



THE SALVATION ARMY ESWATINI

TERMINAL EVALUATION REPORT FOR YOUTH FOCUSED DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (10851 FA)

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CEDAW	Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CODEC	Co-operative Development Centre
Covid-19	Coronavirus disease of 2019
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DIGNI	An Umbrella organization for 19 Norwegian Missions (based in Norway)
EAT	Empowerment Assessment Tool (DIGNI)
EYEF	Eswatini Youth Empowerment Fund
ERPS	Eswatini Royal Police Services
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IGAs	Income Generating Activities
JAE	Junior Achievement Eswatini
KII	Key Informant Interviews
LCC	Local Community Committee
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
NAMBoard	National Marketing Board
NDS	National Development Strategy
NOR	Norway
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Plan
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEDCO	Small Enterprises Development Company Limited
SODV	Sexual Offenses & Domestic Violence Act of 2018
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
THQ	Territorial Head Quarters
TMP	Territorial Mission Plan
TOR	Terms of Reference
TOT	Training of Trainers
TSA	The Salvation Army
TSA NOR	The Salvation Army Norway Iceland and the Faroes
TSA SAF	The Salvation Army Southern Africa
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
USD	United States Dollar
VSLA	Village Savings & Loans Association
YFD	Youth Focused Development

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The project evaluation was commissioned to determine the overall achievement and impact of the three-year project of the Youth Focused Development Project which was funded by DIGNI through The Salvation Army Norway, Iceland and the Faroes (TSA NOR) and The Salvation Army Southern Africa (TSA SAF). The project had an overall goal to contribute towards the socio-economic transformation of unemployed and out-of-school youth through equipping them with knowledge, resources and skills for development – thereby improving the livelihoods of youths and their households, and reducing youth exclusion in decision making. The project was implemented in seven communities; three in rural areas and four in peri-urban areas in the Hhohho and Manzini Regions. These communities include Dlangeni, Mbuluzi, Sidwashini, Fonteyn, Msunduzi, Nkhungu and Ekudzeni.

The evaluation findings revealed that seven groups were formed and the current membership was at 47 (27 females and 20 males). Two of the groups (Sidvwashini and Fonteyn) were not operating at the time of data collection due to lack of commitment from members and conflicts.

The youths demonstrated the ability to identify and solve their challenges by conducting clean up campaigns, fixing damaged roads and ‘donate a book campaign’ were implemented with a participation of 503 community members (152 females and 351 males) including the youth group members. Other issues that were identified in the different communities were human trafficking, substance abuse and gender based violence. Through partnering with the Eswatini Royal Police Service community dialogues were conducted in all of the seven communities which had an attendance of 5 796.

Data from the evaluation finding also revealed that 94% of the youth members were aware of gender equality and affirmed that it is encouraged in their communities. Despite the encouraging statistics, further enquiry revealed a low to medium participation of women and the youth in key leadership positions and the traditional leaders and community members felt there was a need for the youth to be taught on how to engage in community meetings. Three of the youth group members were part of development committees in their communities.

The youth group members were able to approach the traditional leaders for land for their businesses but due to the land allocated being unsuitable for the business types, the groups had to sort alternative areas also through collaboration with the traditional authorities.

Overall, the evaluation found that the project was well planned, successfully implemented and coordinated by the project team and implementing partners through guidance from the coordinating offices (TSA NOR and SAF).

That said the youth group businesses remain at risk of discontinuity. They will require continued support from many of the partners, in particular SEDCO, Junior Achievement and the Ministry of Commerce and Agriculture. Some of the groups will also require additional working capital.

1. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

1.1 The Intervention

The Youth Focused Development Project (10851 FA) was a three-year project (January 2019-December 2021), which was implemented by The Salvation Army Southern Africa in Eswatini through an agreement entered into with The Salvation Army Norway, Iceland and the Faroes (TSA NOR) and DIGNI Norway (the funder). The overall goal of the project was to contribute towards the socio-economic transformation of unemployed and out-of-school youth through equipping them with knowledge, resources and skills for development – thereby improving their livelihoods and those of their households and also reducing youth exclusion in decision making.

The project was a result of an analysis of the challenges faced by the country as evidenced by national key reports. Key findings from these reports revealed that Approximately 59% of the population live below the national poverty line and 20.1 % below the extreme poverty line; an unemployment rate of 28% and a further 50% of the youths in the country are unemployed and coupled with other challenges such as the HIV prevalence which is at 27% this further exacerbates poverty issues within the youth population for a country that has a young population (37.4%).

