

National Skills Development and Coordination Framework For Adolescents and Young People Programmes in Eswatini

August 2022



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INTERNATIONAL

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List of Abbreviations

4IR	4th Industrial Revolution	ILO	International Labour Organisation
ACMS	Aid Coordination and Management Section	JAE	Junior Achievement Eswatini
AEC	Annual Education Census	KII	Key Informant Interview
AI	Artificial Intelligence	M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
AU	African Union	MCIT	Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade
AYP	Adolescents and Young People	MITC	Manzini Industrial Training Centre
CFI	Centre for Financial Inclusion	MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
CIC	Construction Industry Council	MoEPD	Ministry of Economic Planning and Development
Covid-19	Coronavirus Disease 19	MoET	Ministry of Education and Training
CSO	Civil Society Organisation	MoF	Ministry of Finance
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training (South Africa)	MoLSS	Ministry of Labour and Social Security
DIVT	Directorate of Industrial and Vocational Training	MoPS	Ministry of Public Service
ECOT	Eswatini College of Technology	MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
ELGPN	The European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network	MSCYA	Ministry of Sport, Culture and Youth Affairs
EMIS	Education Management Information System	MSME	Micro-, Small- and Medium-Enterprise
ENQF	Eswatini National Qualifications Framework	NASTC	Nhlangano Agricultural Skills Training Centre
ENYC	Eswatini National Youth Council	NCAP	National Career Advice Portal (South Africa)
ESA	Eastern and Southern Africa	NCC	National Curriculum Centre
ESARO	Eastern and Southern African Regional Office	NDS	National Development Strategy
ESEPARC	Eswatini Economic Policy Analysis and Research Centre	NEET	Not in Employment, Education or Training
ESHEC	Eswatini Higher Education Council	NETIP	National Education and Training Improvement Programme
ESSP	Education Sector Strategic Plan	NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
ETP	Education and Training Provider	NHTC	National Handicraft and Training Centre
EU	European Union	NOLS	National Open Learning System (South Africa)
GenU	Generation Unlimited	NQF	National Qualifications Framework
GoE	Government of Eswatini	NSA	National Skills Authority (South Africa)
GPE	Global Partnership for Education		
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education		
HMCS	His Majesty's Correctional Services		
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies		
ILFS	Integrated Labour Force Survey		

NSDP	National Skills Development Plan (South Africa)
NSF	National Skills Fund (South Africa)
NTA	Namibia Training Authority
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OS	Online Survey
PPYP	Public-Private-Youth Partnership
PRSAP	Poverty Reduction Strategy and Action Plan
PSET	Post-Secondary Education and Training
PWD	Person with Disability
PYEI	Presidential Youth Employment Intervention (South Africa)
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority (in South Africa)
SIFA	Skills Initiative for Africa
SITC	Siteki Industrial Training Centre
ToR	Terms of Reference
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNESWA	University of Eswatini
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USSD	Unstructured Supplementary Service Data
VOCTIM	Vocational and Commercial Training Institute Matsapha

Acknowledgements

The Aflatoun International research team would like to thank the Ministry of Education and Training for the continuous collaboration with UNICEF in supporting the plans and strategies for skills development for employability in the education and training sector. The compilation of the skills development and coordination framework has been made possible through the collaboration and interaction of UNICEF, the Ministry of Education and Training, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and national stakeholders involved in programmes for skills development and employability for adolescent and young people in Eswatini.

Acknowledgements are accorded to ministry and government actors, key stakeholders and adolescent and young people who responded to the surveys, participated in key informant interviews, engaged with the UNICEF U-Report platform, and not forgetting the skills development steering committee, the Director of Education, and the Chief Inspector for Tertiary Education. Finally, we would like to thank Ministry of Education and Training senior management personnel, the Director of Industrial and Vocational Training in the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, and UNICEF's Education Specialist for continuous guidance and direction. This framework would not have been completed without their dedication, expertise, insights, and patience.

1. Introduction

This document presents the overall process and architecture on which the national skills development and coordination framework for adolescents and young people in Eswatini is based. Chapter 1 gives an overview on the background and context for the national skills development and coordination framework. Chapter 2 presents relevant findings from the literature review with regard to the policies, regulatory frameworks and guidelines that provide a policy environment for adolescents and young people (AYP) skills development programmes divided into the Eswatini context, the regional context, and the Generation Unlimited (GenU) initiative. Chapter 3 outlines the preliminary findings of the data collection and analysis taking into account the guiding questions from the key informant interviews, the online survey, and the UNICEF U-Report platform. Chapter 4 presents the architecture of the skills development and coordination framework, its overarching objectives and steps on how to achieve them. Chapter 5 highlights the conclusions and way forward to implement the skills development and coordination framework.

1.1 General introduction and overall objective

UNICEF Eswatini, in partnership with the Government of Eswatini (GoE), has contracted Aflatoun International to *elaborate a comprehensive multi-sectoral national skills development and coordination framework* to strengthen the provision of appropriate skills development programmes, including an implementation plan to guide government, private sector and civil society skills development programmes for adolescents and young people (AYP) in Eswatini. Thus, the purpose of the skills development and coordination framework is to guide the implementation of skills development initiatives that will be more relevant, effective, and aligned to labour market demand, support decent livelihoods and decent work to reduce high youth unemployment and promote industrial development, economic growth, and recovery of the Kingdom of Eswatini.¹

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) defines the term “skills development” as being used to describe the full range of formal and non-formal vocational, technical, and skills-based education and training for employment or self-employment. It includes: pre-employment and livelihood education and training; technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and apprenticeships as part of both secondary and tertiary education; training for employed workers, including in the workplace;² and employment and labour market-oriented short courses for those seeking employment. In many countries the terms “skills development” and “TVET” are used in parallel and even as synonyms. The ILO further highlights that this “will necessitate the revision of school-based education and training for employment and/or self-employment, as well as apprenticeships, which combine on-the-job training and off-the-job learning, enabling learners from all walks of life to acquire the knowledge, skills and competencies required to carry out a specific occupation. It will also require a renewed commitment to continuing vocational education and training, to enable workers to improve or update their knowledge and skills, and/or acquire new skills for career progression”.³

¹ Ministry of Education and Training. (2020). Landscape Analysis of Skills for Employability Programmes in Eswatini (Skills Audit Report). Mbabane, Kingdom of Eswatini: MoET/GPE/UNICEF.

² It is prudent to make a distinction between work-based learning opportunities and workplace learning. Work-based learning usually refers to those who either learn a skill or trade “on the job” or those whose role requires a certain mandatory qualification or training, such as in health and safety or operating heavy machinery, while workplace learning refers to a period of apprenticeship or placement as part of a formal TVET course.

³ ILO. (2020). Skills Development and Lifelong Learning. Resource Guide for Workers’ Organisations. Geneva, Switzerland: ILO.

The national skills development and coordination framework that is being proposed under this assignment should also provide options for connecting with the Generation Unlimited (GenU) initiative, a global multi-sector partnership, spearheaded by UNICEF, designed to meet the urgent need for expanded education, training and employment opportunities for adolescents and young people. It is the goal of the initiative to put the youth at the core of the partnership through fostering an environment for *youth voice amplification*, investing in *youth-led solutions and actions*, and building *youth leadership capacity* to achieve youth empowered impact that is catalytic for scaling up programmes focused on⁴:

- **Skills and employment:** Demand-led skills building for improved employability and pathway management from skilling to certification to career guidance and employment opportunities;
- **Entrepreneurship:** Build entrepreneurial mindsets and skills for young people to start ventures through an enabling policy environment, mentorship, incubation, and access to start-up finance;
- **Social impact:** Empower young people as agents of social change and create impact through youth-led campaigns;
- **Connectivity:** Connect schools, communities and young people to the internet through zero-rating data and scale up open-source software.

1.2 Background and context for the national skills development and coordination framework

Although classified as a lower-middle income country, Eswatini’s economic growth and industrial output has been declining over the last twenty years. Technological change, economic globalisation, demographic imbalances, poor social assistance and urban and cross-border migration are some of the major factors creating a volatile environment for skills development. This is exacerbated by the absence of relevant and advanced skills development, such as those in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, among others, needed to drive industrial production and innovation⁵, identify opportunities to adapt to global changes, embrace emerging industries and promote sustainable economic growth.⁶

The Integrated Labour Force Survey (ILFS, 2016)⁷ reveals that there are high levels (34.3%) of labour underutilization in Eswatini. This is particularly present amongst the youth, and especially those aged 15 – 25 years, where unemployment rate is one of the highest in the region, at 47.4% (ILFS, Survey, 2016). For those young people with secondary and high school level of education only, the unemployment rate is even higher, at 62.1% (ILFS, 2016). With 70% of the population under 35 years of age, this youth bulge will either create on-going demands on the Government of Eswatini (GoE) resources and harmful over-competition within the labour market, or, if adequately trained and provided for, could lead to economic growth and what economists refer to as the *demographic dividend*. Currently, low labour absorption rates⁸, at 39%, mean that Eswatini is under-utilising the presently available skills in the economy, indicating an over-supply of some skills, under-supply in

⁴ See: Generation Unlimited. (2022). Strategy 2022-2025. (no place).

⁵ Government of Eswatini. (2015). Industrial Development Policy 2015–2022.

⁶ See also: Eswatini’s Poverty Reduction Strategy and Action Plan (PRSAP 2007) and the revised Eswatini National Development Strategy (NDS 2014).

⁷ Eswatini Integrated Labour Force Survey (ILFS). (2016). Ministry of Labour and Social Security. Mbabane.

⁸ Ministry of Labour and Social Security. (2016). Eswatini Integrated Labour Force Survey (ILFS).

others⁹ and a *brain-drain*, where a good proportion of those trained in highly specialised areas, such as medicine and engineering, do not return to Eswatini after completing their studies, choosing lucrative remunerations in other countries, especially in South Africa.

Instead of harnessing the demographic dividend for inclusive economic growth, the increasing number of poorly educated, unskilled, unemployed, and under-employed young people become a threat to the stability of countries and social discontent as unemployment depreciates human capital. Addressing the challenge of youth unemployment is therefore a priority ranking prominently in both international, regional, and national development strategies so that the labour force participation of young people is substantially increased, and social cohesion safe-guarded. Measures to be taken are aligning skills development to the labour market and empowering young people with necessary entrepreneurial skills to enable them to create their own business (African Union, 2018).¹⁰

As highlighted by several recent publications on this topic, skills mismatch is one of the major contributing factors to Eswatini's high youth unemployment, stifling industry productivity and growth. The recent Skills Audit¹¹ found that companies consistently highlight inadequate supply of skilled labour as a major obstacle to growth. It appears that the TVET and wider tertiary sector are not able to respond innovatively, quickly or in a coordinated manner to meet emerging industry demands for skills. Critical action must be taken to address the relevance, quality, and availability of adequate skills in the labour market in Eswatini, as well as clarifying the appropriate GoE duty-bearers and strengthening platforms such as GenU for a coordinated response to this situation.

Achieving these national and international goals and capitalising on the so-called “4th industrial revolution” (4IR)¹² requires a coordinated, state-driven approach. Providing quality TVET is inherently multi-sectoral and requires inter-ministerial cooperation to achieve effective coordination, policy development, implementation, and funding sources. Currently, there are three key ministries responsible for human resource development in Eswatini: the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET), the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MoLSS) and the Ministry of Public Service (MoPS). The MoET provides TVET through formal and non-formal education and training centres. The Higher Education Council (ESHEC), currently operating under the MoET, has a crucial function in the registration of qualifications on the national qualifications framework (NQF) and the accreditation of education and training providers. The Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade (MCIT) provides formal TVET through the National Handicraft and Training Centre (NHTC) which has full time courses offered at the centre, while short outreach courses are offered at regional training centres. Whereas the MoLSS delivers non-formal TVET through the Directorate of Industrial and Vocational Training (DIVT) and the Vocational and Rehabilitation Services, targeting Persons with Disabilities (PWD), DIVT is the only government institution that is responsible for conducting trade tests for graduates of TVET institutions. For secondary level education, MoET piloted pre-vocational education in 16 secondary schools aimed at improving the relevance and quality of the education system in the country. The National Human Resource Planning and Development Unit under the MoLSS is charged with the

⁹ These include agriculture and agro-processing, manufacturing, ICT, energy and mining, and tourism sectors, among other emerging industries.

¹⁰ <https://au.int/en/documents/20181022/continental-strategy-technical-and-vocational-educational-and-training-tvet>

¹¹ Ministry of Labour and Social Security. (2021). Eswatini National Skills Audit. Report prepared by Eswatini Economic Policy Analysis and Research Centre (ESEPARC). Mbabane, Kingdom of Eswatini: ESEPARC.

¹² The fourth industrial revolution is the ongoing automation of traditional manufacturing and industrial practices, using modern smart technology and artificial intelligence (AI). Large-scale machine-to machine communication and the internet of things are integrated for increased automation, improved communication and self-monitoring, and production of smart machines that can analyse and diagnose issues without the need for human intervention through utilising AI.

responsibility of coordinating the implementation of the National Human Resource Planning and Development Programme.

In ensuring that the skills development imperatives of the country are addressed, there is a need for streamlining, capacity building and strengthening the institutional environment supporting TVET and other skills building initiatives in the country. The MoET recognises the important role to be played by TVET for economic development of the country in the 2018 Education Sector Policy, emphasising the urgent need to re-position, re-brand and market TVET if Eswatini is to become regionally and globally competitive, and a major regional exporter of skilled human resource.¹³ However, as well as re-branding the skills building opportunities available to young people, there is a need to strengthen coordination between these GoE actors, as well as between education and training providers (ETPs) and industry.

1.3 Aim of the skills development and coordination framework

The compilation of the national skills development and coordination framework for adolescents and young people programmes was an exercise that was informed by the data collection and analysis conducted under the assignment. Furthermore, it investigated the challenges and shortcomings identified in the “Landscape Analysis of Skills for Employability Programmes in Eswatini (Skills Audit 2020)” and established the key elements for setting up a functional skills development and coordination framework that would speak to the skills development landscape in Eswatini. In particular, the data collection and analysis of the assignment was conducted to:

- i. Determine the relevance, adequacy and responsiveness of current skills coordination and implementation arrangements, regulatory frameworks, guidelines and strategies and their alignment to national economic recovery plans and their potentials to integrate the GenU objectives.
- ii. Identify and assess the feasibility of current coordination arrangement for adolescents and youth skills programmes leading to their employability.
- iii. Consult with key stakeholders and partners supporting educational, employment and empowerment programmes for adolescents and young people.¹⁴
- iv. Identify and review the effectiveness of current coordination platforms for skills development and employability of adolescents and youth.

¹³ The TVET Policy was adopted in 2010 with the purpose to meet the economy’s requirements for trained labour but was reviewed in 2020 with the purpose to re-position TVET and make the delivery of technical and vocational training more efficient and relevant for the 21st Century. See UNESCO. (2020). TVET Policy Review: Kingdom of Eswatini. Paris, France: UNESCO.

¹⁴ The research team is aware that in the context of Eswatini adolescent and young people refers to every person between the ages of 15 to 35 years, in accordance with the African Youth Charter (AU 2006). However, the focus of the framework will be on AYP between the age of 15 to 25 years in line with GenU.

2. Findings of the desk review

In line with the policies, regulatory frameworks and guidelines that furnish the policy environment for AYP skills development programmes, a literature desk review was conducted as part of the data collection and analysis of the intervention.

2.1 Eswatini context

A policy analysis and document review was undertaken to better apprehend the context of skills development in Eswatini and to determine the relevance, adequacy and responsiveness of current skills coordination and implementation arrangements, regulatory frameworks, guidelines and strategies and their alignment to the country's industrial development and national economic recovery plans. In essence the below document review provides a brief overview of the policy landscape on education and training, and skills development in the country. Whilst a great many documents and policies have been reviewed and consulted as part of the assignment¹⁵, the literature review outlined below focuses on the most recent and relevant contributions to our growing body of knowledge on this subject. This includes the recent ILO Mapping of Existing Labour Market Information and Skills Anticipation (2020) and the Eswatini National Skills Audit (2021) as well as the Landscape Analysis of Skills for Employability Programmes in Eswatini (Skills Audit) (2020). Other documents prioritised by this review included the Future of Learning Report (2022), the TVET Policy Review (2020) and Eswatini Economic Policy Analysis and Research Centre (ESEPARC)'s Industry Labour Force Skills Gap Analysis (2018). In addition, national policies, and strategies such as the National Development Strategy (NDS) (which advocates the need for the augmentation of Eswatini's labour force to fast-track social and economic development), the Eswatini National Youth Policy (2020), and the Post Covid-19 Economic Recovery Strategy (2020) informed the review. For example, the manufacturing sector presents immense opportunities to absorb Eswatini's youth, particularly those engaged in TVET training programmes. Moreover, this is a huge opportunity for skills development and skills transfer especially in high tech industries that will be manufacturing products adopting innovative methods emerging from the 4th industrial revolution.

Finally, the desk research also sought to understand foundational documents and, consequently, this review was used, along with the primary data collection, as the critical contextual and policy information base upon which the national skills development and coordination framework has been developed.

Skills Audit (2021)

The National Skills Audit Report (2021) attempts to establish the main challenges faced by the Eswatini skills economy and labour force. The study evaluated a combination of supply-side (current graduate numbers in particular fields, absorption rates, tracer studies, interviews with ETPs) and demand-side data (employee data, wage returns and employer interviews), concluding that there is a "chronic mismatch of skills supply and demand which perpetuates unemployment, the skills deficit, and the brain drain that occurs in the country". The Skills Audit goes on to link these skills deficiencies to Eswatini's low labour market absorption rate (45.9 %), high unemployment rate (especially among the youth), and the overall underutilisation of available skills in the economy. In essence, the low labour market absorption rate compels emaSwati (often talented, skilled and/or qualified AYP) to search for employment opportunities outside the country, causing the brain drain phenomenon. Naturally, this

¹⁵ Refer to Annex 6.1.

has detrimental effects on the economy, in lost potential state revenue through taxes, on fostering local business development and resilience and in the professional development of future leaders. The Skills Audit also found, through an Employer/Industry Survey, that new employees lack specific industry skills, and some vacant positions are difficult to fill, meaning that they resort to hiring foreigners for these positions.

