schooling profile (see below).[50]

The GER for primary is high but declined somewhat since 2010, mainly because enrolment is becoming more age appropriate. The GER jumped from 126% in 2009 prior to the start of the FPE program to 132% in 2010, and then gradually declined to 126% by 2018 (Figure 39).[51] The main reason is that as over-age students who enrolled in response to the introduction of the FPE program are exiting primary education (either by completing the cycle or dropping out), the share of enrolled students of the appropriate school-age is increasing as discussed above.

At both junior and senior secondary levels, the GER has risen substantially over the last decade. The junior secondary GER rose by 25 percentage points to 100% in 2018 (Figure 40). Part of the explanation for the large increase is the FPE program as students who entered primary education in 2010 are now at an age to transition to junior secondary level. There was a similarly large increase in senior secondary education, from 53% to 76%.

Figure 40 GER by education level 2010-2018



Source: Team calculations based on EMIS and CSO data.

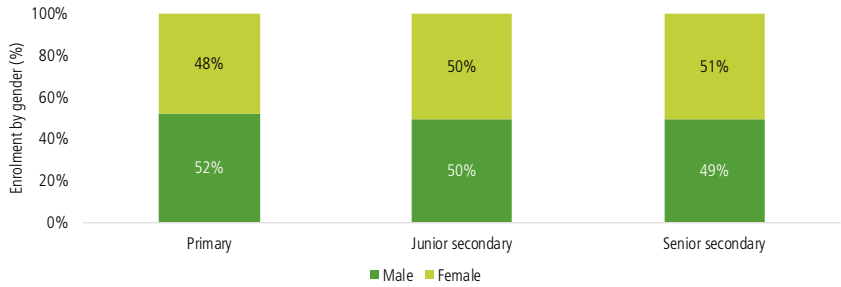
49 The net enrolment rate is the enrolment of the official age group for a given level of education as a percentage of the Population in the corresponding age group. For example, the number of 6-12-year-olds enrolled in primary education as a percentage of the 6-12-year-old population.

50 The gross enrolment rate is the total enrolment in a given level of education, regardless of age, as a percentage of the official school-age population corresponding to the same level of education. For example, the number of children of any age enrolled in primary education as a percentage of the of the 6-12-year-old population.

51 The GER is over 100% because of over-age enrolment, that is, many students are older than the age they should be for the grade they are in. The over-age enrolment is the result of late entry to primary education and grade repetition.

Gender parity for participation has essentially been achieved for primary and secondary levels. There is only a 2-4 percentage point difference in enrolment for female and male students at each of the three levels (Figure 41).

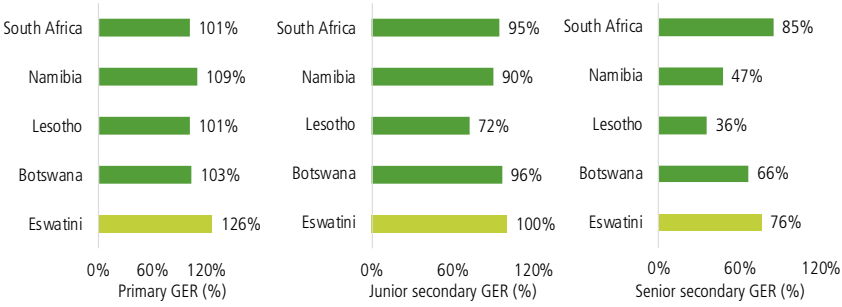
Figure 41 Enrolment shares by gender and education level 2018



Source: Team calculations based on EMIS data.

From a regional perspective Eswatini has high capacity to accommodate its school-age population. At primary level the comparator countries have achieved primary GERs between 101% and 109% but Eswatini has higher capacity still at 126% (Figure 42). This means the country can accommodate all its primary school-age population and more. At junior secondary level Eswatini' GER of 100% is higher compared to each of Botswana (96%), South Africa (95%), and Namibia (90%), and substantially higher than in Lesotho (72%). At senior secondary level, all the countries have GERs lower than 100% meaning they have inadequate capacity to accommodate their senior secondary school-age populations. South Africa has the highest GER at this level (85%) followed by Eswatini (76%) and Botswana (66%), with Namibia (47%) and Lesotho (36%) far behind.

Figure 42 Regional comparison of GER by education level, most recent years available



Source: Eswatini EMIS, Lesotho ESA Report 2020, UNESCO-UIS database 2018.

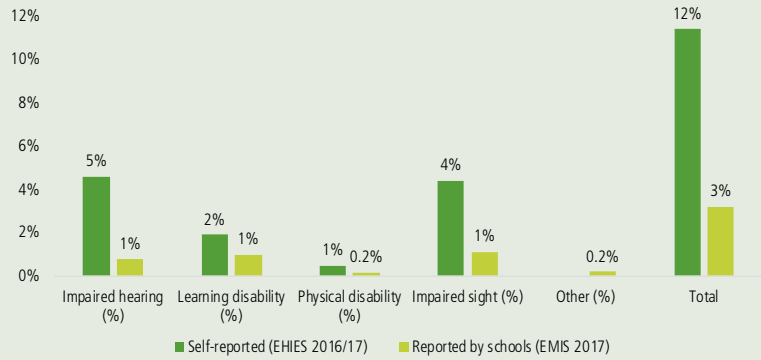
Note: 1) Eswatini and Namibia 2018, South Africa 2017, Lesotho 2016 and Botswana 2015.

Box 14 Education participation for children with disabilities

In Eswatini the policy is that children with disabilities should be mainstreamed into regular schools, using a gradual approach that allows for adjustment of infrastructure and teacher preparation. According to EHIES 2016/17 household survey data, 96% of children aged 6-17 years who had a disability attended school compared to 99% of their peers who did not have a disability. This still means that having a disability is a barrier to accessing education.

Nationally the share with a disability was around 6% in 2017 for those aged 5-14 years (CSO, 2017). There are large differences in the shares of primary school students with a disability depending on whether self-reported data from the EHIES 2016/17 household survey or data reported by schools from EMIS is used. The share of primary students with any disability is 12% using self-reported data from the EHIES but only 3% using school-reported data captured in EMIS (Figure 43). The most common disabilities are (showing self-reported data first followed by school-reported data): impaired sight (4% and 1%); impaired hearing (5% and 1%); learning disability (2% and 1%); and physical disability (1% and 0.2%).

Figure 43 Most common disabilities for primary students using AEC and EHIES 2017



Source: Team calculations based on EMIS data and weighted estimates based on EHIES 2016/17 data.

Some evidence suggests that repetition in the early grades of primary is higher for children with disabilities, and that this is related to teachers not having the required training to meet their needs. After Grade 3 having a disability was no longer cited as a reason for repetition, which was interpreted as these children dropping out during the primary education cycle (MoET, 2015a). Given the extremely limited evidence on children with disabilities it is not possible to draw any strong conclusion about their participation in education, only to note that it is possible that this group of students are more likely both to repeat and to drop out.

6.5 Schooling profile and internal efficiency

Although close to all children access primary education, substantial differences remain in access to junior and senior secondary levels and completion at all levels based on whether children live in rural or urban areas, socioeconomic background, and region.

6.5.1 Access and completion

Eswatini is very close to achieving universal access to primary education, and completion has improved. In 2018 the gross intake rate to Grade 1 was 103% (Figure 44), a decline from 115% in 2014, but this was due to Grade 1 enrolment becoming more age appropriate (see above). Meanwhile, the access rate to the final grade of primary was 107% compared to 87% in 2014. The reason these two rates are above 100% is over-age enrolment and restarters (Box 13). In fact, using household survey data, the likelihood of accessing Grade 1 is 99% and of accessing the final grade of primary is 88%. There is essentially gender parity completion at this level. The gross intake rate to the final grade of primary is 110% for girls and 104% for boys using administrative data while based on household survey data, the likelihood of a girl completing primary education is 89% compared to 88% for a boy. Even though most children in Eswatini access primary education there is a need to improve completion.

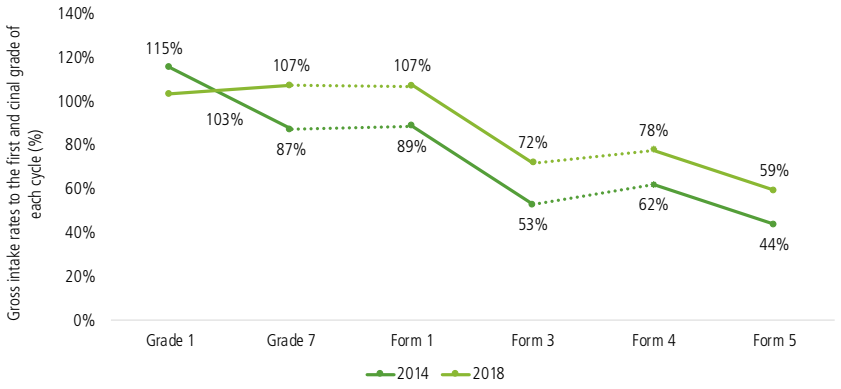
Although access to junior secondary education and senior secondary education has increased, and for children from all income groups, many children are still not accessing these levels. The access rate to Form 1 increased from 89% in 2014 to 107% in 2018 (Figure 44). Over the same period access to Form 4 rose from 62% to 78%. As for primary education, these rates are inflated by over-age enrolment and restarters (Box 13). Using household survey data, the access rate to Form 1 is 80% and to Form 4 it is 52%, and access is largely similar for boys and girls. Despite the improvements over time further measures are required to raise access to junior and senior secondary levels. Using household survey data, attendance at secondary school or higher has improved for children from all income groups (Figure 45). But substantial differences remain. Among children from the poorest 20% of households the adjusted net attendance rate is 40% while for those from the richest 20% of households it is more than double that at 85%.[52]

Completion has improved for junior and senior secondary education. Between 2014 and 2018 the access rates to the final grades of junior and senior secondary education rose from 53% to 72% and from 44% to 59%, respectively,

52 This adjusted net attendance rate is the percentage of children of secondary school-age attending secondary school or higher.

using administrative data. Based on household survey data, the likelihood of accessing Form 3 was 61% in 2017, while for Form 5 it was 48%, and there is essentially gender parity. Regardless of the type of data used, it is clear that many students who start primary education never make it to the final grades of the junior and senior secondary cycles.

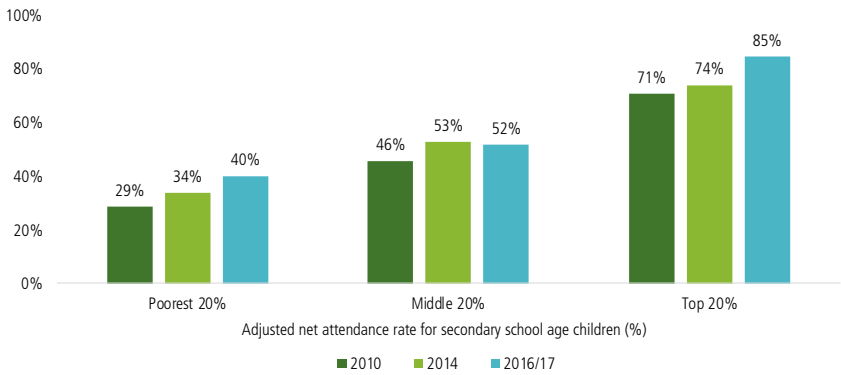
Figure 44 Schooling profile 2014 and 2018



Source: Team calculations and estimates based on EMIS, CSO data.

The analysis in the remainder of this section is based on household survey data from the EHIES 2016/17 and are not directly comparable to the estimates based on EMIS data presented above.

Figure 45 Children of secondary school-age attending secondary school or higher by wealth quintile 2010, 2014 and 2016/17



Source: Weighted estimates based on EHIES 2016/17 and MICS 2010 and 2014 data.

Students in Lubombo and Shiselweni are on average less likely to access education and complete it compared to students in Manzini and Hhohho. There is near universal access to primary education in all four regions but the likelihood of students in Lubombo completing this level is six percentage points lower than in Hhohho (85% compared to 91%), with Shiselweni (87%) and Manzini (89%) falling in between. For the likelihood of accessing junior secondary level Lubombo (73%) is far behind each of Manzini (81%), Shiselweni (81%), and Hhohho (84%) while for access to senior secondary education the regional gap narrows, and now Shiselweni (48%) is the farthest behind after Lubombo (50%), Manzini (53%), and Hhohho (53%). At junior secondary level, the likelihood of completing is lowest for Shiselweni (56%) after Lubombo (59%), Hhohho (61%), and Manzini (64%). At senior secondary level Shiselweni (41%) is still behind the other regions, Lubombo (44%), Hhohho (47%), and Manzini (52%). The main driver behind these differences is poverty, with is more widespread in Lubombo and Shiselweni, however, to examine the reasons for the higher poverty incidence in these two regions is beyond the scope of the ESA.

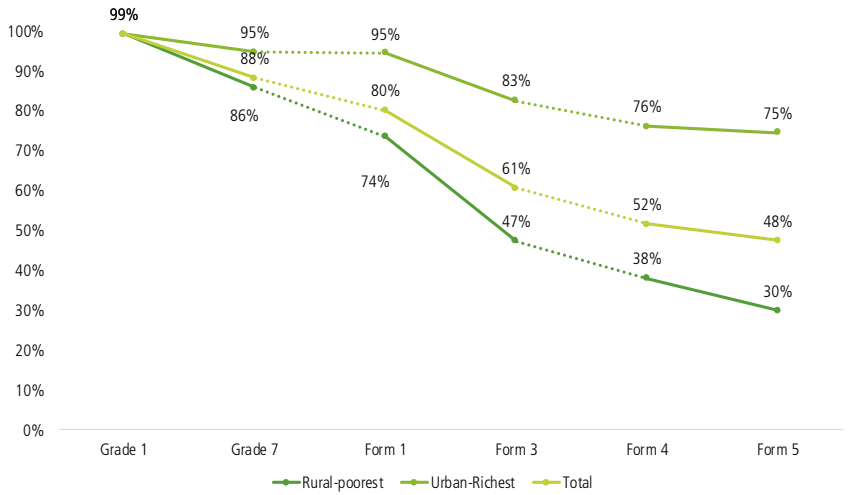
Rural children are substantially less likely to access education, and once in school, are less likely to complete than their urban peers. While access to primary education is near universal, the likelihood of accessing junior secondary education is 12 percentage points lower for rural children (78%) than for urban children (90%). At senior secondary level the gap is even larger at 19 percentage points (47% for rural students and 66% for urban students). At primary level the difference in the likelihood of completing the cycle is the smallest (6 percentage points) by rural (85%) and urban (91%) location. But the gap grows rapidly at junior secondary level with the likelihood of completing at 56% for rural students compared to 74% for urban students, and it remains large at senior secondary level (42% and 61% respectively).

Rural poor children are the most disadvantaged in terms of access and completion at each level while urban rich children are the most advantaged. Poverty and rurality are closely related and the estimated probability of accessing junior secondary education for the rural poorest children is only 74% compared to 95% for the urban richest boys and girls (Figure 46).

The disparity is larger still for senior secondary education with the probability of accessing this level at 38% for the rural poorest children compared to 76% for the urban richest children. Primary completion is not universal even for the most advantaged group (95%) and is much lower for the most disadvantaged group (86%), indicating substantial drop out at an early stage. There is a 36-percentage points difference in the likelihood of completing junior secondary for the most disadvantaged group (47%) and most advantaged group (83%), and a massive 45 percentage points difference for senior secondary education (30% and 75% respectively).

These stark disparities call for targeted measures to improve access and completion for rural poor children, which would also help reduce regional disparities.

Figure 46 Schooling profile for the most disadvantaged and most advantaged groups



Source: Weighted estimates based on EHIES 2016/17 data.

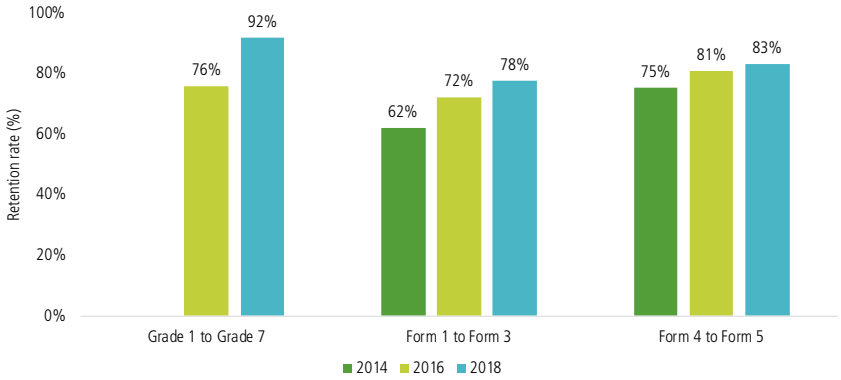
6.5.2 Within-cycle retention and reasons for dropping out of school

Retention within each of the primary, junior secondary, and senior secondary cycles has increased but there is need for further improvement. An estimated 92% of students out of 100% who accessed primary education completed the full cycle in 2018, up from 76% in 2016 (Figure 47).[53] The students who do not stay in the system until the final grade of primary will not have achieved all expected skills and will not be able to continue to the next level, which puts them at a great disadvantage compared to their peers who do.

Retention within the junior secondary cycle increased from 62% to 78% between 2014 and 2018, and within senior secondary it rose from 75% to 83% over the same period. Although these are sizeable increases, large groups of students are not expected to make it to the final grade of these two cycles, and this is after large shares of students have already left the system at previous levels. This shows further action is needed to retain students within each of the cycles.

53 Cohort retention.

Figure 47 Retention rates 2014, 2016 and 2018



Source: Team calculations based on EMIS and CSO data.

The overarching factor contributing to students dropping out of school before completion is poverty. The poverty incidence in Eswatini is very high, with a very large group of households living in poverty and a smaller group in extreme poverty (see chapter 2). Children living in extremely poor households are more likely to drop out because they suffer from severe hunger and their family cannot afford to keep them in school (UNICEF, 2018). An estimated 57% of children aged 0-17 years in Eswatini are multidimensionally poor,[54] and children in rural areas, orphaned children, girls who have been pregnant, and children in Shiselweni region are all more likely to be multi-dimensionally poor than their respective peers (MoEPD, 2018).

The most common reason by far for dropping out of school is that it is too expensive. Education being too expensive is the most common reason for all education levels and all groups ranging from 36% for boys who dropped out of upper secondary to 71% for urban students who dropped out of primary education (Figure 48). This is despite the FPE program and OVC education grants, and points to problems with the coverage of the OVC education grant and with the FPE and OVE education grant programs not covering non-fee costs related to schooling such as uniforms, transport, and at secondary level textbooks, that are unaffordable for many poor households.

This is a major source of concern as poor students are unable to stay in school until completing even primary education. School being too expensive is a relatively more common reason for drop-out in Hhohho and Manzini than in Lubombo and Shiselweni, which are poorer regions.

54 This means they are deprived in four or more of the following dimensions of well-being: education, children protection, health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS, clothing, water, sanitation, housing, and ICT (MoEPD, 2018).

For girls the second most common reason for dropping out is becoming pregnant, and this is becoming more common over time. The share of girls reporting this as the reason for dropping out is 18% already at primary level, rises to 35% for junior secondary level before declining to 22% at senior secondary level. This decrease is arguably related to girls from more advantageous socioeconomic backgrounds being more likely to attend senior secondary level.

Among urban students, 4% at primary level, 12% at junior secondary level, and 12% at senior secondary level report pregnancy as the reason for dropping out. For rural students these shares are more than double at primary and junior secondary level, underlining the much higher risk of early unwanted pregnancies for rural girls. Pregnancy is also a relatively more common reason for drop-out in Lubombo and Shiselweni (that are poorer regions) than in Hhohho and Manzini.

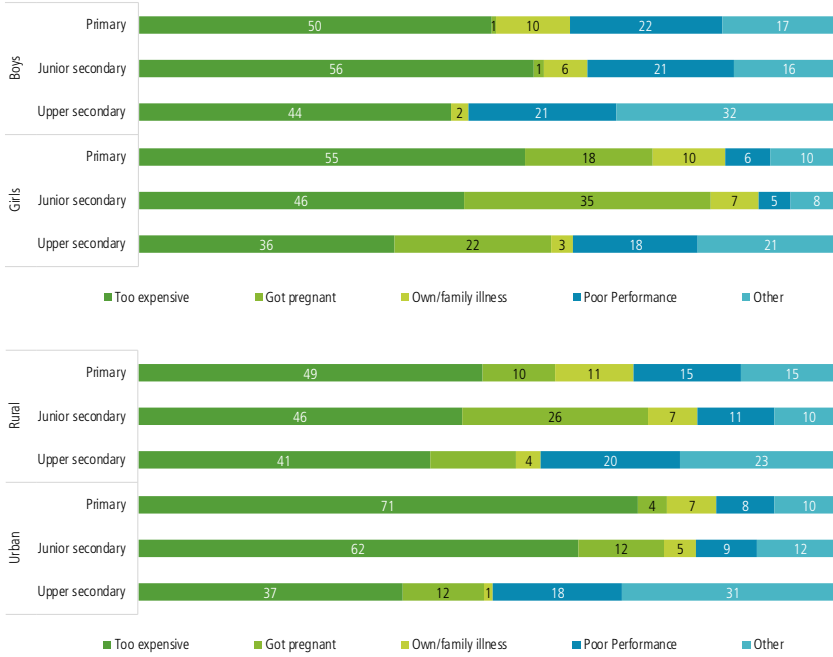
Overall, poverty is a key risk factor for early unwanted pregnancy as poor girls may engage in transactional sex with older men to receive financial support, as well as girls' status in society. Early marriage because of social norms is another risk factor. The policy is that schools should allow girls to re-enter the same school after giving birth (MoET, 2018b), but there is a stigma around early unwanted pregnancy and not all schools follow this policy.

Poor performance is a another the reason for drop-out and is more of a concern for boys. The share of boys reporting poor performance as the reason for dropping out is 21-22% for each of the education levels. For girls these shares are only 6% for primary education and 5% for junior secondary education but is close to that for boys at senior secondary level at 18%.

Among boys, poor performance may be related to other vulnerabilities they face. For example, growing up poor and having to become the main provider at a young age; not having a male role model due to having lost their fathers; engaging in substance abuse; or getting involved in the sale of drugs. Severe corporal punishment is also reported as a reason for drop out despite this practice being abandoned in favor of positive discipline (Erasmus et al., 2019).

Among girls, poor performance only emerges as a main reason for dropping out at senior secondary level, which may indicate they have not gained the foundational skills required to keep up with the curriculum requirements at senior secondary level.

Figure 48 Reasons for drop-out by highest level attended and by gender and location

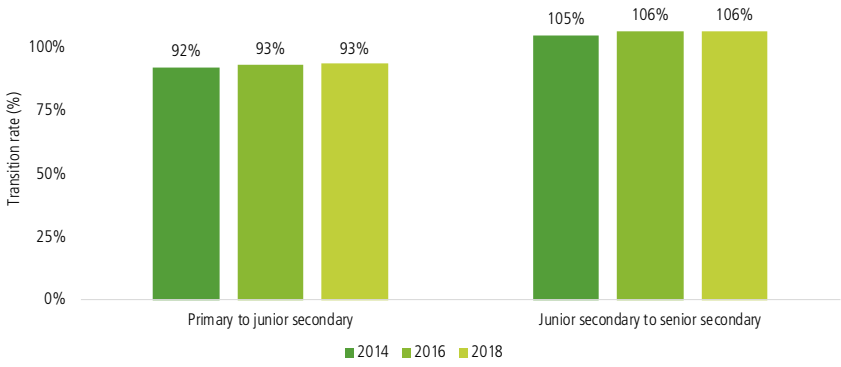


Source: Weighted estimates based on EHIES 2016/17 data.

6.5.3 Transition between education levels

Transition between the education levels is relatively high but this is after large shares of students have already dropped out at the preceding levels. Since 2014 the transition rate from primary to junior secondary level has remained around 93% (using household survey data the estimated transition rate is 91%), suggesting there are barriers that prevent primary graduates from progressing to this level. Over the same period, the transition rate between junior and senior secondary has stayed at around 106% (Figure 49); this rate is inflated by restarters and underreporting of repetition (Box 13), and compares to an estimated transition rate of 78% using household survey data. There is gender parity with boys and girls transitioning to junior secondary and senior secondary levels at similar rates.

Figure 49 Transition rates 2014, 2016 and 2018



Source: Team calculations based on EMIS and CSO data.

6.5.4 Repetition

Repetition rates for primary and secondary education have declined but are still high. In 2018 the average primary and secondary repetition rates were double that of the official policy (see Box 15) at 11% and 10% respectively using administrative data. Based on household survey estimates from 2014 the average repetition rates were 19% for primary and 16% for secondary. This suggests there may be some underreporting of repetition by schools. The reasons for the recent observed decline in repetition rates is not clear. One factor may be the reduction in the share of over-age students at primary level related to the effect of the introduction of the FPE program having worked its way through the primary system. Another possible factor is that schools are beginning to align with the 2015 MoET circular that there should be no repetition in Grades 1, 2 and 3 (AEC, 2018).

Box 15 Policy on grade repetition

According to the policy on repetition, promotion from one grade to the next should be based on achievement of the expected competencies, and students who do not achieve these should still be promoted but with additional support (MoET, 2018a). However, in practice schools are found to not follow this policy, partly because they are not aware of the rules (MoET, 2015).The target is for the repetition rate to not exceed 5% both at primary and secondary level (MoET, 2018b).

There is high repetition in Grade 1 already. In 2018, the Grade 1 repetition rate was 8%. One contributing factor is that teaching and learning materials for the early grades are in English and many children, especially in rural areas, do not speak English at home.

Another factor is that a majority of children do not attend preschool and their levels of school readiness is generally low (MoET, 2015a).

At secondary level, repetition is highest in Form 2 and Form 4 which suggest students may be repeating to be able to pass the final grade examinations. If this is the case, it signals underlying problems with the quality of education in the preceding grades.

This is also indicated by the large shares of Form 3 and Form 5 students passing the final examinations without having acquired many of the skills expected by the end of these two stages (see chapter 4).

Both family and system factors are behind repetition at primary level. In 2015, the main reasons for primary repetition included: inability of parents/caregivers to support children's learning; poverty; students not speaking English well enough; students not meeting the promotion criteria; lack of student motivation; and large class sizes.[55] For the early grades, lack of teacher competence to work with students with special needs was also a main reason (MoET, 2018).

Yet another reason is that some schools hold back Grade 6 students who they expect to do poorly on the EPC examinations because performance on these examinations is viewed as a measure of how good a school is. No studies on the reasons for repetition at secondary level are available, which is a key information gap.

Box 16 provides a summary of factors that contribute to drop-out and repetition.

55 No study on the reasons for repetition at secondary level is available.

Box 16 Factors that contribute to dropout and repetition

Level	Factors that make students more likely to:	
	Drop out of school	Repeat grades
Family	• Poor performance • Being orphaned • Inability of parents/caregivers to support children's learning • Child labor • Having special needs • Family member with HIV/AIDS • Low motivation of learners, especially boys in the late grades of primary • Value of education perceived as low, especially given opportunity cost of not working	
	• The cost of schooling: top-up fees, transport, some learning materials, uniforms, examination fees • Becoming pregnant	
System	• Lack of activities outside and inside schools to monitor and to academically support weaker students • Lack of teacher competence to work with students with special needs in the early grades • Low quality of education in some schools due to poor management and lack of monitoring	
	• Charging of top-up fees. • Inadequate financial support to poor students through FPE grants, OVC education grants etc. • Lack of effective programs to prevent teen pregnancies.	
		• Lack of early childhood programs to increase school readiness • Students not speaking English well enough • Schools holding back Grade 6 students who they expect to do poorly on the EPC examinations • Inadequate support for students who are falling behind in their studies

Source: Team's compilation using EHIES 2016/17, MoET 2018, MoET 2015a, UNICEF 2018, MIET 2019.

There is a need to improve the internal efficiency of the education system, particularly, to increase retention and reduce repetition at primary and secondary levels. High repetition means that students are not moving through the education levels at the intended pace which means public education resources are used to accommodate repeating students instead of improving retention, access and quality. For example, 3,700 students in senior secondary education were repeaters in 2018 equivalent to almost 10% of total enrolment. Given the relatively low access to senior secondary education (Figure 44), reducing repetition would allow more junior secondary graduates to progress to this level. In 2018 the cost of repeaters at primary level in terms of FPE grants alone was approximately E15 million (USD920,000), roughly equivalent to 1%

of total recurrent public spending on primary education. This does not include the costs for textbooks, stationery, and school feeding that are also publicly funded, adding these would increase the cost of repetition further. Repetition can also influence internal efficiency indirectly as it is associated with increased drop-out.