In the Kingdom of Eswatini, the project was expected to impact 140 youths, both male and female between the ages of 19-35 years through livelihood and entrepreneurship skills development, as well as leadership development for the youth to take action on issues affecting them in their respective communities. The youth were the direct beneficiaries coming from rural and peri-urban communities. Six of the communities were from the Hhohho Region (Dlangeni, Mbuluzi, Msunduza, Sidwashini, Fonteyn and Nkhungu Communities) while one was from the Manzini Region (Ekudzeni Community).

Other indirect project beneficiaries of the youth group projects were 700 family members. The family members were expected to benefit from the income generating activities where the youths were engaged, enabling family members to access basic goods and services such as food, clothing, education and health services. Furthermore, through community action initiatives planned by the youth groups, it was expected that approximately 16 000 community members would be reached through awareness campaigns/ dialogues for topics including HIV/ AIDS, Gender based issues, gender equality and human trafficking.

The project's theory of change had two major result areas as follows:

Result 1: Capacity and Civil Society with the following outcomes:

Outcome 1.1: There is a high degree of organization in the target groups

Outcome 1.2: Local communities are able to identify and solve their challenges together

Outcome 1.3: Communities provide equal opportunities for women and men

Outcome 1.4: Rights-holders are holding duty-bearers accountable

Result 2: Economic Empowerment

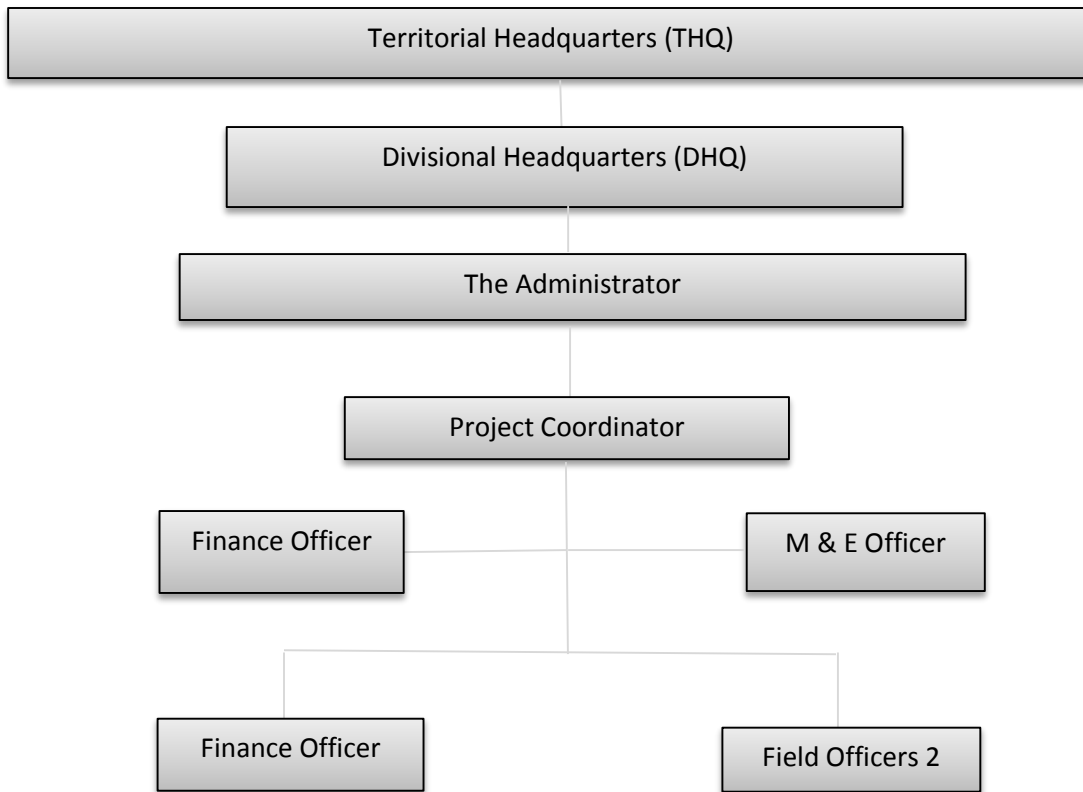
Outcome 2.1: Youth in target areas have improved their livelihoods

The project also incorporated an outcome for the youths to be strengthened on issues affecting their health and gender based violence through community dialogues.