To combat the challenges caused by the skills mismatches, shortages, and gaps, as well as by an environment which currently encourages job seeking rather than job creation,¹⁶ the Skills Audit profiled sectors that the GoE regards as priority sectors for fast-tracking economic growth and development. These include: agriculture and agro-processing, manufacturing, information, and communication technologies (ICT), education, and tourism, among others. In each sector, the Skills Audit makes sector-specific recommendations to GoE on how each can be strengthened through addressing the current skills deficiencies.¹⁷ The Skills Audit concludes by highlighting that these sectors need to become GoE focus areas and the GoE should prioritise investment in curriculum and syllabus development in educational institutions which offer courses relevant to these industries.

The Landscape Analysis of Skills for Employability Programmes in Eswatini (Skills Audit) (2020)

The Landscape Analysis of Skills for Employability Programmes in Eswatini (Skills Audit)¹⁸, conducted in 2020 by the Government of Eswatini with support from UNICEF Eswatini, made several recommendations regarding the implementation of skills development initiatives that will be more aligned to labour market demand, support decent livelihoods and decent work to reduce high youth unemployment and promote economic development and industrialisation in Eswatini. As well as re-emphasising the mismatch between skills offered by ETPs and those required by industry, the analysis also found that:

- Skills for employability in Eswatini consist of foundational skills, transferable or core skills (cognitive, digital, social, and emotional), and specific technical and vocational skills.
- Secondary education is not skills-oriented and should consider introducing multiple pathways to make secondary education more relevant through the development of skills for employability that prepare learners to the needs of the labour market and the world of work.
- Eswatini’s education system has a low emphasis on entrepreneurship.
- Courses offered by ETPs that yield the highest rate of employment are: Construction, Electrical and Civil Engineering, Diesel Mechanics and Auto Electronics, Computer Engineers, Teaching, Health, Nursing and Safety, Accounting & Finance, Business Management and Administration, Secretariat & Administrative Studies and Call Centre Management and Operators.
- There is a lack of up-to-date training equipment in ETP institutions.
- A significant number of outdated qualifications amongst teachers, instructors, and lecturers are observable in assessed education and training institutions.
- There is a lack of soft skills among TVET graduates.
- Graduates lack toolboxes and start-up capital to start their businesses.

¹⁶ Placing the emphasis on the individual AYP, both as a student and as a jobseeker, is seen throughout this study, adding pressure to AYP to succeed within an environment which often does not facilitate that success.

¹⁷ These recommendations are largely corroborated by a contemporary study: Ministry of Education and Training. (2020). Landscape Analysis of Skills for Employability Programmes in Eswatini (Skills Audit Report). Mbabane, Kingdom of Eswatini: MoET/GPE/UNICEF.

¹⁸ Ministry of Education and Training. (2020). Landscape Analysis of Skills for Employability Programmes in Eswatini (Skills Audit Report). Mbabane, Kingdom of Eswatini: MoET/GPE/UNICEF.

- There is limited encouragement from parents with regards to employment and self-employment.
- Unemployment is high among people with disabilities.
- There is a need for development of skills to drive economic growth in Eswatini, particularly focusing on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

Key skills for employability for adolescents and young people¹⁹

The Commonwealth of Learning²⁰ defines employability as a set of achievements (skills, abilities, and personal attitudes) that make adolescents and young people more likely to gain employment or create self-employment through entrepreneurship, and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community, and the economy. Core employability skills build upon and strengthen the skills developed through general education, and individuals are most employable when they have broad-based education and training, basic and portable high-level skills, including teamwork, problem solving, ICT, communication, and language skills. The combination of these skills enables individuals to adapt to changes in the world of work.

The ILO²¹ further differentiates the skills required for the world of work into foundation skills, transferable or core work skills, vocational or technical skills, and professional or personal skills. Foundation skills include literacy and numeracy, which are also a prerequisite for progressing in education and training, and for acquiring transferable or core work skills and technical and vocational skills that enhance the chances of getting decent jobs. Vocational or technical skills are specialised skills, knowledge and know-how which is needed to perform specific duties or tasks. Professional or personal skills are individual attributes that impact on work habits such as honesty, integrity, and work ethic.

Transferable or core work skills have been pooled under four broad skill categories: learning to learn, communication, teamwork and problem solving. Each broad skill category has been attributed several transferable core work skills as listed in the table below:

Table 1: Core skills for employability (based on ILO Skills for Employment: Policy Brief)

Broad skill category	Transferable or core work skills/abilities
Learning to learn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ think abstractly ▪ use learning techniques to acquire and apply new knowledge and skills ▪ organise, process, and maintain information ▪ interpret and communicate information ▪ begin, follow through and complete tasks ▪ manage own learning

¹⁹ This sub-section is based on some elaborations on key skills for employability for adolescents and young people as presented in the previous research study carried out by Aflatoun entitled “Landscape Analysis of Skills for Employability Programmes in Eswatini (Skills Audit Report)” (2020).

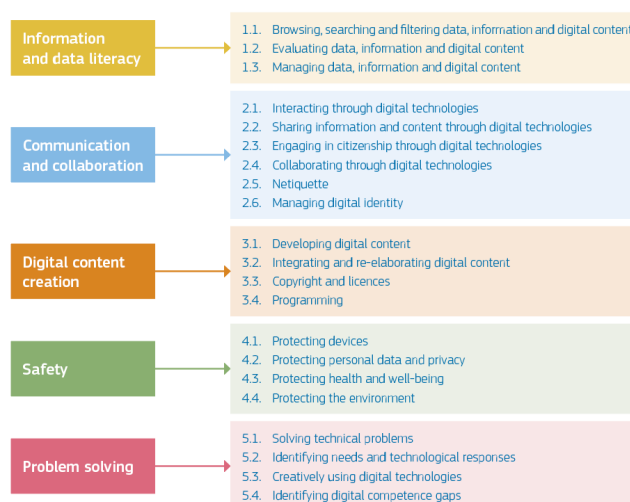
²⁰ Commonwealth of Learning. (2019). Integrating Employability in Higher Education Institutions: An Introduction to the Commonwealth of Learning’s Employability Model for Prospective Partners. Burnaby, Canada: Commonwealth of Learning.

²¹ International Labour Organisation. (2013). Skills for Employment: Policy Brief. Geneva, Switzerland: ILO Skills and Employability Department.

Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ competent in reading ▪ write, understand and speak effectively in the language in which business is conducted ▪ read, comprehend and use materials, including graphs, charts, displays ▪ use numeracy effectively ▪ articulate own ideas and vision
Teamwork	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ work in teams or groups ▪ respect the thoughts and opinions of others in the group ▪ lead effectively ▪ accountability for actions taken ▪ build partnerships and coordinate a variety of experiences ▪ accept feedback ▪ resolve conflicts
Problem solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ think creatively ▪ solve problems independently ▪ identify problems and test assumptions ▪ take the context of data into account and adapt to new circumstances ▪ ability to identify and suggest new ideas to get the job done ▪ collect, analyse and organize information ▪ ability to plan and manage time, money and other resources to achieve goals

Additionally, when taking into account the requirements stemming from the 4IR and the future of work, ICT skills²² are regarded as key for enhancing employability and should be developed as an essential part of every education and training programme offered to adolescents and young people. The digital competence framework of the European Commission registers the following ICT skills as key competencies for citizens: information and data literacy, communication and collaboration, digital content creation, data safety, and digital problem solving.

Table 2: Digital competence framework (based on European Commission: Joint Competence Centre)



²² Riina Vuorikari, Stefano Kluzer, Yves Punie. (2022). DigComp 2.2. The Digital Competence Framework for Citizens. European Commission: Joint Competence Centre (Luxembourg).

TVET Policy Review (2020)

The TVET Policy Review, conducted in 2019 and published in 2020 outlines the legal/policy and practical implications of the TVET Policy (2010), and outlines some key priorities necessary to re-position TVET and make the delivery of technical and vocational training more efficient and relevant for the 21st century. The review systematically outlines a number of objectives, solution-orientated options for state and other stakeholders to consider in the delivery of TVET and the revision of the policy. Unfortunately, little has been done to action the recommendations, but nonetheless they remain relevant to, and often echoed by, this study. The review, conducted by education specialists from the UNESCO regional office, found that current TVET ETPs, even those which are government-run “do not constitute a comprehensive and consistent network” to provide an efficient and harmonized approach to TVET skills programming. The review therefore strongly recommends one of two options which could create an authoritative body to coordinate and regulate TVET skills delivery: either through the establishment of a specialist TVET department within the MoET, or by an act of Parliament creating an autonomous entity to coordinate all TVET interventions such as a national training authority.²³

Using MoET financials, the report finds that the actual funds spent on TVET each year between 2014 and 2018 totalled an average of less than 2% (av=1.928%) of the total MoET budget, most of which went on educator and instructor salaries. This results in a “system [which] does not train for some industry-specific processes, [and] employers who complain that TVET graduates lack adequate technical or 21st century skills”. The review also noted that “access to TVET is limited for women, [...] persons with special educational needs” as well as those looking for opportunities for lifelong learning in the TVET subsector”. Overall, the report concludes that the current poor access to, and quality of TVET education generally exacerbates stigma around TVET as being “associated with failure”.

The report mandates a new TVET Policy to be drafted by the appointed task team and a UNESCO-funded consultant in early 2020 (perhaps delayed by the Covid-19 pandemic).

Mapping of Existing Labour Market Information and Skills Anticipation (2020)

In 2020, the ILO released a comprehensive mapping of the labour market and skills anticipation survey, under the Skills Initiative for Africa (SIFA) project. The objective of this study was to better map out the existing data sources, review current practices, capacities, and institutional arrangements for obtaining accurate labour market information and anticipating the future skills needed for economic growth in Eswatini. Like the contemporary research outlined above, the ILO study makes strong recommendations to GoE and other stakeholders on the urgency of addressing the skills gap identified in this study and others. Particularly, this mapping highlights the need for an investment strategy to “support and guide skills identification and skills anticipation activities”. Although the mapping finds that the necessary policy and legal framework is in place (some, albeit, still in draft form), it also found that there are data and research gaps which prevent full assessment of the labour market, and thereby the GoE’s ability to plan for skills needs beyond the short-term future. Finally, the mapping made further calls for a more inclusive approach, citing the desire of stakeholders, such as major employers and industry partners, to be more involved in informing changes to the approach to skills development programmes (including TVET) in Eswatini.

²³Given the GoE’s intentions to cut down on such parastatals, including plans to merge some and decommission others, this option is now unlikely to be actioned in the coming years.

Industrial Labour Force Skills Gap Investigation (2018)

As part of the Taiwan Technical Mission TVET Enhancement Project in Eswatini, ESEPARC produced a summary of the skills needs within the industrial labour force, focusing on three key industries (automotive, electrical engineering and ICT). Taken directly from that investigation, the recommendations below remind us that this 2022 preliminary findings report is grounded in a number of similar findings and calls from various research and development partners over the last decade or more. The investigation found the following:

- There are limited linkages between TVET institutions and the industries.
- The development of TVET curricula is not informed by DIVT due to unclear mechanisms for information sharing and liaison.
- The provision of apprenticeships has been declining since 2010.
- There are no formal agreements between industries and TVET institutions on internships and apprenticeships for students.
- TVET system lacks quality assurance and effective coordination mechanisms.
- The demand for tertiary education is higher than the institutions can accommodate.
- TVET training institutions in the country mostly offer certificate and national diploma level qualifications.
- The TVET system is not flexible to accommodate alternative students. For instance, they maintain rigid learning hours from 8am to 5pm.
- TVET institutions need to invest in more state-of-the-art equipment and machinery to remain relevant.

The investigation highlights six main factors which need to be urgently addressed as they negatively impact TVET and skills development in Eswatini. These are also reinforced by the TVET Policy Review (2020) and others:

- Lack of or weak collaboration between TVET institutions and industry
- Inadequate physical resources, which includes facilities, equipment, and machinery
- A weak and fragmented institutional environment supporting TVET
- Lack of adequate funding for TVET institutions
- Outdated curricula and training modules
- Inadequate capacity amongst TVET instructors

ILO and the World Bank (skills for employability)

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) defines core work skills for employability as “portable competencies and qualifications that enhance an individual’s capacity to make use of the education and training opportunities available in order to secure and retain decent work, to progress within the enterprise and between jobs, and to cope with changing technology and labour market conditions”.²⁴ Furthermore, core employability skills build upon and strengthen the skills developed through basic education allowing individuals and industries to adapt to changes in the world of work.²⁵ The World Bank (2020) attests that a rapidly changing global economy increasingly requires workers to develop transferable 21st century skills, including learning to learn, collecting and processing information,

²⁴ International Labour Organisation. (2013). Skills for Employment: Policy Brief. Geneva, Switzerland: ILO Skills and Employability Department.

²⁵ This is further detailed in the ILO’s Centenary Declaration on the future of work (2019). Available here: <https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/mission-and-objectives/centenary-declaration/lang--en/index.htm>

communication, critical thinking, problem-solving, leadership and teamwork, and core technical work skills. Facilitating platforms and opportunities for workers to develop and maintain such skills makes long-term economic sense. If the workforce is largely unskilled, under-skilled or not having acquired skills that meet actual demand in the economy, large numbers of people are not employable, face unemployment or are forced to take insecure, low-wage jobs that offer little career growth, cash-in-hand salaries, unsafe and unregulated working conditions and avoid taxation. As well as an imperative for national economic growth, human capital development is also a key cross-cutting development priority, facilitating social justice and resilience, improved livelihoods, education, health, and rule of law. As well as “the right to work” being a Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, Article 23),²⁶ Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), target 5 implores governments to increase the percentage of youth and adults with the knowledge, skills, and competencies to access decent work at least by 99% in 2030. Furthermore, SDG Goal 8 implores governments to ensure “full and productive employment for all” by substantially reducing the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training. Furthermore, key aspects of decent work are widely embedded in the targets of many of the other 16 goals of the SDGs, Eswatini’s commitments to the ILO, as well as the African Union’s Agenda 2063 and others

2.2 Regional context

In understanding the state of skills development at the regional level, to inform the development of a skills framework in Eswatini, a rapid investigation was carried out on some countries in Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA) to identify best practices and to understand if countries with comparable contexts have any of the following measures in place:

- Skills development frameworks
- Skills programming and coordination platforms
- Institutional arrangements for skills development programming
- Inter-sectoral collaboration and partnerships for curriculum development and delivery
- Industry-informed assessment and accreditation systems
- Quality assurance, monitoring and evaluation
- Knowledge management, portability and articulation within the education and training cycle

Across the region, there is a commonly shared recognition of the importance of skills development. However, many ESA countries have yet to establish a formal skills development framework such as that intended by this assignment. The term “skills development framework” remains nascent and rarely used in the region. While many countries clearly refer to skills development in their national priorities, the researchers were unable to identify frameworks to guide such programming. Further, skills development is framed in different terms or nomenclatures as well as contexts, such as “lifelong learning”²⁷ and “21st century skills strategy” among others.²⁸ The different terminologies used also

²⁶ Article 23 particularly details the right to “free choice of employment” and “protection against unemployment” and “the existence worthy of human dignity” all of which speak directly to the need for increased coordination of appropriate skills development programmes in Eswatini.

²⁷ For reference see: The European Lifelong Guidance Policy Network (ELGPN). (2012). Lifelong Guidance Policy Development. A European Resource Kit (Tools No. 1). Sarajevo, Finland: University of Jyväskylä.

²⁸ For reference see: US Department of Education. (2020). Employability Skills Framework. Overview of the Employability Skills Framework Resources: <http://cte.ed.gov/employabilityskills>.

contribute to the lack of clear understanding of what is meant by the collective noun “skills”, as well as their applicability and further, teaching and assessment.

Most countries in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region have established a specific agency or ministry for the execution and governance of TVET; or, alternatively, split the ministry of primary, secondary and tertiary education along these lines. Rarely is one ministry responsible for all these sectors, as well as professional/tertiary skills and TVET, as is the case in Eswatini. South Africa is a good example of this approach to education management and coordination, whilst in Namibia and other countries in the region, a dedicated authority, the Namibia Training Authority (NTA), is mandated with TVET separately through the *Vocational Education and Training Act* of 2008. The NTA is mandated with TVET ETP accreditation, skills qualifications assessment, certifications and industry standards as well as a broader mandate to promote vocational skills development programming.

South Africa’s National Policy for an Integrated Career Development System (2017) and National Skills Development Plan (NSDP 2030) as well as Kenya’s National Skills Development Policy (2020) are the closest in definition when it comes to a skills development framework. South Africa appears to be the neighbouring country with the most elaborated and coherent plan by aligning multiple learning pathways across all levels of education and learning systems through curriculum and assessment to improve the quality of basic education, vocational training, and job placement services, thus enhancing the value chain from early childhood, through teen-years until the acquisition of skills needed for the world-of-work. It comprises the following elements that could constitute a skills development and coordination framework:

- A clear direction on the skills programming utilising analysis on sectoral growth priority areas, development plans and labour market information;
- An institutional arrangement in place through a National Skills Authority (NSA) that coordinates the Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) and other relevant agencies, as well as the establishment of a National Skills Fund (NSF) operating under the Presidential Youth Employment Intervention (PYEI);
- Inter-sectoral collaboration and partnerships and curriculum development and delivery, by locating the NSDP within an integrated Post-Secondary Education and Training (PSET) system, as well as a specific focus on the coordination of planning, funding, monitoring, evaluation and reporting on the system with a focus on skills levy institutions.
- A strong quality assurance, monitoring and evaluation as part of the NSA’s roles and functions.