Box 17 Out-of-school children

Although retention has improved a large number of children of secondary school-age are out-of-school. In the age group 8-14 years, nearly all children are in school.[56] But among those aged 15-19 years an estimated 22,000 are out of school – equivalent to 17% of this age group (Table 12). Since almost all children access primary education, this is almost entirely driven by students dropping out and means a relatively large group of students do not even complete basic education which is a major concern for the education system.

A vast majority of those aged 20-26 years are out-of-school. In this age group, an estimated 79% are out-of-school equivalent to almost 105,000 individuals. This is mainly the result of individuals dropping out (an estimated 77% of those out-of-school), but in this age group a larger share has completed their desired level (23% of those not currently in school). For those still in school (21%), some are attending senior secondary and some are attending tertiary education.

Table 12 Estimated number and share of out-of-school children by age group 2016/17

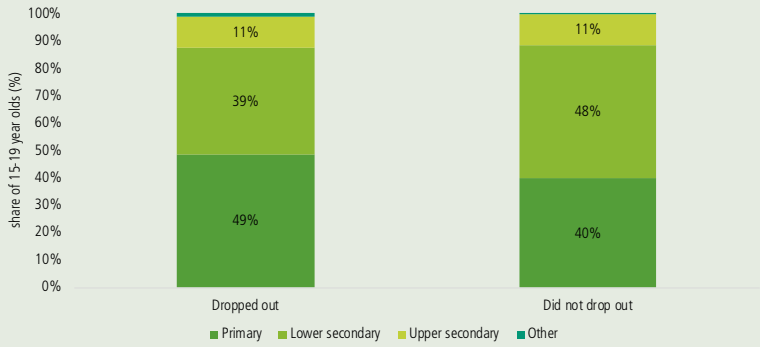
Age group	Total	In school	Out of school	Among those out of school:	
				Completed desired level	Dropped out
15-19	130,714	108,715 (83%)	21,999 (17%)	2,947 (13%)	19,052 (87%)
20-26	132,728	28,180 (21%)	104,549 (79%)	24,396 (23%)	80,153 (77%)
Total	263,442	136,895	126,548	27,343	99,205

Source: Weighted estimates based on EHIES 2016/17 data.
Note: 1) Because almost all children access primary education the estimated number of out-of-school children comprises those who completed the desired level and those who dropped out of school but excludes those who never attended.

Among those in the age group 15-19 years who drop out, the highest level attended is primary for 49% and junior secondary for 39%, which is nine percentage points lower for each level compared to those who did not drop out (Figure 50). Both among those who dropped out and those who did not, for 11% senior secondary education is the highest level attended.

56 Large groups of students are two or more years above the official school-age for each level (section 7.2). Therefore, to more accurately capture those who are out-of-school the reference age groups used here are: 15-19 years and 20-26 years, which are the official school-age intervals for secondary and tertiary level plus two years. In the age group 13-19 years, an estimated 24,000 children (13%) are out of school.

Figure 50 Highest education level attended for students who dropped out

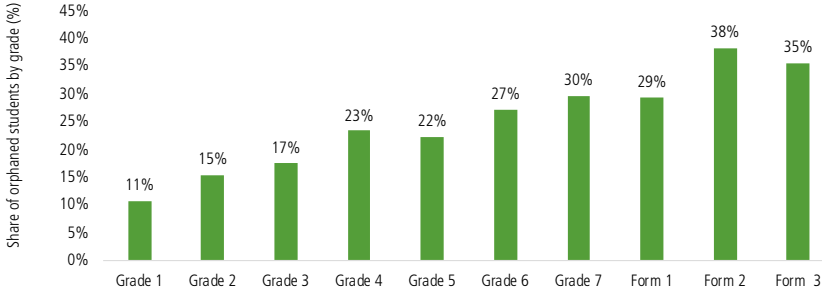


Source: Team estimates based on EHIES 2016/17 data, weighted estimates.

6.6 Orphaned children

The shares of orphaned children enrolled in primary and secondary education are very high which creates additional demands on the education system. Using household survey data, in Grade 1 in 2016/17, 11% of students were orphaned and this share rises gradually to 30% by Grade 7 (Figure 51). The peaks are in Form 2 and Form 3 where 38% and 36% of students respectively are orphaned. The shares of orphaned boys and girls are roughly similar across the grades. The large shares of orphaned students create additional demands on the education system because this group needs extra support both financially and academically. The OVC education grants for secondary students are designed to reduce the financial barriers to education for this group of children (see below). However, tailored academic support to these students is not currently available.

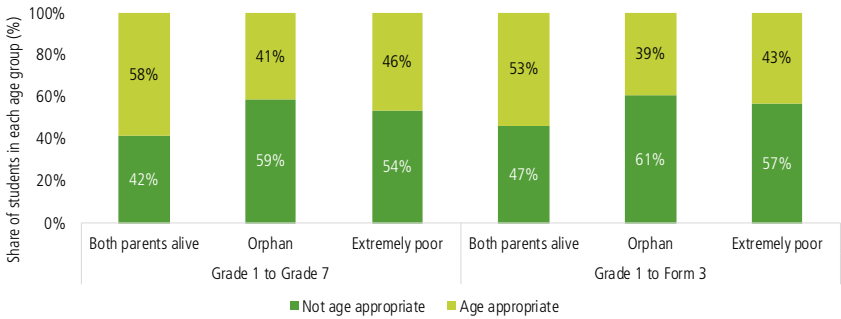
Figure 51 Share of orphaned students by grade 2016/17



Source: Weighted estimates based on EHIES 2016/17 data.

Orphaned children are more likely to be over-age for the grade they attend. Across Grade 1 to Form 3 orphaned students are more likely to be over-age for the grade they attend (61%) than non-orphaned children (47%), and even more so than extremely poor students (57%) (Figure 52). Fundamentally, losing one or both parents is a traumatic even that profoundly affects a child's life in every way. It may cause children to temporarily leave school to later return, which would make them older than the appropriate age for grade.

Figure 52 Over-age enrolment of orphaned students and of extremely poor students



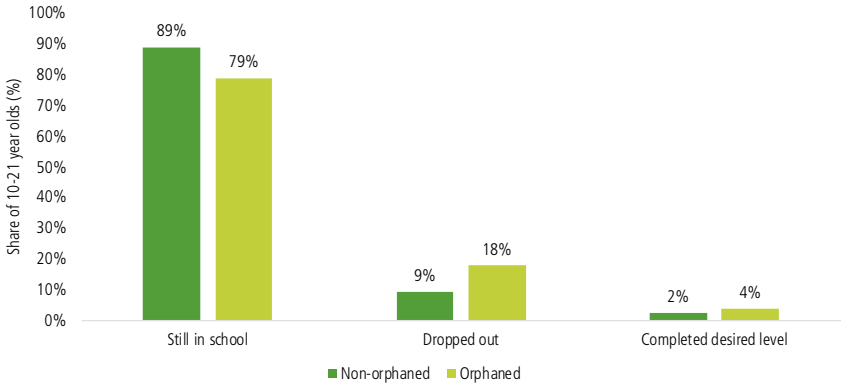
Source: Weighted estimates based on EHIES 2016/17 data.

Orphaned children and youth are much more likely to drop out. The share of orphaned children and youth aged 10-21 years that dropped out of school (18%) was double that of non-orphaned children (9%) in 2016/17 (Figure 53). This is directly reflected in 79% of orphaned children attending school compared to 89% of non-orphaned children. There are many possible reasons why a disproportionately large share of orphaned children drop out of school, including:

- OVC education grant amounts are not enough to meet the financial needs of orphaned, poor children of secondary school age as they cover school fees but not top-up fees charged by schools; costs for transport to and from school or uniforms; or any costs of living.[57]
- A large share of poor, orphaned children of secondary school age appear to not receive the OVC education grants (see below).
- Orphaned girls are more likely to become pregnant (see below), and transactional sex is a big concern.
- Orphaned children are more likely to be over-age for the grade they attend, which increases the risk of repeating and of dropping out.

57 The OVC education grants are paid directly to schools and are meant to cover school and examination fees. The amount for Forms, 1, 2, 3, and 4 is E1,950 per year, and for Form 5 it is E2,500 per year plus up to E2,000 for examination fees.

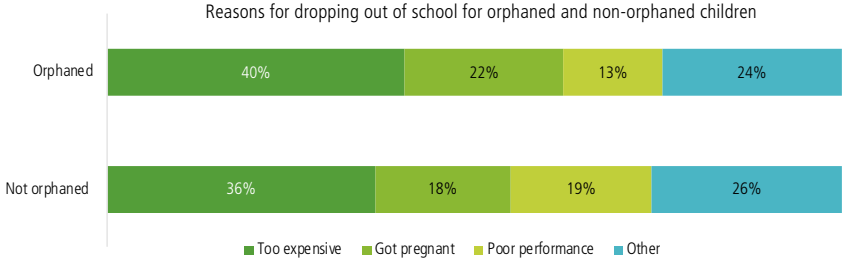
Figure 53 School status of orphaned and non-orphaned youths



Source: Weighted estimates based on EHIES 2016/17 data.

Compared to their peers, orphaned students are more likely to drop out because of the cost of schooling and pregnancy, and less likely to drop out because of poor performance. The most common reason for orphaned students age 15-21 years to drop out was the cost of schooling (40%), and this was a more common reason than for non-orphaned children (36%) (Figure 54).[58] This is despite the OVC education grants that are intended to reduce the financial barriers to education for this group. Orphaned students were also more likely to drop out because of becoming pregnant (22% compared to 18%). When it comes to poor performance leading to drop-out, this was less common for orphaned students (13%) than for non-orphaned students (19%).

Figure 54 Reasons for dropping out of school for orphaned and non-orphaned children

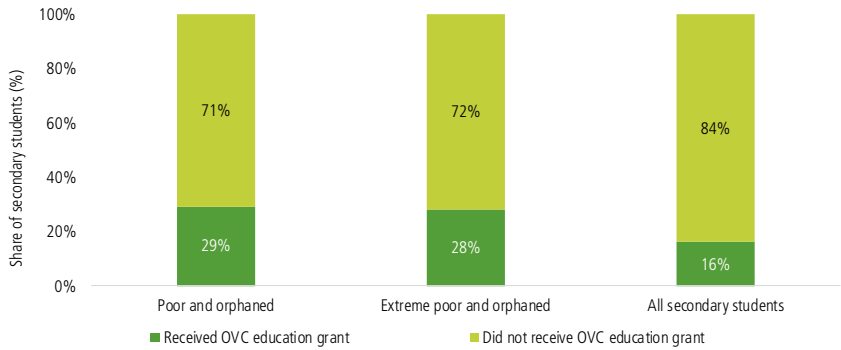


Source: Weighted estimates based on EHIES 2016/17 data.

58 The 'Other' category includes family or own illness, disability, and school not being of interest/useful.

A large share of secondary students who are poor and orphaned report not receiving the OVC education grant increasing their risk of dropping out. Among orphaned students who are poor 29% reported receiving OVC education grants in 2016/17 and 28% of orphaned students who are extremely poor (Figure 55).[59] That such a small share of orphaned students living below the food poverty line do not receive the grant is a major concern given that the cost of schooling is the main reason for students to drop out of school. The significant barrier posed by the cost of schooling for this group is well illustrated by the 15% increase in enrolment in 2004 when secondary school fees for OVCs were waived (MoET, 2015b).

Figure 55 Recipients of OVC education grants



Source: Weighted estimates based on EHIES 2016/17 data.

Why such a large share of extremely poor, orphaned students attending secondary school report not receiving OVC education grants requires investigation. To be eligible for an OVC education grant a child: must be a Swazi citizen; have a personal identity number (PIN); attend an officially recognized school; and essentially be a poor orphan, a poor vulnerable child, or have ill or disabled parents. In theory, *'any interested party can identify a potential beneficiary and refer her or him to a relevant resource system as Social Welfare Offices and relevant school committees'* (World Bank, 2019: p.19).

Among poor, orphaned children who did not receive OVC education grants the main reported reason is 'not being eligible' which raises questions about the grant application and approval process. For example, students may not have a PIN as is required; there may be errors in applications; or officials responsible for approving applications might misclassify applicants as 'not eligible', which is by far the most common reason given for not receiving the grant both for poor,

59 There will be some reporting Table 2s by respondents in both directions, that is, some respondents who did not receive the OVE education grant will respond that they did, and vice versa.

orphaned students as well as for extremely poor, orphaned students (Table 13). Although the number of observations is very small, they give an indication of the relative importance of different reasons.

Table 13 Reported reasons for not receiving OVC education grant in 2016/17

Reported reason for not receiving OVC education grant	Number of secondary students	
	Poor and orphaned	Extremely poor and orphaned
Not eligible	151	42
Don't need to receive it	48	14
Applied but never received it	15	4
Have not yet applied	13	0
Don't know how to enroll/Never heard of it/Enrolment offices too far away	12	8
Don't think can benefit	3	3
Total	**242**	**71**

Source: EHIES 2016/17.

There is a considerable difference in the number of OVC education grant beneficiaries using administrative and household survey data. Using EHIES household survey data, 16% of secondary students reported receiving OVC education grants in 2016/17[60] – equivalent to around 17,600 students, but according to administrative data the number of beneficiaries was 52,600 for the same year (DPMO records). The reason for this difference requires investigation to understand exactly how many beneficiaries there are and the reasons for the discrepancy. The actual spending on the OVC education grants was E142 million in 2016/17. Using the household survey estimates for the share of students who received the grant, this would imply an average payment of E8,000 for each recipient of the grant annually. This is in contrast to the official grant amount of E1,950 for Form 1 to Form 4 annually and E2,500 for Form 5 plus fees for external examinations.

60 This is consistent with the estimate in the 2018 social assistance assessment (Unicef, 2018).

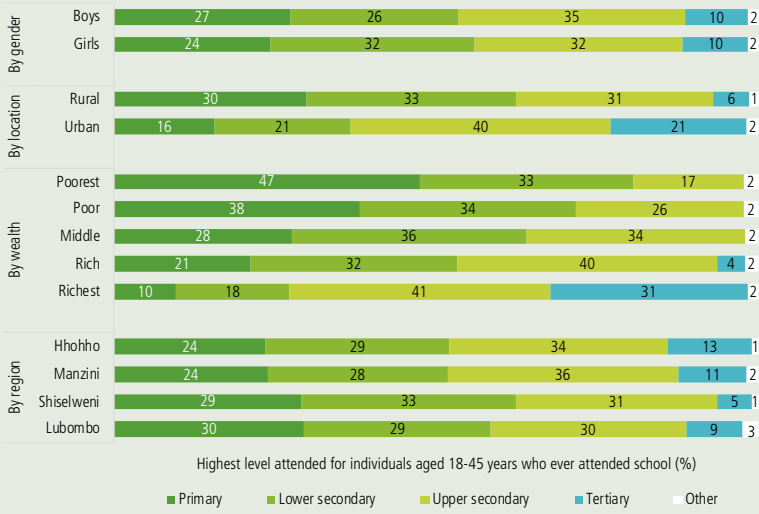
Box 18 Disparities in educational attainment

Educational attainment for men and women is quite similar. The most common highest level attended is senior secondary (32-35%), followed by junior secondary (26-32%), primary (24-27%), and far behind, tertiary education (10%) (Figure 56).

Regionally, educational attainment is higher in Hhohho and Manzini than in Lubombo and Shiselweni. For primary, junior secondary, and senior secondary education there is a 5-6 percentage points difference in the shares who attended each of these levels between Lubombo and Shiselweni on the one hand and Hhohho and Manzini on the other (Figure 56). The disparity is larger still for tertiary education with only 5% of the population living in Lubombo having attended this level compared to 9% in Shiselweni, 11% in Manzini, and 13% in Hhohho.

There are substantial disparities in educational attainment by wealth and by rural-urban location. The share who has attended only primary education ranges from 47% for the poorest quintile to 10% for the richest quintile (Figure 56). The largest disparity in junior secondary attainment is between the poorest quintile and those living in rural areas (33% for each) and the richest quintile (18%). For senior secondary education this is the highest level attended for 40% of those living in urban areas as well as for 40% of the richest quintile; meanwhile only 17% of the poorest quintile has done so. The largest disparity by far is for tertiary education, with no one in the poorest 60% of households having attended this level while 31% of those in the richest quintile of households have and 21% in urban areas.

Figure 56 Highest education level attended by gender, location, income, and region



Source: Weighted estimates based on EHIES 2016/17 data.

Looking ahead – primary and secondary education

Many primary schools charge top-up fees, to address this financial barrier at primary level, the MoET would need to ensure that schools serving poor students cease this practice. At secondary level, it would not only be important to consider an increase of the OVC education grant amount but also to examine the targeting of the grant ensure more children who are eligible receive it than is currently the case. In addition to the barriers of direct school fees and top up fees charged by schools, poor families struggle with paying non-fee schooling costs for uniforms, transport, learning materials, and at secondary level for textbooks. Considering introducing options such as the 2014-2018 cash transfer pilot that provided general financial support directly to households could help to improve school attendance and other social outcomes for children (DPMO, 2018).

Many students also face non-financial barriers to attending school. To address these barriers will require multiple measures to support students more holistically. This may involve strengthening the life skills training programs that provide information and support on sexual reproductive health, family planning, HIV/AIDS, and substance abuse in the national curriculum, especially at junior secondary level. This could be complemented by a scale-up of After-School Girls Clubs and introduction of After-School Boys Clubs to provide safe spaces for peer support, mentorship, and accessing information, in schools and communities with high drop-out rates. For such efforts to be effective would also require programs to engage with communities, including religious and traditional leaders and parents to change thinking and behaviors around sexual reproductive health, early marriage, and early pregnancy including supporting girls to return to school after giving birth.

Students need to have access to a safe secondary school close to where they live. Inadequate school infrastructure may contribute both to students dropping out of and not accessing secondary education. Programs to address the former may comprise rehabilitation of junior secondary schools to ensure they meet the minimum standards, especially related to water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities, and by adding classrooms to overcrowded schools. Access, in turn, could be improved by constructing secondary school schools in underserved catchment areas to allow the system to accommodate all primary school graduates who want to continue to junior secondary education.

Poverty is the main driver behind disparities in access, retention and repetition. Poor children often face additional challenges, including living in rural areas with fewer and lower-quality opportunities for education; being orphaned; and living in the Lubombo or Shiselweni regions which lag the other two regions in terms of economic development and opportunities. There are also some gender differences, with boys on average having less access to early childhood education,

which in turn affects school readiness and their subsequent schooling careers. Table 14 summarizes the severity of the education situation for vulnerable children, with poverty being the most limiting factor followed by living in a rural area and being orphaned. When these factors interact the situation is even worse, and makes it evident that to improve education outcomes for these groups of children will require a targeted, multi-sectoral approach, combined with strong measures to improve education quality.

Table 14 Multi-dimensional vulnerability and access and retention

	Access			Retention	
	ECE	Primary	Secondary	Primary	Secondary
Poorest 20% (compared to richest 20%)	Substantially lower	Similar	Substantially lower	Lower	Substantially lower
Live in rural area (compared to urban area)	Substantially lower	Similar	Much lower	Lower	Much lower
Orphaned (compared to non-orphaned children)	No data	Similar	No data	Substantially lower	Substantially lower
Live in Lubombo / Shiselweni (compared to Hhohho)	Lower (Lubombo)	Similar	Lower (Lubombo)	Lower	Lower (Shiselweni)
Boys (compared to girls)	Much lower	Similar	Similar	Similar	Similar

Source: Analysis conducted for this report and MICS 2014.

Note: 1) 'Similar' = 0-3.0 percentage points difference, 'Lower' = 3.1-8.0 percentage points difference, 'Much lower' = 8.1-19.0 percentange points difference and 'Substantially lower' = 19.1 or more percentage points difference.

7. Primary and secondary teacher development and management

Education is labor intensive and as a result, teacher management and the performance of teachers to a large extent determine the quality of education services. Recruitment, hiring, and deployment of adequately qualified and trained teachers together with appropriate incentives for professional development, to take up hardship postings, and high performance, are all important parts of effective teacher management (Lewis et al., 2009). Given the low levels of learning in the education system it is necessary to understand existing constraints in these areas of teacher management as well as in teacher development. This section focuses on primary and secondary school teachers which constitute the large majority of teachers in the country. Dedicated pre-service training for ECCE teachers was introduced relatively recently at two of the teacher training institutes; the minimal information available for this group of teachers is also discussed in this chapter.

This chapter examines some of the key aspects in the management of primary and secondary teachers. First, it describes the main institutions and entities for teacher management. It then presents an overview of the teaching workforce. Next it sets out the different types of pre-service and in-service training provided by teacher training institutions in the country. This is followed by a discussion of policies and practices for teacher recruitment, teacher salaries and other benefits, as well as teacher career paths. The teacher deployment process and pattern, and transfers and attrition are examined next. The final section presents findings on teacher content knowledge based on the limited available data and highlights key data gaps for teacher management.[61]

The priority issues related to teacher management identified by the ESA are set out in Box 19 and are discussed in detail in the remainder of the chapter.

61 This chapter is based on discussions with stakeholders; a review of policy and research documents; and new analysis using secondary data.

Box 19 Priority issues in teacher management

Currently an effective mechanism to project and align the demand and supply of teachers to ensure efficient recruitment of teachers does not exist.

Overall, teacher deployment is efficient, but the education system faces challenges in attracting qualified teachers to rural schools due to a lack of incentives to take up such postings.

Promotions and salary increases are largely disconnected from teacher performance.

While overall there are enough teachers in primary and secondary schools, there is a shortage of teachers who can teach mathematics, science, and IT.

Large groups of teachers do not have any teacher training, lack required qualifications, or have inadequate content knowledge.

After entering the teaching service, there are limited opportunities and incentives to attend training to learn about new and more effective ways of teaching.

The coverage of continuous professional development (CPD) is low and it does not target teachers based on skills upgrading needs; it does not cover all subject; and it largely consists of short duration workshops. There is no immediate financial incentive for teachers to attend in-service training.

Key data on teachers and head teachers is currently not available which limits evidence-based planning and program design

7.1 Key teacher management institutions and entities

There are many institutions and entities within and outside of the MoET that have important roles and responsibilities regarding the different aspects of teacher management. The key ones are described below.

The Office of the Director of Education under the MoET in addition to other mandates in the development of the education sector (see chapter 3), has several key functions in teacher management. These include promoting and maintain appropriate standards of qualifications for teaching, ensuring the uniformity and harmony of the terms and conditions of service in the teaching profession, facilitating the administration and management of the teaching profession, and promoting any other activities conducive to the attainment of these objectives.

The Teacher Service Commission (TSC) under the MoET has the mandate to oversee key aspects of teacher management.[62] It was established through an Act of Parliament, the Teaching Service Act No1. of 1982 and the Teaching Service Regulations of 1983 through the Legal Notice No. 28 of 1983. The TSC is responsible for human resource management in public primary, secondary, pre-vocational, special need schools, some Government teacher training colleges, and other public education and training institutions (National Curriculum Centre, In- service Training, Rural Education Centres, Emlalatini Development Centre, Emakhonweni Skills Training Centres). Specifically, functions of the TSC include managing processes related to the recruitment, employment, confirmation, promotion, transfer, discipline, and termination of employment of teachers and educators in public educational institutions and ensuring their general welfare.

Public Service Ministry is responsible for defining the terms of employment for teachers and educators and the salary scales and promotion, as part of the national policy for all other public servants.

The Primary (including ECDE) and Secondary Inspectorates under the MoET have a wide range of responsibilities related to the provision of high-quality education at the preprimary, primary, and secondary levels. Their responsibilities include inspecting schools to ensure the implementation of the curriculum and sector policies, supervising teaching practices, and identifying training needs for teachers and school management and providing short trainings and workshops by collaborating with the In-service Education and Training (INSET) unit (see below), and other entities. In addition, the Inspectorates provide input to the TSC on the promotion of teachers. The Primary Inspectorate is composed of the Chief Inspector of Primary Education and FPE Officers (stationed at national level), Regional Education Officers, Deputy Regional Education Officers, and Regional Inspectors. The Secondary Inspectorate has a similar composition including the Chief Inspector, Senior Inspector of Schools (stationed at national level), and Regional Inspectors. The main difference between the Primary and Secondary Inspectorates is that inspectors at the secondary level specialize in one or two subjects, while primary inspectors are not specialized by subject.

In-service Education and Training (INSET) Unit under the MoET is one of the entities responsible for providing in-service training for teachers, especially at the primary level, as well as for head teachers. In this regard, the INSET Unit works closely with the Primary and Secondary Inspectorates to identify priority topics where teachers need support as well as to organize and provide the training. The Unit also closely collaborates with the National Curriculum

62 The Constitution of the Kingdom of Eswatini establishes the Public Service Commissions in Chapter X, Part 1 and this includes the TSC.

Centre (NCC) in providing orientation and training for teachers on any changes in the school curriculum or new textbooks. The Unit has nine Teacher Resource Centres (TRCs) that are distributed across the four regions of the country.

Teacher training institutions (TTIs) include the public Teacher Training Colleges, University of Eswatini's Faculty of Education, and other private teacher training institutions that are responsible for the training of ECDE, primary, and secondary school teachers. These institutions offer pre-service and some offer in-service qualification upgrading trainings. To a limited extent, some of the institutions are also involved in the professional development of teachers by proving short trainings and workshops.

Head teachers and deputy head teachers at the school level, primary and secondary school head teachers and deputy head teachers are responsible for managing and supervising the day-to-day teaching and learning process. The head teacher is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching, overseeing teachers' attendance, supervising the proper planning and presentation of lessons, and supporting teachers to improve their practice (for example, by identifying teacher needs and recommending relevant interventions or training). Head Teachers make recommendations to the TSC on the confirmation of new teachers who have successfully completed the two-year probation period. The deputy head teachers assist in all these roles.

Teacher unions play an important role in teacher management in Eswatini's education system, including by negotiating with the Government for improved terms and conditions for teachers. They also play a role in ensuring teachers follow the code of ethics and uphold and protect the rights of children. They promote the review, relevance and implementation of education policies and engage their members, including through workshops, on issues such as women's empowerment, gender equality, and advocacy for equal opportunities. The main teacher union is the Swaziland National Association of Teachers (SNAT), which has the mission to "Improve the professional socio-economic status of teachers, enhance collective bargaining for teachers and encourage maximum participation and dynamic provision of quality education to the learner" (SNAT, 2020: p.). The SNAT has over 12,000 registered and subscribing members including public and non-public service teachers, contract teachers, and college and university lectures. Among public service teachers, SNAT members account for about 85% of the total. Under SNAT, there is also the Association of Administrators, which serves headteachers. Another relevant union is the Eswatini Principals Association (EPA), which is working towards being recognized by the Government.

7.2 Overview of the teaching workforce

The majority of primary and secondary teachers work in rural areas. Over 16,400 teachers make up the Eswatini teaching workforce at the primary and secondary levels, of which 55% are primary school teachers and 45% are secondary school teachers. The reason for the larger number of teachers at primary level is that enrolment at primary level is substantially higher than at secondary level (see chapter 6). The majority of teachers (72%) in the system teach in rural parts of the country, with 76% of primary school teachers and 68% of secondary school teachers teaching in rural schools (Table 15). The reason is that a majority of school-age children live in rural areas (also see section 7.6).

Most teachers at primary and secondary level are public service teachers. About 89% of primary school teachers and 85% of secondary school teachers are public service teachers. These teachers are hired by the TSC and their salaries are paid by the Government. The remainder (11% and 15% of teachers in primary and secondary schools respectively) are non-public service teachers who are directly hired and paid by schools. These non-public service teachers are hired by private non-government-aided schools as would be expected, but also by government-aided schools, which may directly hire non-public service teachers for extra-curricular activities.

Table 15 Primary and secondary teachers overall and by rural-urban location 2018

	Public service teachers			Non-public service teachers			Total teachers
	Total	Urban and peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	Total	Urban and peri-urban (%)	Rural (%)	
Primary	**8,054**	22%	78%	**963**	40%	60%	**9,017**
Secondary	**6,304**	31%	69%	**1,096**	40%	60%	**7,400**

Source: EMIS 2018.