1.2 Project Management

The Project was managed under the coordination of The Salvation Army Southern Africa THQ Youth's department through THQ Projects Office, while being implemented by The Salvation Army Eswatini where a Project Team was established (refer to figure 1 below). The Salvation Army Eswatini Administrator had the overall oversight responsibility. The Project Team comprised of the Project Coordinator who was responsible for coordinating activities, planning events and trainings and managed coordination with relevant project stakeholders. The Monitoring and Evaluation Officer ensured that the project was implemented in line with the pre-determined monitoring and evaluation framework, while two Field officers conducted day-to-day follow-ups at grass-root levels. Whilst the initial plan revealed the engagement of a Local Coordinator, when the Coordinator resigned it was felt that the role be left vacant as there seemed to be duplication of activities between the Local Coordinator and the Field Officers. The Finance Officer ensured that funds were received and spent according to budget expectation through laid-down financial principles.

Figure 1: Project Organogram



1.3 Project Implementation Strategy

The project targeted communities where there is already an existence of The Salvation Army in a form of a Corps or clinic for communities to tap into the already existing relationship and trust that the community has for TSA. The project team worked closely with the traditional authorities in the selection of the youth group members in the seven communities as well as in the mobilization of community members during community engagement processes such as awareness campaigns and dialogues.

The project had two major results as per the project proposal and an extra result from DIGNI. Its implementation strategy focused on strengthening the youth groups with theoretical and practical knowledge and training on entrepreneurship skills development to enable them to organize, manage and run viable income generating activities. The groups were further provided a seed-capital of SZL 120 000.00 per group which they initiated a business of their choice for a meaningful livelihood by TSA.

DIGNI states that “Poverty is not only about lack of resources, but also lack of security, social exclusion and denial of choices, opportunities, and lack of basic capacity to participate effectively and meaningfully in society as individuals or groups”. The project also strengthened the capacity of the youth in leadership and community engagement so that they can take lead in community discussions and confront issues within their community.

Further to this, the project also strengthened the capacities of the youth groups by community action initiatives. The youths identified pertinent issues in their communities and community dialogues were held to address these issues such as health, GBV, gender equality and advocacy.

Junior Achievement Eswatini, a local Non-Government Organization with a mission to empower youth through innovation in entrepreneurship, financial literacy and career development to create self-employment in Eswatini, was engaged to train the youth on entrepreneurship skills both from a theoretical and practical skills utilizing an array of training methodologies. Further to the training, the youth groups went through a mentorship program to strengthen their enterprise specific business skills.

The Small Enterprises Development Company Limited (SEDCO) an organization established to create, develop and promote Small, Micro and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in the Kingdom of Eswatini to stimulate home grown entrepreneurship with a sustainable economic growth through entrepreneurship development and growth, trained the youth groups on business sustainability and at the time of the evaluation the groups were receiving mentorship on their respective businesses.

The Eswatini Youth Empowerment Fund (EYEF) with a mission to promote youth employment and alleviate poverty among young people between the ages 18-35 years, participated in the evaluation of youth business groups’ business plans together with Junior Achievement and other independent partners during panel presentations.

The Ministry of Agriculture with a mission *“to transform Eswatini agricultural production system from its prevailing subsistence mode to more commercially oriented production systems through commercialization and the diversification of small and medium (S&M) holder SNL and TDL agricultural*

production within the next four to five years”, provided extension services to Mbuluzi, Ekudzeni and Dlangeni groups on the establishment of the feedlot and piggery businesses.

The community traditional authorities supported the project in the section of the youth group members, mobilization of the community during community dialogues, allocation of land to the youth groups in the seven communities and conflict resolution.

<https://eswatini.un.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/CCA%20Report%20-%20FINAL%20for%20printing%2022%20July.pdf>

<https://snyc.org.sz/downloads/Eswatini-National-Youth-Policy-Final-Document.pdf>

<http://www.sedco.co.sz/company-overview/>

<https://www.gov.sz/index.php/ministries-departments/ministry-of-agriculture>

2. THE PROJECT EVALUATION TERMS OF REFERENCES

2.1 Evaluation Scope

Following the end of the project time line in December 2021, The Salvation Army, commissioned I-Smart Business Solutions, an independent consulting firm to conduct a project terminal evaluation which intended to assess the project concept, design and implementation modalities. The terminal evaluation further assessed the relevance, performance, and success of the project. In addition to the appropriateness of strategy and approach, the process of implementation, quality, and efficiency of management structure were to be unpacked. The evaluation interrogated the impact that TSA community engagement had on local communities and reviewed the overall impact of Covid-19. Under each of these criteria, evaluation questions were identified and compiled in an evaluation matrix (see Annex 1).