The PYEI in South Africa²⁹ is a comprehensive effort to address youth unemployment. Its goal is to enable more young people to move from learning to earning. It seeks to coordinate, accelerate and enhance existing programmes and unblock pathways to employment, training and youth enterprise. It aims to implement interventions to address barriers young people face and supports the creation of opportunities in the formal and informal economies. These actions are focused on sectors with identified potential for sustained growth that can translate into sustainable employment opportunities for young people. The key principles of the PYEI for building an employability framework are:

²⁹ See: Presidential Youth Employment Intervention. (2022). Transitioning young people from learning to earning: An Overview. The Presidency: Republic of South Africa.

- Place young people at the heart of the intervention
- Provide accountability for implementation
- Leverage existing policies and focus on addressing gaps in these policies
- Create space for innovation that accelerates delivery and catalyses further action
- Strengthen and build effective partnerships across all spheres of government, with the private sector and social and development partners
- Address constraints to job creation both on the supply and demand side

The PYEI has adopted a strong partnership approach to the delivery of employability programmes and in creating employment opportunities for young people, which links it up with the GenU initiative described in section 2.3 below. A principal objective is therefore to accelerate results by breaking down barriers between actors that are working to provide opportunities for young people. In this respect the anticipated PYEI outcome areas are to generate new demand with opportunities opened up for young people. This will be combined with an increasing number of young people accessing training programmes with integrated workplace experiences so that they can seamlessly transition and navigate different pathways across learning and work areas. However, South Africa still needs to come up with an explicit national framework for employability services for coordination and unpack the National Policy for an Integrated Career Development System (2017). In this context, it might be worthwhile to investigate further that the setting up of a national skills development and coordination framework for AYP employability programmes in Eswatini might also have to be rooted in a preceding policy for an integrated career development system still to be developed.

2.3 Generation Unlimited (GenU)

In the programmatic brochure entitled “Generation Unlimited: Our Time. Our Turn. Our Future” it is stated that the objective of GenU as a global multi-sector partnership is to enable “young people to become productive engaged members of society” and that “the largest generation of young people in history must be prepared for the transition to work”, which could then unleash an unlimited “potential for global progress” to “transform economic and social outcomes, raise global productivity, and reduce inequality but only if we create enough opportunities”.³⁰ Broadly speaking, GenU is on a mission to skill and connect the world’s 1.8 billion young people to opportunities.

The strategic priorities of GenU are therefore focused on education and training, employment, entrepreneurship, equity and youth participation. Initiatives at global and national levels will aim to “transform the formal secondary school experience to build skills young people need for productive lives and the future of work”, to “provide young people outside formal school with opportunities for training, skills development, and additional education”, to connect them to work opportunities and to “foster entrepreneurship as a mind-set and livelihood” for young people, who are equipped to be “problem-solvers and engaged members of civil society”.³¹

GenU intends to develop and implement “country investment agendas” or platforms through public-private-youth partnerships (PPYP) that will bring together government, the private sector, international and local organisations, and that are driven by young people whose voices need to be heard. The interdependence of quality education, training, skills development, and decent work

³⁰ See: Generation Unlimited. (2018). Brochure Our Time. Our Turn. Our Future. (no place) (retrieved from www.genunlimited.org)

³¹ Ibid

opportunities is unquestionable. It is important that in designing a skills development and employability framework, strong connection between the education, training and skills development sectors and socio-economic development strategies including industrialisation of a nation be made to reduce the mismatch between skills supply and skills demand on the one side and high youth unemployment on the other side, a source of concern in many developing countries, including Eswatini.

Skills for employability development should therefore be understood more generally to refer to the acquisition of knowledge, competencies, foundational and transferable (core) skills, competencies and knowledge acquired through all levels of education and training, occurring in formal, non-formal and on-the-job settings relating to a wide range of occupational fields, production services and livelihoods. In principle, it is expected that skills development should impart skills for employability and provide flexible education and training arrangements to absorb a diverse group of learners and individuals in all areas of the economy to become fully and productively engaged in livelihoods and to have the opportunity to adapt these capacities to meet the changing demands and opportunities of the economy and labour market.

3. Findings from the data collection and analysis

3.1 Methodology

Approach and processes

Data collection involved a mixed methods approach including document review and analysis, semi-structured key informant interviews, an online survey, and the U-Report platform, ensuring that both the voices of adolescents and government stakeholders were fully heard and captured³². Throughout the Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), notes and recordings were taken to ensure accurate capture of the opinions, concerns and suggestions shared. The notes and recordings were then collated and reviewed individually, by stakeholder and in aggregate, through a basic trends analysis. The findings are anonymised and presented below along four key areas of focus:

- Coordination platforms for skills development
- Existing inter-ministerial coordination and collaboration
- Current programming to enhance skills for employability
- Resource mobilisation for current and future skills development programming

An overview on the major processes, adopted approaches and methodologies is presented in subsections 3.1.1. to 3.1.3 below. The findings from the KIIs, targeting key decision-makers and the Online Survey (OS), targeting other important informants, have been amalgamated and detailed below in subsection 3.2 to 3.5 below, whilst the U-Report findings are analysed separately in subsection 3.6. Findings have been grouped into the four areas of inquiry which were outlined in the ToR of the assignment, and which gave direction to the data collection phase and architecture of the national skills development and coordination framework.

3.1.1 Key informant interviews

Thirteen (13) KIIs were conducted with personnel in both public and private institutions. The MoET, MoLSS and UNICEF agreed on a list of 20 specific key informants to be contacted, of which seven were not available for comment. A semi-structured interview guide³³ was developed with questions targeted at each of the pre-identified stakeholders for personal interviews.

3.1.2 Online survey

A survey of government and parastatal employees, civil servants and other state and non-state actors, including ETPs, was conducted to provide an understanding of the coordination modalities currently used to roll-out skills development programmes in Eswatini. The anonymous OS³⁴ was shared with at least 62 stakeholders, with a request that key partners also disseminated the tool within their networks. However, despite several reminders, the response rate was lower than expected, with 13 responses at the time of writing. Nonetheless, the OS gathered information on the frequency and efficacy of current coordination platforms in a safe, confidential manner, enabling a cross examination of the views presented in-person, through the KIIs.

³² For a full list of respondents, see Annex 6.2 below.

³³ See semi-structured key informant interview guide in Annex 6.3.1.

³⁴ See online survey questions in Annex 6.3.2.

3.1.3 U Report and AYP engagement

A significant number of young people (n=3,848) were engaged through the UNICEF U-Report platform to contribute to this study.³⁵ The unstructured supplementary service data (USSD)-message poll was shared with 28,705 subscribers over 5 days, including both weekdays and weekend days, in April 2022. Although this method has its limitations, especially in terms of the number and length of questions and responses, the anonymous platform engaged a large number of people in one data-capture event, and can be disaggregated by age, sex, and location. Questions asked of AYP focused on their current education levels, employment and awareness, interest, and experience in skills development programmes.³⁶

3.2 Coordination platforms for skills development

“We don't have a policy or coordination framework, in policy or in practice.”

When both KII and online survey respondents were asked about existing coordination platforms, there was consensus that current coordination platforms for skills development actors and programmes in Eswatini are fragmented, informal and lacking leadership mandate. Some respondents, even those involved in government-led tertiary-level skills programming, were unable to respond to questions about which existing entity currently coordinates these programmes, whilst the responses of other informants were very mixed. When a collaboration platform or initiatives could be identified, those cited were donor or project-led, or ad-hoc and mostly one-off meetings. These included partner meetings convened by the likes of UNDP, UNESCO, or the EU Delegation in Eswatini, or monthly meetings between ministries such as MoLSS, MoET and MCIT throughout the implementation of the Taiwanese-funded TVET Enhancement Project. The MoET has shown some signs of identifying this coordination challenge and have recently engaged partners like the Construction Industry Council (CIC), to better learn from that industry which skills are in highest demand. Despite the clear need and potential impact of such meetings, demonstrated by their reported success, no regular or structured platform was established, nor were other key stakeholders present or focal persons assigned for future partnership. Many respondents expressed disappointment at this, noting that such platforms are not just good ways of maintaining strong communication between MoET, ETPs and industry, but that it would also act as a foundation for greater industry investment into programmes, either through financial support, or by ensuring that a quota of their employees take up that course. As one respondent put it, to create dynamic and appropriate learning for employability: “we want to ensure that industry is involved in the design of the programmes, right down to the learning outcomes, teaching methodology and assessment.”

It was reported that the MoET has made some progress, particularly with developing memorandum of understandings (MOUs) with national NGOs, such as Junior Achievement Eswatini (JAE) and corporate partners, such as Premier Bakeries and Royal Eswatini Sugar in Mhlume, but these

³⁵ U-Report is a messaging tool that empowers young people around the world to engage with and speak out on issues that matter to them. It works by gathering opinions and information from young people on topics they care about – ranging from employment to discrimination and child marriage. (UNICEF, 2021) It uses a free USSD-based messaging platform which in Eswatini has over 28,000 subscribers.

³⁶ See UNICEF U-Report survey in Annex 6.3.3.

Memoranda appear to be bi-lateral and initiated by individual industrial entities to regulate internship programmes, rather than industry-wide and/or expected as standard.³⁷

It was clear that there is currently no institutionalised mechanism which acts as coordination platform, either between ministries, or between state and non-state actors, including ETPs.

There was almost universal consensus that there is a perennial challenge in the mismatch between the supply of skills development courses and the demands of industry. Several respondents noted that some tertiary-level courses had not changed their approach or content for many years or even decades, and yet the social, technological, and industrial context of Eswatini is continually changing.

As industries become increasingly automated and machine-driven, their general ability to create new jobs will likely become more limited. The current prognosis is that both wages and the numbers of jobs available in classic industrial sectors will continue to decline, as automation and machines increasingly take over (and low-paying jobs are at particular risk). Given the likely depth of this technological paradigm change, there is a pressing need to come up with more effective ways to help people develop new skills and stem job losses. As global competition becomes increasingly innovation-driven, only a vibrant innovation environment can provide a critical advantage and needs to be implanted in the skills development programmes for employability.

Whilst the MoLSS through the DIVT confirmed that they are mandated to host various multi-sectoral advisory committees to develop and conduct trade industry standards and assessments, they acknowledge that this is currently not a regularly implemented sector education and training mechanism like it is the case with the SETAs in South Africa. These committees should ideally be composed of various stakeholders including the MoET, MCTI, ETPs, employers, worker's unions and youth serving CSO groups and be responsive platforms to be able to quickly respond to the demands of industry and emerging priority sectors by adjusting industry standards and TVET programmes on offer, in particular short upskilling courses.

In addition, it was noted by several respondents that informal initiatives are even less regulated than those offered by formal institutions and any attempt to better coordinated skills development programming recognise the important contribution and reach offered by such informal providers, including those offered at community centres, by community-based or unrecognised civil society groups, informal apprenticeships and even actors such as His Majesty's Correctional Services (HMCS) and religious institutions.

Another example of the current poor coordination may be found in the activities of several ministries working towards similar, or even duplicate, ends. For instance, the Micro-, Small- and Medium-Enterprise (MSME) Unit under the MCIT is currently developing a Stakeholder Coordination Framework for Entrepreneurship, among other policies, strategies and frameworks, whilst the Centre for Financial Inclusion (CFI) under the Ministry of Finance, is developing a National Strategy for Financial Inclusion. UNESCO worked with MoLSS on the review of the TVET Policy and the development of a TVET M&E Framework, whilst ESEPARC and the ILO are also working with MoLSS DIVT on related studies. These documents, the drafting of which is supported by a number of different government partners, naturally overlap with this assignment, and others, without much overarching

³⁷ It should be noted that these internships are considered to be part of the course requirements at various tertiary institutions. As a result, internships have been heavily disrupted by student protest actions and, at the time of writing, are currently not fully functional.

strategy or collaborative approach. Without doubt, such a coordination within this sector would prevent such and introduce efficiencies for the coordination of skills programming. It seems apparent that a thorough stakeholder mapping of current and future initiatives seems to be necessary, to create efficiencies and in fact, many respondents cited concern that this assignment was not one which focussed entirely on institutional responsibilities, rather than other objectives. As one respondent said: “The home [of TVET] is not as important as the clarity in roles”.

3.3 Existing inter-ministerial coordination and collaboration

Existing coordination and collaboration

In the absence of a skills development platform, as explored above, respondents were asked to describe existing platforms for coordination, no matter how small. In general, respondents struggled to name institutionalised and effective platforms of coordination between MoET and MoLSS, and to a lesser extent, MCIT and others.

Most respondents to both the KIs and online survey, the majority of whom were in leadership or management roles, emphasised the need for such platforms, with many stating that MoET cannot and should not evaluate and/or regulate its own programmes. This would therefore necessitate an independent entity to conduct quality assurance, assessment, establish industry standards and offer feedback to training providers. However, inter-ministerial accountability structures would require some authority of one ministry over another, which may prove challenging given the way ministries are currently structured and collaborating. These inefficiencies were also noted within the development partners who support TVET and associated development agendas. With an increasing number of such partners interested in supporting TVET and skills development as a means of improving the fiscal outlook, youth empowerment and social cohesion, there are now “quite a number of chefs in the kitchen” as one respondent puts it. Indeed, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNDP, the EU Delegation, ILO, and the Embassy of the Republic of China on Taiwan are also active partners of one ministry, or another involved in this field and a more coordinated strategic and funding approach from these agencies would certainly encourage GoE to create similar structures and avoid the time and efforts currently spent individually soliciting each these partners for additional support.

One important finding, which has also been found by other research into this area is that within the 2008 amalgamation of the Ministry of Education into the Ministry of Education and Training, the training element was not prioritised, setting a tone which has continued to the present day. Many respondents cited that the “training” focus of MoET’s mandate is still under-appreciated, with one respondent calling it a “motherless baby”. This is exacerbated by the vacant Senior Inspector of TVET post at MoET, which has not been filled since the transfer of the previous one to become DIVT Director several years ago. As a result, all TVET, professional courses, up-grading and up-skilling and all adult education are managed under the broad banner of tertiary education, under the leadership of the Chief Tertiary and her small team of educationalists.

Furthermore, the MoET acknowledges that there are skills development programmes implemented in Eswatini of which they do not have knowledge or oversight. This includes programmes implemented by HMCS, religious groups and other ministries, such as youth, sport and cultural affairs (specifically the Eswatini National Youth Council), MCIT, or the Ministries of Agriculture (MoA) or Foreign Affairs (MoF). It was noted that, at this stage, it would be challenging to transfer the management of such institutions to the MoET without a very clear directive and mutual benefit to do so. However, there

has been some progress in this streamlining process as it was reported to the consultants (unverified at time of writing) that the Cooperative Development College (CODEC) in Ezulwini, would be transferred from the purview of the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade to the Ministry of Education and Training.³⁸

In the absence of such oversight, it was noted that private ETPs are taking initiatives which are not mandated or governed by MoET or ESHEC. These include scaling or expanding the selection of courses, offering online courses and so on. In addition, many of these institutions are not owned or controlled by Swazi nationals, further weakening ties to the regulatory system and the benefit to the country. The largest provider of tertiary education in the country, the national university UNESWA is almost entirely autonomous, being self-governed and self-accrediting.

The development of further inter-ministerial learning and sharing platforms is desperately needed. One respondent said: “Once another ministry is invited [to a meeting/workshop] as a ‘stakeholder’, they often do not attend at all” whilst another reported that, although their team was actively involved in vocational education programming, “interaction with the MoET or MoLSS is very limited”. A common trend in both online and in-person responses was that ministries are “overly-protective of their territory”, and “resistant to change”, limiting innovation. Furthermore, some development partners feel that they must play a liaison role between government actors, and between government and other stakeholders. One development partner described themselves as a “neutral liaison” between relevant ministries in this field, acknowledging that they were aware that such a role was beyond their mandate, but that it was seen to be necessary “to get them [ministries] around the table”. Several partners attested that greater collaboration is possible, however, giving the example of the establishment of the National Children’s Services Department under the Deputy Prime Minister’s Office, as a successful platform for furthering a cross-cutting mandate.

These collaboration challenges influence the civil-society skills development partners too. Junior Achievement Eswatini and Enactus Eswatini are two of the largest skills development practitioners in Eswatini, implementing programming at secondary and tertiary levels respectively. However, both partners receive only a small government subsidy from the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade, which also acts as their line ministry, after having been assigned to that ministry by previous government administrations. Both partners implement the majority of their programming in MoET-run or accredited training institutions, substituting for what could be called a government-mandate to encourage skills building, financial literacy, problem solving and soft skills development.³⁹ Whilst both institutions have some form of agreement with MoET, and implement in partnership with various government agencies (MCIT, MoET, ENYC and CFI), they do not report directly to MoET and, being donor-funded, are largely contingent on a project’s life cycle. An example of this is a 2017 project implemented by JA Eswatini at the various regional industrial training centres (MITC, SITC, NASTC and Mpaka Vocational Centre) which coupled the vocational training with financial literacy education and business mentoring. This project, supported primarily by local “corporate social responsibility” funding, led to some encouraging results, but was not externally evaluated, scaled or institutionalised

³⁸ It was unclear if this would also include the National Handicraft Centre, also in Ezulwini and which is also implemented under the Handicraft Promotions Department of MCIT.