Most public-service teachers are hired on a permanent basis while the majority of non-public service teachers are hired on a temporary basis. About 94% of public-service teachers in government and government-aided schools are permanent teachers. In contrast, among non-public service teachers in government or government-aided schools, about 66% are hired on a temporary basis (Table 16).

Table 16 Status of teachers in government-aided schools 2018

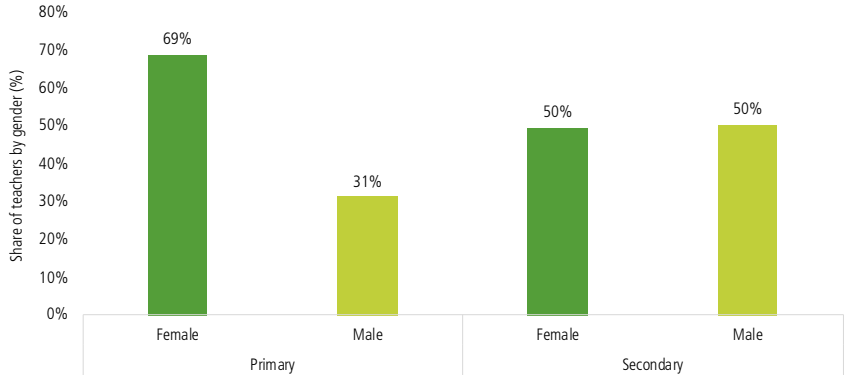
Government-aided schools	Public service teachers			Non-public service teachers		
	Total	Permanent (%)	Temporary (%)	Total	Permanent (%)	Temporary (%)
Community	9,262	92%	8%	1,072	28%	68%
Mission	4,271	96%	4%	341	41%	52%
Government	525	96%	4%	70	40%	60%
Private	297	96%	4%	57	32%	47%

Source: EMIS 2018.

Note: 1) The share of permanent and temporary teachers does not add up to 100% in some cases as information on the employment status of some teachers in not included in the EMIS data. However, the analysis shows that a large majority of non-public service teachers are hired on temporary basis.

At primary level female teachers dominate while at the secondary level there is gender parity. Females account for 69% of the primary teaching workforce (Figure 57). At the secondary level, however, there is parity in the shares of female and male teachers. This is in contrast with many other Sub-Saharan African countries, where at this level the share of male teachers is significantly larger than the share of female teachers. Recent estimates, for example, suggest that women account only for 30% of secondary school teachers in the Sub-Saharan Africa region (Bashir et.al, 2018).

Figure 57 Primary and secondary teachers by gender 2018



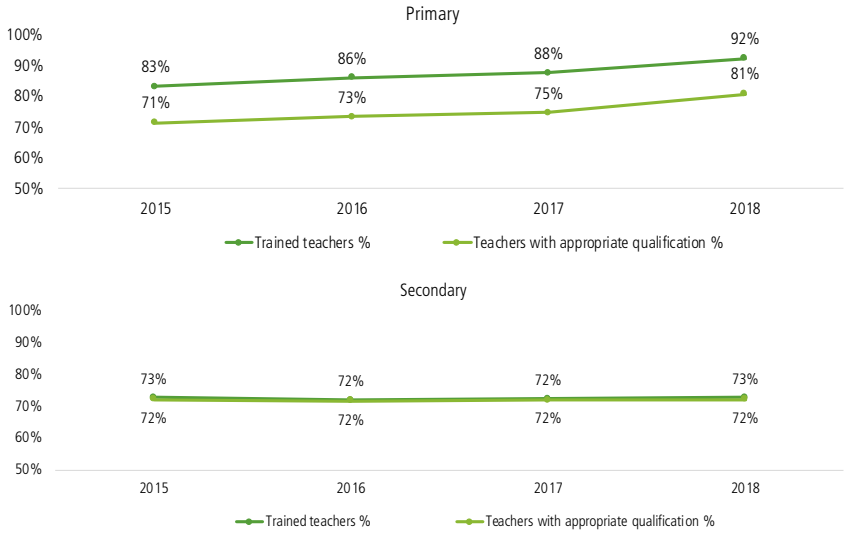
Source: EMIS 2018.

The minimum qualification required to teach at the different levels of education are as follows (MoET, 2020):

- Primary Teachers Diploma (PTD) for primary school teachers;
- Secondary Teachers Diploma (STD) for junior secondary school teachers;
- Degree in education for senior secondary school teachers; or
- Any qualification equivalent to these (for example, diploma or degree in non-education fields combined with a certificate or diploma in education).

Eswatini has made significant progress in increasing the share of qualified teachers in primary education while it has remained stagnant for secondary education. In 2015 the share of qualified teachers at the primary level was 71% compared to 81% in 2018 (Figure 58). Meanwhile the share of qualified teachers at secondary level remained at 72% over the period.

Figure 58 Trends in the shares of trained and qualified teachers



Source: AEC Report 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018.

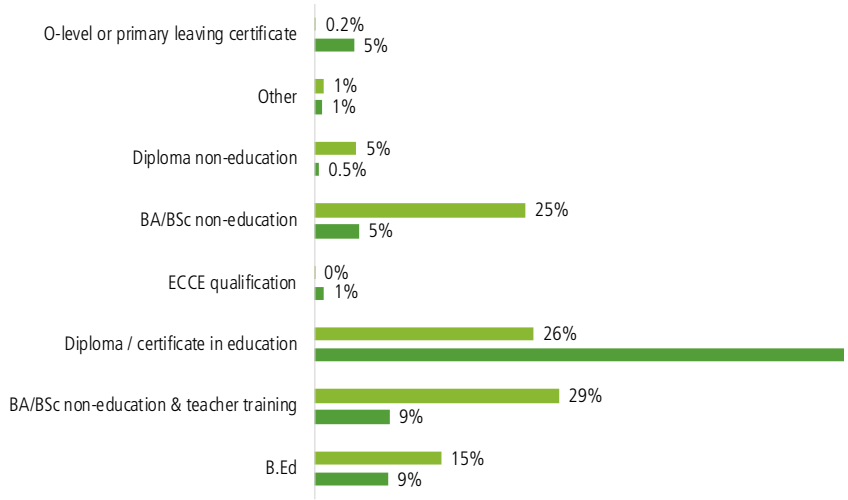
A majority of teachers in primary schools have some type of teacher training, but not all are qualified to teach at the level they are teaching. In 2018, about 81% of teachers teaching at primary level had the required qualification to teach in primary schools.[63] One of the most common mismatches in qualifications

63 Overall, both at the primary and secondary levels there is almost no difference in the shares of female and male teachers who are trained or qualified for the level they are teaching at.

that is observed in the system is teachers with a secondary level qualification teaching at the primary level. The use of teachers with secondary level training in primary grades can be problematic for several reasons. First, secondary school teachers specialize in two subjects and may not be prepared well to teach multiple subjects like trained primary teachers. Second, they might not have the pedagogical preparation that will enable them to be effective in teaching younger children.[64]

A small group of primary teachers only have a PLC or O Level certificate. Examining the academic and teaching qualifications of primary teachers more closely, 70% have a certificate or diploma in education and about 18% have B.Ed. or a degree in a non-education field combined with a teacher training certificate or diploma (Figure 59). About 5% have a bachelor's degree in a non-education field of study but no teacher training which may make this group less effective in the classroom. Importantly, another 5% only have a primary school leaving certificate (PLC) or O Level certificate which means they are unlikely to have mastered the subjects they teach and that their pedagogical practices are likely to be weaker than those of their appropriately qualified peers. This in turn will impact student learning.

Figure 59 Academic and teaching qualifications of primary and secondary teachers 2018



Source: Team calculations based on EMIS 2018 data.

64 Another issue relates to teachers with teachers having Primary Teacher Certificate (PTC) and secondary Teacher Certificate (STC), which are the previous minimum requirements to teach at the primary and secondary levels respectively that are currently being phased out. While there are a small fraction of primary and secondary school teachers holding these older qualifications, they are increasingly being replaced by qualified teachers as they retire, which is improving the profile of the teaching workforce in terms of qualifications.

A large group of teachers at secondary level have no teacher training. At the secondary level, around 73% of teachers have the appropriate qualification to teach at this level. Unlike the primary level, there is minimal mismatch in teachers' actual qualification and the required qualification for the level. Specifically, there is almost no difference between the share of trained teachers and the share of qualified teachers at the secondary level (Figure 58). But there has been almost no improvement in the share of qualified teachers between 2015 and 2018.

Examining the data more closely, 15% of secondary teachers have a B.Ed.; 29% have a bachelor's degree in a non-education field of study; and 26% have a STD. But a large share of teachers at this level (30%) do not have any teaching qualification meaning they are not trained on pedagogical methods which may reduce their ability to teach effectively.

7.3 Pre-service teacher training

There are several public and private institutions that provide pre-service training for primary and secondary teachers. The main public teacher training institutions that offer diploma level trainings (PTD and STD) include Ngwane Teachers' College, Southern Africa Nazarene University (SANU) Faculty of Education[65], and William Pitcher Teacher Training College. In addition, the Eswatini College of Technology (ECOT) offers diploma training for secondary school teachers in selected subjects (Commerce, Information and Communication Technology, and Design and Technology).

At the degree level, the University of Eswatini (UNESWA) Faculty of Education offers a four-year B.Ed. for Primary and for Secondary. The three public teacher training colleges and ECOT are affiliated with UNESWA, which plays a leadership and coordinating role in setting standards for college-based teacher training. In addition to the public TTIs, there is also a number of private institutions that offer teacher training for different levels.

Table 17 presents the main teacher training institutions, the types of training they offer, and recent enrolment and graduate data when available.

65 The Southern African Nazarene University (SANU) was established in 2010 as a merger of the Nazarene College of Nursing, College of Theology, and the Nazarene Teacher College.

Table 17 TTIs: programs, duration, enrolment, STR, and graduates 2018

	Enrolment			Student-teacher ratio	Graduates
	F	M	T		
Public Teacher Training Institutions					
Ngwane Teacher Training College					
ECCE	159	20	179	15:1	86
Primary Teacher Diploma (3 years)	331	227	558		250
William Pitcher College					
Primary Teacher Diploma (3 years)	71	43	114	9:1	56
Secondary Teacher Diploma (3 years)	212	206	418		77
University of Eswatini - Education Faculty					
Certificate in Adult Education (1 year fulltime, 2 years part-time)	27	7	34	24:1	10
Diploma in Adult Education (3 years fulltime or 4 years part-time)	71	32	103		28
	90	51	141		40
Bachelor of Education Primary (4 years)	221	178	399		79
Bachelor of Education Secondary (4 years)	57	49	106		81
Post-Graduate Certificate in Education (1 year)	57	64	160		56
Master of Education (2 years fulltime or 3 years part-time)					
Eswatini College of Technology - Education Faculty*					
Vocational Instructor's Diploma – Part-time 2 years	10	26	36	25:1	13
Diploma in Commercial Teaching – 3 years	80	78	158		37
Diploma in ICT Teaching – 3 years	23	38	61		00
Southern Africa Nazarene University (SANU) - Nazarene Teacher Training College (Partly public)					
Diploma in ECCD Foundation Phase (3 years)	106	17	123	Not available	Not available
Primary Teacher Diploma (3 years)	625	373	998		
Bachelor of Education Special and Inclusive Education (SIE) (3 years)	182	59	241		
Bachelor of Education Leadership and Management of SIE (3 years)	107	79	186		
Private Teacher Training Institutions					
AMADI					
Postgraduate Diploma in Education	8	7	15	8:1	0
Bachelor of Education	80	39	119		19
Master of Education Degree	43	62	105		18
Diploma in Education	228	74	302		59

	Enrolment			Student-teacher ratio	Graduates
	F	M	T		
Global University College					
Primary Education Diploma (3 years) and Part-time (3.5 years)			Not available		
Bradford College					
Primary Teacher Diploma (PTD)					
Secondary Teachers Diploma (STD)			Not available		
Post-graduate Diploma in Education (1 year)					
Centre for International Technology and Consultancy (CITEC) College					
Diploma Primary Education	190	31	211	5:1	211
Institute of Development Management					
Bachelor of Education Management (2 years)			Not available		
Diploma in Vocational Education (Entrepreneurship and ICT)					
Workers College					
Primary Teacher Diploma (3 years) and Part-time (3.5 years)	323	96	419		0
Secondary Teacher Diploma (3 years) and Part-time (3.5 years)	36	39	75	22:1	0
ECCD Teacher Diploma (3 years) and Part-time (3.5 years)	56	8	64		0

Source: AEC Report 2018, individual training institutions.

Note: 1) Disaggregated data not available. 2) The types of programs offered across different institutions has varied over time. 3) This table reflects the latest available information. 4) The bachelor programs at SANU are 3 years because they are meant for candidates who already possess diploma qualification.

The different teacher training programs mentioned earlier are not exclusively available to secondary school completers or new entrants into the teaching profession. In-service teachers who do not have the appropriate qualification for their jobs or want to obtain a higher qualification, can also join these programs (including the PTD, STD, and Bachelor level training), if they meet the minimum requirements (see section below). Most of the diploma and degree programs offered at public institutions are full-time programs, while there are some part-time and distance learning programs teachers can go through to upgrade their qualification. For example, the University of South Africa has distance teacher training programs and private teacher training institutions (TTIs) have several part-time options. In addition, UNESWA and a few non-public institutions offer a Post-Graduate Certificate in Education programs which target candidates that already hold a diploma or degree in non-education fields who seek a teaching qualification.

Entry requirements for teacher training programs

Entry requirements into the **public teacher training institutions (TTIs)** are standardized across institutions. They are mainly set by UNESWA in consultation with the MoET and the other TTIs, which are affiliated with UNESWA. Currently, the selection of candidates into pre-service programs, both at the diploma and degree levels, is largely determined by the results on the secondary school leaving examination.

For both **diploma level programs (PTD and STD)**, the minimum entry requirement to public teacher training institutions is six passes on the secondary leaving certificate examination (O Level, EGSCE, IGCSE examinations) including English. Among the six subjects, a minimum of three must be credit level pass in subjects taught at the primary school level, which includes Mathematics, SiSwati, History, Geography, Physics, Chemistry, Physical Science, Combined Science, Integrated Science, Biology, Human and Social Biology, Home Economics, Food and Nutrition, Fashion and Fabrics, Agriculture, Religious Knowledge, and English. This means English must be part of the six passes, credit in English is not compulsory. Candidates who have a Primary Teacher Certificate or Secondary Teacher Certificate and a minimum of five passes in their secondary school leaving examination including English language, with three of these subjects being credits in subjects taught in primary schools can also qualify. These students enter at the second year of the three-year diploma program.

At the degree level – **B.Ed. Primary or Secondary** – the minimum entry requirement is six passes in the secondary leaving examination, which must include passes at C grade or better in English language and at least four other subjects. In addition to these general entry requirements, some subject specializations have additional entry stipulations. For example, to be admitted into the Bachelor of Primary Science program, a candidate must have C grade or better in Mathematics and two of the following subjects: Biology, Chemistry, Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, or Physics, which count towards the four credit requirements. Similarly, for other subject specializations, credit level passes are required in related subjects. Candidate who have PTD, STD, Secondary Teachers' Certificate (STC) or an equivalent qualification from a recognized institution may also be admitted to the Bachelor programs on a case-by-case basis.

Course structure of pre-service training

The **PTD** programs consists of three groups of subjects:

- Teaching practice;
- Core subjects taught at the primary level; and
- Support subjects (music, arts and crafts, physical education, numerical skills, academic communication skills, and information and communication technology).

The STD programs also consists of very similar group of subjects, including:

- Professional studies including core courses in teaching practice, education and special and inclusive education;
- Courses drawn from combinations of English/Siswati, Mathematics/ Science, Geography/History, English/Religious Studies, English/French, French/Siswati, ICT/Mathematics, ICT/Science, and English/Geography (that is, a teacher specializes in a subject combination from the list);
- General education courses like academic communication skills, Music, Physical Education, Computer Technology Skills (CTS), and Psychosocial Support.

Both the PTD and STD programs include six weeks of teaching practice in schools in the second and third years of the programs, for a total of 12 weeks.

In **Bachelor of Education programs**, the combination of subjects trainees must take depends on their specialization. At the UNESWA Faculty of Education, which is the main public institution offering bachelor level training, subject specializations for the B.Ed. Primary include Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies. For the B.Ed. secondary, subject areas offered at UNESWA include Business Education, Humanities, and Science, with a number of subject combination specializations under each subject area. For example, under Business Education, a candidate can specialize in Accounting and Business Studies Education, Accounting and Economics Education, or Economic and Business Studies. Under humanities, specialization options include African Language and Literature Education, History and English Language Education and many others. Under the Science category, combinations of specializations include Biology and Chemistry, Chemistry and Mathematics, or Mathematics and Physics to mention a few.

For both the Primary and Secondary programs, depending on their chosen specialization, candidates take a combination of courses covering:

- Core subjects courses in their specialization area;
- Teaching practice courses; and
- General education courses (academic communication skills, Computer Technology Skills (CTS), HIV Prevention, and Infection and Management of AIDS).

In addition, similar to the diploma programs, in the last two years of their bachelor's degree education, students go through six weeks of practical training in schools each year.

Financing of pre-service training

Most pre-service teacher trainees in public institutions are sponsored by the Government, (over 90%), which covers the cost of training including tuition, boarding and lodging, book allowances as well as personal allowances. In contrast, teachers who would like to upgrade their qualification are generally responsible for covering the cost of training and all associated costs themselves. However, in subject areas where there is shortage of qualified teachers, the Government sponsors a small number of teachers (about ten teachers per year) to upgrade their qualification. In the last few years, the focus of the Government's sponsorship has been on Mathematics, Science and ICT teachers, while more recently the focus has shifted to Design and Technology teachers.

For many teachers, including those who do not have the appropriate qualification, there is no immediate financial incentive to upgrade their qualification, as a promotion or salary increase is not automatic. Only once a vacancy that requires the higher qualification opens up, can a teacher apply for a promotion. Moreover, for primary and junior secondary teachers who obtain Bachelor of Education qualifications, the main incentive comes from the prospect of moving to leadership positions such as department head, head teacher, deputy head teacher, or other administrative posts in the education system. Promotion and teachers career path are discussed in more detail in section 7.5.

Alignment of output from pre-service training programs with system needs

There is a mismatch between the supply of new graduates from TTIs and the needs of the education system. These is some communication between the TSC and TTIs regarding the types and number of teachers needed by the education system, which influences the subjects and types of training TTIs offer. However, there is no formal mechanism in place to regularly assess demand by level and subject and predicts output from TTIs to ensure openings are filled with qualified teachers. Beyond pre-service training, there is also a need to carefully

look at the role of in-service qualification upgrading programs in improving the qualifications and quality of teachers in the system, especially in subject areas where there is a shortage of qualified teachers.

7.4 Continuous professional development

Professional development support generally consists of short training and workshops, with limited follow-up support in Eswatini. The availability and quality of continuous professional development support for teachers is critical to help teachers improve their practices and become and stay effective in the classroom. To be impactful, however, CPD has to be tailored to the needs of teachers and their context, focused, practical, and combined with follow-up support including through coaching, mentoring or peer group support (Popova, et.al, 2016; Darling-Hammond, et.al, 2017). This is currently not what is in place in Eswatini.

The INSET unit under the MoET is one of the key entities responsible for in-service professional development support. Through its nine Teacher Resource Centres (with 13 staff in total), the INSET unit provides different types of trainings, most of which focus on supporting head teachers in different aspects of school management. Training manuals are developed by the INSET trainers who then use them in training workshops. The workshops are usually residential and last for up to five days. The main training programs are:

Management which focuses on building the capacity of head teachers to lead the teaching and learning process in their schools including by supporting and supervising teachers.

Financial management aims to equip head teachers with basic accounting skills to enable them to adequately manage school finances.

Personnel management focuses on human resource management issues including teachers, non-teaching staff, and students.

Organizational management seeks to provide fundamental skills to head teachers to run their schools in a professionally acceptable manner using existing policy guidelines. One example of an outcome of the organizational management training is that most schools have developed strategic plans or school development plans.

In addition, the INSET unit provides other types of training for teachers and school leaders depending on need. Additional management related trainings that are offered include strategic management, records management, effective reporting and minutes writing, project management, and purchasing and supply management. Training related to the teaching and learning processes

including competency-based education, positive discipline, classroom management, instructional supervision and evaluation, and learning new teaching strategies. To provide the training, the INSET unit, collaborates with the Primary and Secondary Inspectorates. During visits to schools, inspectors compile information on gaps schools and teachers have, including challenges newly appointed teachers face, and plan capacity building training to respond to these gaps and challenges. These trainings may be offered at school or cluster level.

The key agency providing in-service training for secondary teachers is the In-service Training Department under the UNESWA Faculty of Education. While there is no formal delineation of roles and responsibilities, the Department to a large part focuses on secondary mathematics and science teachers, mostly covering senior secondary teachers (both public and non-public).

The Department currently has five professional staff (composed of Biology, Chemistry Physics, Mathematics and School Management educators), and offers four programs:

- **The Induction program for new secondary teachers** targets all new mathematics and science teachers in secondary schools. The induction program is a whole-year program, where teachers are expected to attend four one-day workshops, which are spread out across the year and held at UNESWA. Between workshops teachers are expected to practice and complete assignment using materials that is provided as part of the training. There is follow-up communication using SMS and WhatsApp. The cost of the training including materials and refreshment is covered by the Department, while the teacher's school covers cost of transport. To recruit teachers, the Faculty writes to all schools in the country. The program on average starts with 100 teachers, with about half dropping out before completing the training.
- **Training for teachers who teach science and mathematics teachers without the appropriate qualification** Target teachers are those who do not have training in education or the science subject area but are teaching those subjects. The training focuses on both content and pedagogy. The program is designed to be incremental with the department developing materials on a specific topic area, with the idea that teachers will gradually cover all relevant topics for secondary instruction.
- **Basic computer skills training** provides a crash course for teachers and school leaders who do not have basic computer skills (for example, MS Word, Excel, and PowerPoint and internet use). The training was initially designed to be 50 hours and is offered as a three-day intensive program. The training takes place at the UNESWA during holidays. Teachers pay for

their transport and accommodation, which may be covered by their own schools, but do not have to pay fees or for materials. Typically, there are around 30 participants.

- **General science training program for experienced science teachers** (teachers who have taught for five years or more), consisting of day-long workshops for a total of 2-3 days across the school year.

Coverage of continuous professional is limited with only a small number of beneficiaries each year. The In-service Department at the Education Faculty of UNESWA faces capacity and resource gaps which limits the reach of the training offered by the Department. There are only five professional staff under the department, serving a large number of mathematics and science teachers in the education system.

There is no in-service training for subjects other than mathematics and science for secondary teachers, and there is a lack of incentives to attend training. Currently, subjects other than mathematics and science that are taught at the secondary level are not covered by the professional development programs. Another issue relates to the lack of incentives for teachers to engage in professional development. Currently, teachers do not receive any certification or recognition for engaging in training and workshops and professional development is currently delinked from teachers' career growth.

7.5 Recruitment, remuneration, and promotion

After pre-service training, the recruitment, employment and deployment of new teachers for public schools is managed by the TSC, while private (non-government-aided) schools manage their own recruitment process. Qualified candidates from the registered TTIs within the country and tertiary institutions outside the country directly apply to the TSC. Depending on the vacant posts, the TSC employs and deploys teachers on permanent terms. Only Swazi nationals qualify to be hired in a permanent position.

On the demand side, a head teacher in a school where a vacant position has occurred notifies TSC specifying the subject and level combination, using a declaration, which is signed by the Regional Education Officer as well as by the School Manager for government-aided schools. The School Manager can recommend a candidate but ultimately the hiring decision rests with the TSC. Once the request is submitted to the TSC, it is compiled along other employment, transfers, confirmations, promotion requests for review by the Executive Secretary and discussions and decision by the TSC. An employed teacher/educator is then issued with a Posting Letter/Appointment Letter signed either by the Executive Secretary, Deputy Executive Secretary, or Principal Human

Resource Officer on behalf of the TSC, specifying the school, duration of employment, subject(s) to teach, and post number to be occupied.

Once the teacher assumes her or his duty, the head teacher fills in an Assumption of Duty form which is signed and stamped by the head teacher, School Manager (if applicable) and the Regional Education Officer. The teacher then signs a contract of employment with TSC. Newly hired teachers are appointed on probation, which covers the first two years of their employment, and are confirmed after a performance review by the Primary or Secondary School Inspectorate.

In addition, the TSC may hire teachers on a temporary basis to fill gaps in subjects where there is a shortage of qualified teachers (for example, for Mathematics, Science, French, ICT, and Design and Technology where there are shortages of Bachelor Degree candidates with education training). Most teachers who are hired on a temporary basis tend to be unqualified, that is, they have a diploma or degree but no education training. The hiring of temporary unqualified teachers is particularly common in rural schools, where the MoET has challenges attracting qualified teachers. Temporary teachers may also be hired to relieve teachers who are on extended sick leave, maternity leave, study leave, secondment, or suspension. In line with the TSC regulations of 1983, temporary teachers without the appropriate qualification are employed on contract terms not exceeding two years per contract which may be renewed for one year by the TSC.

The salary scale for teachers is part of the overall pay scheme for public servants. Although teachers are managed by the TSC, they draw their salaries from the same pool as all other public servants. Teachers are remunerated through the Government Human Resource Management Information System (HRMIS) in accordance with the Establishment Register and Circulars. The Ministry of Public Service is the administrator of the HRMIS and the Establishment Register. The payroll system is within the HRMIS, controlled and monitored by the Ministry of Finance's Treasury Department.

The key determinants of the salary a teacher receives include his or her level of academic qualification and the level they will be teaching at. The salary scale also differentiates between those who have specialized training in education and those who do not. For example, degree holders who have training in education earn more that those who have a degree but not in the field of education. Table 18 shows the salary grade for teachers and school managers and the salary range for each grade.

Table 18 Teacher and head teacher salary scales

	Grade	Annual salary range (ESL) (five notches per grade)	As multiple of GDP per capita
All Primary teachers engaged on temporary basis	B2	65,844	0.8
Primary Teacher III (Lower primary certificate, old qualification obtained through in-service training)			
Primary Teacher II (Primary teaching certificate, with old 2-year training program)	C1	90,609 - 101,981	- 1.2
These are currently being phased out.			
Primary teacher I (Primary teaching certificate, with certificate in home economics or agriculture)	C2	103,117 – 113,209	1.3 – 1.4
These are currently being phased out.			
Primary Teacher (PTD)	C3	118,986 – 133,921	1.5 – 1.7
Secondary Teacher IV (STD)			
Degree teacher with no education training	C4	143,296 – 161,280	1.8 - 2
Secondary Teacher I (Bachelor of Education Secondary)	C5	172,569 – 194,229	2.2 – 2.4
Teacher (degreed)			
Deputy Head teacher – Primary	D3	194,272 – 218,656	2.4 – 2.8
Head of Department – Secondary			
Head teacher- Primary	D4	223,412 – 251,452	2.8 – 3.2
Deputy Head teacher – Secondary			
Head teacher- Secondary	D5	256,925 - 289,171	3.2 – 3.6

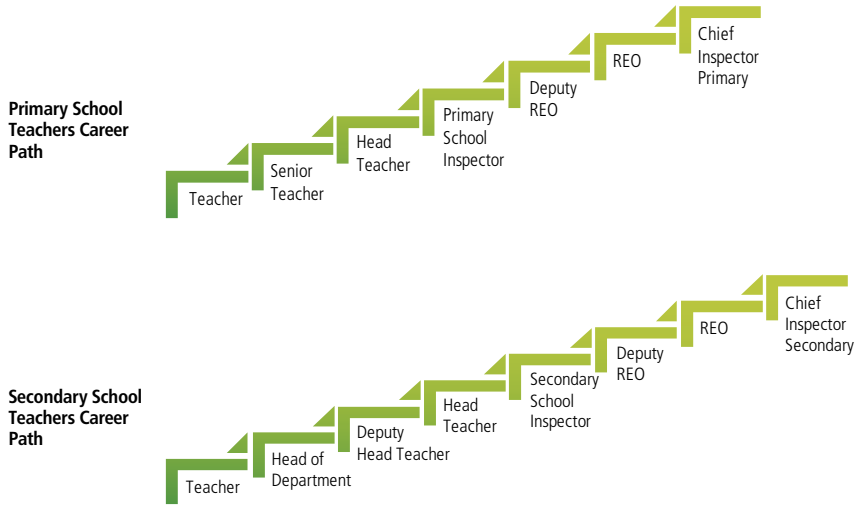
Source: MoPS 2020.