2.2 Evaluation Purpose

The terminal evaluation assessed two central broad questions:

- (i). Relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the project.
- (ii). Learning for further improvement of TSA's community engagement and development projects across Southern Africa.

2.3 Evaluation Objectives

- (i). To assess the relevance of project design/ strategies.
- (ii). To assess the coherence and compatibility of the project with other interventions in the targeted communities.
- (iii). To assess project effectiveness in achieving project outcomes.
- (iv). To assess project efficiency in delivering project results.
- (v). To examine project impact.
- (vi). To assess sustainability of project results and outcomes.
- (vii). To capture project lessons learned and best practices.
- (viii). To provide recommendations for future related projects.

2.4 Evaluation Expected Outcomes

- (i). An inception report with a clear methodology, data collection tools.
- (ii). A quantitative analysis and narrative evaluation draft report.
- (iii). Conduct a validation workshop with key stakeholders and partners.
- (iv). Final Terminal Evaluation Report submitted in soft and two hard copies.

3. WORK DONE AND METHODOLOGY

The evaluation was centered around the project logic model, the two result areas with five outcomes as well as the DIGNI health outcome. The evaluation focused on assessing the relevance, performance and successes of the project, appropriateness of the project implementation strategy and approach, process of implementation, quality as well as efficiency of management structures. Emphasis was made on lessons learned and recommendations for future projects. It also analyzed on how the project was designed to best meet its intended goals, effectiveness and bottlenecks in the implementation phase, and extent to which project objectives were met.

The methodology that was used to conduct the terminal evaluation complied with international criteria professional norms and standards. The approach was participatory in nature where an evaluation team was formed comprising of team members from both the Consultant and Project Team. The inception report and data collection questionnaires were reviewed by the team and approved by The Salvation Army Southern Africa and NOR. Further to that, stakeholder validation workshops were held to triangulate the evaluation findings.

The consultant utilized both qualitative and quantitative methods for data collection, and further compiled and submitted a report with recommendations based on findings.

3.1 Methodology:

At inception, a desk review was conducted to extrapolate secondary data while both qualitative and quantitative data collection questionnaires were developed for primary data sources using closed ended and open-ended questions.

Qualitative methods of data collection:

- a. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs): These were conducted to acquire an in-depth understanding of the results obtained in the quantitative data collection questionnaires with the participating beneficiaries. Special focus was placed on the youth groups that were formed in the seven communities. The project team was also engaged in two FGDs (one for the DIGNI Empowerment Assessment Tool and another for the project's Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats Analysis).
- b. Key informant interviews: Interviewed were the traditional authorities from the seven communities, community members, a member from one of the development committees in the communities and also partners that were part of project implementation as well as the project team. The Key Informant Interviews provided insights on challenges and successes of the youth development project, possible areas of collaboration post the project and further recommendations for similar projects.
- c. Project site visits: These were conducted in all of the seven communities where the youth group businesses were visited. The visitations were to conduct an on-site inspection of the business area and its relevance to the business and overall operations of the enterprises.

Quantitative methods of data collection:

Quantitative data were collected from records included:

- a. Quarterly and annual project reports
- b. Records from youth groups such as the constitution, business plans and financial records of the businesses established.
- c. The individual youth group members where both current and departed members were sampled.
- d. The youth group direct family members.

The main indicators that were measured using the quantitative methods were:

- a. The level of women and youth participation and involvement in leadership positions in community development initiatives.
- b. The impact of the capacity building initiatives on the youth group members.
- c. The level of Improvement on the livelihood status of the youth group members and families through income generating activities undertaken.
- d. The overall effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on project implementation.

The consultancy team applied evaluation methodologies and approaches and their expertise in the areas of community development, entrepreneurship, business and financial management. The team also applied several methodological principles such as (i) Validity of information: multiple measures and sources were sought out to ensure that the results were accurate and valid; (ii) Confidentiality and consent: all participants had the right to provide information in confidence.