³⁹ For a comprehensive break-down of these skills, see: Ministry of Education and Training. (2020). Landscape Analysis of Skills for Employability Programmes in Eswatini (Skills Audit Report). Mbabane, Kingdom of Eswatini: MoET/GPE/UNICEF.

at the close of the project, due to unavailable resources and so potential to learn and develop the programme into a GoE-led initiative was lost.

Leadership within skills development programming coordination

Around 60% of those engaged felt that the mandate to coordinate skills development programming currently belongs with the MoET, and that it should remain there, whilst other respondents cited several other actors or could not answer. DIVT was also often recommended as the most relevant government department to adopt a wider skills programming coordination mandate. However, in both instances, serious concerns over capacity limitations were cited, including budgetary allocation, staffing constraints and authority over other stakeholders.

“This is beyond the level of a specific Ministry. We need a higher Government intervention.”

Senior decision-maker

In contrast, some respondents noted that because there has not been enough indication that ministries are prepared to cooperate within clearly defined roles and responsibilities to-date, that the coordination role should be placed at a new, or “higher” ministry, such as the Prime Minister’s Office or a new parastatal. This is not a new cry, with several research documents, strategies and action plans urgently recommending this action, including the recent Landscape Analysis conducted by Aflatoun International supported by UNICEF and the Review of the TVET Policy, supported by UNESCO (both 2020). However, given the current efforts by GoE to reduce its number of such institutions, by merging and shelving existing structures, the creation of a new entity to coordinate skills programming is unlikely.

More than one respondent cited an alternative to establishing a separate entity to coordinate skills development would be the formation of an inter-ministerial platform such as the Planning and Budgeting Committee, which is made up of senior officials and ministers from the central planning agencies, such as the Ministries of Finance, Economic Planning and Development and Public Service, among others. It was made clear however, that in these times of fiscal challenges, that there could not be additional sitting fees or other large or recurring costs in establishing and maintaining such a body, and that without these expected incentives, that it may be difficult to maintain buy-in from across the ministries. Furthermore, a general observation that MoET were not concessionary or cooperative with other ministries, were also commonly cited, especially when regarding issues related to TVET or tertiary-level up-skilling initiatives: “Anything that cuts across mandates is going to need the individuals to work together. Where there is collaboration, there is going to be characters, attitudes, biases or misgivings” said one respondent.

The lack of skills councils for industries was also cited as a collaboration challenge. The researchers found a readiness to attribute blame to industry partners for their lack of involvement, but, at the time of writing, there has been no real analysis of why they are not more involved. It was found that private sector engagement is still largely uncoordinated, leading to their complete absence from some platforms and, in some cases, over-engagement, causing frustration and calling for a pan-government strategy about creating industry buy-in and communicating the value of greater involvement to big business. One respondent submitted that “industry is business being industrious. Currently any involvement [in skills development programming] has been out of their interest and usually in their own time. Who cannot forgive them if they want to take a step-back?”

3.4 Current programming to enhance skills for employability

"Our tertiary education providers offer the same courses they did when I was young. The world has changed significantly since then but the courses, and their content, have not."

Current skills development programming in Eswatini is evidently in very high demand. Whilst there are a number of constraints which continue to be barriers for young people in accessing tertiary education, there remains an inability for skills programming supply to meet demand. This creates a number of challenges, including, but not limited to, stifling vibrant competition, innovation and capital investment.⁴⁰ ETPs are largely at liberty to respond to this demand by increasing prices, raising the standard entrance criteria and continuing to deliver similar content and in existing modalities.

This was reflected in the research conducted under this assignment. Nearly every respondent cited the same challenges, heard previously, in the resistance to reform demonstrated by the courses offered through tertiary ETP. Attempts to adopt a more dynamic and responsive choice of tertiary education options has met with some resistance from ETPs, who have no real incentive to change the current status quo, given that demand for any tertiary-level education remains high and that given that such decisions are made by parents and young people who are not often informed by data from industry or MoLSS. Even in the absence of such independent research, MoLSS or industry-provided data (which has been cited a number of times and in-part has

"No job should be considered superior or inferior. Every job dutifully done with honesty and sincerity deserves appreciation. In fact, TVET can bring fortunes, if well approached. The question is: how can we equip young men and women with the skills required to meet the needs of our economy, and to be as professional as we want them to be?"

Former PS Education (2018)

been remedied by the 2022 Skills Audit), institutional tracer studies should inform ETPs that some courses produce graduates and skills who are in higher demand than others. It should be noted, however, that despite several calls from similar studies and strategies such as that same Skills Audit, the Landscape Analysis (2020) and others, tracer studies are not mandatory as part of the on-going periodic accreditation process. Interestingly, ESHEC is mandated to assess the relevance of a course, among other criteria, as part of its accreditation process. However, until recently, there does not seem to be very much that such an assessor can use to determine this future need for a specific skill set. Despite ESHEC confirming its intention to revise accreditation criteria to accommodate additional criteria based on relevance of the course and its learning outcomes, there was a general feeling that ESHEC did not use these methods currently, consistently and no assessment tool was available. In addition, given that such information on the relevance would need to come from independent

⁴⁰ It should be noted here that there are a number of smaller, privately-owned ETPs operating at a small scale in a variety of fields, including catering, hospitality, automotive mechanics etc but due to their scale, these do not meet demand especially in popular subjects such as plumbing, carpentry and metalwork.

research, such as the aforementioned Skills Audit or from MoLSS directly, it was unclear how the need and relevance of a qualification or skill could be independently determined.

Government and private ETP institutions report becoming overwhelmed with applicants in recent years, reflecting the “youth demographic bulge” previously cited. In a recent admission cycle, William Pitcher College reported that 6000 applicants applied for around 300 places, whilst Ngwane Teachers College, at which 90% of the Primary Teaching Diploma students are government-sponsored, received over 8000 applications for over 1000 places.⁴¹ These unverified admissions statistics indicate the demand for teaching qualifications, despite recent research suggesting that there are limited career progression prospects, especially at primary level, and that many are unlikely to find adequate employment as graduates. Some respondents attributed this imbalance to ill-informed decision-

“In all my study of education systems, I have never known one which is principally propped up by the government as the majority employer. It is a false economy.”

KII respondent

makers (usually parents of AYP) who still see teaching and other professions (especially those in the civil service) as steady, reliable careers to pursue. Further efforts to engage and educate this demographic on the future-of-work and 21st century career options appear to be in urgent demand. In the short term, such efforts can begin by making ETP tracer study data mandatory, standardised and published to inform AYP (and their parents) decision-making. In time, and should additional support be available to address the budgetary and capacity restraints which currently prevent them from fulfilling their function, ESHEC’s mandate could be scaled to offer a rating/ranking system on the quality of individual courses, especially for

private ETPs, such as those found in other countries.

As one would expect for practical courses, the intake quotas offered by a number of TVET colleges are even smaller. Whilst ECOT and Gwamile VOCTIM are the primary TVET destinations for many students, with a combined intake of approximately 1650 students (1400 and 250 respectively)⁴², Mpaka National Training Centre follows next at about 800-1000 students (studying for the South African National N-Series Diploma). At the smaller scale, Manzini Industrial Training Centre (MITC) and its sister colleges in Nhlanguano (NASTC) and Siteki (SITC) have a reported intake of about 300 students per annum for their mostly traditional TVET courses. Given this bias of demand over supply, and the liberty of each institution to establish its own admission criteria, a rise in the admissions criteria is the natural outcome. However, TVET and vocational skills are education and career pathways which remain open to those who are not academically inclined and/or whose secondary schooling is interrupted for other reasons (financial constraints, repeating years, early marriage and pregnancy, migration, expulsion etc). By raising their admissions criteria, these institutions also bar such AYP from a qualification, skill and potential career, often leaving them no choice but to re-enter a secondary school system with all the individual challenges previously outlined, and which in many cases lead to systems of failure, stigma and exclusion for these students. In addition, the financial burden of repeating school cannot be underestimated, especially when repeating at GCSE level means repeating not one but two (of the

⁴¹ On a positive note, William Pitcher College did recently make the strategic decision to phase out its Primary Teacher Diploma programme in response to reports that there was an oversupply of these teachers, and that the employment market was not able to absorb graduates.

⁴² ECOT reports similar admissions challenges as other institutions, with over 5500 applications per annum for an institution with a total student body of approximately 1,400 (in all years).

most expensive) academic years. Finally, it was also noted that since Covid-19 disrupted schooling, many students have not returned to formal secondary education, furthering the urgency of calls for additional and alternative pathways for these students to be made available. Strengthening these pathways, as well as reinforcing their value, should therefore be one of the priorities of the MoET in the coming years, guided by the skills development and coordination framework developed under this assignment. Creating national career pathways across secondary education and PSET should become a core function of the skills development and coordination framework and will have to feature as a strong recommendation to be taken forward.

At the centre of this harmful cycle, remains a stigma around TVET, which was evident throughout the data collection, and which further exacerbates the pressure on students who are practically skilled to conform to academic pathways. Simply put, even formal TVET is commonly seen as a “last option” for many parents, teachers and young people, whilst informal and/or community-based TVET courses, many of which are undocumented and unassessed, are considered in even lesser light.⁴³ Even at the MoET level, it was noted by a number of respondents that there is no specific expertise in skills development and/or TVET education speciality within the ministry’s senior personnel,⁴⁴ with several citing this as an example of the de-prioritization of TVET and the barriers that those with TVET education experience throughout their careers. Verbalisations of this kind of stigma against TVET were heard from across the spectrum of respondents, from educationalists and GoE officials, to the AYP themselves, and addressing this bias must therefore be a priority in the country’s efforts to reposition and rebranding TVET and other skills as urgently needed, viable and secure career paths. It is highly recommended that independent research like the Skills Audit be actively used to address such bias and better inform future decision-making. Publishing success stories from projects like the TVET Enhancement Project should also be considered.

Another way of addressing the bias towards TVET, among many other benefits, would be to invest heavily in improving the quality of the courses themselves, the capacity of those who teach them,⁴⁵ as well as the accreditation students receive on their completion. Currently, there are significant challenges in both the horizontal and vertical integration of TVET qualifications. Although a TVET qualification framework has been developed, it has not been fully integrated into the National Qualifications Framework. This has several implications. Firstly, it means that there is no formal equivalence or benchmarking (especially for employers but also for parents and young people) between well-recognised and accredited tertiary academic pathways and those of TVET.⁴⁶ Secondly, it stifles progression between TVET institutions and qualifications, meaning that a student cannot currently begin their TVET education with a one-year course at Gwamile VOCTIM, and then move to ECOT to take up the next level of the qualification ladder.⁴⁷ This is a particular barrier to those who do

⁴³ There is an urgent need for further understanding and documentation of the non-formal TVET sector and providers. Many such programmes, implemented by community-based organizations, faith-based groups and MSMEs offering informal apprenticeships, are thought to be making significant contributions to skills development but are, by their very nature, unknown and uncredited.

⁴⁴ This is not to suggest that the researchers did not find enthusiasm and capacity from among the key stakeholders they interviewed throughout the data collection phase. Conversely, the researchers encountered some passionate, informed and highly capacitated people in key decision-makers roles, but in many cases these individuals were supported by small or low-capacity teams, insufficient budget, and low political will.

⁴⁵ It was also noted that currently there is no mandate for tertiary educators to maintain or improve their skills to adapt to modern teaching content and pedagogical styles. This could be incorporated into the strengthened accreditation system previously recommended in this report.

⁴⁶ This is also very much the case at secondary level, where a pre-vocational training stream, as an alternative to an academic pathway, is reportedly being piloted for students in 16 schools. However, it was not clear to the consultants if this pilot is being implemented in the given institutions.

⁴⁷ This finding is also noted in UNESCO. (2020). TVET Policy Review: Kingdom of Eswatini. Paris, France: UNESCO.

not finish secondary education, as the choice of institution open to such AYP remains limited and training courses are often of poor quality and present few opportunities to move to another institution to complete subsequent years or courses of study. For example, a student who does not complete the EGCSE/IGCSE certificate, seen as Level 3 on the Eswatini Qualifications Framework below (see figure 1 below) may be able to further their technical skills through Sebenta National Institute or perhaps through one of regional industrial training centres, should be accepted. From there, however, there is no current standardised pathway to further their education at other institutions, such as ECOT or Gwamile VOCTIM. Finally, there is also currently no alignment to SADC TVET standards, meaning that students from Eswatini will not have the recognised qualifications to apply their trade or further their education in other SADC countries, especially in South Africa.⁴⁸

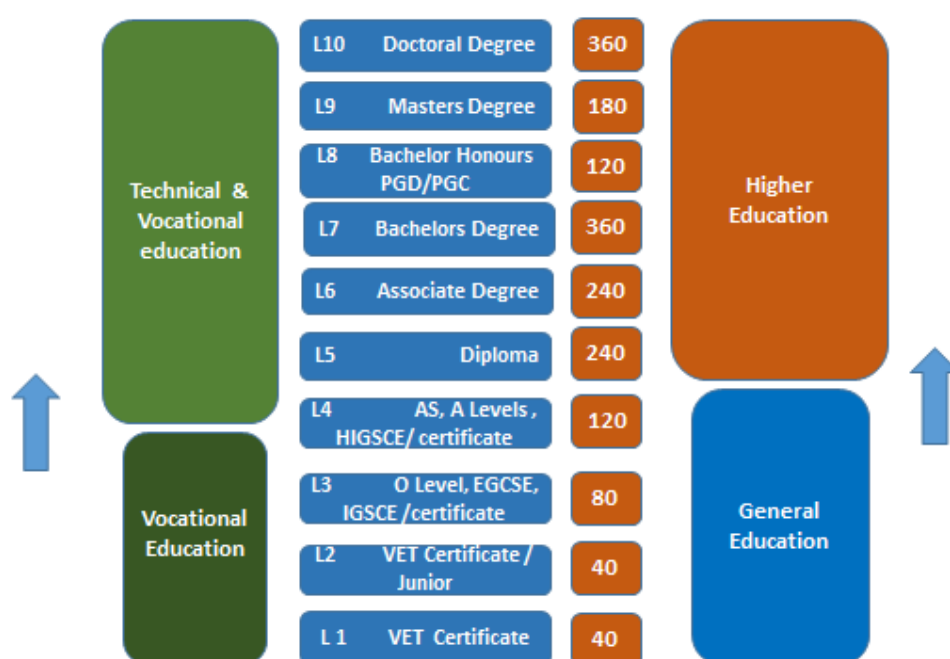


Figure 1: The Eswatini Qualifications Framework

On a broader level, a common finding included almost universal support amongst respondents for ETPs (and not the students individually) to arrange prescribed work placements and internships, based on the quality of the student’s performance in their field of study. It was cited that this would have widespread positive effects including removing the current pressure and cost (printing, travel time,) on students to secure their own placements, as well as limiting the current system of nepotism which exists throughout the career ladder and especially in the civil service. While actively searching and applying for jobs is a key skill for young people to learn, it is a commonly held belief that the current system expects too much of third/final-year students and that fostering institutional relationships between ETPs and industry partners to facilitate these placements, as some private ETPs are already currently doing, will be more effective and encourage further industry involvement at all levels. In time, it was suggested that such relationships could be developed to such a point where companies could offer some minimal remuneration to internship candidates, or else formalise the path to employment for the most successful students.

⁴⁸ It is suspected that this is the reason for Mpaka Vocational Training Centre, a government run institution, adopting the South African N-Series qualifications.

3.5 Resource mobilisation for current and future skills development programming

“There is currently no reason to believe that [the] government really appreciates the potential impact of genuine investment in skills development.”

The national resource allocation towards current and future skills development programming was a favourite topic for many respondents, who were ready to cite a number of challenges they face daily concerning resources. Such calls reflect the fiscal challenges currently faced by the country at-large but there were also specific recommendations for how to better fund skills development programmes. Most respondents were very complimentary of the efforts of development partners in supporting GoE in supporting skills development programmes, but most also acknowledged that the donor space was shrinking, especially in recent years, with other global concerns such as Covid-19, climate change and the emergent war in Ukraine diverting resources from such issues and from southern Africa in general. Many suggested that development partners could consider a “breadbasket approach” where, through greater coordination and collaborative approaches, partners could pool funding behind a smaller number of initiatives and achieve real results.

However, respondents also acknowledged that development partners, who largely support initiatives through cyclical project-based funding, should not be directly funding the implementation of TVET and other skills development programmes, a responsibility which lies with the GoE. In response, there were repeated calls for a clearly defined financing strategy specifically for TVET as well as greater transparency in budget allocations to TVET from the government. Currently, whilst the foundations for such a strategy are in place, including the 2020 TVET Policy Review, the state does not have a strategy to clearly define how this agenda will be financed and repeated calls for greater emphasis on skills development in the national budget have seen minimal results. In addition, it was clear that stakeholders felt that such a strategy would require a revision of the way in which scholarships are currently awarded. Several stakeholders felt that by investing in individuals, rather than courses or institutions, the current scholarship process was not achieving value for money or return on investment for government and, instead, the GoE would be well-advised to invest in courses and skills which are linked to priority sectors, in most need within the labour market or have the most potential to create a multi-skilled, resilient workforce as well as a conducive context for MSMEs. This would allow ETPs to make capital investment in equipment and facilities which will further strengthen the quality of education on offer. There was particular concern for the number of government scholarships which are being awarded to students who study towards Associate Degrees or similar at private ETPs as these foundational tertiary courses are not recognised as a bachelor’s degree equivalents internationally or by many industry players, nor are they acting as a gateway to further study.