Promotion is not automatic for teachers who upgrade their skills, and for those who do not there is very limited scope to be promoted. Teachers career path in Eswatini mainly offers vertical mobility opportunities, where teachers apply and are promoted to leadership and management positions (Figure 60). Such promotions come with a significant salary increase. However, for most teachers who stay in a teaching post, horizontal promotion opportunities are limited. As teachers gain experience, their salary increases through notching, however, this is the case only in the first five years of their career. As shown in Table 18 there are five notches within each salary grade and teachers (similar to all public servants) move to the next notch automatically every fiscal year; once they reach notch 5, they remain at that level unless they are promoted to a higher position. In addition, teachers' salaries might increase as part of cost of living adjustments to the public servant salary scale.

As discussed earlier, for teachers who upgrade their qualification through in-service training, a promotion or salary increase is not automatic. They can only

reap the added benefit of the additional qualification if a new vacancy requiring that qualification becomes available and they are hired for it. There are also no provisions in the salary scale for some of the post-graduate qualifications (for example, the master's in education although an exceedingly small number of teachers hold this qualification), and teachers with these high levels of qualifications are not paid more. Overall, the current salary scale and promotion process does not have a mechanism to reward high performing teachers who remain in the same teaching post. A Scheme of Service for primary and secondary teachers, which will articulate policy and procedures on key aspects of teachers' career including entry requirements into the teaching profession, salary scale, advancements, duties and responsibilities, and other relates aspects is currently being developed.

Figure 60 Teacher career path by education level



Source: MoET consultation 2020.

The teacher compensation package includes several types of benefits. Some teachers may qualify for housing allowance if they reside outside their duty station. For primary teachers (Grades C1 to C3, the housing allowance is E601 per month, for secondary teachers (Grades C4-C6 and Grades D1-D5) the allowance is E618 per month. Teachers are also provided with a bus allowance if they do not reside within 12km of their duty station. In addition, teachers have access to subsidized loans on car and housing and to salary advances (not exceeding the net salary and repaid within three months). Teachers also have

a contributory pension scheme and death benefit (a fixed amount paid by the pension scheme). Temporary teachers are entitled to two-month salary bonus at the end of a two-year contract and an additional one-month salary bonus if the contract is extended for a third year. In terms of leave, teachers are entitled to five days of casual leave, seven days compassionate leave, sick leave, vacation leave (minimum of 20 days coinciding with school holidays); and maternity leave (84 days including weekends).

The salary scale for teachers and head teachers is comparable to public servants in other sectors with similar qualifications. Labor force survey data is not readily available to compare teachers' salary and compensation package with other professions. However, comparison of the public service salary scale across different professions shows that in general the salary scale for teachers is comparable to public servants in other sectors with similar qualifications. Table 19 shows the different professions that fall within similar salary grades as teachers and school leaders.

Table 19 Comparison of teachers' salary scale with other public civil servants 2016

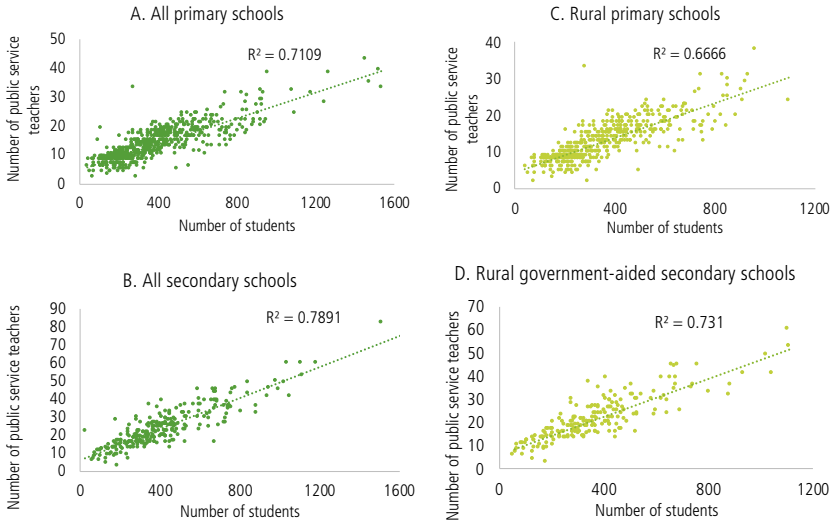
Level	Salary Grade	Other professionals with the same salary grade
Primary Teacher II/III	C1	General nurse II; Assistant storekeeper; Senior technical assistant
Primary teacher I	C2	Audit examiner II; Senior assistant program officer; Help desk officer; Dental technician; Pharmacy technician; Nursing assistant
Primary Teacher (PDT); Secondary Teacher IV	C3	Senior clerk of court; Computer program analyst; Engineering assistant; assistant health education officer; Rural development officer; General Staff Nurse I; Laboratory technician
Degree teacher with no education training	C4	Accountant II; Assistant Librarian; Senior pharmacy technician; Community development officer; Laboratory technologist;
Secondary Teacher I; Teacher (degreed)	C5	Senior accountant II; Accountant I; Procurement officer; Finance officer II; EMIS data administrator; Staff Nurse; Laboratory technologist I
Head teacher - Primary; Deputy headmaster - Secondary	D4	Principal health inspector, Nutrition program officer, Judicial commissioner, Land administrator, Senior health administrator, Nutrition program officer
Head teacher - Secondary	D5	Hospital manager, Public relations officer, Prosecution officer, Principal environmental health officer

Source: MoPS 2016.

7.7 Deployment, transfers, and attrition

The deployment of teachers to primary and secondary schools is largely determined by the number of enrolled students. This can be seen in Figure 61 where there is strong association between the number of students enrolled and the number of teachers at each school. For example, the number of students enrolled explains 71% of the difference in teacher allocation across schools at the primary level and 79% at the secondary level. Comparison with other Sub-Saharan African countries shows that teacher allocation is more closely linked with enrolment in Eswatini than countries such as Ghana (41%) and Lesotho (21%) but less so than in Botswana (93%) (Bashir, et al., 2018; LMoET, 2020; GoB, 2019).

Figure 61 Teacher allocation and student enrolment in government-aided schools 2018



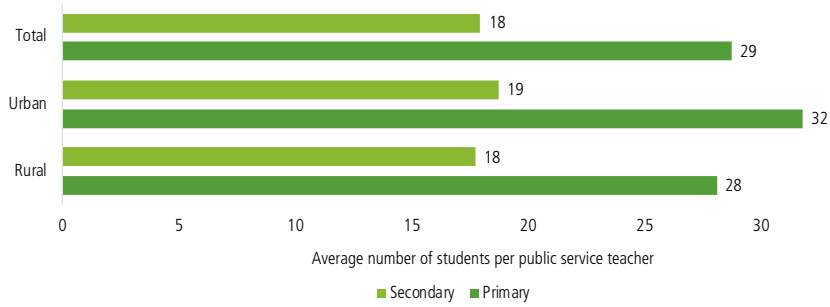
Source: EMIS 2018.

One of the biggest challenges the education system faces in terms of teacher deployment is attracting qualified teachers to rural and remote schools, as qualified teachers are often unwilling to be assigned there. This challenge is reflected in the weaker relationship between enrolment and the number of teachers in rural schools (Figure 61). The challenge in deploying qualified teachers to rural areas is particularly acute for the subjects of Mathematics, Science, and ICT for which there is a shortage of qualified teachers. This has resulted in heavy reliance on temporary teachers who are often not qualified or lack teacher training.

Average student-teacher ratios are within the national standards and compares well regionally both at primary and secondary levels. Nationally, in primary education, the average number of students per public service teacher is 29:1 while in secondary education it is 18:1 (Figure 62). However, these averages mask some differences across schools in the system. The average student-teacher ratio (STR) for the bottom decile of primary schools is 42:1 while for the schools in the top decile it is only [66]18:1. At secondary level, the average STR for schools in the bottom decile is 24:1 while for schools in the top decile it is 12:1. This shows that although overall teacher allocation is largely efficient, there is some scope to further improve it by targeting additional teachers to primary schools in the bottom decile.

The average STR for secondary education is lower compared to primary level because of the greater need for subject specialized teachers at the secondary level. Data on the subject specialization of teachers is not available to assess if there is surplus of teachers at the primary and secondary level considering the subjects that are offered at each level. In addition, EMIS data do not distinguish between teachers, head teachers, and deputy head teachers, and some head teachers may teach classes while others do not. This means the average STRs presented here will in reality be somewhat different. The student-teacher ratio in primary education is slightly higher in urban areas (32:1) compared to rural areas (28:1), while the figures are comparable for urban and rural areas for secondary education. Very large schools (generally urban) on average have much higher STRs than smaller schools (more likely to be rural). There are also some differences in STRs across regions at the primary level with Hhohho having the lowest ratio at 27:1 and Lubombo having the highest ratio at 32:1. In contrast, the differences are minimal at the secondary level (not shown).

Figure 62 STRs in government-assisted schools by rural-urban location 2018

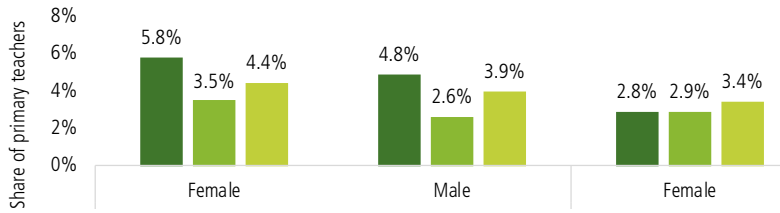


Source: EMIS 2018.

66 This is for government-aided schools.

The TSC is responsible for managing the transfer of teachers in all public schools. A teacher wishing to transfer notifies the head teacher, the Regional Educational Officer, and also the School Manager if the school is a government-aided school, where the Government provides financings for teacher salaries.[67] The Regional Education Officer compiles a list of transfer requests and submits it to the Transfers Committee which is under Secretary Schools Manager. The Under Secretary for Education consults with all the Regional Educational Officers in a meeting of Transfers Committee and submits the recommendations of the Committee for approval by the TSC. The Teaching Service Commission writes to the teacher and copy the Regional Education Officers and School Manager informing them of the final decision on the transfers. Overall, transfer rates are relatively low for both female and male primary teachers ranging between 3-5% annually over the period 2013-2017 (Figure 63).

Figure 63 Teacher attrition and transfers 2013, 2015 and 2017



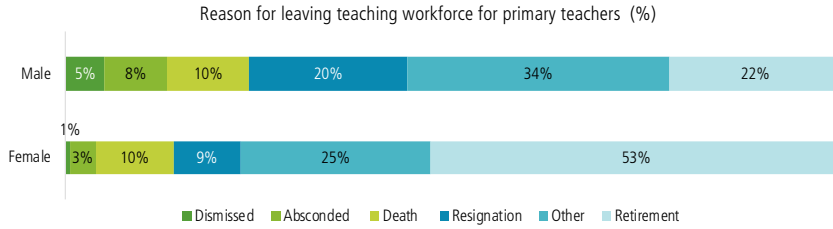
Source: EMIS 2013, 2015, 2017.

The average annual teacher attrition rate is relatively low and is similar to the rates in other countries in the region. The attrition rate varies between 2.6% and 5.8% annually with attrition for female teachers being slightly higher. This is comparable to many countries in Sub-Sharan Africa region.[68] For female teachers the main cause of leaving the teaching work force by far is retirement (53%), followed by other non-specified reasons (25%), death (10%), and resignation (9%). The reasons for male teachers exiting the teaching profession differ in terms of relative importance. The most common reason is other non-specified reasons (34%), retirement (22%), resignation (20%), death (10%), and absconding (8%) (Figure 64).

67 For mission or private schools that are government-aided, the School Manager also gets notified.

68 For example, a study on the attrition rate of teachers in the Gambia, Kenya, Lesotho, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia reported an average rate of teacher attrition in the six countries of 4% (Education International, 2007).

Figure 64 Reasons for primary teacher attrition 2017



Source: EMIS 2017.

7.8 Teacher content knowledge

Improving and sustaining teacher effectiveness in the classroom requires data on teachers' content knowledge and teaching practices as well as on the challenges they face in their day-to-day activities. But in Eswatini there are major data gaps in this regard, which limits the understanding of teacher management issues at the school level. Box 20 summarizes some of the key data gaps for teacher management.

Box 20 Key data gaps for teacher management

Data on teacher attendance, pedagogical skills, motivation, time-on-task, and working environment are currently not collected. The only source of data on primary teachers' content knowledge is SACMEQ IV which was conducted in 2013 and is not representative, while no data are available on secondary teachers' content knowledge. Data on the number of teachers by subject at each school is also not available, which limits the understanding of teacher utilization.

Eswatini has yet to implement a dedicated school survey to collect data to allow for assessment of teacher motivation, attendance, and of what teachers do at school, both inside and outside the classroom. Administrative data such as the Annual Education Census do not capture data related to teacher subject specialization, competency, attendance, or performance.

These key data gaps severely restrict the possibility for evidence-based and timely decision-making and planning on teacher management.

The latest data on teachers' content knowledge comes from the SACMEQ IV assessment conducted in 2013. As part of the assessment, teachers of Grade 6 students in the sample schools were tested on Grade 6 level mathematics and reading. The assessment defines eight competency levels for mathematics and reading.

For mathematics, competency levels include:

Level 4 – beginning numeracy (translates verbal or graphic information into simple arithmetic problems, uses multiple different arithmetic operations in the correct order on whole numbers, fractions, and/or decimals);

Level 5 – competent numeracy (translates verbal, graphic, or tabular information into an arithmetic form in order to solve a given problem, solves multiple-operation problems using the correct order of arithmetic operations involving everyday units of measurement and/or whole and mixed numbers, converts basic measurement units from one level of measurement to another);

Level 6 – mathematically skilled (solves multiple-operation problems involving fractions, ratios, and decimals; translates verbal and graphic representation information into symbolic, algebraic, and equation form to solve a given mathematical problem, checks and estimates answers using external knowledge);

Level 7 – problem solving (extracts and converts information from tables, charts, visual and symbolic presentations in order to identify, and then solve multi-step problems); and

Level 8 – abstract problem solving (identifies the nature of an unstated mathematical problem embedded within verbal or graphic information and then translate this into symbolic, algebraic or equation form in order to solve a problem).

For reading, competency levels include:

Level 5 – interpretive reading (reads on and reads back in order to combine and interpret information from various parts of the text in association with external information that 'completes' and contextualizes meaning);

Level 6 – inferential reading (reads on and reads back through longer texts and combines information from various parts of the text to infer the writer's purpose);

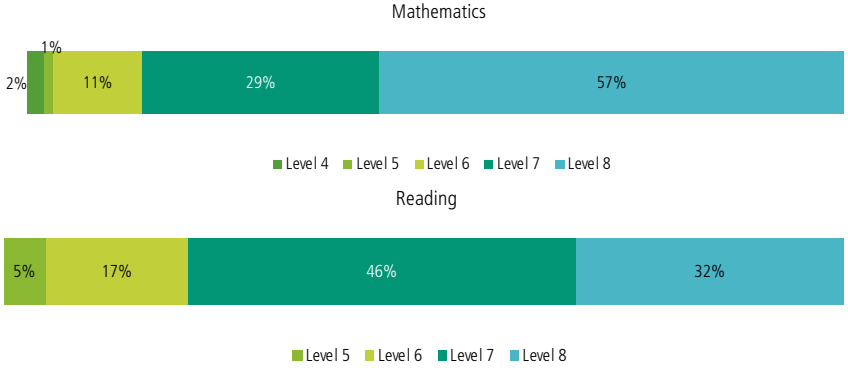
Level 7 – analytical reading (locates information in longer texts by reading on and reading back to combine information from various parts of the text so as to infer the writer's personal beliefs); and

Level 8 – critical reading (reads from various parts of the text so as to infer and evaluate what the writer has assumed about both the topic and the characteristics of the reader).

A large share of primary teachers lacks the required competency levels for mathematics and reading. No teachers scored below Level 4 in mathematics or below Level 5 in reading (Figure 65). However, only 57% of mathematics teachers and a mere 32% of reading teachers reached the highest competency

level (8), which is only equivalent to Grade 6 level skills. Most concerning is that for mathematics 14% of teachers only reached competency level 4, 5, or 6, and for reading 5% of teachers only reached level 5 and another 17% level 6. This means a large group of teachers had far from acquired the knowledge required to teach at primary level with likely detrimental effects on student learning. While the findings from SACMEQ IV shed some light on teacher content knowledge at the primary level, there are some caveats. However, SACMEQ IV was conducted in 2013, hence the analysis does not capture any progress that may have been made in the last seven years, and the results are not fully representative.[69]

Figure 65 Teachers by mathematics and reading competency levels 2013



Source: SACMEQ IV 2013.

7.9 Looking ahead – management of primary and secondary teachers

Teachers are one of the main determinants of student learning and a combination of measures would be needed to improve their ability to teach effectively. A large group of students do not (regularly) speak the language of instruction. To address this major learning disadvantage, the MoET would need to focus on improving English language instruction in the early grades by increasing the emphasis on English language during pre-service and in-service teacher training and possibly, by raising the English language requirements for

69 See chapter 4.

new teachers. Aside from improving teachers' English language knowledge, supporting teachers to deliver the new competency-based curriculum with appropriate teaching pedagogy and the provision of relevant instructional materials is critical. To further strengthen teaching practices, new teaching materials including structured lesson plans and teacher guides for early grade English, mathematics, and siSwati would be helpful, especially for the large group of teachers without any teacher training. Training teachers to make their own teaching aids using locally sourced materials (for example, using bottle caps as counters for numeracy) is an affordable approach to enhance teaching practices for the early grades. Lastly, teachers need to be supported to enhance their teaching methods through peer-to-peer learning or one-one coaching/ mentoring support in the classroom.

More broadly, there is a need to induce teacher candidates to choose science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects and to introduce incentives for hardship postings. This would involve incentivizing the training of teachers in STEM subjects. Shortages of qualified teachers in rural schools could be addressed by introducing teacher incentives for hardship postings such as financial allowances and/or career growth incentives, in consultation with teachers, head teachers, and teacher unions.

There is a need to create a teacher management database to better track the qualifications, experience, training, and specializations of teachers in the system and use this to project how many new teachers are required, and with what qualifications and subject specialization. This information on the demand for new teachers would in turn be shared with Teacher Training Institutes (TTIs) to ensure there is an adequate stream of candidates being selected into and receiving the relevant training in the TTIs. This teacher management system would need to be closely linked to the Public Service Management Information System so that teachers' salaries, promotions, transfers, and exit from the teaching force are all captured in the system.

8. Post-school education and training

This chapter looks at the landscape of education and training options available after leaving formal general education. It comprises a broader spectrum of formal and non-formal adult education, skills development and academic programs at different educational levels up to tertiary education, usually aimed at facilitating the transition to work of young labor-market entrants or to improve the skills of those already in the labor market. Unlike general education, the post-school education and training (PSET) supply is rather heterogeneous both in terms of how and where it is delivered as well as in terms of regulation and management. Apart from the MoET, the Ministry of Labor and Social Security (MoLSS) is a key player in PSET. In addition, other line ministries finance and run PSET institutions and programs.

A major challenge in evaluating the broad range of PSET in Eswatini is a general dearth of up to-date information. While information on tertiary education has been improved with the establishment of the Eswatini Higher Education Council (ESHEC), data on PSET at lower levels remains sketchy, aggravated by the multi-stakeholder situation in owning, running and regulating the different programs and institutions. Especially, information on labor market outcomes of the different PSET programs is rare, apart from some noticeable recent exercises to evaluate the effectiveness of select training programs (ESEPARC, 2018; ESEPARC, 2019c).

As far as possible, and cognizant of the data challenges, this chapter describes the structure, patterns and challenges of PSET in Eswatini. Before initiating major investments to strengthen the PSET sector or parts of it, as envisaged in NETIP II, strong and systematic research efforts are required to define more precisely the skill gaps to be addressed and the effectiveness and efficiency of the different PSET provider segments in meeting identified gaps.

The priority issues related to post-school education and training identified by the ESA are set out in Box 21 and are discussed in detail in the remainder of the chapter.

Box 21 Priority issues in post-school education and training

- Access to PSET is limited.
- PSET graduates show overall good employment rates. Nevertheless, there is a general mismatch between the skills of PSET graduates and those required by the labor market. In many occupational areas, companies experience difficulties finding the right skilled workers and professionals and are required to retrain new recruits.
- There is a need for further investment in continuous professional development of PSET teachers and instructors.
- Currently there is weak capacity to regulate, administer, and guide the PSET sub-sector.
- There is no systematic monitoring of TVET because systematic collection of data for planning purposes and to assess the quality of TVET is lacking.
- Cooperation between the education sector and the world of work is limited.
- Public funding for TVET and AELL is low and fees are high which limits access and affects quality.

8.1 Overview of post-school education and training provision

PSET in Eswatini comprises a considerable range of post-school educational options including university and other tertiary education, formal and not formally registered TVET programs as well as adult and non-formal education, the latter addressing foundational and vocational skills training. Boundaries are not always clear-cut; and owing to a fragmented and insufficient regulatory environment, precise information on providers and participation in PSET is hard to obtain. Table 20 summarizes basic data on post-school educational sub-systems as far as recorded by EMIS and ESHEC.

Table 20 Number of registered PSET institutions 2019 and enrolment 2017

Sub-sector	Type of institution	Number of institutions (2019)	Enrolment (2017)
Tertiary education	Public universities	1	6,718
	Private universities	3	4,660
	Public teacher training colleges	2	996
	Public non-teacher training colleges	13	n.a.
	Private non-TVET colleges (accredited)	29	n.a.
	Total tertiary	**48**	

Sub-sector	Type of institution	Number of institutions (2019)	Enrolment (2017)
Tertiary education students abroad	South African Universities	-	4,965
	Tertiary education students outside South Africa	-	491
	Total tertiary education abroad	-	5,456
Formal TVET	Public TVET Institutions	5	1,694
	Private TVET Institutions	29	n.a.
	Total TVET	34	
Adult and non-formal education	Sebenta National Institute, vocational	Decentralized delivery locations	599
	Sebenta National Institute, non-vocational		2,851
	Distance Education (Emlalatini Development Center)	Distance education	519
	Adult Education Centres	8	322

Source: Eswatini Higher Education Council, 2019; DHEC; UIS; and EMIS. Note: 1) There are at least 13 public non-teacher training colleges. 2) Data for enrollment in public TVET institutions are for 2016.

8.1.1 Tertiary education

Overall, access to tertiary education is limited. Tertiary education is regulated by the Eswatini Higher Education Council (ESHEC) in terms of the Higher Education Act of 2013 and comprises all learning programs that commence after secondary education and lead to higher qualifications (HE Act, 2013).

In 2019, four universities were registered, including the public University of Eswatini (UNESWA), which is the largest tertiary institution in the country established in 1982, as well as three younger and smaller private universities (Table 21). This is complemented by 44 colleges, of which 15 are public and 29 are private. These colleges include teachers training colleges and other specialized learning institutions focusing on one professional segment such as medical professions, as well as colleges with a broader range of programs, with IT and business management programs predominating. Many of the private tertiary institutions are affiliated with foreign tertiary education institutions, originating, for example in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Malaysia, Botswana or India.

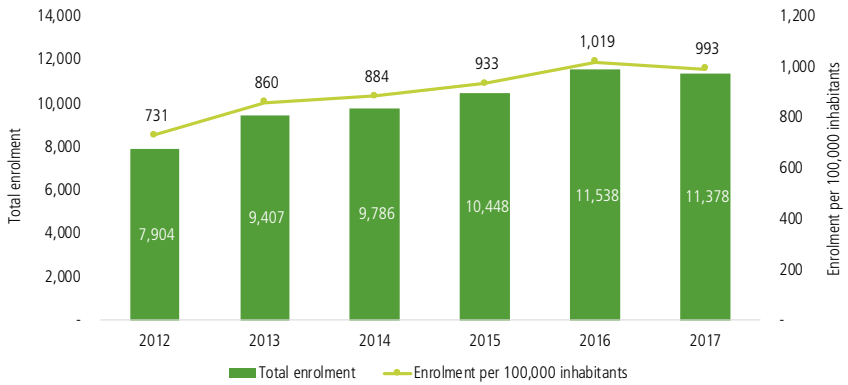
Table 21 Number of students by university 2017

	Number of enrolled students
Eswatini Medical Christian University	162
Limkokwing University of Technology	2,374
Southern Africa Nazarene University (SANU)	2,124
University of Eswatini (UNESWA)	6,718
Total	11,378
Memo item: Swazi students at South African Universities	4,965

Source: EMIS.

Access to tertiary education has increased with a considerable number of Swazi youth studying abroad. In 2017, university education was provided to more than 11,000 students, more than half of which were enrolled at UNESWA (Figure 66). Over the past decade, university enrolment has increased absolutely and relatively,[70] but participation rates are still low compared to other countries in the region (Figure 67). The university participation rate (number of students per 100,000 inhabitants) in Eswatini was 993 in 2017, compared with 1,709 for Namibia, or 1,500 for Botswana. The participation rate, however, increases to 1,426 if Swazi youth studying abroad are included. Overall, 32% of all Swazi university students (5,456 in total) are enrolled in tertiary education institutions abroad, mainly in South Africa.[71]

Figure 66 University enrolment and participation in Eswatini 2012-2017

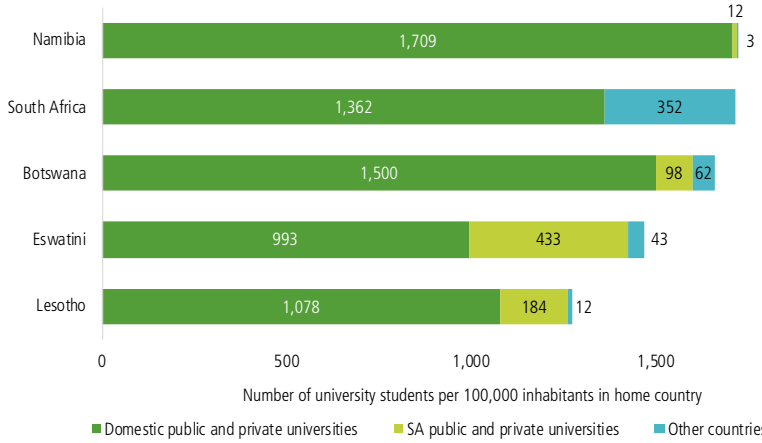


Source: EMIS.

70 The drop in enrollment in 2017 compared to the year before is owed to a reduction in the intake of the Eswatini Medical Christian University following accreditation issues. In 2020, enrolment of the ECU has recovered to about 250 students (information provided by the university management).

71 AEC, 2017; DHES, South Africa 2018.

Figure 67 Regional comparison of university participation 2017



Sources: EMIS, Lesotho ESA, Statistics Botswana 2017/18, UIS 2017, World Bank 2018.

Females are well represented in the universities operating in Eswatini. The share of female students across universities was 50% and above since 2012, reaching a peak of 54% in 2016 and 2017. With a female participation rate of 46% in 2017, only the private Limkokwing University of Technology stayed below the 50% threshold.

The university programs provided in Eswatini are overwhelmingly undergraduate programs. Only 4% of all students are enrolled in postgraduate studies. Available information suggests that Swazi students have to go to South Africa to advance their education. Of all Swazi students in postgraduate programs, 56% were enrolled in South Africa, compared to only 13% of undergraduate students.

Enrolment shares by department in the four universities reveal a striking neglect of STEM programs raising concern about the labor market relevance of the tertiary education sector. Education is by far the most important program in terms of employment, followed by commerce/business, medical professions and agriculture (Figure 68). In contrast, only 5% of students opted for science subject, and 7% for IT related programs. This pattern is even more pronounced among female students, where enrolment in science and IT programs drop to 3% and 4%, respectively (Figure 69).

The low enrolment in STEM subjects is a consequence of low general education outcomes for science subjects, as only few students are qualifying to enter STEM-related courses after graduating from senior secondary school.