The evaluation was conducted following a set of steps presented in the table below:

Table 1: Steps Used to Conduct the Evaluation

<p>1. Reviewed documents and prepared Inception report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reviewed project documents• Conducted inception meeting with TSA- Eswatini Project Team• Presented Inception Report and reviewed data collection questionnaires with TSA- Eswatini Project Team• Trained enumerators on data collection questionnaires• Conducted evaluation questionnaire pilot• Conducted preliminary site visits and youth group focus group discussions on group dynamics and business operations progress.	<p>2. Conducted data collection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conducted field data collection for individual youth group members, family members, traditional leaders, community members, development committee questionnaires.• Conducted TSA Project Team SWOT Analysis• Conducted individual Interviews with key Stakeholders.• Conducted TSA Project Team key informant interviews
<p>3. Data Capturing and Analysis of Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Data was captured in SPSS and MS Excel• In-depth analysis and interpretation of data collected	<p>4. Prepare Terminal Evaluation Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presented draft terminal evaluation report to TSA Project Team• Conducted terminal evaluation report validation workshop with key stakeholders.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow-up interviews were conducted where necessary) Developed and submitted draft terminal evaluation report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated terminal evaluation report comments Submitted final terminal evaluation report
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3.2 Data Collection

Enumerators engaged were trained on the data collection questionnaires to be used. Upon completion of the training a pilot was conducted with respondents from the youth group. The major pilot questionnaire was the individual youth group member questionnaire which was administered through a face-to-face interview.

Through-out the data collection exercise, face-to-face interviews were preferred while telephonic interviews and on-line data collection were conducted as well. Upon commencement of the field data collection, it was realized that the departed group members were not forthcoming hence another strategy to reach out to them had to be executed. A separate departed members' questionnaire was then developed with less variables than the current youth group members.

Table 2: Type of questionnaire and number of respondents reached

Questionnaire Type	Targeted Respondents	Target Sample Size	Actual Sampled
Quantitative	Youth Group Members and	35(5x7 groups)	33
Quantitative	Exodus youth group members	14 (2x7 per group)	11
Quantitative	Youth Group Household member	35 (5x7 groups)	13
Qualitative- FGD	Youth Group Executive Committee	7 groups	07
Project Site Visits	Youth Group Project Site visit	7 groups	07
Qualitative- KII	Traditional Authorities	7 respondents from the 7 represented communities	06
Qualitative- KII	Development Committees	As per availability	02
Qualitative- KII	JA, SEDCO, EYEF, ERPS, CODEC, TSA Nurse	As per availability	07
Qualitative- KII	Community partners: MOA- Veterinary Officers MOA- Piggery extension Officers		02 02
Qualitative- FGD	YFD TSA Team	SWOT Analysis	01(05 members)
Qualitative- FGD	YFD TSA Team	DIGNI Tool	01 (05 members)
Qualitative- KII	YFD TSA Team	Project concept, implementation, monitoring & closure	05
Total Interviewed			97

3.3 Data Analysis

The collected data was transcribed, cleaned and analyzed to tease out all the responses provided by respondents, with focus on answering to the research questions and specific impact areas that were being measured. Results are presented in various tables and bar graphs.

Quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS and MS Excel spreadsheets. The qualitative data was also analyzed using MS Excel spreadsheet and some of the points integrated in the report findings and recommendations discussions.

3.4 Limitations of Scope

During the face-to-face field work data collection process, the departed members were not present while their participation was key in the exercise. The evaluation developed a telephonic interview with these respondents to capture information from them. Only very few were reached for the telephonic interviews

The high attrition rate of the youth group members consequently affected availability of family members for interviews. Other reasons stated by the youth group members were that they were the heads of their families and family members were siblings attending school hence their unavailability during the data collection process.

The youth groups did not have sufficient financial records and bank statements to objectively assess financial performance of their businesses. Nonetheless, the evaluation attempted to collect this information from the focus group discussion and in the individual youth group member questionnaire.

During compilation of the inception report, it was realized that in a bid to ensure that the evaluation was conducted in a participatory manner and collect data as per the TORs, there needed to be intensive data collected which in turn required more days for the exercise from the initial agreed timeline as per contract. Thank you for the one extension.

4 MAJOR FINDINGS AND EVALUATION RESULTS

The evaluation findings have been structured around six major evaluation criteria; which are also the six recently revised internationally accepted evaluation criteria set out by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). A scale has been developed where each criterion has been ranked with one being the lowest achievement and five being the highest.