When follow-up enquiries were made about how TVET should be funded if not through project-based development partner support, it was revealed that, among decision-makers, there is quite a lot of support for an industry levy approach (also called a TVET levy or skills levy) as has been implemented in some of the most advanced countries in the region, such as Mozambique, Botswana, Namibia and Mauritius.⁴⁹ Such a levy would involve adding a mandatory amount to existing payroll or corporate

⁴⁹ According to the latest global review, in 2020 about 70 countries worldwide operate levy-financed training funds of different types (Palmer, 2020).

taxes (typically about 1%) in order to fund skills development programming.⁵⁰ It was cited that in countries where such levies have been introduced in a clearly communicated, transparent and efficient manner, the reservations from companies has been minimal. However, it has also been noted that in many of these comparable regional contexts, the corporate sector is not as influential as it is in Eswatini, the markets freer and able to withstand such measures, especially if it means a greater investment in skilled employees and less need to re-train new staff in the medium-long term. However, respondents acknowledged that transparent coordination structures, autonomous control over budgets and clearly defined responsibilities are prerequisites to such a levy being introduced. Without such coordination, the faith in the government to be able to allocate and account for levy fees will offer companies solid grounds to object to the introduction of such a fee. Furthermore, it is only natural that employers large and small will want to see the return of their levy fees through improved skills development programming and will, as contributors to the fund, have some influence over the way funds are used. As an example of this, two respondents cited the failure of NAMBOARD and Dairy Board to use their levies for their intended purpose: to further the industry and stimulate growth in those sectors. Instead, it was claimed that, as those levies were introduced, government funding of those institutions was gradually withdrawn and levy funds were instead used to fund operational costs, creating little or no advantage for industry contributors. In summary, although placing some of the cost burden of skills programming on the private sector is generally seen as a viable future solution to the current funding gap, which has also been detailed in other studies and publications on this issue; it is a medium-long term option which requires strategic planning, capacity building and stronger institutional arrangements to be put in place first. Furthermore, such a levy should be matched by a sizable investment from the GoE through increased funding allocation in the annual budget, which to-date has not been forthcoming.

⁵⁰ It should be noted that the provisions necessary to establish a TVET levy are already in place under the Industrial and Vocational Training Act of 1982. To-date this regulation has not been implemented.

3.6 U-Report results

The U-Report platform was used to incorporate the views of a large sample of AYP in the study.⁵¹ While respondents (n=3,848) were from all four regions, following a largely representative geographic spread, there were significantly more female respondents (64%) than male (36%). This may be attributed to the higher willingness of women and adolescent girls to respond to unsolicited polls. Age disaggregation was also largely expected, with the 25–30-year-old age bracket the most common (at 35% of all respondents). Given that efforts to enrol young people in the U-Report platform have been going on for some years now, and that this is an age group who often own and control their own mobile phones, this is justified, although it was hoped that the study would engage more than 23% in the 20-24 age bracket.

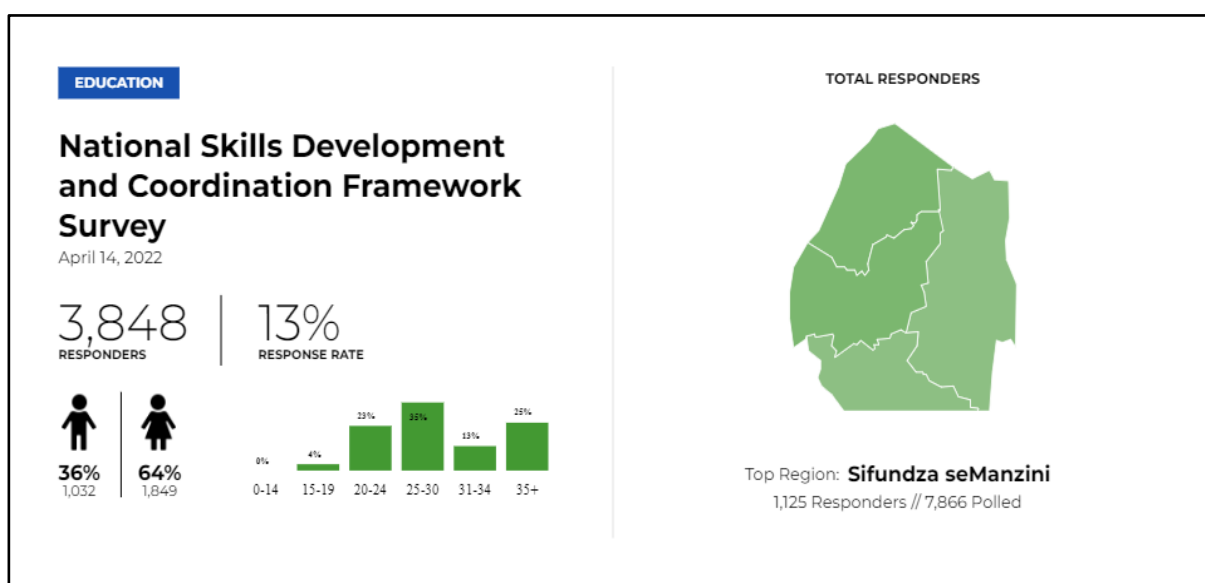


Figure 1: An overview of the U-Report survey respondents by

Respondents were first asked on their current activities and responses from 3,848 people concurred with recent education and employment statistics. 8% of those asked responded that they were attending a tertiary course, which speaks closely to the 7% student progression rate between secondary school and tertiary, previously published by MoET and partners (EMIS, 2019). 49% claimed to be unemployed, which is aligned to the published national youth unemployment average of 47%, although lower than that found by the recent Skills Audit (2021). These respondents also did not select other options available to best describe them, suggesting that they can be classified as not simply unemployed by “not in

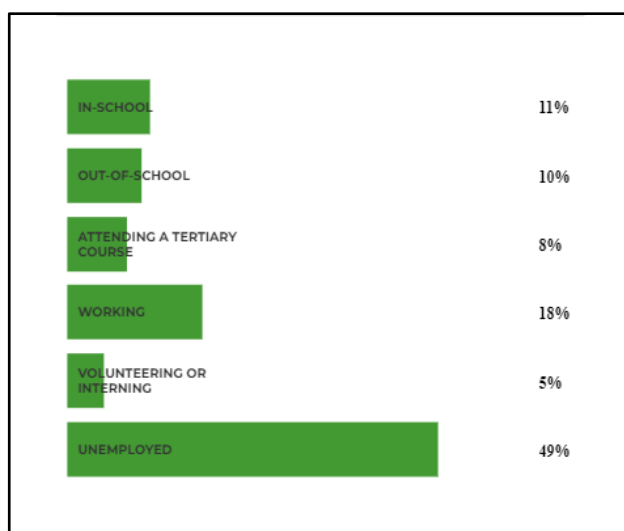


Figure 2: Results of Question 1: “Are you currently...” (n=3,848)

⁵¹ For full results, see: <https://eswatini.ureport.in/opinion/5665/>

Employment, Education or Training” (NEET). However, the results of a later, more specific question, “Are you currently employed?” reveals a much higher AYP unemployment rate, with 68% responding “no” and a further 14% responding “yes, but on and off” (indicating informal, temporary or piece-job work), implying that a very concerning 82% currently have no formal and/or regular employment and income. As one might expect, there was some correlation with age and location, with older respondents and those in the more urban Hhohho and Manzini regions responding more positively than those who are younger and/or from Lubombo or Shiselweni region (see figure 4 below).⁵² There was very little difference in employment rates between male and female respondents to this question.

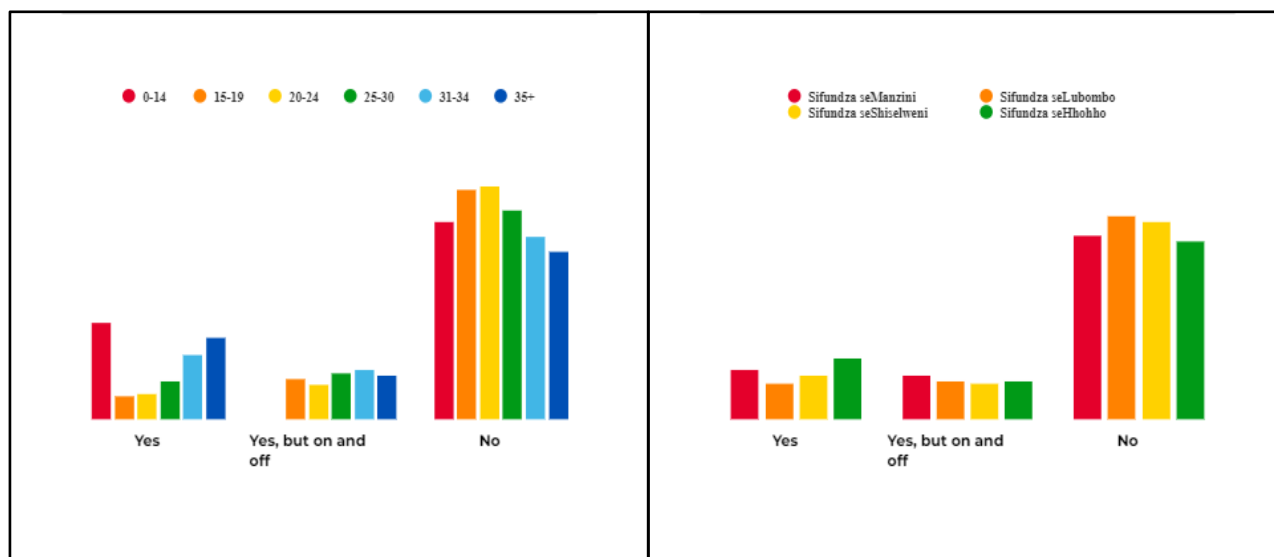


Figure 3: Results to Question 4 “Are you currently employed?” disaggregated by age (left) and region (right)

When we isolate those who respond “yes” or “yes, but on and off” when asked if they were employed, we can interrogate the type of employment held by many young people. Of the 1,010 respondents employed, 179 (17.7%; m=14.5%, f=20.0%) responded that they were “self-employed” while 393 (38.8%) answered that they were a day labourer or informally employed. Sex disaggregation reveals that these two responses were submitted by the majority of male respondents, with 43.2% of the employed respondents claiming to be thus employed, compared to 36.6% of female income earners. Finally, a further 43.4% (n=439; m=42.2%, f=43.3%) of those who are working, answered that they were “formally employed”, with very little differences between the male and female persons surveyed. This analysis of the world of work, although limited, gives us a concerning outlook, whereby the majority of AYPs and others are not formally employed or earning income, having implications not only on social protection, labour laws and rights, and economic resilience of individuals and communities, but also on national fiscal policy and revenue, and skills building, as those who are self- or informally-employed are far less likely to access professional development or capacity building opportunities.

When we consider access and demand for skills developing programming, the U-Report survey revealed that 1187 out of 3172 surveyed (37.4%; m=41.4%, f=35.2%) said that they had ever attended a skills development programme of any kind, including informal skills development activities at community level. Whilst the definitions of skills programming in the minds of the respondents may present a challenge to the reliability of this data, only 16% responded that they had attended a

⁵² Employment results from those 0-14 years should be discounted as they make up only 3 respondents and cannot be employed.

community-based skills building programme, which is lower than expected, given the number of such programmes implemented by school, community, NGOs, and faith-based partners at community level. A further 21% (m=24.9%, f=19.8%) claimed that they had taken part in a TVET programme at a formal institution, such as a college or training centre, showing a notable sex difference of 5.1% between male and female respondents. The majority (n=1985; 62.6%) of all those surveyed said they have never engaged with a TVET or skills development course of any kind.

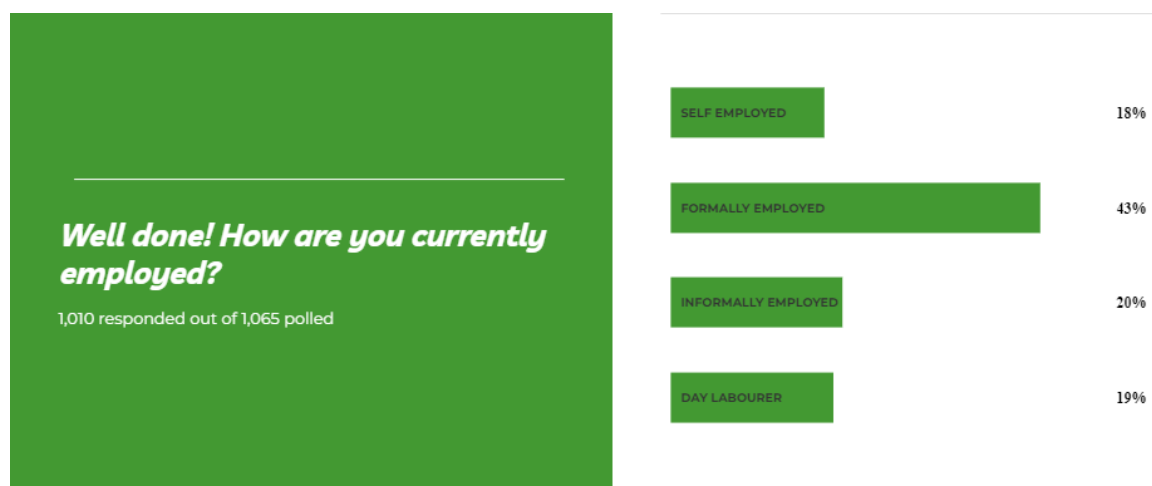


Figure 4: Question 5 results.

When asked about the barriers to formal skills development courses (figure 6 below), as expected, the cost was identified as the major barrier, with 56% of respondents identifying it over other challenges. This is aligned with other research on this topic including the 2018 TVET Enhancement Study findings. Indeed, due to the practical nature and smaller class sizes of TVET courses, the costs are generally higher than their academic equivalents, and there are far fewer government bursaries available for students wishing to pursue these courses. However, other barriers were also chosen over cost by a large number of study participants. Nearly 1000 of 2987 (n=997, 33.4%) replied that “knowledge of available options” or “choice of courses” were the biggest barrier they faced in accessing TVET, revealing a civic education and promotions challenge which has been noted throughout the data capture. Prospective students, especially those from the rural areas, face genuine communication challenges in accessing relevant and up-to-date information from a distance. Noting that some institutions are better than others in this regard, many of such institutions do not have an up-to-date website, promotional material or other ways of learning and comparing the courses they offer. Furthermore, there is no central or online skills or careers guidance platform operational in Eswatini, the likes of which we have seen implemented in South Africa such as National Career Advice Portal (NCAP) and the National Open Learning System (NOLS) focusing on TVET courses and qualifications. Surprisingly, only 6% cited “time” as the main barrier to youth skills development in the country, and a very small minority (5%) claimed that there was no need for any new skills, or no barriers whatsoever (“none”).

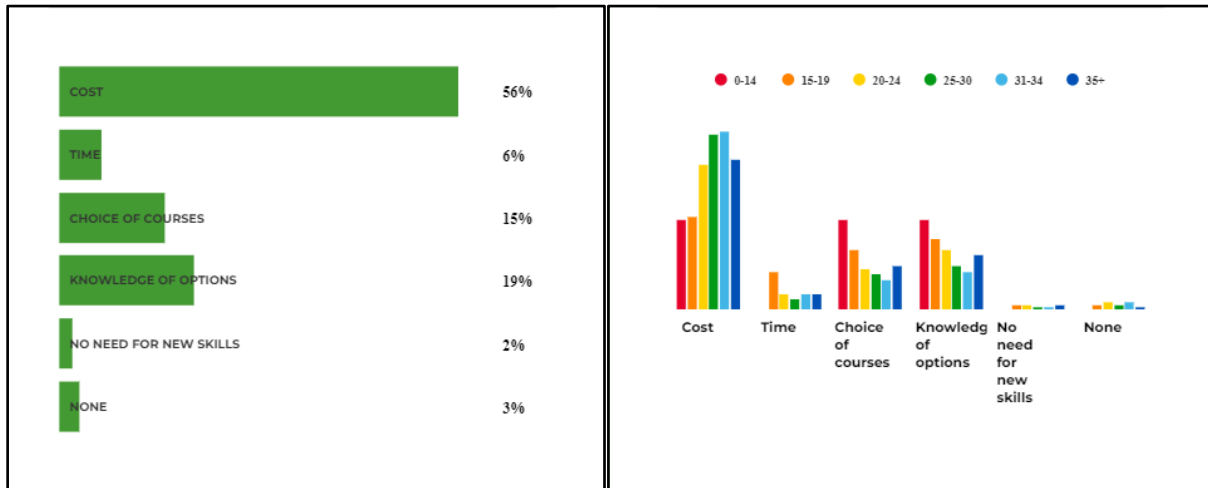


Figure 6: Question 9: “What is the main barrier to youth skills development?” results overview (left) and by age (right)

This poor access did not affect demand, however, with the vast majority (87%) of both males and females replying “yes” when asked “given the chance, would you be interested in improving your technical or vocational skills?” (figure 7 below). This high demand was consistent across both sexes and all locations, although there was a 10% rise in the willingness to undertake skills development training among older youth, rising from 80% in the 15-19 age range to 90% responding “yes” in the 31-34 age group. Given the number of academic and professional options available to young people, this is a surprisingly high proportion of those surveyed. It may indicate a lack of knowledge or adequate information, especially in careers guidance, the desperation many now feel as other plans have not been realized, or, more positively, an openness with which young people, even those who have identified their talents and future career paths, may approach skills building and lifelong learning. This result was also surprising as it reveals a counter-narrative to some of the stigma towards TVET skills and vocations we have seen from other stakeholders, implying that, in the face of poor job prospects and economic challenges, many young people are interested in up-skilling, changing their career path or having multiple sources of income.