In 2019, only 20% of secondary school students opted for either mathematics, physics, or IT as an examination subject. Out of these, only 29% scored a mark above a C, which is usually the minimum score required to enter tertiary education, meaning that less than 10% of the 2019 senior secondary student cohort would qualify for tertiary education in STEM-related fields (World Bank, 2020).

Figure 68 Undergraduate enrolment by department 2017

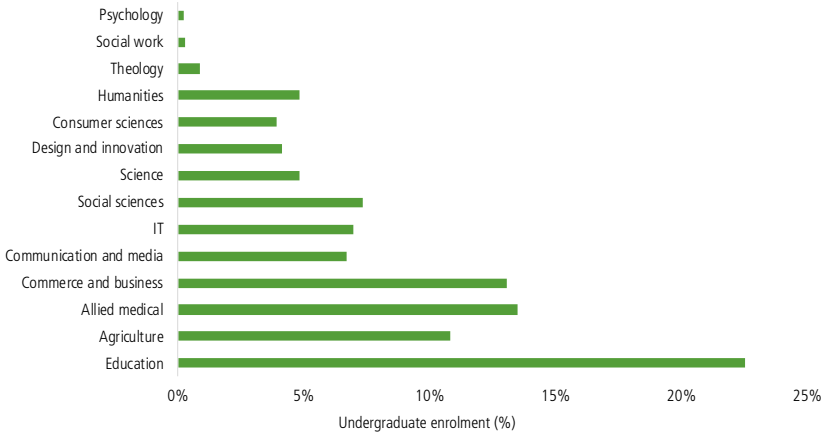
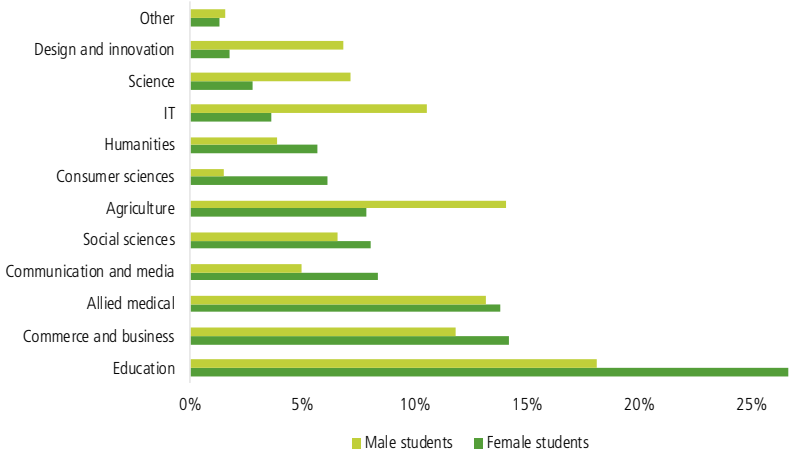


Figure 69 Undergraduate enrolment by department and gender 2017



Source: EMIS.

Furthermore, distance education is substantial catering for 15% of the total enrolment in Eswatini's university student population. Program concentration is rather high in distance education with 70% of students enrolled in just

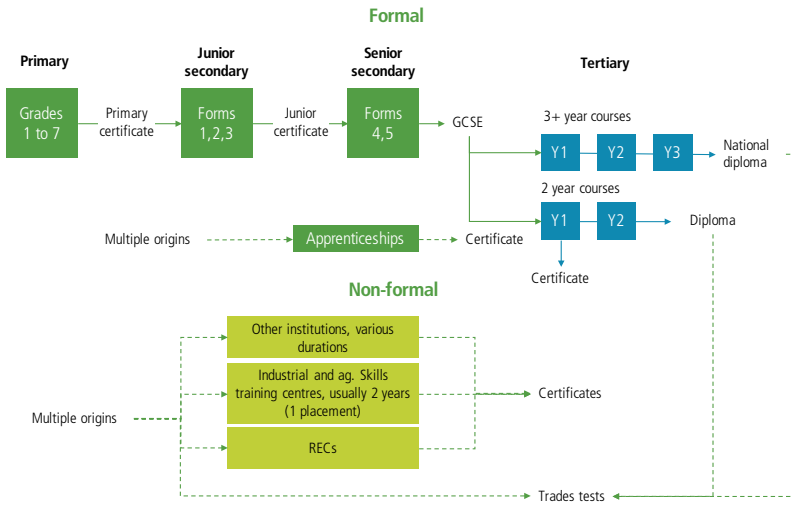
three programs: education, commerce and psychosocial support. Half (49%) of all Swazi students who are pursuing distance education are enrolled with universities in South Africa.

Available information is rather sketchy in the field of non-university tertiary education. MoET data shows that two public teacher training colleges were registered (Ngwane Teacher Training College and William Pitcher College), enrolling some 1,000 students in 2017, as well as 13 public non-teacher training colleges and 29 accredited private non-TVET colleges. Apart from the two public teacher colleges, EMIS does not have data on the tertiary colleges in Eswatini.

8.1.2 TVET

The supply picture related to TVET is diverse, and rather patchy as far as data and information is concerned. TVET is supplied at the secondary and tertiary levels (Figure 70) governed by a fragmented and weak regulatory environment. What may be subsumed under formal TVET is under MOET's Chief Inspector Tertiary, while apprenticeship training and trade testing is regulated by the Department of Industrial and Vocational Training (DIVT) in the MoLSS. Many institutions, however, operate outside of the regulatory framework and offer programs leading to in-house certificates and trade testing, and/or award foreign qualifications, including from City and Guilds, Microsoft, CISCO, ACCA and others.

Figure 70 Structure of TVET sector



Source: Adapted from World Bank 2010.

Note: 1) Y is year, M is month. 2) Trade tests can serve as a progression from any level of education, as well as companies

Only a fraction of the TVET supply in Eswatini is recorded in the EMIS. Overall, access to TVET is increasing with new institutions being added and others in the pipeline to be opened soon. In 2019, the MoET had recorded 34 TVET institutions, five of which are public.[72] The recorded public institutions together enrolled some 1,700 students in 2016 representing a modest increase of 17% over enrolment three years before (Table 22). Public formal TVET is limited to ten occupational fields focusing on traditional technical trades, education, business professions, IT and agriculture. The most important programs in terms of enrolment include construction-related fields catering for 22% of all trainees, followed by education (16%), engineering (16%), business administration (14%) and auto trades (12%) (Figure 71).

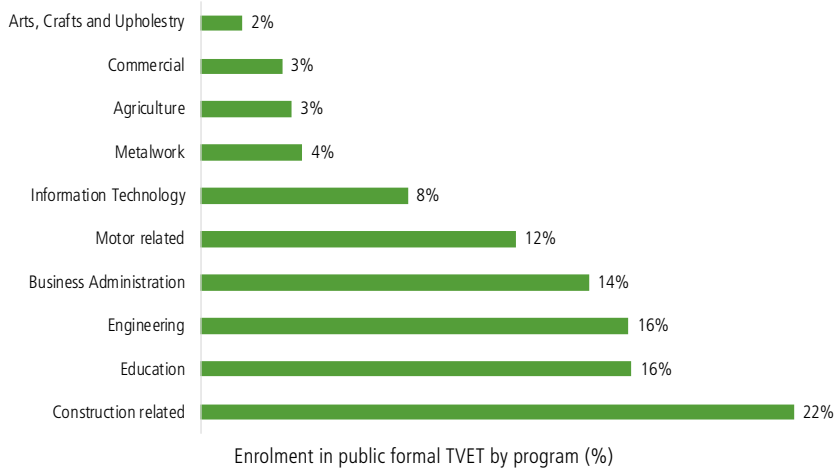
Table 22 Enrolment by selected formal public TVET institution 2013 and 2016

Institution	Enrolled students 2013	Enrolled students 2016
Manzini Industrial Training Centre	183	243
Nhlangano Industrial Training Centre	90	127
ECOT	945	1,043
Siteki Industrial Training Centre	88	105
VOCTIM	139	176
Total	**1,445**	**1,694**

Source: EMIS for 2016 data; World Bank (2014) for 2013 data

72 This does not include the Pre-vocational Education Programme under the MoET, which has started recently as a pilot project in 16 selected senior secondary schools (four in each region). Learners in this program have to accomplish all general core subjects and prevocational core subjects (IT and Entrepreneurship) and choose one area of specialization from a wide range of practical subjects including agriculture, business studies, home economics and technical studies. The program aims to provide learners with basic skills to either continue in post-secondary education, find a job or start a business enterprise. The program is accredited by the Examination Council of Swaziland (ECOS) and the Directorate of Industrial Vocational Training (DIVT). For further information see http://www.gov.sz/index.php/departments-sp-799263136/secondary-education

Figure 71 Enrolment in formal public TVET by program 2016



Source: EMIS.

Compared to university education, formal TVET has not achieved to raise its female participation rate over the last decade. The share of female trainees in public TVET never exceeded 28% since 2013. In terms of gender equality, ECOT - by far the biggest of the public institutions – fares best with 32% female participation rate in 2016. At the other end of the spectrum is the Manzini Industrial Training Centre stagnating at 14% female participation rate or below. Female TVET trainees are most likely to opt for business administration programs (32%), followed by education (20%) and construction (13%).

Private TVET provision is significant in terms of the range of programs offered and enrolment, but information is dated. Student data for the 29 recorded private TVET institutions were not available. It should be emphasized that the TVET providers covered in the EMIS only represent a fraction of the overall TVET provider landscape. There are additional public institutions run by other line ministries and apparently a significant number of private institutions, which may be registered as organizations but not formally accredited as training institutions. In 2013, a TVET stocktaking commissioned by the World Bank identified a total of 70 institutions, of which 27 were public,[73] 29 private-for-profit and 14 private-not-for-profit run by NGOs, religious organizations and communities (World Bank, 2014). Total enrolment in these 70 TVET institutions was recorded at 6,881 in 2013, of which some 2,500 were catered for in public institutions. Overall, the World Bank assessment identified some 60

73 These also included some non-formal adult education institutions which also provide TVET, such as Sebenta National Institute or Rural Education Centers.

different programs being offered across all providers addressing a wide variety of skill areas for technicians, business personnel, small manufacturers, service and social workers. Half of these institutions identified in 2013 were focusing on programs at the post-secondary level and in fact, many of those have in the meantime applied for accreditation at the ESHEC (ESHEC, 2019). Assuming that the total number of TVET institutions, whether registered with the MoET or not, will not have significantly decreased since 2013, the actual number of TVET students in Eswatini may well be in the range of seven thousand instead of below 2,000 as suggested by official EMIS data.

Public non-formal basic vocational training is provided through MOET's Rural Education Centers (REC) and Skills Centers and the Sebenta National Institute (SNI)[74]. Non-formal basic vocational training comprises mainly short-term skills development for gainful employment. It targets those population groups that wish to improve their livelihoods but are for various reasons not able to join formal or other long-term skills training programs. SNI is part of the MoET. It offers nine-month courses in the fields of bricklaying, carpentry, computing and sewing, catering for some 600 students in 2017 (Table 23). Originally, the target group of SNI vocational programs were completers of adult education programs, which had passed the post-basic level, but more recently, also people coming from the formal general education system have shown interest and were taken in, pointing to supply shortage in non-formal employment-oriented training in the country. Rural Education and Skills Centers are attached to schools and administered by the school principles. RECs offer courses of six to nine months duration (Mgabhi and Mohammed 2019). Recorded enrolment was 262 in 2018.

Table 23 Trend in enrolment in non-formal RECs and Sebenta vocational programs

	Number of students	
	Rural Education Centers and Skills Centers	Sebenta vocational programs[1]
2013	-	291
2014	242	346
2015	400	465
2016	306	673
2017	322	599
2018	262	-

Source: NETIP 2018/19-2020/2021, EMIS. Note: (1) The programs are: brick laying, carpentry, computing and sewing.

74 Non-formal basic skills training is separately administered in the MoET through own units, not by the Chief Inspector Tertiary, which is in charge of formal TVET.

Separately from the TVET activities under the MoET and other ministries, the government is maintaining a formal apprenticeship and traineeship scheme under the auspices of the DIVT. This is based on the Industrial and Vocational Training (IVT) Act of 1982. Apprenticeship training is organized as dual training with complementary training delivery in recognized training institutions and workplaces running over a period of five years. It is offered in 21 different traditional technical trades ranging from auto trades over various engineering trades to electrical and construction trades. Training is based on an apprenticeship contract and apprentices are entitled to receive a stipulated minimum apprenticeship allowance.[75] Assessment and certification of apprenticeship completers is the responsibility of DIVT.

Participation in formal apprenticeship training is very limited. For 2018 and 2019, DIVT recorded 203 and 210 apprentices respectively, with 73 and 35 completing in the respective years. The number of apprenticeships appears to have been stable over the last decade,[76] but DIVT estimates that enrolment could potentially be three times the current number, if all companies that potentially have capacities would participate. At the moment around 50 companies employ apprentices with up to 50 apprentices employed by one company. In most cases the institutional training part is provided by TVET institutions in South Africa. The demand for apprenticeship places is said to be very high, and generally the best educational achievers, including national diploma holders, are taken in by companies.[77] Parallel to apprenticeship training, the Act also foresees the introduction of traineeships of shorter duration, meant mainly to provide apprenticeship-type programs for service and other modern non-technical trades. The traineeship scheme, though, has not taken off.

Furthermore, DIVT is running a trade testing scheme originally targeting competence assessment and certification of workers in the formal and informal sectors of the economy. However, in fact, completers of TVET programs, both formal and non-formal, also represent a significant share of candidates. The scheme operates with three levels ranging from TT Grade III representing the lowest level for semi-skilled workers, TT Grade II for Skilled workers and TT Grade I for highly skilled workers. Trade tests are currently conducted in 17 trades (Figure 1.7). Tests are based on competence standards, which are revised from time and time and more lately aligned with the Eswatini qualifications framework. Tests are conducted in government training institutions throughout the country and in companies by trade testing panels of at least three members

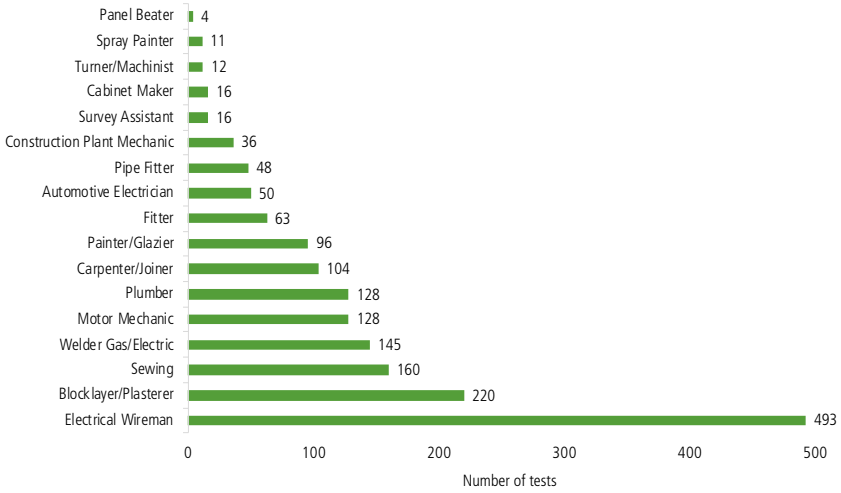
75 See. http://www.gov.sz/index.php/departments-sp-501430421/directorate-of-industrial-and-vocational-training-divt

76 The Education Sector Assessment of 2010 reported about 200 apprentices registered per year, with 50 new recruits and 50 apprentices completing every year (World Bank/MoET 2010).

77 National Diploma holders may qualify for a reduction of the apprenticeship period. In this case, the standard duration of five years can be reduced to three years.

including experts from the private sector, training institutions and the government or parastatal sector. Workers must be at least 18 years of age and have previous work experience to qualify for candidacy in trade testing.[78] In 2018 and 2019, a total of 720 and 1,010 trade tests were conducted across the different trades, respectively. The majority of these (68% in 2018 and 77% in 2019) were at the lowest level Grade III[79]; and most tests were taken in the trades electrical wireman, sewing and bricklaying/plastering (Figure 72). The relatively substantial number of trade tests suggests considerable informal on-the-job training going on in workplaces in Eswatini.

Figure 72 Number of trade tests conducted in 2018 and 2019 (aggregated)



Source: DIVT 2020.

Generally, the type and extent of non-formal and informal enterprise-based training in Eswatini is unknown although it can be reasonably assumed that considerable training activities take place. According to data from the most recent EHIES, 33% of all those respondents that had participated in non-formal training had been awarded a job-specific training certificate.[80] In 2007, a World Bank investment climate assessment of Eswatini found that just under half of all manufacturing firms would provide training to their staff, mainly to upgrade skilled workers (64%) and to a lesser extent to unskilled laborers (World Bank 2007).[81] Furthermore, informal apprenticeships are a common type of traditional

78 http://www.gov.sz/index.php/departments-sp-501430421/directorate-of-industrial-and-vocational-training-divt and World Bank/MoET 2010.

79 Information provided by DIVT.

80 Team estimates based on EHIES 2016/17 data, weighted estimates.

81 More recent data are not available.

skills transfer from experienced master craftspersons to youth who want to learn a specific trade. Unlike modern apprenticeship training, it is not based on formal contracts and not governed by modern labor legislation, and the training is not certifiable or complemented by school-based theory instruction. However, also informal apprenticeships are based on agreements between the master and the apprentice (or the apprentice's family) and embedded in traditional norms and rules. While systematic knowledge about informal apprenticeships in Eswatini is not readily available, the increasing informality of the country's economy[82] suggests that also significant informal training is taking place side-by-side formal and non-formal institution-based skills development.

8.1.3 Adult education and lifelong learning

The public PSET provision is complemented by adult education and lifelong learning (AELL). AELL targets out-of-school children and youth, as well as adults, with the aim of empowering the more vulnerable in society in accordance with their needs and interests and to prepare them for the world of work. AELL in Eswatini has two directions: (i) basic and general education with the aim to complete missing educational steps; as well as (ii) creating opportunities for the acquisition of skills to improve employability, which is part of the non-formal skills development system described above.

A key provider of basic adult education is the Sebenta National Institute (SNI), which offers free Non-Formal Primary Education (NPE) for children, youth and adults who have either never enrolled in, or have dropped out of, the formal education system. It is delivered by volunteer primary teachers in modular programs for two hours a day, three days a week, to small groups of learners in various locations including churches, neighborhood care points and schools. The SNI program comprises five levels, enabling learners to complete the primary curriculum in five years. The curriculum is aligned with the formal primary curriculum.[83] Learners in Level 5 can sit for the EPC through the SNI or by (re)joining the formal education system. After passing the EPC learners can continue with a non-formal Junior Secondary and Senior Secondary education program also offered by SNI.

The MOET's Emlalatini Development Centre (EDC) assists learners to complete secondary education through distance learning combined with face-to-face teaching. EDC uses the same curriculum as the formal general education system, with learning materials converted into distance-learning modules. Distance

82 The informal sector is contributing 39% of the country's GDP, which is high in regional comparison. An estimated 68% of workers are informal, which includes informal employment in formal enterprises. World Bank 2019.

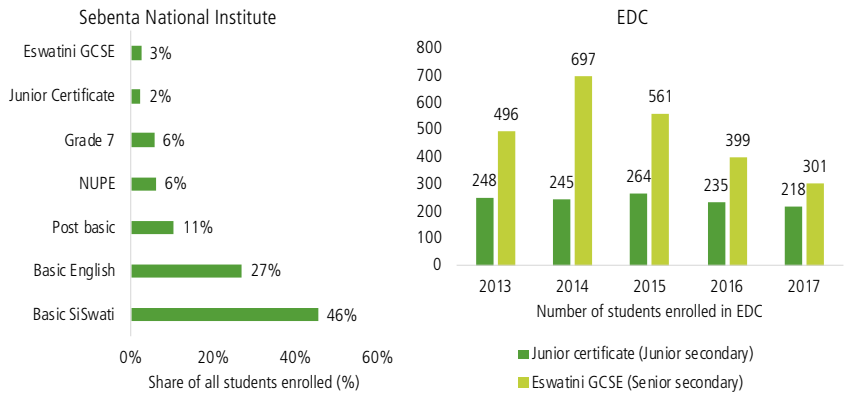
83 SiSwati and Basic English are taught as subjects and other subjects are taught through integrated themes in Levels 1, 2 and 3. In Levels 4 and 5 the primary schools subjects are taught with emphasis on communication skills. See MoET webpage.

learning under EDC also provides opportunities for workers to continue their education and upgrade their educational qualifications.

SNI and EDC programs are supposed to provide effective pathways back into formal education. To avoid discrimination against non-formal education and to ease the transfer of students from the non-formal to the formal education system, the MoET Examinations Council and SNI decided that learners from both streams should be awarded the same EGSCE.

Relative to the high number of out-of-school children and other people without completed education, enrolment rates in non-formal adult programs are very low. For the year 2016, the MoET reported a total of just over 11,000 youth dropping out of primary school alone (MoET, 2018a). As shown in Figure 73, a total of 2,851 students were enrolled in general education SNI programs in 2017, and 519 in EDC. Notably, enrolment in the distance education programs of EDC went down during the second half of the last decade, dropping from 942 students in 2014 to 519 students in 1917. Overall, more adult education participants pursue certificates at primary school than secondary school level. While distance education (EDC) targets secondary education with a majority of students studying at senior secondary level, most Sebenta students are enrolled at primary level. The Government in its NETP II acknowledges the serious access problems and has defined access increase as a prime objective for this sub-sector.

Figure 73 Enrolment in (non-vocational) SNI by program 2017 and in EDC 2013-2017



Source: EMIS.

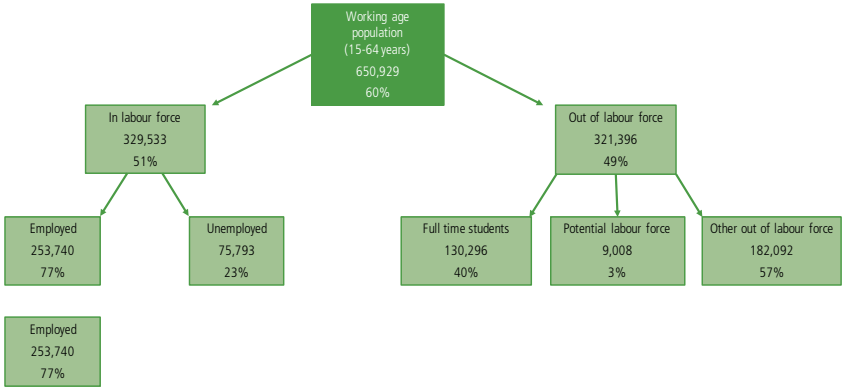
Note: 1) NUPE stands for non-formal upper primary education.

8.2 Labor market outcomes of PSET

8.2.1 Employment situation in Eswatini

While unemployment has declined in recent years, labor market outcomes remain poor in Eswatini. According to the 2016 Labor Force Survey, overall unemployment stood at 23% in 2016 (30% if discouraged workers are included), down from 28% in 2013 (Figure 74). Youth unemployment (ages 15–24) was higher at 47%. However, with just half of the working age population participating in the labor force and only 39% of the working age population employed, core labor market outcomes in Eswatini compare unfavorably, even by regional standards. Unemployment is a structural problem in Eswatini, with 70% of the unemployed having been out of work for at least a year, and nearly 50% for at least two years. Moreover, underemployment is significant. Migrant work, mainly in South Africa, is significant among the labor force. An estimated 94,000 Swazis, or 7% of the entire population, were living abroad in 2017, more than 90% in South Africa (World Bank, 2019).

Figure 74 Status of working age population (15-64-year-olds) 2016



Source: World Bank 2019.

Access to employment opportunities is highly uneven, with women and youth facing significant challenges, as well as those with low skills. The gap in labor force participation between men and women was nine percentage points in 2016. Moreover, women face higher levels of unemployment (by four percentage points), lower earnings (earnings gap of approximately 40%), and are much more likely to be in vulnerable employment––the share of women that are own-account or contributing family workers is 12 percentage points higher than for men. Youth similarly face poor labor market outcomes. Just one in four youth

(15-24 years old) are active in the labor market, and for those that are active, almost half (47%) were unemployed in 2016. Informality among youth stood at 83% in 2016, almost 15 percentage points higher than the national average. Lower-skilled workers face significantly worse labor market outcomes. While almost 36% of the working age population has less than a secondary level of education, they account for less than 30% of the employed population driven amongst other things by low levels of participation of low-skilled women (World Bank, 2019).

Informality in the job market is growing resulting in increasingly poor jobs and earnings prospects. Job creation has been dependent on the low-productivity services sector rather than on industry or the primary sector. Consequently, private sector employers have been creating fewer than 1,000 jobs for the roughly 25,000 youth reaching working age each year. Approximately two-thirds of the new jobs created over the past decade have been in self-employment. From 2007 to 2016, the share of employee workers (versus self-employed workers or contributing family workers) fell by almost ten percentage points.

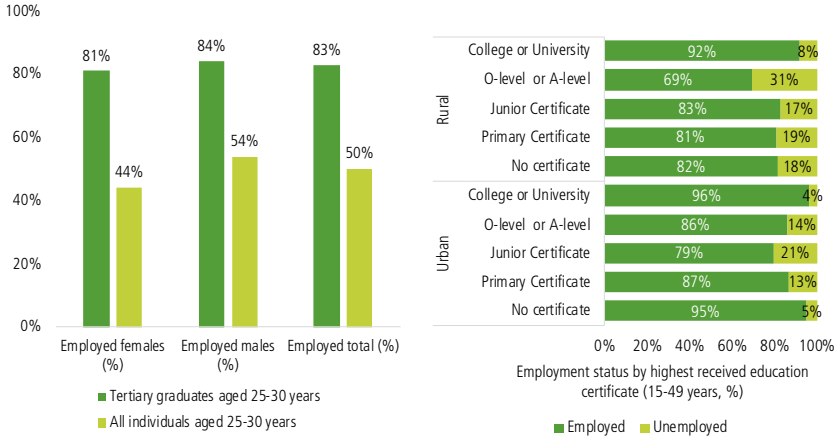
Declining productivity has contributed to a sharp rise in the informal sector. The informal sector in Eswatini remains one of the largest in Africa at approximately 39% of GDP and appears to be increasing. Labor force survey data indicate that informal sector employment rose between 2010 and 2016. Including workers that are informally employed in formal sector companies, 68% of workers in Eswatini are informal. Not surprisingly, the trend toward informality has had significant effects on earnings because average wages in the informal sector (E1,200) are approximately 45% lower than in the formal sector (World Bank, 2019).

8.2.2 Labor market outcomes of PSET

The limited, often anecdotal, evidence on labor-market outcomes of PSET programs in Eswatini allows to draw only a rough picture about the relevance of programs. There is no system to regularly and comprehensively track employment outcomes of completers and graduates, or to collect information on employers' satisfaction with and perceptions of graduates. Some educational institutions conduct tracer studies for their own graduate population, but results are not publicly available. National datasets, such as household and labor force surveys provide some insight into the value of tertiary education in the labor market, but not TVET-level skills development. Regular tracer studies as well as skills gap and skills need analyses are required to improve PSET planning and enhance effectiveness and efficiency in the provision of skills development. The planned National Skills Survey in 2021 will represent an important step in this direction.

Tertiary education pays off in Eswatini, reflecting the comparatively low access to universities and colleges. This applies to both the likelihood to be employed as well as job quality. EHIES data show for 2016/17 that 83% of young tertiary graduates (aged 25 to 30) were employed compared to only 50% of the same age group across all education levels (Figure 75). The tertiary education effect on employment is even stronger among females, which are 37 percentage points more likely to be employed compared to the average age group. Overall, the likelihood of being unemployed is going down with higher education levels and is lower in urban than in rural areas. This trend only changes to the contrary for the low educational achievers in urban areas and those with senior secondary education in rural areas.