Table 3: Evaluation Findings Score

Rating	Expanded Rating	Score Definition
01	Very Poor	One of the evaluation questions in that criterion were met
02	Poor	Only a few of the evaluation questions in that particular criterion were met
03	Good	A fair number of the evaluation questions in that particular criterion were met
04	Very Good	A large number of the evaluation questions in that particular criterion were met
05	Excellent	All of the evaluation questions in that particular criterion were met

4.1 Project Relevance –Very Good (4/5)

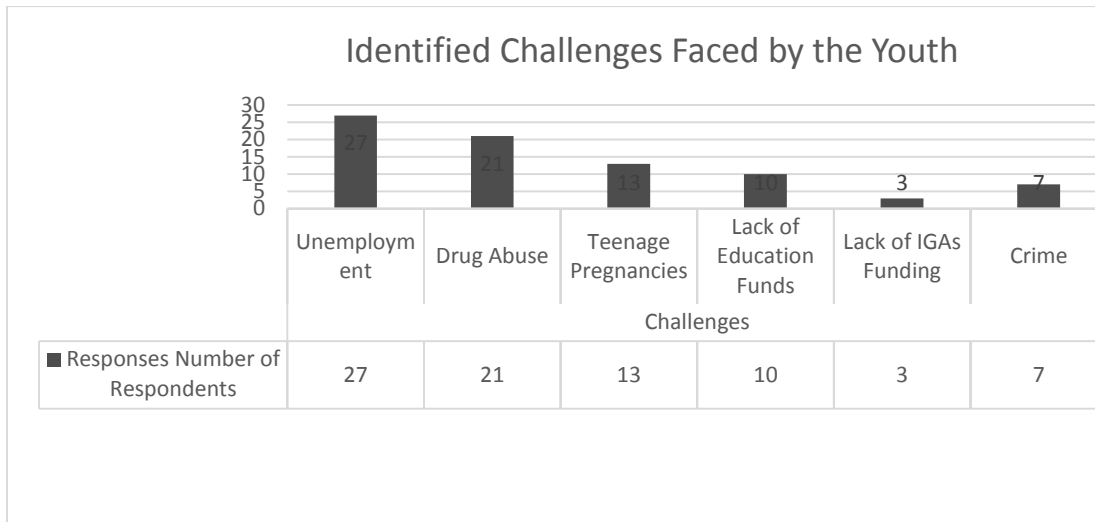
Project relevance refers to how well the project was relevant to issues faced by the targeted beneficiaries; how was gender parity in the project, appropriateness of implementation strategy (group business vs sole business approach) and Covid-19 impact on relevance.

The Project interventions were holistic by design as the project goal was on improving the livelihoods of the youth through “presenting entrepreneurship as a career option”. The project also encompassed outcomes that spoke to the enabling environment where the youth groups were found. This was done through interventions of strengthening civil society and good health, encouraging the youths to tap into the resources within their local community. The project interventions focused on most vulnerable populations and incorporated the key challenges faced by the youth in their communities.

The evaluation findings revealed that unemployment was the major challenge faced by the youth. The World Bank through Economic Research also stated that the country had a high youth unemployment rate and at 2021 it was at 50.89%. Based on a study conducted in December 2020, the real GDP growth in Eswatini was estimated to contract in 2020 by 3.2 percent, which is in line with the effect of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on the majority of the countries on the African continent.

<https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/SLUEM1524ZSSWZhttps://www.statista.com/statistics/1194985/impact-of-covid-19-on-projected-real-gdp-growth-in-eswatini/>

Figure 2: Challenges Faced by the Youth



The youth group members demonstrated a fair representation of both genders (27 females and 20 males for current youth group members) and the community engagement interventions targeted relevant groups befitting the topics that were to be deliberated.