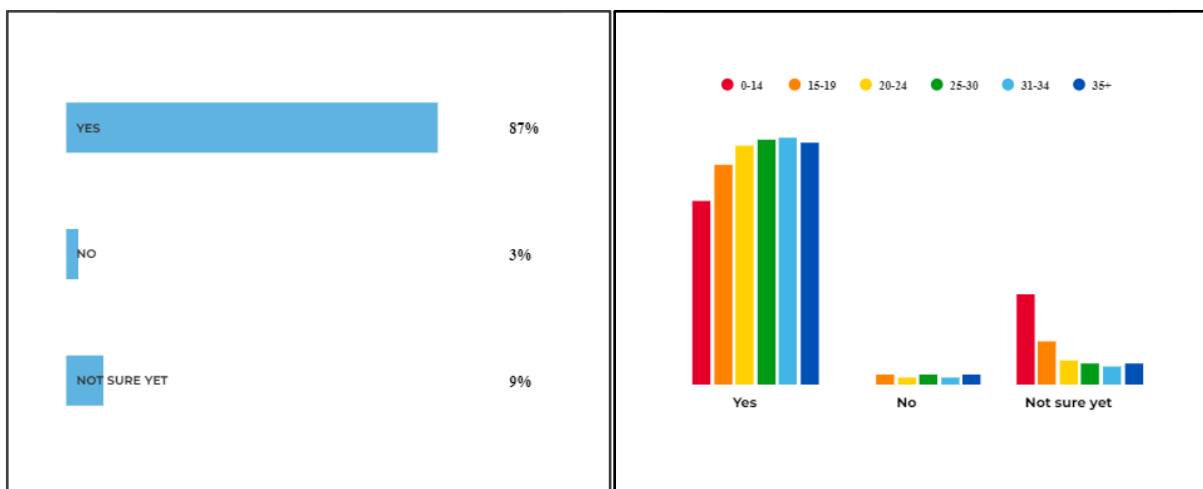


Figure 5: Question 7 (“given the chance, would you be interested in improving your technical or vocational skills?”) results overview (left) and disaggregated by age (right)

4. The architecture of the national skills development and coordination framework

4.1 The objectives of the skills development and coordination framework

The proposed skills development and coordination framework has an underlying theory of change which is to improve the value chain from school through training and skills development to the world of work. In this respect, the architecture of the framework addresses:

- a. **System strengthening** for skills development in the areas of “governance and coordination” and “finance and resource mobilisation” with the expected outcome of a more conducive and enabling environment for better adolescents and young people transition from education to productive work, and
- b. **Service provision and utilisation** for skills development in the areas of “equitable access to skills for work through multiple pathways” and “strengthening the quality and market-relevance of skills provision” with the expected outcome of adolescents and young people developing relevant skills for work and being better prepared to connect to productive work opportunities aligned with their acquired skills.

The expected overall impact of a functional skills development and coordination framework for adolescents and young people programmes is:

- a. Improved transition from education and training to productive work
- b. Reduced rate of NEET (youth not in education, employment or training)
- c. Reduced time to find employment
- d. Better quality of employment and improved retention in employment
- e. Increased earnings

The framework is based on the recommendations derived from the findings of the data collection and analysis in Phase 2 presented in the previous chapter. These recommendations have been converted into 14 objectives, which have then been broken down into tasks or activities for each objective as presented in the sections 4.2 and 4.3 below.

The 14 objectives form the conceptual base which has informed the architecture of the national skills development and coordination framework. The recommendations have been sorted into the various responsible entities who will take a leading role in the execution, although other stakeholders may be delegated sub-tasks at a later stage. Tasks were then further analysed and prioritised based on the understanding of the context, the feasibility and cost of the proposed intervention and their estimation of likelihood of its successful implementation. Finally, an estimation of the indicative timeframe has been included, using the following time frame periods: “short-term”: 0-24 months, “medium-term”: 24 months – 72 months (5 years) and “long-term”: greater than 72 months.

Outcome	Objective	Responsible Entity	Priority (High, Medium, Low)	Short-, Medium- or Long-term Strategy	Timeframe ⁵³
1. 21st century core skills	1. Revise various curricula to better focus on skills for employability development as well as learning content. Vary assessment methods in order to better assess skills over knowledge.	MoET	High	Long	
	2. Create requirements and monitoring mechanisms for the up-skilling, re-skilling, and at times re-qualifying of TVET instructors and educators particularly in ICT, competency-based teaching methodologies and styles and skills for the 4IR.	MoET	High	Long	
	3. Develop upskilling, short and professional courses which give learners flexibility and advancement opportunities without long investment in formal courses.	MoET	High	Long	
	4. Creating national career pathways for technical and vocational skills development across secondary education and PSET.	MoET	High	Long	

⁵³ Timeframe to be determined when the implementation of the Skills Development and Coordination Framework commences, perhaps as one of the first responsibilities of the proposed Stakeholder Coordination Platform (Objective 11).

Outcome	Objective	Responsible Entity	Priority (High, Medium, Low)	Short-, Medium- or Long-term Strategy	Timeframe
2. Resource mobilisation and management	5. Review the process of scholarships and move to allocating funds to priority courses, rather than individual students.	MoLSS	High	Medium	
	6. Greater budget transparency for skills development programmes within the MoET and other related ministries.	MoET	High	Long	
	7. Urgent need for more sustainable sources of funding, identified by a clear financing strategy for skills development programmes.	MoET	High	Long	
	8. Establish a donor coordination platform to facilitate new and existing donors to effectively contribute to the TVET/ Skills Development space, including, in the medium-term, a move towards a bread-basket funding approach.	MoET and Development Partners	High	Medium	

Outcome	Objective	Responsible Entity	Priority (High, Medium, Low)	Short-, Medium- or Long-term Strategy	Timeframe
3. Effective skills coordination	9. Strengthen horizontal (between institutions and within SADC) and vertical (progression) integration of the TVET Qualifications Framework.	MoET	High	Long	
	10. Line ministerial roles and responsibilities defined.	Prime Minister's Office	High	Medium	
	11. Stakeholder coordination platforms established.	MoET	High	Short	

Outcome	Objective	Responsible Entity	Priority (High, Medium, Low)	Short-, Medium- or Long-term Strategy	Timeframe
4. Industry-informed skills programming	12. Introduce a centralised, integrated career development system ⁵⁴ such as the National Careers Advice Portal (NCAP) and the National Open Learning System (NOLS) in South Africa.	MoLSS	High	Long	
	13. Strengthen labour placement services for graduates, allowing them to transition from tertiary education into the world of work.	MoLSS	High	Medium	
	14. Improve the accreditation process for training programmes and qualifications as well as the institution responsible for awarding such accreditations.	ESHEC (MoET)	High	Long	

⁵⁴ It is highly recommended that a policy for an integrated career development system (still to be developed in the Eswatini context) should precede the roll out of a national skills development and coordination framework for AYP employability programmes, as it may have influence over how responsibilities are shared among stakeholders.

4.2 The logic of the skills development and coordination framework

The skills development and coordination framework has been articulated in a circular visual logical framework format to better demonstrate the interlinkages and relationships between the various objectives (strategies) which are recommended to improve skills programming for adolescent and young people in Eswatini. The logical framework accepts that there might be many ways of achieving the desired goal and has therefore resisted a visualisation which suggests that the next step in the framework can always be achieved by success in its predecessor, and that the two are therefore directly causally linked. Instead, by using the circular visual representation, the framework suggests more reliance on the inter-relationship between different factors and suggests that GoE can prioritise from where it believes activities can achieve the greatest impact during the subsequent implementation of the framework. Alternatively, the skills development and coordination framework is also presented in a table format log-frame. Further guidance on the prioritisation and the various stakeholders responsible are offered in the table format following the visualisations.

A simplified version of the visual framework is reproduced below, with a more detailed version submitted in annex to this report. The extended version of the visual framework features an outer ring of prioritized, chronological actions or tasks (in black boxes) which, if realised successfully, will achieve the objectives outlined in the blue boxes immediately inside them. These objectives are the imperative priorities which should be realised in the next 1-5 years for four interconnected outcomes to be achieved. These outcomes, just like the objectives around them, are not ranked in order of timeliness or prioritisation but rather rely on one another to achieve the goal. These outcomes are:

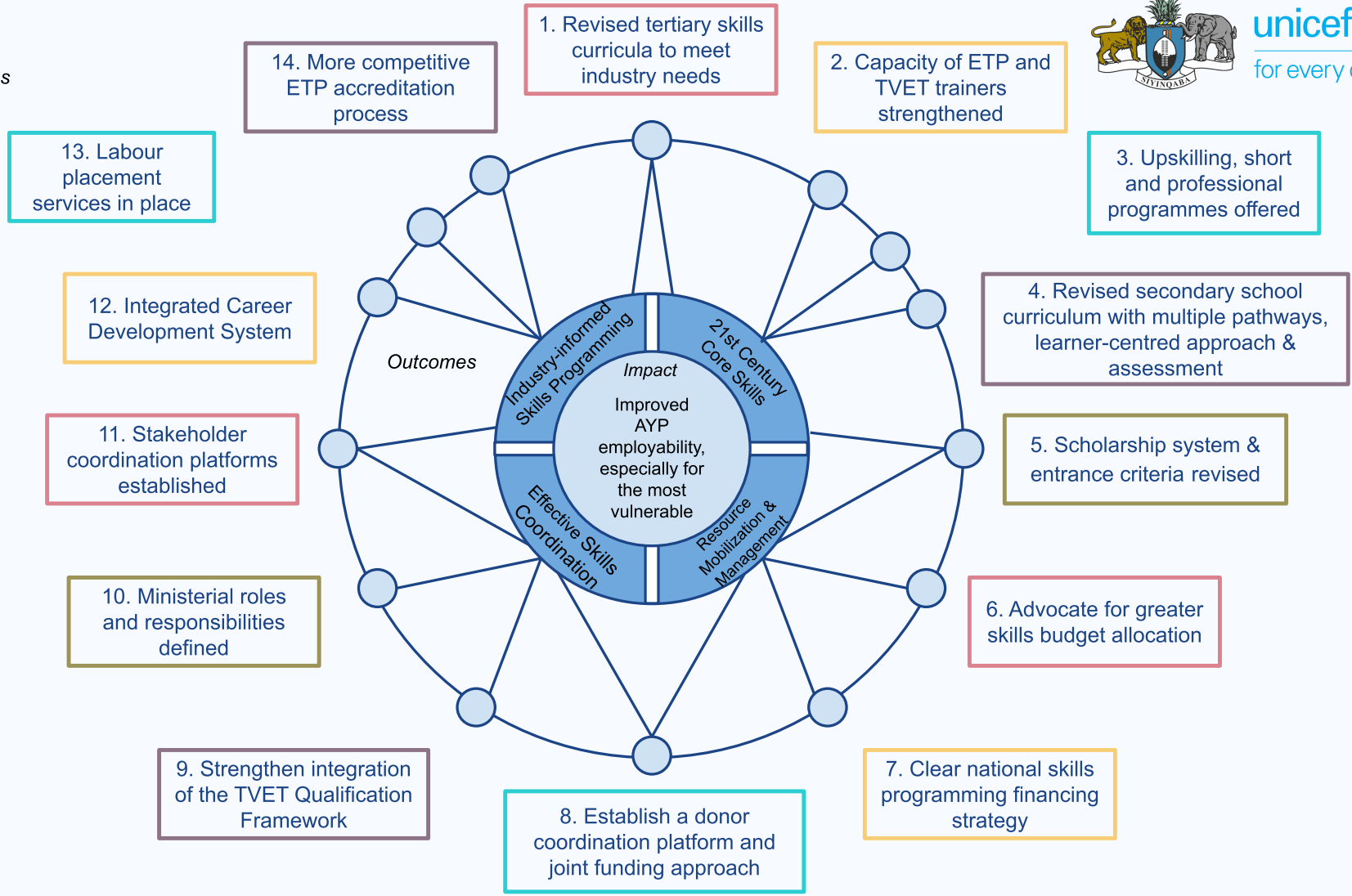
- 21st century core skills development
- Industry-informed skills development programming
- Effective skills development coordination
- Resource mobilisation and management

Should the GoE be able, through preceding steps, to realise these outcomes across the spectrum of education and training, but especially in secondary and tertiary levels, then they are more likely to realise the goal or impact at the centre of the presented visual, which is to see “improved adolescent and young people’s employability”.

The Skills Development and Coordination Framework for Adolescents and Young People in Eswatini



Objectives



Long-term goal

Improved economic growth and development

Impact

Improved adolescent and young people's employability, especially for the most vulnerable

Outcomes

21st Century Core Skills

Industry-informed Skills Programming

Effective Skills Coordination

Resource Mobilization & Management

Objectives

2. Capacity of ETP and TVET trainers strengthened

1. Revised tertiary skills curricula to meet industry needs

8. Establish a donor coordination platform and joint funding approach

5. Scholarship system & entrance criteria revised

3. Upskilling, short and professional programmes offered

12. Integrated Career Development System

9. Strengthen integration of the TVET Qualification Framework

6. Advocate for greater skills budget allocation

4. Revised secondary school curriculum with multiple pathways, learner-centred approach & assessment

13. Labour placement services in place

10. Ministerial roles and responsibilities defined

7. Clear national skills programming financing strategy

14. More competitive ETP accreditation process

11. Stakeholder coordination platforms established



4.3 Tasks and implementation plan of the skills development and coordination framework

The fourteen tables below systematically unpack the objectives identified in the framework above, offering several tasks which will be necessary to achieve each objective. These tasks are listed in a logical and sequential order and offer a more detailed implementation plan which will guide stakeholders towards achieving each objective. Through a validation workshop, which offered a platform for consultation with the most influential stakeholders in Eswatini's education and skills programming sector, these tasks are each assigned a responsible party and timeframe for implementation, which will enable partners to achieve all these tasks, and thereby the respective objective, within the allocated timeframe. Whilst there may still be need to develop and cost further action plans for each objective, these tasks highlight the most important major steps and can be used by GoE, industry stakeholders and development partners to inform their workplans in the coming years as a baseline of priority measures for the activation of the national skills development and coordination framework.

Objective 1: Revised tertiary skills curricula to meet industry needs

Task	Responsible Entity	Timeline
1. Conduct a mapping exercise to better understand all the courses on offer from GoE and private ETPs in the country, including those with provisions for people with special educational needs and/or those living with disabilities.	MoET	Short term
2. Building on the findings of the mapping, other existing research and ETP tracer studies, establish which skills and qualifications are in highest demand by industry.	MoET	Short-to-medium term
3. Develop criteria against which to assess and/or rank the quality of skills programmes offered in order to determine which course(s)/ETPs provide better quality of education and/or increased future employability.	MoET / ETPs	Short-to-medium term
4. Add financial literacy, cooperatives and entrepreneurship skills into TVET and skills development programmes curricula as standard in order to encourage students to establish MSMEs.	MoET / ETPs	Short-to-medium term
5. Create a communications plan for the roll out of civic education and promotions on TVET and skills development programmes on offer by government run and private ETPs with particular emphasis on those needed by industry and for self-employment.	MoET / Partners	Short-to-medium term
6. Publish information annually to inform students, parents, and other stakeholders.	MoET / ETPs	Short-to-medium term

Objective 2: Capacity of ETP and TVET trainers strengthened

Task	Responsible Entity	Timeline
1. Develop and/or strengthen relationships with industry to collect accurate and transparent industry needs data to inform which trainer capacities should be prioritised and where up-skilling programmes need to be offered.	MoET	Short term
2. Conduct a comprehensive capacity assessment/skills audit of all government-employed TVET trainers and government-run ETPs.	MoET	Short term
3. Introduce a schedule of learning and sharing visits between ETPs.	MoET	Short term

4. Introduce minimum qualifications and mandatory staff development programmes for all ETPs, as a condition of accreditation.	MoET	Medium term
5. Introduce minimum accessibility criteria and mandatory staff development for all ETPs on integrating students with special education needs and those living with disabilities into mainstream skills education.	MoET	Medium term
6. Enhance the capacity of DIVT to conduct assessments and certify learners to meet the needs of learners and industry	MoLSS (DIVT)	Medium-to-long term

Objective 3: Upskilling, short and professional programmes offered

Task	Responsible Entity	Timeline
1. Develop a short and professional programmes list with qualifications defined by industry needs.	MoET	Short term
2. Map current up-skilling, short and professional courses offered by public and private ETPs and evaluate their relevance against the industry needs.	MoET- ESHEC	Short term
3. Map other work-based learning programmes offered by employers (internally or through third party private trainers), such as mandatory fire, first aid or health and safety qualifications.	MoLSS (DIVT)	Short term
4. Identify potential public and private ETPs to offer identified up-skilling, short and professional courses in the short and medium term.	MoET- ESHEC	Short term
5. Document capacity building and equipment needs at public and private ETPs to offer the identified inclusive up-skilling, short and professional courses.	MoET	Short term
6. Develop various training curricula for up-skilling, short and professional courses with relevant industries and register them on the ENQF.	ETP	Medium term
7. Explore options to offer scholarships to AYP to participate in the up-skilling, short and professional courses (linked with Obj. 5) and link it to the integrated career development system (Obj 12).	MoET	Medium term
8. Develop and conduct an advocacy and communications campaign to advertise the up-skilling, short and professional courses in collaboration with industry.	MoET	Medium term
9. Establish and launch a database of up-skilling, short and professional course graduates to contact should further training or refresher training become available.	MoET	Medium-to-long term

10. Offer graduates of up-skilling, short and professional courses linkages to state and NGO-funded business mentorship programmes and seed capital opportunities to encourage MSMEs.	MoET / MoCIT	Medium-to-long term
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Objective 4: Revised secondary school curriculum with multiple pathways, learner-centred approach, and assessment

Task	Responsible Entity	Timeline
1. Unpack curriculum framework for general education to guide review and revision of secondary education curriculum and decide on the introduction of multiple pathways. ⁵⁵	NCC	Short term
2. Determine the scope and overarching approach to secondary education curriculum revision, including the multiple pathways model and further integration of those with special educational needs and learners with disabilities.	NCC	Short term
3. Conduct the revision of subject syllabuses under the premise of introducing multiple pathways.	NCC	Short-to-medium term
4. Ensure the integration of financial literacy and entrepreneurship skills into secondary education curricula as cross-cutting issues to encourage students to establish MSMEs.	NCC	Short-to-medium term
5. Establish capacity building needs for secondary teachers to implement the revised secondary curriculum under the multiple pathways model (continuous professional development).	NCC	Medium term
6. Establish teaching and learning materials and equipment needs to implement the revised secondary curriculum under the multiple pathways model.	NCC	Medium term
7. Review the pre-service training of secondary teachers to align to the multiple pathways model.	MoET	Medium term
8. Ensure that the revised secondary curriculum under the multiple pathways model is inclusive by including learners with special educational needs and disabilities and allowing second chance education and re-integration of learners at different entry points.	MoET	Medium term
9. Decide on the implementation and phasing-in modalities for the revised secondary curriculum.	MoET	Medium term
10. Develop and conduct an advocacy and communications campaign for the multiple pathways model to ensure buy-in of parents, students, teachers, and the general public.	MoET	Long term

⁵⁵ The skills development and coordination framework explores opportunities and direction for the 3 major stages of education and training, including a revision of the secondary education approach and curriculum, by creating multiple pathways for learners to succeed, based on their interests, talent, and industry demand. The skills pathways (such as those hypothesised within Annex 6.4) across the education-to-work value-chain is strongly recommended as a complementary parallel strategy to this framework, the impact and necessity of which should not be under-estimated.