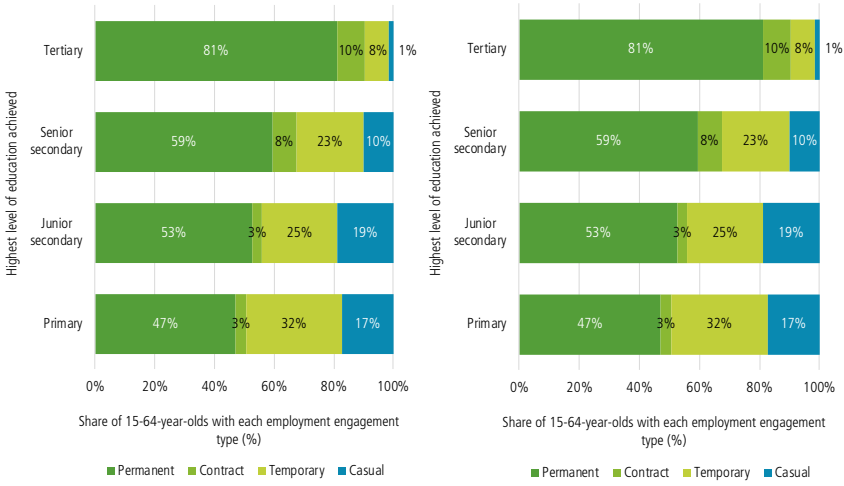
Figure 75 Employment status for tertiary graduates by gender and educational achievement and employment outcomes 2016/17



Source: Team estimates based on EHIES 2016/17 data, weighted estimates.

Completion of tertiary education also leads to better types of jobs. More than 80% of tertiary education graduates found themselves in permanent jobs, significantly more than among those with secondary education (Figure 76). Tertiary completers are also enormously privileged in terms of access to public employment. While 64% of all tertiary qualification holders were government employees, less than 20% of high school leavers were employed with government. The share dropped to 8% and 6%, respectively, for lower secondary and primary school leavers.

Figure 76 Type of employment engagement and employer by highest level attended



Source: Team estimates based on EHIES 2016/17 data, weighted estimates.

Contrary to tertiary education, it is more difficult to establish labor market outcomes for TVET. Due to the low number of youths enrolled in TVET, cases of TVET completers included in national surveys are usually too low to identify robust results. As indicated before, completers tracking surveys have not been regularly and comprehensively conducted. The few studies available over time indicate mixed results. Tracer survey results of TVET completers from 2011 and 2012 (Table 24) indicate employment rates 12 months after completion of the training between 55% and 76%, mainly depending on the type of provider. Interestingly, completers of privately provided TVET perform significantly better with more than ten percentage points higher employment rates compared to graduates from public institutions. Completers of other, mainly non-profit providers showed comparatively lower employment rates, presumably because those institutions tend to cater for disadvantaged youth that face special barriers in education-to-work transition. Another tracer study (Mgabhi and Mohammed 2019) tracking graduates of mixed TVET programs between 2005 and 2017 came to the result that 43% of graduates remained unemployed (not in employment or self-employment). 41% were wage-employed in the formal sector, while 14% indicated to be self-employed, and 2% to be both wage and self-employed. The ESEPARC study on TVET in auto-motive, electrical mechanical and ICT trades (ESEPARC, 2018) reports about considerable difficulties and insecurities of students when they enter the workplace as a result of lack of good quality practical training. Employers indicated that only a small share of graduates do not require skills upgrading immediately after completion of studies.

Table 24 Share of trainees employed within 12 months after completion of training

Institution type	2011	2012
Public	65%	64%
Private	76%	76%
Others (including non-profit, church-run etc.)	57%	55%

Source: Joint World Bank and MoET survey of 2011 and 2012 completers conducted in 2013. World Bank 2014.

Not surprisingly, employment outcomes of TVET completers vary significantly depending on programs, highlighting the importance of detailed and differentiated analysis and skills development planning. Supply-driven skills development system often retain existing, traditional programs irrespective of changing labor market realities, while new market trends and emerging occupational fields are only slowly incorporated. This appears to be the case in Eswatini as well. While trade-specific results from the tracer studies were not available, average earnings by trade, indicated by Mgabhi and Mohammed (2019), clearly showed that the programs computer studies, ICT as well as electrical and building studies were generating much higher earnings than other programs, that is, those skills were much more honored in the labor market than others. Interestingly, in some trades, notably agriculture, carpentry and sewing, self-employment generated better incomes than wage employment.

There are indications of mismatches between the supply of and demand for skills in terms of level of qualifications notably indicating a shortage of skilled workforce at a higher qualification level as compared to lower-level skilled workers. The IMF has diagnosed Eswatini as a country with one of the highest skills mismatch indices in the world (ranking 136th out of 139 countries (IMF 2017)). The assumption is that this is caused by relatively lower educational attainment in Eswatini compared to other lower middle-income countries leading to shortages of skilled workers, especially at high qualification levels. This assumption is also supported by the results of the qualitative analysis conducted by ESEPARC in 2018. The study assessed skills gaps in the three occupational areas of electrical engineering, automotive and ICT and found that technicians with higher and specialized qualifications are in very short supply, while lower level skilled workers are more readily available.

There are also considerable differences in employment outcomes between training institutions. As shown in the 2019 study of Mgabhi and Mohammed (Figure 77), VOCTIM appears to achieve the best employment outcomes and lowest unemployment rates for its graduates. There were also good employment outcomes for the National Handicraft Training Centre (NHTC) and the Big-Bend Rural Employment Centre, which had particularly good results

in facilitating self-employment of completers. Such results require further investigations. They may point to differences among institutions in training quality and effectiveness of wrap-around employment promotion services, but also to different occupational specializations. The example of the Kululameni training center, which targets people with disabilities (PWD) and did not achieve to facilitate employment for any of its students, shows the immense difficulties to address the barriers of particularly disadvantaged parts of the population.

Figure 77 Employment outcomes of TVET graduates by institution 2005-2017

Source: Mgabhi and Mohammed 2019.

Workplace learning appears to result in better employment outcomes than institutional training. Information provided by DIVT suggests that apprenticeship graduates are in high demand. Usually around 90% of all completers find employment immediately, in most cases with the companies where they were trained. One reasons for this outcome may be that the number of apprenticeships is limited because companies train in line with anticipated demand for new recruits. This may change, if the Government would provide incentives to companies to train above their own demand. Furthermore, the good outcomes may also be driven by the fact that apprentices are usually the better performers in the education system.

8.3 Factors influencing the responsiveness of PSET to the country's development needs

This section summarizes some key issues emerging from the analysis of the PSET sector.

8.3.1 Inadequate provision of PSET

Low access to PSET remains a challenge, although better data are required to identify gaps in detail and discuss policy options. EHIES data for 2016/17 suggest that some 75,000 Swazi youth aged 15 to 29 are out of education, the majority of whom dropped out along their educational path. These represent the major share of the potential target group for PSET; and clearly, the current PSET capacities are insufficient to cater for this demand. As described before (Figure 67), enrolment in tertiary education in Eswatini is low by regional comparison although access was enhanced during the last decade with the revision of the scholarship loan policy (NETIP II). In 2016/17, not more than 10% of all individuals aged 21 and above had accomplished a tertiary education qualification (diploma or degree), with females performing slightly better than their male peers.[84] In view of the dearth of data, it is almost impossible to describe access challenges in more detail for TVET. The 2018 ESEPARC study suggests that in the more established TVET institutions such as ECOT, MITC or VOCTIM, demand for training places by far exceeds the supply. On the other hand, TVET institutions are rather small. In 2013, close to 60% of all TVET institutions enrolled fewer than 50 trainees. Low enrolment in TVET appears to be also a result of high tuition fees. While some TVET institutions qualify for students being supported by scholarship loans (see below), private institutions are largely dependent on student fees, which are much higher than in public institutions. ESEPARC (2018) reports that private institutions struggle with high drop-out rates due to high tuition fees. Enrolment is also extremely low in AELL. The share of people provided with AELL opportunities in Eswatini is only a fraction of those of other comparable countries in Africa, for example Namibia (MoET 2018a).

Recent examples show that efforts to strengthen private investment in PSET can be instrumental to increase access to high quality, market-driven skills development. Recognizing the importance of science, technological innovation, and digital skills, the Government recently established the Royal Science and Technology Park (RSTP) under the Ministry of ICT. It hosts the Advanced School of IT (ASIT), which is is operated by a private company, Aptech Limited, a global retail and corporate training provider. ASIT specializes on training in software development, multimedia, cyber security and forensics, and

84 Team estimates based on EHIES 2016/17 data, weighted estimates.

hardworking and networking. The establishment of the ASIT is seen as a way to increase the number of IT graduates in Eswatini and to increase the quality and relevance of graduates' digital skills. The case of ASIT illustrate the chances of the Government to attract innovative and high-level private investment if it succeeds to provide a conducive investment climate; which includes the provision of adequate basic infrastructure, reliable and non-discriminatory regulations, cluster development and linkages to key industry and academic players. Enabling students in private institutions to access the public student loan facilities – as already implemented for selected tertiary education institutions - would ensure access of the broader student population to private skills development, and at the same time create sustainable demand for private training services.

Box 22 Lack of data to assess PSET outcomes and equity aspects

Available data are not sufficient to analyze any further the performance of the PSET sub-systems in terms of overall outcomes or equity. Table 25 shows the severe data gaps related to access, completion, learning as well as employment outcomes both overall and for vulnerable groups, notably the poorest 20% of the population; those living in rural areas; and orphaned youth.

Table 25 Multi-dimensional vulnerability and PSET access, completion, learning and employment

	Access		Completion		Level of knowledge and skills (post-graduation)		Employment status (post-graduation)	
	Public TVET	Tertiary	Public TVET	Tertiary	Public TVET	Tertiary	Public TVET	Tertiary
All individuals	Low	Low	No data		No data		No data	
Poorest 20%	No data	No access						
Live in rural area (compared to urban area)	No data							
Orphaned (compared to non-orphaned children)	No data							
Girls (compared to boys)	Lower	Similar						

Source: Analysis conducted for this report and MICS 2014.

Note: 1) 'No data' indicates that no data at all are available or that only partial, outdated data are available.

8.3.2 Weak frameworks for managing PSET

The institutional and legal framework for managing and regulating PSET is fragmented and weak. The establishment of the Eswatini Higher Education Council in 2015, based on the 2013 Higher Education Act, represents an important step in improving regulation and quality assurance of tertiary education in the country. ESHEC has since developed the Eswatini Qualifications Framework, facilitated the adoption of tertiary education regulations and initiated a process of registering and accreditation of tertiary institutions. Whereas a number of TVET institutions have applied for ESHEC accreditation, the TVET sector remains fragmented and uncoordinated, and many institutions appear to operate without formal accreditation or registration. Institutions fall under various ministries including the MoET, Ministry of Labor and Social Security (MoLSS), Ministry of Tinkhundla; Ministry of Sport, Youth and Culture; Ministry of Works; Ministry of Agriculture; and Ministry of Commerce. The Chief Inspector Tertiary in the MoET is responsible for formal TVET institutions, while the Department of Vocational and Industrial Training (DIVT) in the MoLSS is managing trade testing and the formal apprenticeship scheme, and according to the Industrial and Vocational Training Act of 1982 has the mandate to strengthen skills development in Eswatini. There is no institutionalized coordination between the relevant departments in the two ministries. Adult education and lifelong learning is implemented through Sebenta and EDC, both independently operating government institutions under the MoET. A dedicated department for AELL in the Ministry of Education, as envisaged in the 2011 Education and Training Sector Policy, has not been formed.

Strategic planning and development of PSET is a challenge under the current fragmented institutional environment. Eswatini needs a comprehensive and integrated policy framework for the development of an efficient PSET sector, effective coordination mechanisms for the fragmented TVET sub-sector as called for in NETIP II, and the establishment and strengthening of dedicated departments under the MoET to drive the further development of TVET and AELL. At the moment, MoET has initiated a revision of the TVET policy of 2010 and has incorporated other stakeholders in this process, notably the DIVT, which raises hope that strategies to improve coordination may gain momentum.

8.3.3 Limited private sector involvement

Private sector linkages in the PSET sector are underdeveloped in training institutions and formal TVET under the MoET. Strong communication structures and linkages into the labor market are essential for a demand-driven post-school education and training system. However, large parts of PSET in Eswatini lack strong institutions to foster such linkages. The recently

established ESHEC, which is the main institution charged with driving the further development of tertiary education and securing its quality and relevance, includes only two representatives of the private sector among its 13 members. For formal and public TVET and AELL, there is no formal process in place in the MoET to engage with the private sector and other labor market stakeholders. Institutionalized linkages, however, exist with the tripartite Industrial and Vocational Training Board and its Training Advisory Committees,[85] but at the moment its influence is limited to the DIVT administered trade testing and the apprenticeship scheme. It does not impact on TVET institutions and the wider PSET landscape.

Systematic information about potential informal linkages between education and training institutions and employers are not available although such linkages do exist. The Limkokwing University of Creative Technology (LUCT) for example, reports that is offers industry-based projects to students and involves industry representatives as advisors and in assessment panels[86]. It furthermore invites industry guest lecturers. A strong involvement of industry experts in the roll-out of the Eswatini Qualifications Framework (launched in late 2016), may be instrumental in re-orienting program design and curriculum development in line with market needs. Examples from other countries have shown that formalized partnerships between education institutions and private sector companies and representatives can be strong drivers of enhancing curricula and training delivery to better serve labor market requirements.

8.3.4 Underfunding of TVET and AELL

Higher funding levels are needed to develop and expand quality TVET and AELL. Again, data and precise information on funding volumes, resource requirements and funding structures are scarce. Compared to tertiary education, which consumes 21% of all public education spending, public expenditure for TVET and AELL is very low with 1.7% and 0.5% of the education budget allocated to formal TVET and AELL, respectively (see chapter 9).

85 http://www.gov.sz/index.php/departments-sp-501430421/directorate-of-industrial-and-vocational-training-divt

86 Written comments of LUCT to the team.

Box 23 Scholarships for tertiary education and TVET

In addition to the education budget allocations, the Government is subsidizing tertiary education through scholarship loans for students attending tertiary courses in priority areas. Scholarships are available for first degree and diploma courses only, with the exception of a post graduate certificate in Education (PGCE) and an Honors Degree in Psychology.[87]

They are awarded to students for courses in priority areas in Eswatini colleges and universities, and for studying abroad in priority areas not offered locally. Priority areas include education and teaching programs for primary school level and scarce subject areas (STEM subjects, French and Commercial Studies), PGCE, Engineering and Environmental Science, Agriculture and Home Economics, Nursing, Technical and Vocational subject areas and Tourism and Hospitality.

At the moment, the following tertiary institutions are included: UNESWA, ECOT, Limkokwing University of Creative Technology, William Pitcher College, Ngwane College and Southern Africa Nazarene University.[88] There have been complaints about delays in the disbursement of parts of the scholarships (UNESWA, 2020).

Public student support is complemented by private scholarships schemes.

There is a general perception that public TVET institutions are underfunded. Apart from ECOT and VOCTIM, TVET institutions are not included in the government scholarship scheme but are financed through tuition fees payable by students and government subsidies for salaries of teachers. However, in 2013, three-quarters of all TVET institutions did not receive government subsidies; and only around 10% of private institutions were included in the government funding scheme for teachers' salaries (World Bank, 2014). As a result, TVET in Eswatini is mainly dependent on private funding. Mgabhi and Mohammed (2019) found that a majority of TVET students were raising tuition fees from family and friends (46%), 24% of the respondents of the survey received a government scholarship, while 13% were supported by NGOs. Public TVET institutions use income from students' tuition fees for investments and replacement of equipment, however, the procedures to access the funds, who are deposited in special accounts, is following cumbersome government procedures and does not allow for flexible action.

Systematic mechanisms for industry to contribute to the cost of TVET do not exist although the legal and policy framework suggests introducing a training levy. The 1982 Industrial and Vocational Training Act included the option

87 Scholarships are comprehensive and cover tuition, books, accommodation and meals, project and uniform allowances and personal allowance.

88 Further information see http://www.gov.sz/index.php/tenders-sp-715487845/consultancy-in-strengthening-the-tbt-legal-metrology-weights-and-measures-quality-infrastrusture-in-the-kingdom-of-eswatini/76-labour-a-social-security/labour-a-social-security/409-scholarship-department

that the Minister of Labor and Social Services introduces a training levy. The introduction of a levy was reaffirmed in the TVET Policy of 2010. So far, however, the training levy has not been operationalized. There are plans to revise the Vocational Training Act with the aim to revive and update the possibility of training levy introduction. It is expected that the levy would also serve as an incentive for companies to enhance their involvement in apprenticeship training.

8.3.5 Need for development and management of teaching staff for PSET

The training and management of teachers and instructors in the PSET system require attention. Qualified, competent and committed lecturers, teachers and instructors are the backbone of quality education. This applies even more for PSET, where specialized skills and a high level of flexibility in a labor market of ever-changing technologies and skills requirements, are demanded from teaching staff.

UNESWA can draw on a relatively well qualified corps of lecturers. In 2017, UNESWA had 354 academic staff members, of which 40% were female (Table 26). More than half of the academic staff were PhD holders. Male lecturers are more likely to have a PhD qualification than female academic staff members. Of the latter, half hold a master's qualification and only 45% a PhD. The university is continuously investing in upgrading staff qualifications. In the academic year 2018/19, for example, a total of 13 academic staff members were newly awarded a PhD. In the same year, 13 lecturers were undergoing further education in universities outside of the country (UNESWA, 2020).[89]

Table 26 UNESWA academic staff by qualification 2017

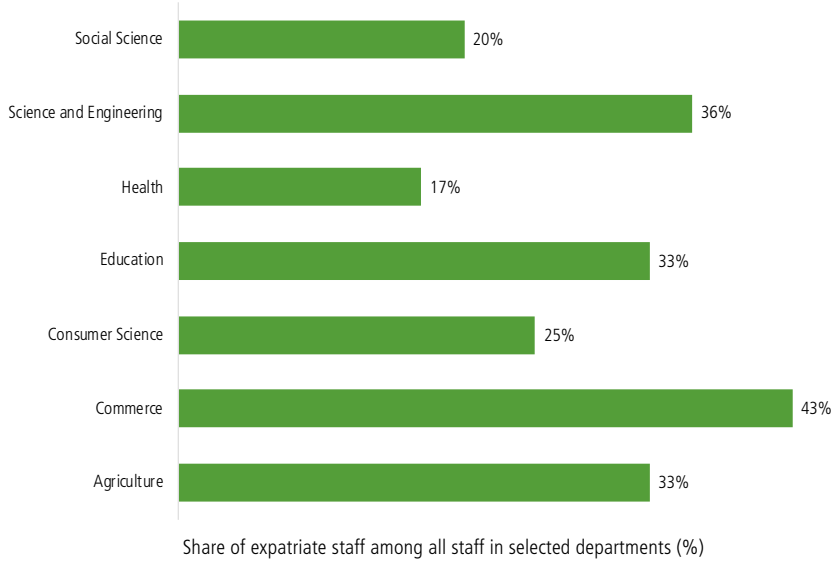
	Number of UNESWA academic staff by qualification			Share of UNESWA academic staff by qualification (%)		
	Total	Female	Male	**Total**	Female	Male
PhD	192	65	127	54%	45%	60%
Masters	146	71	75	41%	50%	36%
MBA	5	1	4	1%	1%	2%
Bachelors	9	4	5	3%	3%	2%
Other	2	2	0	1%	1%	0%
Total	354	143	210	100%	100%	100%

Source: UNESWA Vice Chancellor's Report 2017. Note: The academic staff total is higher than in the AEC possibly due to inclusion of visiting faculty. Gender not provided in one case.

89 Also private universities invest substantially in staff development. LUCT, for example, facilitated further education to 71 of its academic staff between 2016 and 2020 according to information provided by the institution. Comprehensive information on the professional development in private institutions, however, is not available.

To cope with shortages of qualified staff a significant share of senior staff in UNESWA is recruited from abroad. In 2018/19, almost one-fourth (24%) of all 438 academic and administrative staff at UNESWA were expatriate. In general, the share of expatriates is higher in academic and administrative positions. Especially in the faculties of commerce, science and engineering, agriculture and education, lecturers from other countries make up one-third or more of the entire teaching cadre (Figure 78) Also private universities recruit expatriates to complement their teaching staff in scarce skill areas.[90]

Figure 78 Share of expatriate staff in selected UNESWA departments 2019



Source: UNESWA, 2020.

TVET teachers and instructors appear to be formally well qualified but are generally considered to require substantial skills upgrading. A majority held a university degree or higher diploma in 2013 (Table 27), but require skills upgrading, especially in pedagogy and advanced technologies. They often lack industrial experience and are not acquainted with modern industry practice.[91] According to MoET (2018a), facilitators in AELL also urgently require additional training, but there is a shortage of funding available for such development.

90 For example, 20 expatriate special experts are employed at LUCT (information provided by the Institution).

91 See NETIP II, World Bank 2014, and ESEPARC 2018.

Table 27 TVET trainers by academic qualification 2013

Qualification	Share of TVET trainers in %
No academic qualification	1
National certificate	9
National diploma	19
Higher national diploma	21
Bachelor's degree	37
Master's degree	7
Other academic qualification	6

Source: World Bank 2014.

Student-teaching staff ratios are rather uneven across the PSET sector. Public institutions are generally much better endowed with teachers' resources than private institutions. As shown in Table 28, there are 50% and more students per lecturer in private universities as compared to UNESWA, and comparatively lower student-lecturer ratios in the two public teacher training colleges following regulations for colleges. The STRs recorded in the World Bank report of 2014 (reflecting 2013 data) showed ratios of 6:1 for public TVET institutions, 13:1 for private and 9:1 for other TVET institutions. It is noteworthy that 68% of all teaching staff in public TVET colleges were female (World Bank, 2014). Higher STRs in private institutions are also a result of unequal pay and working conditions within the teaching profession. For TVET, the Bank study of 2014 revealed that salaries in the private training sector are hardly competitive. Public technical teachers earn twice the average salary of teachers in the private not-for-profit sector, and even more than twice the amount earned at private-for-profit institutions. Many teachers, therefore, who have managed to upgrade their skills and/or qualifications often leave the teaching profession for industry. Working conditions are especially poor among AELL facilitators, leading to a shortage of teaching staff.

Table 28 Student-lecturer ratios in selected tertiary institutions 2017

Universities	Student-lecturer ratio
Limkokwing University of Creative Technology (LUCT)	38
Southern Africa Nazarene University (SANU)	30
University of Eswatini (UNESWA)	22
Public colleges	
Ngwane Teacher Training College	10
William Pitcher College	8

Source: EMIS.

Apart from skills upgrading among teaching staff, the PSET system will need a growing number of qualified and competent teachers and lecturers in order to modernize its range of programs, increase access and replace current teachers many of whom near retirement age (ESEPARC, 2018). Addressing the key challenge of availability of competent teaching staff, therefore, does require more than skills upgrading programs. Rather, a more comprehensive human resource strategy may be considered, especially for TVET teachers and instructors. Such a strategy would address challenges of initial training, upskilling and continuous professional development, working conditions and a TVET teacher qualification system that facilitates lifelong learning and creates conducive avenues for industry practitioners to cross over into the teaching profession.

8.3.6 Limited use of work-based learning (WBL)

The possibility to expand and structure work-based learning should be explored. Evidence worldwide shows that work-based learning (WBL) improves the relevance of skills development and consequently the chances of young labor market entrants for employment. In countries where most vocational learning takes place in apprenticeships youth unemployment is often significantly lower than in those countries where skills development is mainly offered in educational institutions. Skills development delivered mainly or partly at the workplace exposes youth to real workplace conditions, thus improving up-to-date technical competencies as well as soft skills and work attitudes. WBL also improves the fit of new recruits with company requirements as employers have the chance to observe youth performance in the workplace before recruitment. This supports successful matching between employers and job seekers and increases the job chances for youth who cannot rely on private networks during job search, especially when recruitment procedures are predominantly informal. Against this background, efforts are increasing worldwide to strengthen WBL elements in post-school education and training, and to create more structured avenues to include enterprises in the delivery of education and training.

Eswatini can build on existing traditions when strengthening WBL. Especially in TVET, many institutions require internships as part of their curriculum. For example, VOCTIM's motor mechanics courses, which are running over a period of three years, include a one-year internship in the second year. In the Manzini Industrial and Training Centre (MITC), which targets school drop-outs, one year out of a two-year program is reserved for industrial attachment (ESEPARC, 2018). Although there are no national standards, internship requirements vary from institution to institution and access to internships is not well organized, companies are prepared to take on students. The ESEPARC assessment in 2018 identified 38 employers[92] receiving TVET students for industrial attachment

92 This include parastatals, ministries and other public organizations, such as the University of Swaziland.

in automotive, electrical engineering and ICT trades alone. As mentioned before, Eswatini has also been running a formal apprenticeship and traineeship scheme under the auspices of the DIVT. While actual numbers involved remain very small, the scheme indicates industry commitment towards involvement in TVET. Workplace learning through internships also takes place during university studies, but information is scarce. LUCT, for example, runs the Limkokwing Entrepreneurship Accelerating Platform (LEAP), which organizes and quality-assures structured internships and attachments.[93]

Particularly in countries with a large informal sector such as Eswatini, strengthening informal apprenticeship training can substantially improve the skills development options for vulnerable youth, especially those from low-income families and with low levels of education. Information on informal apprenticeships in Eswatini is not available, but in view of the increasing importance of the informal sector, it is also likely that informal unregulated training is increasingly practiced by master craftspersons. Bringing this training closer to the formal skills development system would not only open up the potential for quality assurance but would also provide access to formal certification for those who have previously been learning informally. The further roll-out of the ESQF would also allow for connecting informal skills development to formal qualification structures.

More knowledge is required to understand the current extent and practice of WBL in the formal and informal sectors of the economy, the preparedness of companies to get involved and the potential of increasing WBL opportunities for Swazi youth by creating incentives and conducive institutions.

8.3.7 Challenges to align skills of PSET graduates with labor market needs

The PSET supply needs to be better aligned with market needs and particularly focus on digital skills development. Available studies reveal considerable skills shortages in priority sectors. These are a result of outdated curricula, which are not aligned with the requirements of modern production technologies, as well as lack of programs for new and emerging occupational fields, for example B-Tech qualifications (ESEPARC, 2018). The Government has initiated several initiatives aimed to address the supply-demand gaps, including the MoET/UNICEF study on adolescent ad youth employability of 2020, the National Skills Survey to be conducted by the MoLSS in 2021, the launching of the Eswatini Qualifications Framework, and the subsequent establishment of the Eswatini National Alignment Committee (NAC) in March 2019 aimed to facilitate the alignment of the ESQF with the Southern African framework.

93 Information provided by the Institution.

A bold initiative to align the supply and demand with skills is required in the field of digital skills. A digital skills diagnostic study conducted by the World Bank in 2020 comes to the conclusion that considering the current (increasing) supply of initiatives in the field of digital skills development, a comprehensive and coordinated ICT and Education Policy and Implementation Plan is needed to integrate the required and planned investment in ICT infrastructure, teacher training, curriculum development and services in a coherent program, based on comprehensive analytical work to understand digital skills needs and current supply constraints.

8.4 Looking ahead - PSET

TVET and tertiary education institutions need to strengthen their engagement with employers to improve the relevance of their training programs to labor market needs and improve the employability of TVET and tertiary graduates. This could include skills demand surveys at regular intervals to inform the development of new training programs and/or the expansion of existing programs that are in high demand by employers. Public private partnerships such as the Advanced School of IT (ASIT), located at the RSTP IT Park, are good examples of delivering employer relevant courses, and employment outcomes of its first batch of students needs to be closely monitored to assess whether this kind of model should be replicated and scaled up. The strengthening of formal and informal links between training providers and employers and the use of field visits, employer fairs, and internships would help improve the school-to-work transition for graduates. Regular tracer studies would also be essential to monitor the labor market outcomes of PSET graduates and verify that courses are responding to market needs.

A system to regularly collect and analyze data on TVET service provision is urgently required to inform sub-sector planning, coordination, and regulation. Data is required from all providers, including the large private provider segment. It will be essential to design and conduct a comprehensive provider mapping to be updated annually. Once such a list is in place, a system to regularly collect data from all TVET providers on enrolment, graduates, teachers and instructors, facilities, occupational health and safety standards, and quality, that is integrated into the EMIS could be developed.

TVET is multi-sectoral in nature and requires the engagement of multiple ministries, the private sector, and communities. Therefore, the sub-sector requires an overarching regulatory and coordination framework to ensure different provider systems are planned and implemented in coordination and meet labor market needs. Its complexity also requires strong leadership and commitment to expand and strengthen it. It is also a priority to develop a coherent TVET legislative framework and update the 2010 TVETSD policy.

9. Education spending and financing

This chapter examines public and household education spending in Eswatini with the objective of guiding public resource allocation to enable the sector to achieve universal primary completion; increased access and retention at the secondary level; and improved education quality. It begins by describing the overall trends in public education spending and the relative priority of education compared to other sectors. The next section examines recurrent versus development spending as well as public recurrent spending over time and by economic classification. It also discusses the equity of public education spending. This is followed by analysis of the trend in public recurrent spending per student by education level before moving on to the analysis of household education spending. The next section compares the contributions of public and household spending to overall education spending. There is then a brief discussion of education financing from development partners. Finally, some of the key policy considerations looking ahead are set out.

The priority issues related to education spending and financing identified by the ESA are set out in Box 24 and are discussed in detail in the remainder of the chapter.

Box 24 Priority issues in education spending and financing

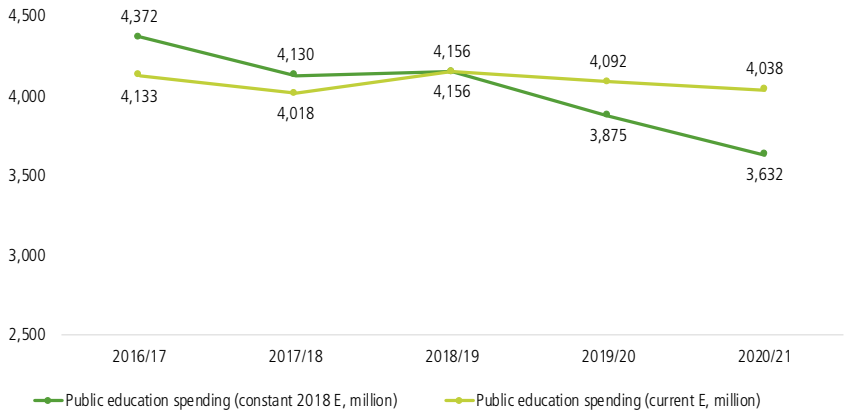
- Eswatini spends more on education than the average for lower-middle-income countries but less than the SACU average and spending is declining.
- Recurrent non-salary spending as well as development spending related to improving the quality of education is inadequate.
- The distribution of public education resources is highly inequitable which contributes to student drop-out and reduces access to post-primary education.
- Given the decline in the education budget and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the overall fiscal space going forward:
  - » It may become necessary to reallocate resources within the education sector. For example, from tertiary education which benefits a relatively small number of individuals to ECDE that targets a much larger number of individuals and could help raise school readiness and improve learning during the subsequent stages.
  - » There is a need to increase the efficiency of education spending in each sub-sector.

9.2 Total public education spending

Total public education spending has declined in real terms over the last five years. Total public education spending, including OVC education grants and scholarships, in current terms remained relatively stable at E4 billion between 2016/17 and 2020/21. But over the same period after adjusting for inflation (real terms), public education spending decreased from almost E4.4 billion in 2016/17 to E3.6 billion in 2020/21 – a 17% decline (Figure 79).[94] Uncertainty about future SACU revenues,[95] coupled with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, means it is unlikely that there will be fiscal space to increase public education spending over the next few years. Rather, to preserve current spending levels it may become necessary to reallocate resources from lower priority areas to education, and to reallocate resources within the sector to higher priority areas.

The shares of GDP and total public spending assigned to education have also declined. Since 2016/17, the share of education in total public spending has decreased by 5 percentage points to 16% (Figure 79). As a share of GDP, education spending decreased from just above 7% in 2016/17 to 5.5% in 2020/21. The decline in the shares of GDP and total public spending going to education, indicate that other sectors have become more of a priority (see below).

Figure 79 Trend in total public education spending



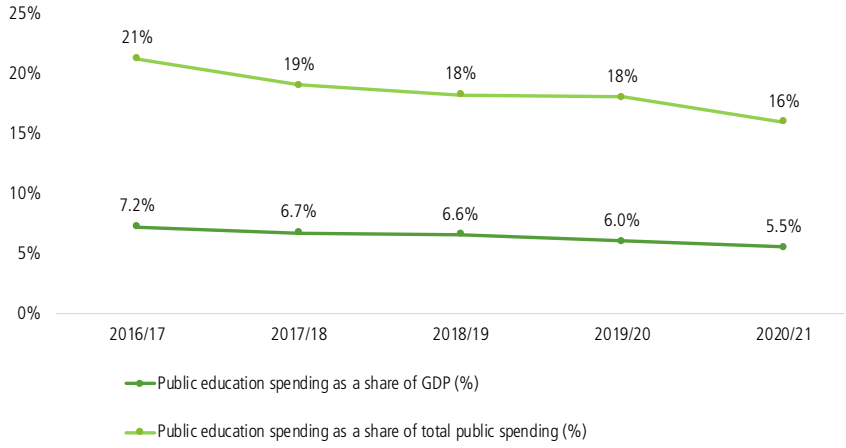
Source: Budget books, IMF country report GDP deflator.

Note: 1) Includes OVC education grants and scholarships.

94 For the two most recent fiscal years, Figure 79 shows the budgeted amounts rather than executed amounts. However, budget execution for education is typically high. In 2016/17 and 2017/18 the executed amounts almost fully matched the approved budget (UNICEF, 2018).

95 SACU revenue currently accounts for around 41% of Eswatini's total revenue (World Bank, 2019), and is expected to decline from 2022 onwards, reflecting the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on future revenues.

Figure 80 Trend in public education spending as a share of GDP and total government spending



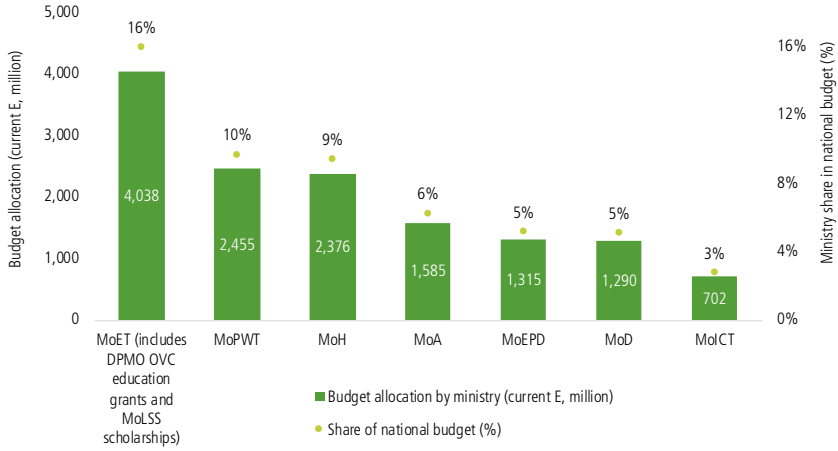
Source: Budget books, IMF deflator.

Note: 1) Includes OVC education grants and scholarships.

Although the education sector continues to receive the largest budget allocation, growth in its share of the national budget has stalled. In 2020/21 the MoET received 16% of the total national budget, six percentage points more than the next largest ministry – the Ministry of Public Works and Transport (10%) (Figure 81).[96] The other most important sectors in terms of the budget are the Ministry of Health (9%), the Ministry of Agriculture (6%), the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development (MoEPD) (5%), the Ministry of Defense (5%), and the Ministry of Information, Communication, and Technology (MoICT) (3%). Since 2013/14 the share of the national budget allocated to the MoET has only increased by 1% in real terms. This compares to increases of 78% for each of the MoICT and the MoEPD (capital), 56% for the MoPWT, 37% for the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade (MoCIT), and 17% for the Ministry of Health and DPMO (combined). This suggest that priority is shifting from the social sectors to capital investments.

96 The MoET share includes OVC education grants which fall under the DPMO and scholarships sponsored by the MoLSS.

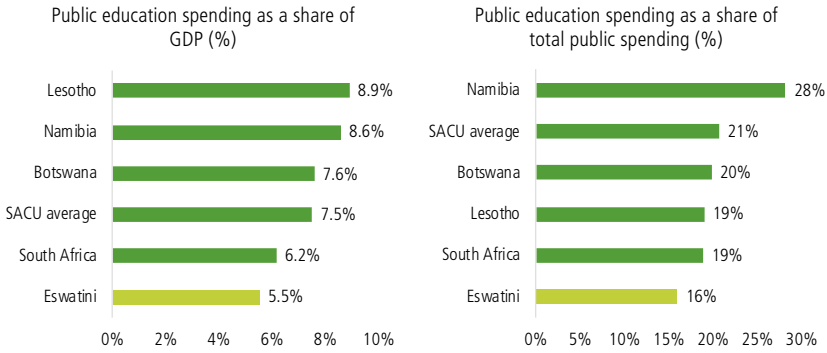
Figure 81 National budget allocation and share for the top seven ministries 2020/21



Source: Team estimates using Budget books.

Eswatini spends less on education as share of total public spending and of GDP than its neighbors. Eswatini's spending on education as a share of GDP at 5.5% is 2 percentage points below the SACU average, and smaller than that of each of its neighbors who spend between 6.2% (South Africa) and 8.9% (Lesotho) (Figure 82). Similarly, Eswatini's share of education in total public spending at 16% is 5 percentage points less than the SACU average. It is also lower than in neighboring countries whose spending shares range from 19% for South Africa to 28% for Namibia.

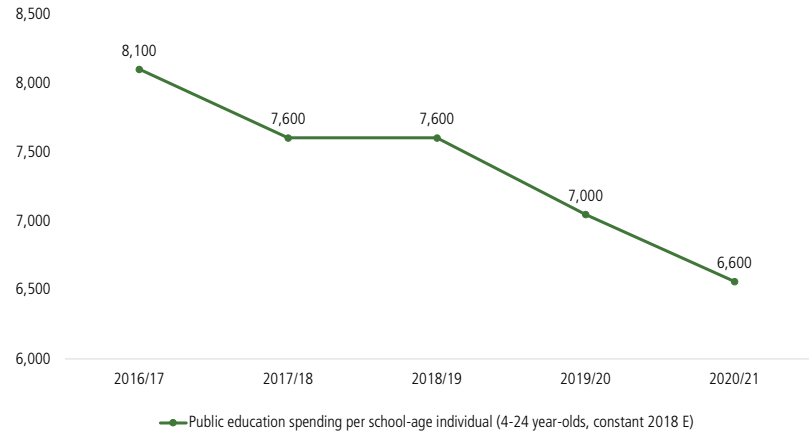
Figure 82 Regional comparison of public education spending



Source: Budget books and IMF Arrticle IV Report for Eswatini, Lesotho ESA 2020, UNESCO-UIS.
Note: 1) Most recent year available.

In addition to the decline in total public education spending, there has been a substantial decline in public spending by school-age individual since 2016/17. The decline in total public education spending (after adjusting for inflation) combined with the rise in secondary enrolment is reflected in the 19% decrease in spending per student over the last five years to E6,600 in 2020/21 (Figure 83).[97]

Figure 83 Trend in public spending per school-age individual



Source: Team calculations using Budget books and CSO population projections.

Box 25 The FPE and OVC education grants

Free primary education (FPE) was introduced for Grade 1 in all public primary schools in 2010, and was gradually rolled out to subsequent grades, and by 2015 all the primary grades were covered. All primary school students are meant to benefit from the FPE grant which covers school fees, school feeding, salaries of support staff, sports, utilities, and maintenance. The FPE grants are paid directly to schools based on enrolment, and the amount varies by grade: E560 for Grade 1 and for Grade 2, E580 for Grade 3 and Grade 4, E640 for Grade 5, E675 for Grade 6, and E1,010 for Grade 7. The FPE grants fall under the MoET. Up until the financial year 2018/19 the European Union funded the FPE grants for Grade 1 students (section 9.7).

Implementation of the OVC education grants for secondary school students started in 2004 (see chapter 6). The grants are paid directly to secondary schools to cover school fees and external examination fees. The intended beneficiaries are poor, orphaned, and vulnerable children of secondary school-age.

97 Primary and tertiary enrolment remained relatively stable over this period while secondary enrolment.

Additional eligibility requirements are that the child must be a Swazi citizen, have a personal identification number (PIN), and attend an officially recognized public school. The annual grant amounts are: E1,950 for Form 1 to Form 4, and E2,500 for Form 5 plus external examination fees up to E2,000. These grants are administered by the DPMO. For more details on the OVC education grants see section 6.4.

The trends for the budgeted and actual amounts for the FPE and OVC education grants are shown in Table 29. For the FPE grant the budgeted amount is the same for each year at E228 million, while the actuals are between E141-145 million indicating a very low budget execution rate (62-64%). A rough calculation for 2017/18, dividing the E145 million spent on the FPE grant with primary enrolment in public schools (231,831), suggests an average amount per student of E625 which is in line with the expected amount given the variation in the grant amount per grade. The same calculation cannot be done for the OVC education grants as only children of secondary school-age who fulfil the eligibility criteria and apply for the grant can receive it. According to administrative data for 2016/17, the number of beneficiaries was 52,600 implying a pay-out per student of E2,700. However, using household survey data for the same year, the estimated number of recipients of the OVC education grant was 17,600 and the budgeted amount for these grants was 167 million while the actual spending was E142 million, which would imply an average amount per student of around E8,000, which is much higher than the intended amount. The large discrepancy in the number of OVC education grant beneficiaries based on administrative versus household survey data needs to be investigated.

Table 29 Trend in actual and budgeted allocations for FPE and OVC education grants

FPE grants	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Budgeted amount (current E, millions)	228	228	228	228	228	228
Actual amount (current E, millions)	144	143	141	145	N.A.	N.A.
Budget execution rate (%)	63%	63%	62%	64%	N.A.	N.A.
OVC education grants						
Budgeted amount (current E, millions)	167	167	169	190	190	180
Actual amount (current E, millions)	137	142	161	160	N.A.	N.A.
Budget execution rate (%)	82%	85%	96%	84%	N.A.	N.A.

Source: Budget books, various years.

9.3 Public recurrent and development education spending

Recurrent spending, which accounts for a vast majority of public education spending, has declined over the last five years. Recurrent spending was about E4.2 million in real terms in 2016/17 but declined to around E3.5 million by 2020/21 but continues to comprise between 95-97% of public total spending in the sector (Table 30). Development spending is very low, making up the remaining 4%. Over the period, spending on development declined by 25% to E152 million in real terms. Overall, there is adequate school infrastructure in Eswatini but many schools lack IT and science equipment and laboratories and libraries; not all schools have adequate WASH facilities; and some schools do not have any source of water or electricity (see chapter 6). There is also a need to construct secondary schools in some rural areas to reduce the distance to school to help improve access to and retention in secondary education. This points to the need for additional development spending to ensure adequately equipped and safe schools.

Table 30 Trend in public recurrent and development education spending

	2016/17 Actual	2017/18 Actual	2018/19 Actual	2019/20 Budget	2020/21 Budget
Current terms (E, millions)					
Public recurrent education spending	3,940	3,874	4,027	3,958	3,870
Public development spending	193	144	129	135	169
Constant terms (constant 2018 E, millions)					
Public recurrent education spending	4,168	3,983	4,027	3,748	3,480
Public development spending	204	148	129	127	152
Share of total public education spending (%)					
Public recurrent education spending	95%	96%	97%	97%	96%
Public development spending	5%	4%	3%	3%	4%

Source: Budget books. Note: 1) Includes OVC education grants and scholarships.

9.5 Public recurrent education spending by education level and economic classification

The shares of public recurrent spending for most sub-sectors have remained relatively stable except for tertiary education which increased and junior secondary education that decreased. Over the period 2018/19 to 2020/21 the public recurrent spending shares of most of the education sub-sectors and also for cross-sectoral administration and teacher education, remained stable. The two main exceptions are tertiary education which increased its spending share from 19% to 21%, and junior secondary education for which the share declined from 22% to 20% (Table 31). Recurrent spending on teacher education remained at 1-2% of total recurrent spending, and for cross-sectoral administration this share was around 5-6%.[98]

Table 31 Trend in public recurrent education spending by education level

	Public recurrent education spending (current E, million)		
	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
Preprimary	3	3	3
Primary	1,446	1,562	1,501
Junior secondary	800	855	793
Senior secondary	396	424	415
Tertiary education	714	757	818
Public formal TVET	48	52	50
AELL	13	13	13
Special needs education	15	16	15
Teacher education	55	63	59
Cross-sectoral administration	223	212	203
Total	**3,713**	**3,958**	**3,870**
	Public recurrent education spending (% of total)		
	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
Preprimary	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Primary	39%	39%	39%
Junior secondary	22%	22%	20%

98 It was not possible to assign cross-sectoral administration, such as ESHEC or ECESWA, to the individual education level(s) it supports, instead this sits as a separate post.

Senior secondary	11%	11%	11%
Tertiary education	19%	19%	21%
Public formal TVET	1.3%	1.3%	1.3%
AELL	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%
Special needs education	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%
Teacher education	1%	2%	2%
Cross-sectoral administration	6%	5%	5%
Total	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

Source: Budget books, WFP, AEC for school feeding and OVC education grant splits.

Note: 1) Includes scholarships and OVC education grants. 2) All data are for approved budgets. 2) Cross-sectoral spending includes administration, management, teacher training, curriculum development and career guidance.

The bulk of public recurrent spending goes to primary education which accommodates the largest share of students by far. Primary education accounts for 43% of public recurrent spending and for 66% of total enrolment (Figure 84). At secondary level, the spending shares are roughly lined up with the enrolment shares: junior secondary education accounts for 23% of recurrent spending and 20% of enrolment while senior secondary's share of recurrent spending is 12% with an enrolment share of 10%.

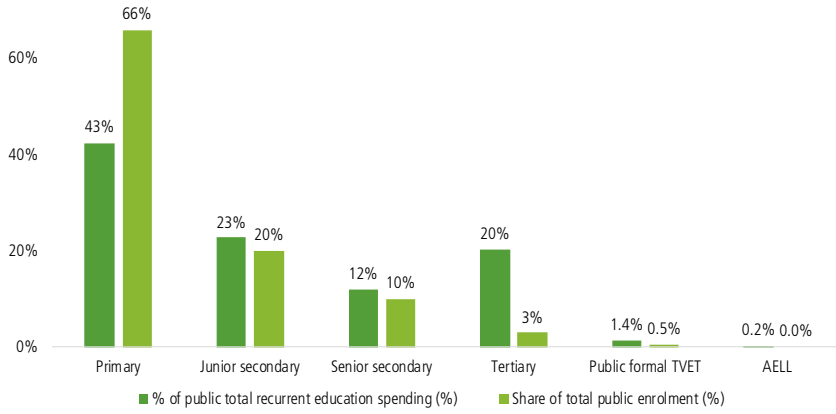
Eswatini allocates a large share of its education budget to tertiary education while spending on ECE, TVET, and AELL is minimal. ECE programs account for a mere 0.1% of the total education budget because of very limited public provision and subsidization of ECDE services. Additional financing for this sub-sector is urgently required to scale up the provision of ECE services while ensuring quality to help raise children's levels of school readiness. TVET (1.3%) and AELL (0.3%) are also under-financed given the shortages of skilled workers in the labor markets (see chapter 8) and the extent of drop-out in the education system which makes it imperative to provide alternative pathways to acquire formal qualifications and skills. Special needs education also receives a small share (0.4%) but generally, students with special needs are in the mainstream education system. Meanwhile, tertiary education receives a large share of public education spending (21%) relative to its enrolment share (3%) and is overall well-financed.[99] This has direct equity implications as most individuals attending tertiary education come from the richest households (see Box 27)

For cross-sectoral administration the salary share is high given the nature of the services provided. Cross-sectoral administration includes, for example, ESHEC

99 Of the recurrent spending on tertiary education around 26% is in the form of student support (scholarships, residence, meals etc.).

that provides services for tertiary education and ECESWA that provides services to primary and secondary education. The salary share is high at 78% while 15% goes to materials and supplies and another 7% to grants and subsidies. The teacher education salary share is 66% and the share of materials and supplies accounts for 34% of spending, and there are no grants or subsidies.

Figure 84 Public recurrent education spending and enrolment shares by education level 2017/18



Source: Budget book 2017/18, Establishments Register 2020/21 for teaching and non-teaching staff split, EMIS 2018 for junior and senior secondary split.

Note: 1) Data on preprimary enrolment are not available so this sub-sector is excluded.
2) Cross-sectoral spending on administration, management, teacher training, curriculum development and career guidance is excluded as it cannot be allocated across the different education levels using the available data.

Salary spending outweighs non-salary spending, and their relative shares in public recurrent spending have remained similar over the last three years. Salaries for teaching and non-teaching staff range from 64-66% between 2018/19 and 2020/21 and outweigh non-salary spending which ranges between 34-36% (Table 32).[100] But salaries for staff at tertiary institutions including UNESWA, are not included because they come under grants and subsidies in the budget. This means that the true salary share is larger. Under the assumption that 90% of MoET subsidies to universities go towards staff salaries, the salary share would go up to 71%. Whereas spending on grants and subsidies is high at 29-31% of total recurrent spending, especially at tertiary level, spending on materials and supplies is very low at only 4-5% which includes primary school textbooks. This will affect the availability of teaching and learning materials and equipment in schools.

100 In addition to public service teachers there are just over 2,000 non-public-service teachers working at public and private primary and secondary schools. These teachers are hired and paid directly by schools and are therefore not covered by the MoET budget.

Table 32 Trend in public recurrent education spending by economic classification

	Public recurrent education spending (current E, million)		
	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
Salary	2,410	2,623	2,471
Non-salary	1,303	1,335	1,398
Materials and supplies	*175*	*177*	*202*
Grants and subsidies	*1,128*	*1,158*	*1,197*
Total	**3,713**	**3,958**	**3,870**
	Public recurrent education spending (% of total)		
	2018/2019	2019/2020	2020/2021
Salary	65%	66%	64%
Non-salary	35%	34%	36%
Materials and supplies	5%	4%	5%
Grants and subsidies	30%	29%	31%
Total	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**

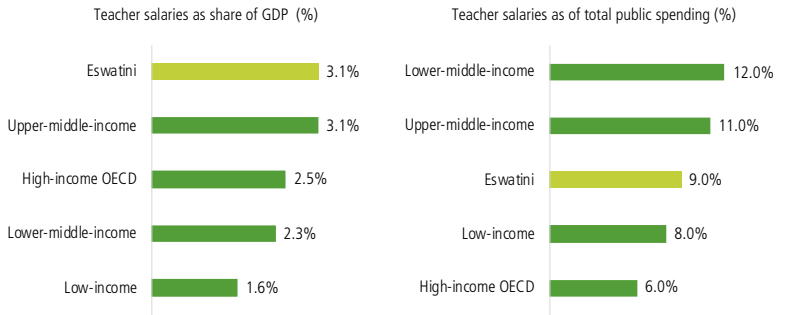
Source: Budget books, WFP, AEC for school feeding and OVC education grant splits.
Note: 1) Includes scholarships and OVC education grants. 2) All data are for approved budgets.

The share of public education resources spent on teacher salaries is high for primary and secondary education while the share spent on materials and supplies is very low. Salaries as a share of total public recurrent education spending ranges from 78% for primary to 84% for junior secondary to 85% for senior secondary education (Table 33). For these three levels the spending on materials and supplies as a share of public recurrent spending is very small: 6% for primary and a mere 1% for each of junior and senior secondary. Grants and subsidies for these levels account for 13-15% of total recurrent spending, this is mainly comprised of FPE grants for primary education and OVC education grants for secondary education. Public provision of preprimary education is limited (see chapter 5), therefore, recurrent spending at this level is extremely low (E3.4 million), and salaries make up 45%, materials and supplies 53%, and grants and subsidies only 2% of public recurrent spending.

Box 26 Comparison of teacher salary shares by country income group

Compared to other lower-middle income countries Eswatini spends a larger share of GDP on teacher salaries. Eswatini spends around 3.1% of GDP on teacher salaries.101 This is the same as the share for upper-middle income countries but higher than the shares for high-income OECD countries (2.5%), other lower-middle-income countries (2.3%), and low-income countries (1.6%) (Figure 85). Teacher salaries alone account for 9% of total public spending in Eswatini, behind other lower-middle income countries (12%) and upper-middle-income countries (11%) but ahead of low-income (8%) and high-income OECD countries (6%).

Figure 85 Comparison of teacher salary shares by country income groups



Source: Team calculations using the Budget book 2020/2021 for Eswatini, Crawfurd and Pugatch 2020 for comparator groups.

The salary share in total public recurrent education spending are largest for public formal TVET, AELL, and special needs education. For formal TVET, salaries comprise 86% of public recurrent spending, for special needs education 88%, and for AELL 90%. There are no grants or subsidies for these three sub-sectors which means the remaining 10-14% are spent on materials and supplies. TVET and special needs education in particular tend to be more material and equipment intensive.

For tertiary education close to all recurrent spending is for grants and subsidies but to a large extent this supports salaries for lecturers and other staff. Grants and subsidies account for 97% of recurrent spending at this level. But an estimated 90% of this goes to support salaries which would bring the tertiary salary share up to 87%. Only 1% of recurrent spending at this level is for materials and supplies.

101 Excludes salaries for non-teaching staff. The number of teachers in the system as well as teacher pay scales are discussed in chapter 7

Table 33 Public recurrent education spending by economic classification and education level 2017/18

	Salaries (current E, millions)	Materials and supplies (current E, millions)	Grants and subsidies (current E, millions)	Total recurrent education spending (current E, millions)
Preprimary	1.5	1.8	0	3.4
Primary	1,168	93	228	1,488
Junior secondary	675	11	113	798
Senior secondary	358	5	56	420
Tertiary education	16	9	692	717
Public formal TVET	44	7	0	51
AELL	7	1	0	7
Special needs education	14	2	0	16
Teacher education	52	27	0	79
Cross-sectoral administration	194	37	18	250
Total	**2,529**	**194**	**1,107**	**3,829**

	Salaries (%)	Materials and supplies (%)	Grants and subsidies (%)	Recurrent total (%)
Preprimary	45%	53%	2%	100%
Primary	78%	6%	15%	100%
Junior secondary	84%	1%	14%	100%
Senior secondary	85%	1%	13%	100%
Tertiary	2%	1%	97%	100%
Public formal TVET	86%	14%	0.0%	100%
AELL	90%	10%	0.0%	100%
Special needs education	88%	12%	0.0%	100%
Teacher education	66%	34%	0.0%	100%
Cross-sectoral administration	78%	15%	7%	100%

Source: Budget book 2017/18, Establishments Register 2020/21 for teaching and non-teaching staff split, EMIS 2018 for junior and senior secondary split.

Notes:
1) No estimate is available for salaries of Grade 0 teachers.
2) Cross-sectoral spending includes administration, management, teacher training, curriculum development and career guidance.
3) Most SEN students are in the mainstream system as per the national policy.
4) The salaries shown for preprimary are for non-teaching staff.
5) Totals may not sum exactly to 100% due to rounding.

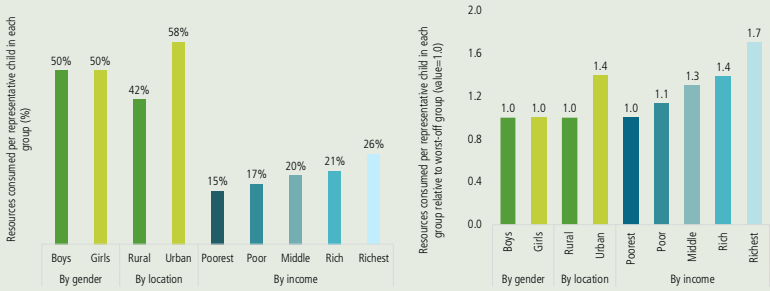
For cross-sectoral administration the salary share is high given the nature of the services provided. Cross-sectoral administration includes, for example, ESHEC that provides services for tertiary education and ECESWA that provides services to primary and secondary education. The salary share is high at 78% while 15% goes to materials and supplies and another 7% to grants and subsidies. The teacher education salary share is 66% and the share of materials and supplies accounts for 34% of spending, and there are no grants or subsidies.

Box 27 Equity in public education spending

To achieve equity in education limited public education resources must be targeted where educational needs are the greatest. Spending per student rises with the education level, and the longer students stay in the education system the more resources they consume. For example, urban students on average stay on longer in education than rural students, and children from richer households stay on longer than children from poorer households, which mean these groups will consume larger share of resources during their school careers (see chapter 6).