Objective 5: Scholarship system & entrance criteria revised

Task	Responsible Entity	Timeline
1. Using existing research and industry demand, identify priority skills and courses.	MoLSS / MoET	Short term
2. Conduct a feasibility study to determine the viability of revising the scholarship system to better support priority skills and qualifications and individual students.	MoLSS ⁵⁶	Short term
3. Develop clearer accountability structures to ensure that funding is allocated effectively, transparently, inclusively and to the most needy.	MoLSS	Short term
4. Review the admission practices at government-run ETP and consider centralising the admissions criteria within MoET. Align admissions to the annual (re-)accreditation process.	MoET	Short term

Objective 6: Advocate for greater skills budget allocation

Task	Responsible Entity	Timeline
1. Conduct budget needs analysis to determine shortfalls and inform prioritisation	MoET	Short term
2. Conduct budget gap analysis to determine unfunded / underfunded programme components	MoET	Short term
3. Prioritise forecast costs based on urgency and impact.	MoET	Short term
4. Develop internal advocacy and lobbying strategy, including a strong, evidence-informed business case for the increase of financial support for TVET.	MoET	Short term
5. Conduct inter-ministerial lobbying, especially towards the Ministries of Finance (MoF) and Economic Planning and Development (MoEPD).	MoET / MoLSS	Medium term
6. Source increased government and corporate support.	MoET	Medium term

⁵⁶ A potential service provide for this activity might be ESEPAC.

Objective 7: Clear national skills programming financing strategy

Task	Responsible Entity	Timeline
1. Conduct fact-finding missions in order to learn from issues that have arisen in the implementation of training levies in some countries that are using training levies to support TVET funding.	MoET	Short term
2. Develop financial targets to guide greater budget allocation to TVET within MoET.	MoET	Short term
3. Strengthen capacity and accountability mechanisms with the MoLSS in order to better account for training levy funds.	MoET	Medium term
4. Conduct stakeholder consultations, especially with industry partners on the viability of a National Training Fund.	MoET	Medium term
5. Implement the recommendation of the IVT Act No 16, of 1982 to “establish an industrial and vocational training fund through state and employer contributions”.	MoET & all stakeholders	Medium-to-long term

Objective 8: Establish a donor coordination platform⁵⁷

Task	Responsible Entity	Timeline
1. Conduct a mapping exercise to identify donors involved in supporting the education, training and skills development sectors in Eswatini.	MoET	Short term
2. Draw up ToR for a donor coordination platform, set it up and establish a modus operandi for regular meetings	MoET	Short term
3. Engage with donors to ensure targeted support to the implementation of the national skills development and coordination framework for AYP programmes in Eswatini.	MoET	Short term
4. Introduce and regularly conduct an annual review of the implementation of the national skills development and coordination framework for AYP programmes in Eswatini for monitoring, evaluation and learning.	MoET	Short term (ongoing)
5. Investigate funding options and, in the medium term, possibilities to move to a bread-basket funding approach.	MoET	Short-to-medium term

⁵⁷ The lead government department to implement objective 8 would be the Aid Coordination and Management Section (ACMS) in the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development (MoEPD).

Objective 9: Strengthen integration of the TVET Qualification Framework

Task	Responsible Entity	Timeline
1. Align Eswatini's NQF with the SADC QF to promote skills transfer and regional mobility.	MoET -ESHEC	Short term
2. Integrate the TVET QF into the ENQF with clear descriptions and levels of TVET qualifications and their alignment to the non TVET qualifications and their assessment.	MoET-ESHEC	Short term
3. Strengthen horizontal (between institutions and within SADC) and vertical (progression) integration of the TVET QF.	MoET -ESHEC	Short term
4. Ensure that ETPs offering skills programmes specifically to learners with disabilities and special educational needs are aligned with the TVET Qualifications Framework.	MoET -ESHEC	Medium term

Objective 10: Ministerial roles and responsibilities defined

Task	Responsible Entity	Timeline
1. Appoint a coordination body with terms of Reference.	Prime Minister's Office	Short term
2. Appoint a secretariat to the coordination body.	Prime Minister's Office	Short term
3. Conduct a mapping exercise to get an overview which line ministries are involved in the education, training and skills development sector in Eswatini.	Coordination body	Short term
4. Identify national policies and strategies in place to direct the implementation of the national skills development and coordination framework for AYP programmes in Eswatini.	Coordination body	Short term
5. Identify policy gaps which need to be addressed to create a conducive environment for the implementation of the objectives guiding the national skills development and coordination framework for AYP programmes in Eswatini.	Coordination policy	Short term
6. Allocate or adjust ministerial roles and responsibilities for the respective objectives guiding the implementation of the national skills development and coordination framework for AYP programmes in Eswatini.	Cabinet	Short term
7. Mandate a national task force (coordination platform) representative of the line ministries and stakeholders involved in the skills development sector to ensure prioritised implementation of the national skills development and coordination framework and develop a national skills development master plan (to be implemented under Obj. 11).	Cabinet	Short term

8. Prioritise core areas where AYP employability can be improved in the short-to-medium term and set up a timeframe and key milestones to be achieved.	Coordination body / Line Ministries	Short term
9. Develop and conduct an advocacy and communications campaign to create awareness for the national skills development and coordination framework for AYP programmes in Eswatini.	Coordination body secretariat	Short term
10. Ensure priority funding for the identified core areas.	Ministry of Finance / Cabinet	Medium term
11. Conduct training and capacity building for identified line ministries to undertake the defined roles and activities	Coordinating body secretariat	Medium term

Objective 11: Stakeholder coordination platforms established

Task	Responsible Entity	Timeline
1. Mandate a national task force (coordination platform) representative of the line ministries and stakeholders involved in the skills development sector to ensure prioritised implementation of the national skills development and coordination framework (under Obj. 10).	Prime Minister's Office	Short term
2. Create additional feedback mechanisms to MoET and MoLSS, which over time, will develop into more comprehensive collaboration and coordination platforms.	Coordination body	Medium term
3. Consolidate all TVET / tertiary ETP to oversee skills development programmes and coordination mechanism between relevant line ministries, public and private training providers, and industry, and AYP.	Cabinet	Medium term
4. Utilise the coordination platform to link industry with training institutions to engage on the review of the curricula for key sectors that have been prioritised in the national skills development master plan.	Coordination body	Medium term
5. Utilise the coordination platform to improve linkages with the private sector to achieve better workplace experience learning and enhance the transition from education to work for AYP attending employability programmes in Eswatini.	Coordination body	Medium term
6. Develop and conduct an advocacy and communications plan to enhance the understanding of long-term plans of MoET amongst government and other line ministries, ETPs and industry stakeholders so that they might ensure better planning and alignment.	Coordination body	Medium term
7. Link the coordination platform for skills development with the GenU initiative and investigate options to develop country investment agendas through public-private-youth partnerships to	Coordination body	Long term

create synergies for skills for employability development and to improve the transition from education to work in Eswatini.		
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Objective 12: Establish integrated career development system

Task	Responsible Entity	Timeline
1. Conduct a scoping study on establishing an integrated career development system as an institutional mechanism for skills planning and a framework for the provision of career guidance and information services in Eswatini.	MoET in collaboration with MoLSS	Short term
2. Provide a framework for coordination and collaboration at all levels of government, civil society, and the private sector, to ensure transparency and access to career development services for AYP.	MoET / Coordination body	Short term
3. Introduce an inclusive one-stop platform for information on labour market information, careers and related learning pathways, ETPs and courses and programmes they offer to facilitate and support informed career and study decisions. ⁵⁸ In due time, these centres can be scaled to provide career coaching and to act as employment agencies, matching AYP with available employment opportunities.	MoET	Short term
4. Create national career pathways for technical and vocational occupations across secondary education and PSET and provide career information, advice and counselling to AYP to make informed career choices.	MoET	Short term
5. Establish a national career development forum to facilitate bridges across education, training, skills development and employment sectors and to promote engagement with general education to facilitate access of school-based learners to career development services (such as career fairs).	MoET	Short term
6. Develop and conduct an advocacy and communications campaign to facilitate a basic understanding of the inter-relationship between the economy and the world of work, skills supply and demand, the integrated career development system and society.	MoET / MoLSS	Short term
7. Review and strengthen the careers guidance and counselling provided at secondary school level, considering building the capacity of careers guidance and counselling teachers to ensure that they feed into the integrated career development system.	MoET	Medium term

⁵⁸ This platform could be modelled on the National Careers Advice Portal (NCAP) and linked to a National Open Learning System (NOLS) as established in South Africa under the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET). Stakeholders at the validation meeting suggested that at least 1-2 centres per region would be needed to meet demand.

8. Develop a national policy for an integrated career development system to set norms and standards for career services and setting up and managing national coordination structures to enhance and facilitate skills development, upskilling and cross-skilling for AYP.	MoET / Coordination body	Medium term
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Objective 13: Labour placement services in place

Task	Responsible Entity	Timeline
1. Conduct a feasibility assessment for the introduction of government-run labour placement services for AYP, including forecast costs, required resources and demand for such services.	MoLSS in collaboration with business sector	Short term
2. Through the stakeholder coordination platform (Obj. 11), engage industry partners on the labour placement scheme.	MoLSS	Short term (ongoing)
3. Develop incentive schemes for scaling and sustaining industry involvement.	MoLSS in collaboration with MoF	Short term
4. Create a database of all industry partners involved in the labour placement scheme in order to avoid duplication.	MoLSS	Short term
5. Introduce a mandate for ETPs to coordinate internships and industry placements on behalf of their students, including for those with disabilities.	MoLSS	Short term
6. Through tracer studies (Obj. 14), and other research, conduct evaluation of pilot labour placement services and ETP-led internships and placements.	MoLSS in collaboration with MoET	Medium term

Objective 14: More competitive ETP accreditation process

Task	Responsible Entity	Timeline
1. Source industry data on skills and qualifications priorities.	MoLSS (DIVT)	Short term
2. Produce guidelines on mandatory ETP tracer surveys, including sample size, survey questions, how to capture, handle and analyse data and how it will be verified by ESHEC.	MoET - ESHEC	Short term
3. Clarify and strengthen the relevance criteria expected of ETPs in seeking accreditation for a course or institution, reviewing and updating at least annually.	MoET - ESHEC	Short term

4. Sensitise new and existing ETPs on what is expected to gain (re-)accreditation for a course or institution, especially in passing the “relevance” criteria.	MoET - ESHEC	Short term
5. Capacitate ESHEC inspectors on new relevance criteria and on interpreting and verifying tracer survey data.	MoET	Short term
6. Digitalize ETP accreditation process and add deliberate transparency measures.	MoET- ESHEC	Short term

5. Conclusions and way forward

It has been demonstrated in the previous chapter that the skills development and coordination framework has an underlying theory of change that has been constructed upon 14 objectives which are the pillars of the intervention. These pillars have been broken down into broad-based activity areas or tasks whose implementation will be critical to improve the skills development domain. The following recommendations are seen as the most urgent steps to be taken to initiate the skills development and coordination framework:

- A. Above all and as a pre-requisite to the skills development and coordination framework, it needs to be ensured that there is political will to develop the education system, including by making large scale changes where necessary. As was said at the validation meeting, the framework is a plan or strategy for action, not the action itself.
- B. The activation of the skills development and coordination framework should be preceded by a policy issue paper to endorse it for implementation (cabinet paper).
- C. It is recommended that the MoET organizes a policy dialogue to ensure that policies and strategies (such as the ESSP, TVET Policy, Youth Policy) align, identify gaps (including within pipeline legislation and policies such as the Citizen's Empowerment Bill and the Youth Bill etc.) and to secure multi-sectoral commitment to the framework. This also pertains to current and future legislation regarding inclusion and those persons living with disabilities (e.g. The Persons with Disabilities Act of 2018, which has largely not been implemented to-date).
- D. Inter-ministerial communication and collaboration is an imperative, but it is often based on the approach, attitude and actions of a few key individuals, who can set precedent for others. It is therefore important that those in positions of influence and leadership publicly endorse the need for stronger inter-ministerial collaboration on skills development.
- E. The Aid Coordination and Management Section (ACMS) in the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development in collaboration with the Education Sector Coordination Group in the Ministry of Education and Training should establish a donor coordination platform and engage with potential development partners to ensure targeted support to the implementation of the skills development and coordination framework and investigate funding options.
- F. The tertiary system, and especially tertiary TVET and skills development programmes rely on the full rehauling of the secondary education curricula, approach and assessment, including a promotion of competency-based learning and 21st century skills, the introduction of education pathways and the re-education of teachers.
- G. Undertake a mapping exercise of current up-skilling, short and professional courses offered in Eswatini, evaluate their relevance against industry needs and develop training curricula for upskilling courses with relevant industries and register them on the ENQF.

- H. We repeat previous recommendations that TVET and skills development programming needs a dedicated office, preferably a fully-fledged directorate within the MoET.
- I. As part of a functioning skills development and coordination framework, it is recommended to introduce:
 - i. An inclusive one-stop platform for information on labour market information, careers, and related learning pathways, ETPs and courses and programmes they offer to facilitate and support informed career and study decisions.
 - ii. Create national career pathways for technical and vocational occupations across secondary education and PSET and provide career information, advice, and counselling to AYP to make informed career choices.
 - iii. Introduce a labour placement service and engage industry partners on labour placement schemes.
- J. There is further need to map and attribute non-formal TVET education and apprenticeships into the skills development continuum in Eswatini, as these are currently uncharted and their impact undocumented.
- K. Investigate options for further technical assistance through UNICEF for the accelerated implementation of the skills development and coordination framework and the establishment of a dedicated skills coordination office in the Ministry of Education and Training.

In conclusion, the overarching aim of setting up a skills development and coordination framework to be implemented by the Ministry of Education and Training is to put in place a roadmap for developing skills for the youth and to set up a mechanism to holistically address the persistent and structural nature of youth unemployment - an issue that can no longer be addressed through isolated initiatives. There is an opportunity, if parties can work effectively together, to achieve real change in the secondary and tertiary education sectors, and thereby to improve economic prospects and social cohesion as a result. However, the situation requires an extensive, coordinated, and sustained effort to respond to both the changing needs of the economy and the youth in Eswatini. This effort must be mobilised and be done in a coordinated manner, cut across sectors and actors, and must include a wide variety of stakeholders and decision-makers from Government, the private sector, academia, development partners and civil society.

Putting in place a national skills development and coordination framework will ensure the existence of a platform where stakeholders come together and discuss demand and supply issues on skills in the labour market. This mechanism will then inform and provide guidance on how skills programming can be improved, contribute to the coordination of skills programmes, and clarify mandates of various stakeholders, including financing of skills programmes and embracing diversity and innovation by AYP in line with the aspirations of Generation Unlimited.

Thus, the expected impact of a fully-fledged and functional skills development and coordination framework for adolescents and young people programmes is for the education and skills development sector to contribute to improved and equitable economic growth and development in Eswatini and ensure social cohesion through the provision of decent employment opportunities for all.

6. Annexes

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6.2 Key stakeholders consulted

Twenty (20) key informant interviews (KIIs) were contacted to be part of the study. Of those, 13 KIIs were possible within the time allocated to data collection. Other stakeholders (7) were unavailable due to work-related travel, incorrect contact details or due to other commitments.

Type of Stakeholder	Name	Position	Institution
Government	Ntombenhle Dlamini	Director	MOET
	Fikile Mdluli	Chief Inspector Tertiary	MOET
	Earnest Simelane	Director	MOLSS (DIVT)
	Mboni Dlamini	Executive Secretary	ESHEC
	Dr. Mandlenkosi Dlamini	Registrar (Examinations)	ECESWA
	Mluleki Dlamini	Director SME Unit	MCIT
	Mohammed Mangaliso	Acting Senior Research Fellow	ESPARAC
	Prudence Mnisi	Manager	CFI
CSO	Wonderboy Khumalo	Director	Enactus Eswatini
	Phetsile Masilela	Director	JA Eswatini
Development Partners	Victor Nkambule	Education Specialist	UNICEF
	Nicky Ndwandwe	Project Coordinator	UNESCO
ETP	John Bukutu	Owner and Director	AMADI University College

The online survey was initially shared with the following stakeholders, with a request that key partners also disseminated the tool within their networks. Responses were anonymous and so the identities of the respondents is unknown. Any errors or omissions in the below are unintentional.

Type of Stakeholder	Name	Position	Institution
Government	Bongiwe Magagula	Assurance Officer	ESHEC
	Vuyo Dlamini	ACDO - Manzini	MTAD
	Nelsile. B. Ginindza	Academic Counsellor	RSTP
	Vusi Ndlovu	Senior Local Officer	Localization
	Constance. T Dlamini	Chief Inspector Primary	MOET
	Zwakele Motsa	Guidance Officer	MOET (ETGPS)
	Martha Shongwe	Chief Inspector Secondary	MOET
	Khethiwe Mhlanga	CEO	SEDCO
	Nhlanhla Motsa	Under Secretary	Ministry of Sports, Culture, Youth Affairs
	Makhosodwa Nkonde	[no designation identified]	Ministry of Tinkhundla

	Moses Gamedze	HRPD Analyst	Ministry of Labour & Social Security
	Vumile Dlamini	CEO	RSTP
	Madoda Khumalo	Planning Officer	MOET
	Nimrod Mdluli	Senior Inspector Pre-vocational	MOET
	Musa Macwele	Adult Education	MOET
	Phesheya Sukati	[no designation identified]	Ministry of Information and Communication Technology (RSTP)
	Jabu Shabalala	EMIS Manager	MOET
	Cebsile Nxumalo	Senior Inspector for Special Education	MOET
	Phumzile Magagula	Coordinator for Sector Wide Approach	MOET
	Ayanda Ndwandwe	[no designation identified]	Industrial and Vocational Training Board (IVTB)
	Colisile Masilela	Programmes Officer	ENYC
	Philiswa Dlamini	Promotional Officer	MSME Unit
ETPs	Tibekile Manana	CEO	Sebenta National Institute
	Nomcebo Nhlengetfwa	Principal	ECOT
	Bhekinkosi Vilakati	Trainee	MITC
	Sandile Nxumalo	Trainee	Skill Centre
	Xolani Mavuso	Trainee	Skill Centre
	Mphumelelo Mkhonta	Trainee	Skill Centre
	Gama Nolwazi	Trainee	Skill Centre
	Mr Jordan Ndlovu	Principal	Ngwane Park Youth and Training Centre
	Mcdonald Dlamini	Training	Vocational in Mpaka
	Bahlengile Motsa	[no designation identified]	Technical and Vocational Rehabilitation Centres
	[no name identified]	[no designation identified]	BOSCO Skills Centre
	Swane Z. Dlamini	DGTM	CTA
	Nyawo Musa	Vice Principal	VOCTIM
	Henry Khumalo	Principal	SITC
	Bahlengile Motsa	Chief VTRS	VTRS
Jama R. Sihlongoyane	Director	BOSCO Skills	

	France Mavuso	Principal	MITC
	Vumile Dlamini	Field Supervisor	SNI
	Samkeliso Mamba	Coordinator	LVCC
	Pinky V. Mazibuko	Coordinator	LVCC
	Sibusiso Dlamini	Programme Officer	HMCS
	Kenneth Nhlengethwa	Director	HMCS
	Shaka Ndlangamandla	Director	Swaziland Empowerment Limited (SEL)
	Dr Musa T. Mokeana	Principal	VOCTIM
	Vumile Dlamini	Field Supervisor	Sebenta National Institute
	Elliot Shongwe	[no designation identified]	Ekululameni Rehabilitation & Vocational Training Centre
	France Mavuso	Principal	MITC
	Phezulu Dlamini	HOD-ICT	ECOT
	Employers and Unions	[no name identified]	[no designation identified]
Sifiso Nyembe		[no designation identified]	Royal Eswatini Sugar Corporation (RES)
Macawe Mnisi		Training Officer	Construction Industry Council
Muzi Mhlanga		DSG	TUCOSWA
Donald Sukati		[no designation identified]	Water Services
Makhosonkhe Dlamini		[no designation identified]	FESWATU
CSO	Nathi Nxumalo	Chief Commissioner	Eswatini Scout Association
	Gift Dlamini	Programmes Manager	Kwakha Indvodza
	Mr Siphon Dlamini	President	Federation of the Disable in Eswatini (FODSWA)
	Stella Nkosi	Director	FAWESWA
	Lisa Zannerini	Director	COSPE
	Khulekani Magongo	Director	Young Heroes
Other	Lomthandazo Mavimbela	Former consultant	N/A
	Alfred Fana Tsikati	Department of Agricultural Education and Extension, University of Eswatini	UNESWA

6.3 Data Collection Tools Used

6.3.1. Key Informant Interviews: Semi-structured interview questions

Consent

You are invited to participate in this key informant interview because you were identified as one of the key stakeholders for the Skills Development and Coordination Framework. Your participation in this survey is voluntary. You may choose not to participate. If you decide to participate in this survey, you may withdraw at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you withdraw from participating at any time, you will not be penalized.

The procedure involves a semi-structured interview that will take approximately 45 minutes.

Your information and your responses will be confidential and used only for evaluation purposes. Your name and any other identifying information will be seen only by the researchers and will not be used for any reason other than those stated above. If you wish, you may request that all your responses, or any specific response, remain anonymous. If you have any concerns or questions about the evaluation process, please contact Aflatoun's Project Manager Iari Vehuliza (iari@afatoun.org).

By signing below, I am indicating my consent to participate in the evaluation procedure.

Signed _____ Date _____

Name _____

Affiliation _____

Key Informant Interviews: Semi-structured interview questions

The following questions are to be asked during Key Informant Interviews of 1 - 3 participants, as well as explored through desk research. If information is already determined through desk-research, the researcher may adapt the interview question to confirm this information or probe further or choose not to ask the question.

Coordination platforms for skills development:

1. In your view, does Eswatini currently have a Skills Development and Coordination Framework?
 - a. If not, or if not operational/sufficient, what are the necessary steps for the establishment of such a Framework?
2. What is the background, role, and mandate of your department/entity/organizations in Skills Development in Eswatini?
3. Are you aware of the Generation Unlimited (GenU) Initiative?
 - a. If yes, how do you see opportunities of integrating the proposed Skills Development Framework with the GenU Initiative?
4. In your opinion, what are the root causes of youth unemployment in Eswatini and what strategies do you think would be best placed in reducing the high rates of youth unemployment?

Existing inter-ministerial coordination and collaboration

5. What are the existing coordination and/or collaboration platforms used to ensure efficient skills development programming in Eswatini?
6. Can you suggest any measures to strengthen the current coordination and/or collaboration platforms?

[Interviewer Note: probe the short-, medium- and long-term measures]

7. Which entity is best placed to be caretaker of such a Framework and its various functions?

Current programming to enhance skills for employability

8. Does Eswatini have an effective education-to-work value chain, which ensures effective transition from early childhood, through various education opportunities, to the world of work?

[Interviewer Note: probe vertical and horizontal articulation of this value chain, skills matching and appropriate skills for labour market here.]

- a. If not, what ideas or solutions could you identify to improve this value chain?

[Interviewer Note: probe various stages of the value chain]
- b. In order to improve the education-to-work value chain, what legislation/policies, or strategies need to be developed or amended?

9. In your opinion, what does decent work look like in a Swati context?
10. In Eswatini, what social protection measures do you think are necessary to ensure that adolescent and young people (AYP) are able to access decent livelihoods or decent work opportunities?

Resource mobilisation for current and future skills development programming

11. What are the current funding modalities for AYP skills development programmes in Eswatini?
12. What are the future resource mobilisation opportunities you can identify to fund the Skills Development and Coordination Framework?
13. Funds permitting, what are the budgetary priorities which must be considered in allocating resources towards skills development programming in Eswatini?

6.3.2. Online Survey Questions

The below questionnaire was administered through the Google Form platform. The questions have been reproduced below.

Introduction:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this short stakeholder questionnaire. Your experiences and opinions are valuable in assisting us develop a relevant and responsive Skills Development and Coordination Framework for all actors in Eswatini. The questionnaire below should not take more than 20-25 minutes to complete and will be completely anonymous. Your answers save automatically once you have completed the questionnaire.

Question	Type of Answer	Possible Answers (if applicable)
1. How would you best describe the role of your entity in delivering skills development programming?	Multiple Choice	
2. How would you best describe your role within your organization?	Multiple Choice	
3. How would you rate the current coordination of adolescent and young people's skills development programming in Eswatini? (1=poor; 5=excellent)	Likert Scale	1-5
4. Why have you given the rating in Q3?	Long answer	
5. How would you rate the current funding allocated to adolescent and young people's skills development programming in Eswatini? (1=poor; 5=excellent)	Likert Scale	1-5
6. Why have you given the rating in Q5?	Long answer	
7. How are responsibilities for adolescent and young person skills development currently divided between ministry partners?	Long answer	
8. Which entity do you think is best placed to be caretaker of this Framework and its various functions, and why?	Long answer	
9. In your opinion, how could the communication between various actors involved in skills development be improved?	Long answer	
10. In your opinion, what is the capacity of your entity in implementing AYP skills development coordination and implementation?	Long answer	
11. What are the capacity gaps you can foresee in implementing a national framework for skills development?	Long answer	
12. What capacity building, if any, do you feel you need as an individual to contribute to the strengthening of skills development programming in the country?	Long answer	
13. In your opinion, what should be the government's top priority in up-skilling AYP?	Long answer or multiple choice?	
14. How would you rate the efficacy of current TVET programming in meeting labour market demand and/or creating	Long answer	

income generation opportunities for adolescents and young people?		
15. How do you feel that the government should be working with education and training providers in regulating and strengthening skills development programming in Eswatini?	Long answer	
16. What, if any, is the role of civil society and development partners in this agenda?	Long answer	
17. Do you have any other observations or comments you would like to raise for the research team?	Long answer	

Concluding statement

Thank you again for your time! Should you have any questions or feedback about the National Skills Development and Coordination Framework, or your contribution to it, please contact tdr.churchyard@cantab.net.

6.3.3 U-Report Survey Questions

The following questionnaire was administered through the UNICEF USSD-based U-Report Platform to all U-Report members in Eswatini. The Brief Document has been reproduced below:

Brief

UNICEF Eswatini, in partnership with the Government of Eswatini, is in the process of developing a **National Skills Framework** to guide skills programming in Eswatini.

UNICEF has contracted Aflatoun International (The Netherlands) to compile a national skills development and coordination framework to strengthen the provision of appropriate skills development programmes offered to Swazi youth.

In ensuring that the skills development imperatives of the country are addressed, and that adolescents and young people are offered the skills they need to succeed, there is a need for streamlining, capacity building and strengthening the institutional environment supporting technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and other skills building initiatives in the country. As well as re-branding the skills building opportunities available to young people, there is a need to strengthen coordination between these government actors, as well as between civil society and development partners, education and training providers (ETPs) and industry.

Below is a brief for UNICEF colleagues on the proposed use of U-Report to contribute to the development of this National Skills Development and Coordination Framework. The data capture phase of the Skills Development and Coordination Framework development will include interviews with decision-makers, implementers, education and training providers, civil society organization, development partners, and adolescents and young people.

Please see the assignment's Inception Report for further details.

Timing:

This survey will be shared with participants between 13th April and 19th April 2022, in order to contribute to the first draft of the national skills development and coordination framework to be developed in April/May 2022.

Target Groups:

Age: All Adolescents and Young People (aged 15-34) already registered as U-Reporters, with sub-categories classified when data are analysed (gender, region, and age [15-19, 20-24, 25-29,30-34])

Gender: Male and Female

Geography: Nationwide in Eswatini

Data:

The short poll will collect anonymous, quantitative data on youth participation.

U-Report Questions

The survey has been carefully constructed to meet U-Report standards, including a maximum of 160 characters or less, written in simple language and with a low number of questions.

Intro text:

Hey U-Reporters! Please take a minute to help us improve skills development programmes for adolescents and young people. Your opinion matters!

Questions	Action
1. Are you currently... i. In-school ii. Out-of-school iii. Attending a tertiary course iv. Working v. Volunteering or interning vi. Unemployed	For all answers go to question 2
2. What is your highest level of formal education? i. Primary ii. Grade 7 iii. Secondary iv. F3 v. F5	For answers i. ii. & iii. Go to question 4 For answers iv. And v. go to question 3
3. Tertiary: Have you completed a i. Short or professional course? ii. Technical course? iii. Undergraduate degree or higher? iv. I have not completed tertiary	For all answers go to question 4
4. Are you currently employed? i. Yes ii. Yes, but on and off iii. No	For answers i. and ii., go to question 5 For answer iii., go to question 6
5. Well done! How are you currently employed? i. Self-employed ii. Formally employed iii. Informally employed iv. Day labourer	For all answers go to question 6

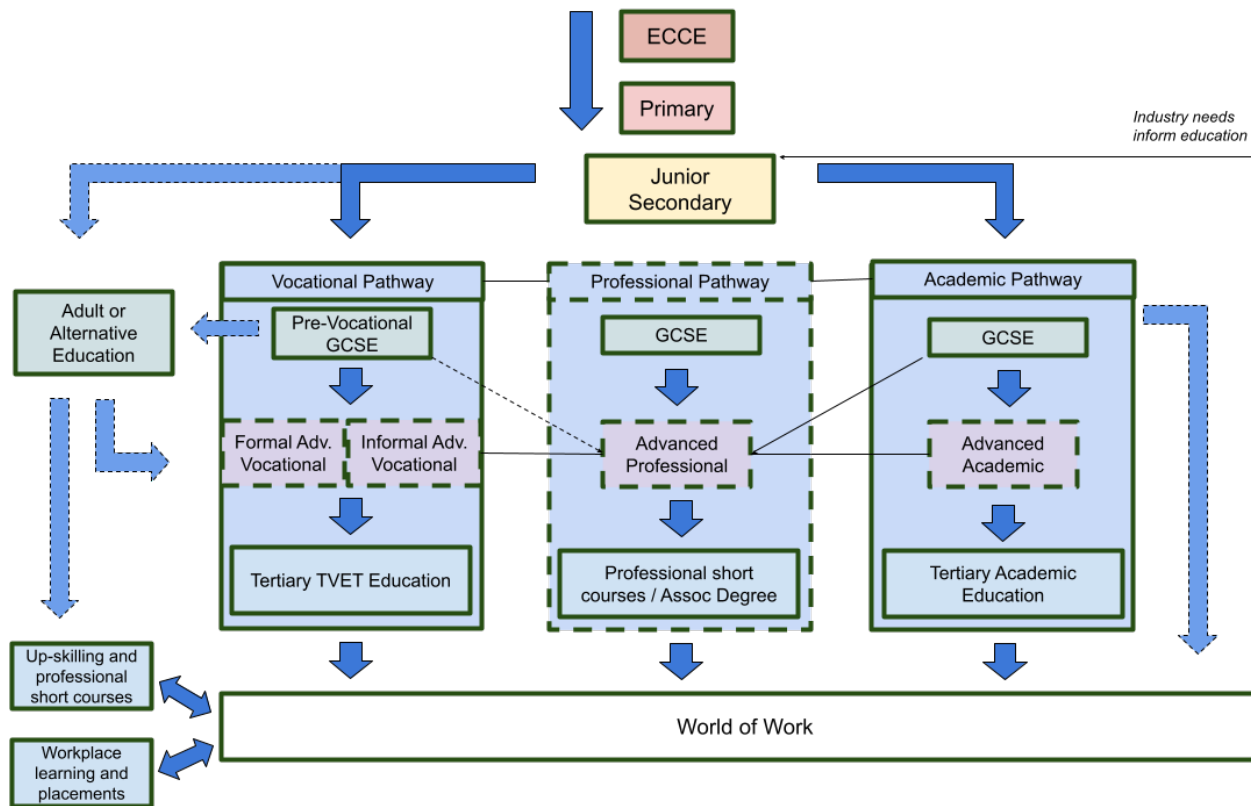
<p>6. Which best describes you?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. I am looking for work ii. I want to study iii. want to start a business in 2022 iv. I have other plans v. I have given up 	<p>For all answers go to question 7</p>
<p>7. Have you ever attended a technical or vocational skills development programme?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Yes, at community level ii. Yes, at a formal training institution iii. No 	<p>For all answers go to question 8</p>
<p>8. Given the chance, would you be interested in improving your technical or vocational skills?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Yes ii. No iii. Not sure yet 	<p>For all answers go to question 9</p>
<p>9. What is the main barrier to youth skills development?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Cost ii. Time iii. Choice of courses iv. Knowledge of options v. No need for new skills vi. None 	<p>For all answers go to Final Text</p>

Final Text:

Thank you for your answers! The information you provided will be used to improve skills development programmes for adolescents and young people in Eswatini.

6.4 Potential Skills Pathways in Eswatini’s Education and Training System

The below diagram demonstrates the potential skills pathways which can be offered throughout the three stages of the education and training to work value-chain in Eswatini. It amalgamates the ENQF tiers (on the right), and the proposed pathways outlined in the study entitled: *Independent Review of the Secondary Curriculum in Swaziland* conducted within the context of the Support to Education and Training Programme (Phase 2). Ministry of Education and Training (2017).



Level	Credits	Qualification	Assessment
0	0	N/A	Observation
1	40	Primary School	Grade VII; Primary School Report
2	40	Junior Secondary	Form III Examinations
3	80	Senior Secondary	IGCSE, EGCSE
4	120	Advanced Senior Secondary	AS-Level, A-Level, Intl Baccalaureate
5	240	Diploma/ Certificate	Diploma/ Certificate
6	240	Associate Degree	Associate Degree
7	360	Bachelor Degree	BA, BSc
8	120	Bachelor Honours	PGD, PGC
9	180	Master's Degree	MA, MSc, MBA
10	360	Doctoral Degree	PhD