The consumption of public education resources is inequitable with children in rural areas and from poorer households lagging behind their peers from urban areas and richer households. Boys and girls consume the same amount of public education resources (Figure 86), which means resource allocation is equitable by gender.[102] By contrast, the representative urban child consumes 40% more education resources than the representative rural child. This is because children living in urban areas stay in school longer, in particular, they are much more like to attend tertiary education (see chapter 6), which is much more costly than lower levels. The same reason applies to children from the richest quintile of households where the representative child consumes 70% more of public education resources than the representative child from the poorest quintile.

Figure 86 Disparities in the consumption of public education resources

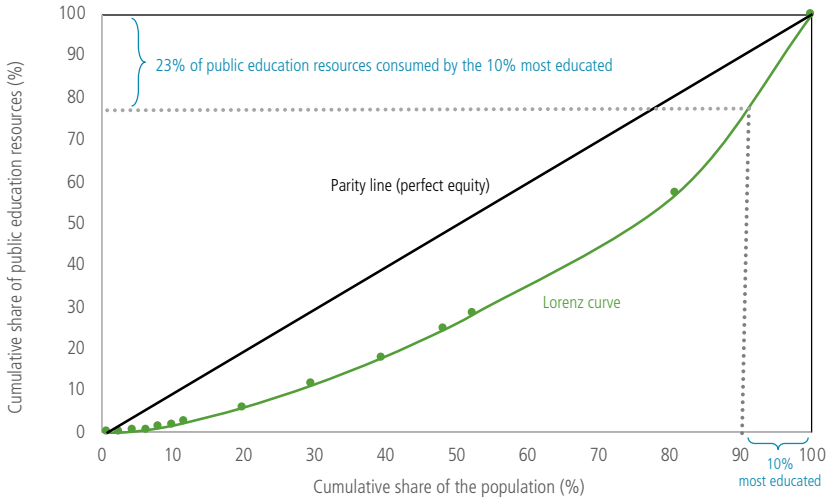


Source: Team estimates based on AEC 2017, Budget estimates, EHIES 2016/17, EMIS 2018.

102 Comparison of the amount of public education resources consumed by each advantaged group relative to each disadvantaged group shows how equitable the public resource distribution is for each group.

Public education resources are concentrated within a very small group of the population. The 10% most educated of the population consume 23% of all public education resources while the 63% least educated of the population consume a mere 13% of resources.[103] Even more starkly, the 21% of the population who are the least educated consume just over 2% of public education resources, underscoring that policies to enable this group to stay in school longer are urgently needed.

Figure 87 Share of public education resources consumed by the 10% most educated



Source: Team estimates based on AEC 2017, Budget estimates, EHIES 2016/17, EMIS 2018.

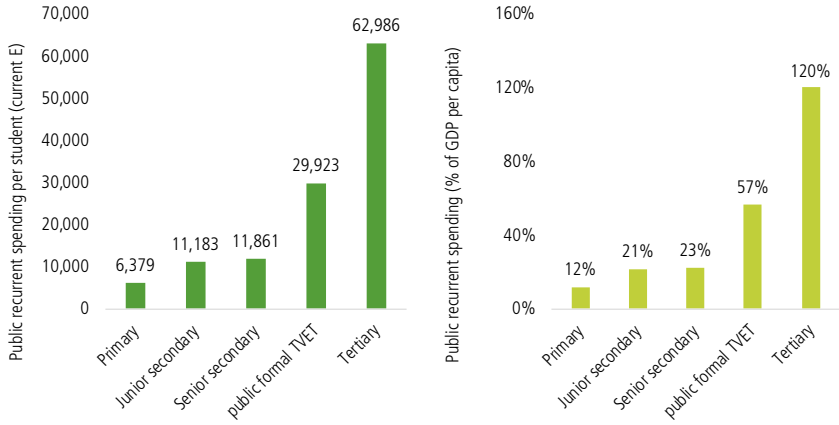
103 Lorenz curve analysis.

9.6 Average recurrent spending per student

The more advanced the education level, the higher the public recurrent spending per student.[104] It follows then that recurrent spending per student (in current terms) is lowest for primary (E6,400) and increases for junior secondary education (E11,200), and senior secondary education (E11,900) (Figure 88). For TVET there is a jump to almost E30,000 per student, this sub-sector tends to require more equipment and machinery, and depending on the program, instructor salaries may be relatively high given their specialist skills. Recurrent spending per tertiary student outstrips that for the other levels at close to E63,000, which is equivalent to 120% of GDP per capita. This means recurrent spending per tertiary student is almost ten times higher than the spending per primary student.

Eswatini spends less per primary student than its neighbors Namibia and South Africa. The average spending per primary student as a share of GDP per capita in Eswatini is 13% which is much less than for South Africa (17%) and Namibia (18%) (Table 34). Recurrent spending per student in secondary education in Eswatini (22%) is higher than in Namibia (16%) and in South Africa (18%). At tertiary level, Eswatini (120%) spends significantly more per student than Namibia (79%) and way above South Africa (46%) but detailed data to examine the reasons for this are not available.

Figure 88 Average public recurrent spending per student by education level 2017/18



Source: Team calculations using the Budget book 2017/18, IMF Country Report 2019, EMIS.

104 Data to compute the average spending per preprimary student are not available.

Table 34 Regional comparison of average spending per student by education level

	Average spending per student as share of GDP per capita (%)		
	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
Eswatini	13%	22%	120%
Namibia	18%	16%	79%
South Africa	17%	18%	46%

Source: 2017/18 Budget book for Eswatini, all others UNESCO-UIS most recent year available.
Note: 1) This table includes development spending.

9.8 Household education spending

The more advanced the education level, the higher the household spending per student. The average household spending per student is E875 for primary, almost E3,500 for junior secondary, close to E4,700 for senior secondary, and jumps to around E10,400 for tertiary education. A main reason for much lower household spending on primary education is the FPE grants, and that non-fee costs at this level tend to be lower. At secondary level average household education spending is higher because of school fees (these are only waived for OVCs) and because of higher non-fee costs at this level, for example for textbooks and transport.

At primary level the share of household consumption devoted to education is larger for the poorest households. For attendance in government-aided schools, the poorest 40% of the population spend on average 3% of their total household consumption on primary education while the remaining (richer) 60% of the population spend around 2% (Figure 89).[105]

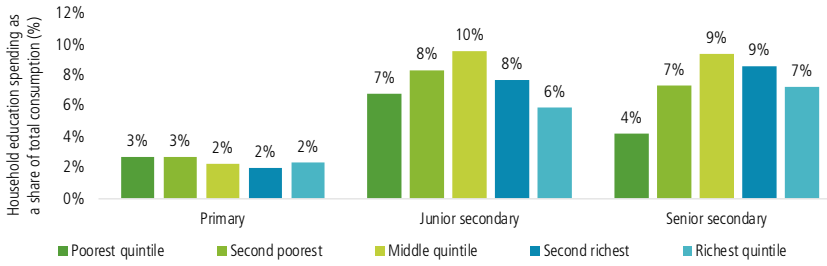
The share of total household consumption that goes to secondary education doubles or more compared to primary level, except for the poorest households at senior secondary level. At junior secondary level, the poorest 40% of households spend 7-8% of their total consumption on education, whereas households in the middle quintile spend 10%, and those in the top two quintiles spend 8% and 6% respectively (Figure 89).[106] For senior secondary education, the spending share of the poorest 20% goes down to 4%, which is arguably the result of many children in this group already having left school (see chapter 6), meaning that the households left in this group are those with relatively higher consumption levels. For the other quintiles, their education spending shares range between 7% and 9%. Tertiary education is almost exclusively attended by individuals

105 No household that is among the bottom 60% of the consumption distribution send their children to private primary schools.

106 Many households that are among the richest 20% send their children to private primary schools, accounting for this their spending share on education rises to 5% because of high fees at private primary schools

from the richest part of the population and about 9% of their total consumption goes towards education spending (not shown).

Figure 89 Education spending share in total household consumption by wealth and education level 2016/17

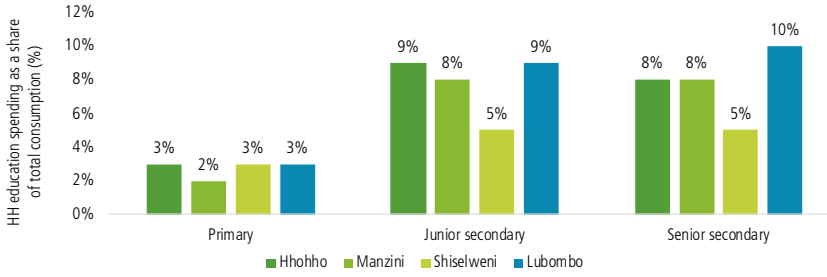


Source: Team estimates using EHIES 2016/17 data, weighted estimates.

Note: 1) This is for government-aided schools only.

Households in Shiselweni region spend a much smaller share of their total consumption on secondary education than households in the other three regions. At primary level households in all four regions devote between 2-3% of their total consumption to primary education (Figure 90). Households in Hhohho, Lubombo, and Manzini spend about 8-9% of their total consumption on junior secondary education and 8-10% on senior secondary education. In contrast, households in Shiselweni spend much smaller shares of their total consumption on these two levels (5% each); the reason for this needs further investigation.[107]

Figure 90 Education spending share in total household consumption by region and education level 2016/17



Source: Team estimates using EHIES 2016/17 data, weighted estimates.

Note: 1) This is for government-aided schools only.

107 Both Lubombo and Shiselweni are poorer, more rural regions than Hhohho and Manzini but the household education spending shares for secondary education are not lower in Lubombo, suggesting that poverty per se is not the reason.

At primary level uniforms are the largest education spending item for households, closely followed by school fees despite the FPE grants. At primary level, 33% of total household spending goes towards fees despite the FPE grant which is meant to cover school fees. The reason is that many households pay top-up fees charged by schools to help cover their operational costs. Charging of top-up fees requires permission from the MoET but many schools charge such fees without having received permission. To eliminate this practice would require more information on which schools charge top-up fees without permission and why, and development of tools for the MoET to assess and enforce compliance with the rules. Uniforms, which are not covered by the FPE grant, is the biggest spending item (36%), and transport between home and school is the third largest item (24%) (Table 35).[108]

The largest spending item for households with children in junior and senior secondary education is by far school fees, followed by uniforms and transport. For junior secondary education, school fees are the largest spending item by a considerable margin (66%), followed by transport (14%), and uniforms (13%). Similarly, for senior secondary education, school fees are the largest education spending item for households (59%) together with transport (14%), and uniforms (9%) but at this level examination fees are also a large item (9%). For households with individuals attending tertiary education, the main spending item is tuition fees (68%), followed by transport (20%), textbooks (5%), and examination fees (4%).

Table 35 Household spending on education by item and education level 2016/17

	Tuition/ school fees (%)	Textbooks (%)	Uniforms (%)	Non-textbook school materials (%)	Examination fees (%)	Transport between home and school (%)	Other (%)	Average household education spending per student (current E)
Primary	33%	1%	36%	2%	1%	24%	4%	875
Junior secondary	66%	1%	13%	1%	3%	14%	2%	3,476
Senior secondary	59%	1%	9%	1%	9%	14%	6%	4,690
Tertiary	68%	5%	0%	2%	4%	20%	1%	10,353

Source: Team estimates using EHIES 2016/17 data, weighted estimates.

Note: 1) This is for all types of schools.

108 While schools with many students can benefit from economies-of-scale from the FPE grants, small schools can find it hard to fully cover school operational costs with the FPE grants due to fixed costs.

9.9 Comparison of household and public education spending

Spending by households constitutes a notable share of total spending on junior and senior secondary education. That households need to spend large amounts of their income on education out-of-pocket affects retention and equity in education. The estimated total spending by households on education is E236 million for primary, E304 million for junior secondary, E167 million for senior secondary, and E82 million for tertiary level (Table 36). This means household spending on education accounts for an estimated 12% of total spending at primary level, and even larger shares of 23% and 22% for junior and senior secondary, which is to a larger degree driven by school fees. At tertiary level, the contribution of households to total education spending is the smallest at 8% because of the low participation and this sub-sector being heavily subsidized.

Table 36 Estimated average annual household and public per student spending by level

	Household spending per student (current E)	Government spending per student (current E)	Estimated total household education spending (current E, milllion)	Total public education spending (current E, million)	Household contribution to total (public + household) education spending (%)
Primary	875	7,496	236	1,749	12%
Junior secondary	3,476	13,112	304	1,011	23%
Senior secondary	4,690	13,881	167	608	22%
Higher	10,353	69,361	82	900	8%

Source: EHIES 2016/17, team estimates (weighted), and Budget book 2017/18.
Note: 1) Public spending includes development spending. 2) Households spending includes all school types. 3) Public per student spending in 2017/18 has been adjusted to 2016/17 level.

9.10 Education financing from development partners

Eswatini's education system is essentially self-funded because it is a lower-middle-income country. The most important development partner in terms of education financing has been the European Union which until 2019 financed the FPE grants for all Grade 1 students as well as measures to improve the quality of primary education, including the review and updating of the primary education curriculum and support for implementation of NETIP II. The main bilateral development partners are the Government of Japan which funds secondary school construction to promote inclusive education and human capital training, and the Taiwan Technical Mission. Other multilateral partners such as the

Global Partnership for Education (GPE), UNICEF, and UNESCO provide support for smaller projects. For example, adolescent protection from violence; access to quality health services; provision of quality non-formal education; and strengthening of the capacity of communities to appreciate and value education. Over the three-year period 2018-2020, the total financing from these partners amounted to roughly USD12 million, equivalent to less than 2% of public total education spending over the same period.[109] This may not fully capture all financing from the development partners as reporting is not comprehensive. Other partners including civil society, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector, also finance activities in education, data on this financing is not available.

External financing for education is directed mainly to the development budget. In 2018/19, 52% of the development budget was funded by the development partners (UNICEF, 2019). This heavy reliance on external financing makes the already minimal development budget volatile (section 9.2). The decline in development spending since 2016/17 can partly be explained by the ending of external financing for secondary school construction during the period.

Looking ahead – education spending and financing

It will be essential to maintain, and if possible, given the current economic outlook, increase financing for the education sector to raise the quality of education, improve student retention, increase equity, and enhance teacher management. This will require consultations with national education stakeholders to ensure the education sector retains its priority status in terms of the national budget, and that public resources are reallocated from lower priority sectors to education if needed. Options for accessing private financing should also be explored. It may also become necessary to consider reallocating resources within the sector to higher priority areas, for example, from tertiary education to ECDE from which a larger number of children stand to benefit. Measures to increase the efficiency of spending, for instance, improved targeting of tertiary bursaries and assessment of teachers to improve their utilization should also be considered.

109 Based on MoET data.

Coda Impact of COVID-19 on the education sector

Current situation

Eswatini is facing an economic slowdown due to the ongoing COVID-19 global pandemic. While the full magnitude of the impact of the pandemic on the country's economy remains to be seen, emerging evidence shows that growth prospects are adversely affected. In 2020, the economy contracted by 3.5 percent, in sharp contrast to the pre-COVID-19 growth projection of 2.4% for the same year (IMF, 2020), and in 2021, economic growth in the country is expected to remain subdued. Prolonged lockdowns, travel restrictions and other measures put in place in Eswatini and in the Southern Africa region are leading to a decline in economic activities, job losses, and reduced remittances, exacerbating challenges related to high unemployment, poverty, and persistent inequality, which the country was already grappling with before COVID-19.

In the education sector, the pandemic is having a devastating effect. In order to contain the spread of the virus, the Government closed all schools and educational institutions in March 2020, affecting over 370,000 learners nationally across all levels of education. Starting in October 2020, selected grades at the secondary level (mainly grades that have external examinations) were reopened with a plan to gradually reopen all grades in a phased manner. However, following a surge in COVID-19 cases in December 2020 and January 2021, the planned reopening has been delayed, and almost all schools remain closed.

While data on the impact of the pandemic on educational outcomes is not available, anecdotal evidence as well as experience from other countries in the Sub-Saharan Africa region point to the severe consequences of the disruption to education service delivery on the educational outcomes of children and youth. The impact of the pandemic is likely to be particularly acute for vulnerable and marginalized children, who were already faced with significant constraints in accessing and stahing in school even before the onset of the pandemic. There are multiple channels through which the adverse impacts of the pandemic on educational outcomes are unfolding, some of which are discussed below:

Loss of learning: The prolonged school closures and the disruption of face-to-face teaching and learning is likely to lead to significant learning losses for most children. To mitigate the impact of school closures, the Government is offering remote learning programs, mainly using radio and television and print. In addition, some educational websites have been zero rated to allow children and youth to access distance learning resources for free. While these measures are encouraging, there is no available data to assess the reach and quality of

these distance learning programs and resources or to evaluate their effectiveness in promoting learning. Household survey data show that many households, especially poor ones and those in Lubombo and Shiselweni do not own radio, television, or computers. This suggests that for many children remote learning remains out of reach (Table 37).

Higher dropout rates: As the school closures continue and access to remote learning remain limited, the risk of becoming disengaged and eventually permanently dropping out of school increase. For children from poor households, the economic impact of the pandemic is also likely to make it difficult to cover the direct and indirect costs of schooling. This constraint is particularly salient at the secondary level, where schooling is not free. Through these channels, the pandemic is likely to lead to a worsening of the some of the persistent inequalities in access to education and student retention across income groups and rural and urban areas.

Table 37 Ownership of selected household assets by region, by location and by poverty status

	Radio cassette/CD player	Television	Computer
By region			
Hhohho	60%	58%	16%
Manzini	59%	60%	17%
Shiselweni	49%	44%	5%
Lubombo	51%	47%	10%
By poverty status			
Poor	46%	34%	2%
Non-poor	64%	70%	22%
By location			
Urban	63%	67%	25%
Rural	53%	49%	8%
National	**56%**	**54%**	**13%**

Source: Weighted estimates based on EHIES 2016/17.

Negative impact on girls: Anecdotal evidence shows that the pandemic has resulted in an increase in adolescent pregnancy, which is the most common reason for dropout among girls in Eswatini after the cost of schooling. Girls are also more likely to bear the burden of care-related tasks in the household (e.g. childcare due to school closures and care for sick household members) than boys, which will negatively affect their engagement in remote learning or home schooling during the crisis and jeopardize their return to school.

Government spending on education: As the economic impact of the pandemic continues to unfold, the Government's resources are increasingly strained from lower revenues and increased spending associated with the pandemic. This raises the risk that education sector spending will stagnate or even decline in the coming years, while the need for increased investment towards recovery and rebuilding of the system is urgent and critical.

Box 28 Impact of COVID-19 in the Sub-Saharan Africa region

The COVID-19 pandemic has created one of the worst educational crises globally, affecting about 1.6 billion students across more than 190 countries.[110] In the Sub-Saharan Africa region, at the peak of the pandemic, 250 million learners were out of schools as a result of pandemic related school closures and in many countries in the region schools remain closed. The prolonged school closure, combined with the social and economic impact of the pandemic, is having far-reaching adverse impacts on the education systems of countries in the region, many of which were already facing significant challenges related to gaps in access, quality and equity.

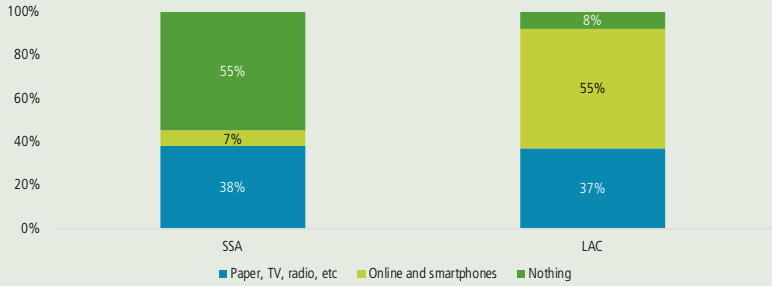
Globally, it is estimated that the share of children living in learning poverty – unable to read and understand a simple text by age ten, could increase from 53% to 63%. For SSA where learning poverty is the highest (estimated at 87% prior to COVID-19), and learning poverty is expected to rise to 92% post-COVID-19. Prior to COVID-19, the average expected years of schooling in the SSA region was estimated at 8.1 years, while learning adjusted years of schooling (LAYS) was 4.9 years; post COVID-19 the average LAYS for the region is estimated at 4.3 years (Azevedo et.al, 2020).

In all countries, already vulnerable children are bearing the brunt of the disruption to education service delivery leading to widening of existing inequalities. One of the most critical channels through which inequalities are widening relates to uneven access to remote learning. Gaps in access to radio, television, electricity and the internet, has made it impossible for many students to learn during the pandemic. Less than half of SSA students have access to some sort of remote learning compared to 92% in the LAC region (Figure 91).

110 See https://www.worldbank.org/en/data/interactive/2020/03/24/world-bank-education-and-covid-19

Lessons from past crisis also show that girls are more likely to be negatively impacted during prolonged school closures, especially due to increased likelihood of teenage pregnancy. School closures in Sierra Leone during Ebola outbreak, for example, were shown to increase teenage pregnancies by as much as 65% (Massaquoi et. al., 2021).

Figure 91 Access to remote learning in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America and Caribbean

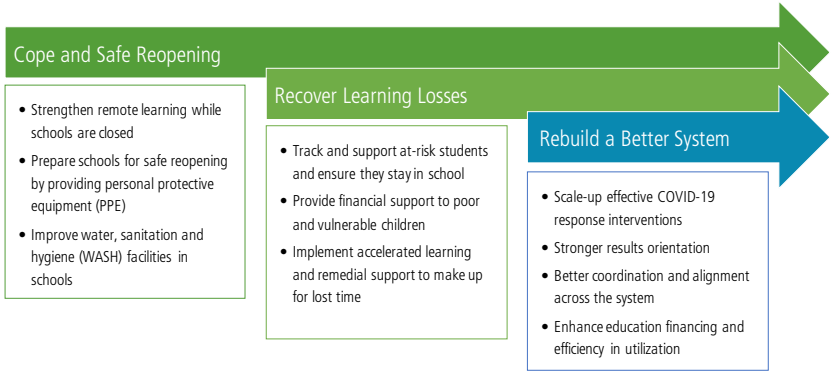


Source: World Bank internal draft, February 2021.

Moving forward

The Government's education sector response to the COVID-19 pandemic was released in March 2020 with a strong emphasis on early emergency response and recovery. The Government's strategy is also aligned with the approach recommended by the World Bank with three overlapping phases: (i) coping and safe reopening; (ii) recovering learning losses; and (iii) rebuilding the education system. These three phases are discussed in more detail below (MoET, 2020).

Figure 92 A phased approach for the Education Sector Response to COVID-19



Source: Adapted from MoET 2020 and World Bank 2020.

Coping and safe return: While schools remain closed in Eswatini in order to contain the spread of the virus, continuing to engage students with remote learning remains a priority. As the the country moves towards reopening, preparing schools to operate safely, including by providing adequate personal protective equipment (PPE) and improving water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities, will be critical to keep students, teachers and communities safe.

Recovering learning losses: As schools reopen, targeted support will be essential to ensure that children from all socioeconomic backgrounds are able to return to school, stay in school and do not fall further behind in their learning. To this end, tracking and supporting at-risk students, including through re-enrollment drives/campaigns, and reducing the cost of education for struggling students including by providing financial support to cover the direct and indirect cost of schooling could be important strategies. In providing financial support to poor students, improving the targeting of the Orphans and Vulnerable Children Education (OVC) grant and linking other social protection programs with educational outcomes could be effective strategies to provide support to children from low-income households.

In addition, providing increased support to students to help them make up lost ground in their learning will be essential. This will require assessing learning levels, developing and implementing accelerated curricula and integrating remedial education, including by leveraging technological solutions. It will also require training teachers to implement accelerated lessons and provide more tailored support to students, especially those who have fallen behind. Adjustments to the school calendar including by extending the academic year and the school week, could also be used to increase the instruction time children will receive once schools reopen.

Rebuilding a better system: The COVID-19 crisis has shown some of the critical weakness in the education sector, including the inequalities in access and learning that are worsening under the pandemic and the heavy reliance on traditional pathways of schooling that has made the sector vulnerable to shocks. The crisis has also drawn increased attention from the Government and development partners to the need to address the fault lines in the system. Hence the crisis presents an opportunity to rethink education service delivery in the country and design and rebuild a better, more inclusive and resilient system. To this end, experiences that are emerging from COVID-19 response strategies both within and outside Eswatini can provide lessons on effective interventions, including in EdTech, that could be adapted and integrated into the system at scale.

In rebuilding the system, a stronger focus on student results including through

regular measurement of student learning outcomes and better alignment across the different levels of education to ensure continuity and efficiency should also be priorities. Lastly, improving education financing to address persistent inequalities and quality gaps, while also improving efficiency in the utilization of resources will be important.

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Annex A International and regional agreements and commitments to education

International and regional agreements and commitments to education to which Eswatini is a signatory.

- United Nations Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development 2015.
- SADC Policy Framework on Care and Support for Teaching and Learning 2015.
- UNESCO-Commonwealth of Learning Paris Declaration on Open Educational Resources, 2012.
- SADC Framework for Technical and Vocational Education and Training 2012 – 2016.
- SADC EMIS Norms and Standards Assessment Framework 2011
- SADC Qualifications Framework, 2011.
- Moscow Declaration on Digital Information Preservation 2011.
- African Union Windhoek Declaration on Social Development 2008.
- Declaration of the World Education Forum: the Dakar Framework 2000.
- African Union Agenda 2063.
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989.
- Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Inter-Country Adoption 1980.
- UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), 1979.

Annex B Development partners active in education in Eswatini

Annex table 1 **Role of development partners in education and training in Eswatini**

	Ministry of Education and Training	Ministry of Health	Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture	Deputy Prime Minister's Office
UNICEF	Strengthen monitoring and response of Violence Against Children (VAC) in schools Support digitization of education management information system (EMIS)	Monitoring of action plan for birth registration Development of nutrition operational plan and community health sector operational plan Capacity building of health staff and community systems (RHM) on integrated child health services Support implementation of WASH sector plan Support capacity building for timely birth registration Support perinatal and neonatal death surveillance and audits Strengthen adolescent HIV knowledge, prevention and treatment	Strengthen systems for skills acquisition of out of school children	Strengthen national and regional mechanisms coordination of initiatives that prohibit Violence Against Children (VAC) Strengthen management systems to monitor Gender Based Violence (GBV) and VAC Support strategic partnerships to leverage resources and promote child rights.
UNESCO	Development of TVET M&E Framework in Eswatini Development of ECDE frameworks (Institutional, Legal, Program, Financing, M&E) Development of Teacher Standards		Support to Youth Council on developing youth engagement programs on skills Support to Sports and Recreational Council in implementation of Anti-Doping Program	

	Ministry of Education and Training	Ministry of Health	Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture	Deputy Prime Minister's Office
Government of Japan	Construction of four Secondary Schools Capacity building program Technical assistance program			
European Union	TVET sector – development of occupational standards for two economic sectors, provision of equipment Education infrastructure and equipment across the country Payment of school fees for all Grade 1 children in the country until 2018/19 Support for the development of the National Education and Training Improvement Program I and II Capacity building for teachers and school committees Improving the quality of primary education by supporting the update of the primary education curriculum			
Taiwan Technical Mission	Support to two TVET colleges: Strengthening ICT and Electronics Engineering courses at Eswatini College of Technology (ECOT), and the Automobile Repair, Electricity and Air-condition courses at Vocational and Commercial Training Institute in Mastapha (VOCTIM)			

Annex C List of consultations

Annex table 2 **List of consultations for the ESA preparation**

Agency/Ministry/Organization	Department/Unit
Deputy Prime Minister's Office	
Emlalatini Development Centre	
Ministry of Health	
Ministry of Economic Planning and Development	
Ministry of Education and raining	Department of Communications
	Department of Planning
	Early Childhood Care, Development and Education
	Education Sector Coordinator (SWAP)
	Education Management Information Systems
	Examinations Council of Eswatini
	INSET Department
	Inspectorate
	National Curriculum Centre
	Primary Education
	Regional Education Office
	Secondary Education
	Special Education Needs Unit
	Tertiary Education
Ministry of Finance	
Ministry of Labor and Social Security	Department of Industrial and Vocational Training
Ministry of Tinkhundla	
Sebenta National Institute	
Taiwan Technical Mission	
Teaching Service Commission	
Technical TVET Colleges	Eswatini College of Technology
	Ngwane Park Training Centre
UNESCO	
UNICEF	
University of Eswatini	INSET Department
UNDP	
World Food Program	