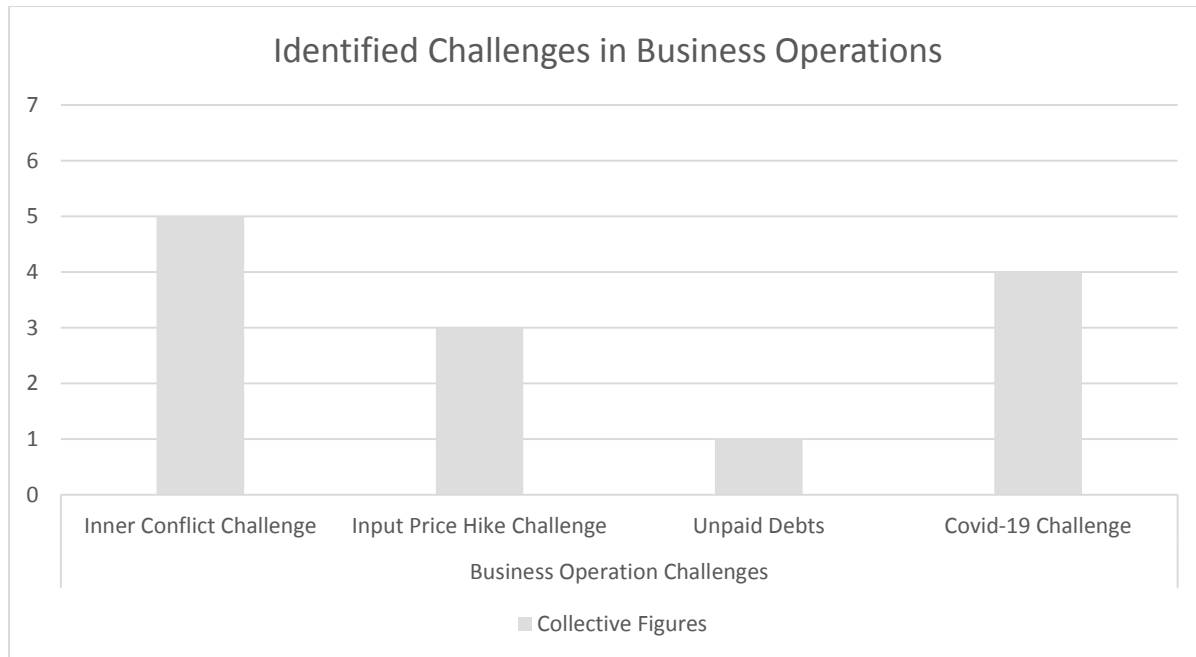
The project results had a component of capacity building on civil society so that the youths and their communities would be in a better position to interrogate issues that affect their livelihoods and address them using the available localized structures. Furthermore, understanding the dynamics preventing youths from making sound decisions about their lives were also included in the project design such as empowering the youths on HIV/AIDS issues, gender equality and advocacy issues.

Evaluation findings revealed that the youth groups lacked commitment and conflicts were one of the challenges stated by the groups. While the project proposal in its risk analysis identified both the lack of commitment and conflicts as possible risks, there needed to be an issues log to ensure that the issues were given the attention they deserved and innovative strategies put in place. The challenges presented were evidence of the “groups business” approach being porous and the need to incorporate “individualism” within the groups to enhance group member commitment.

The Dlangeni group after realizing the lack of commitment from their members, re-strategized their operational procedure by incorporating elements of individualism where two group members were assigned a piggery pen (one piggery pen carried two piglets and the two allocated members were responsible for cleaning, feeding and marketing of the carcass while the business provided feed and vaccinations for the piglets).

<https://www.simplilearn.com/issue-log-concepts-article#:~:text=The%20issue%20log%2C%20sometimes%20also,is%20happening%20within%20the%20project.>

Figure 3: Identified Challenges in the Youth Enterprises



The Covid-19 pandemic had a negative impact on project implementation, the project team reported to have been grossly affected as project interventions were stalled for five months and when the Covid-19 restrictions were eased, the numbers of participants for gatherings was too low. This was also supported by the respondents where 78% of them reported the Covid-19 pandemic to have affected their operations. The break in project interventions destabilized the groups formed as group members opted to search for greener pastures by seeking employment, while some went on to further their studies, requiring more time to replace members lost. As the Covid-19 restrictions were eased, there was an increase in input commodities hence negatively affecting the businesses. The Fonteyn and Sidwashini groups that were engaged in décor and catering were negatively affected by the Covid-19 regulations which banned social gatherings.

4.2 Project Coherence –Excellent (5/5)

Project coherence speaks to the extent to which the project is aligned to international, national and local level policies, or strategies.

International Level

The project in its nature and also its implementation approach was feeding on to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG): SDG #1 *"End poverty in all its forms everywhere"*; SDG #5 *"Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls"* and SDG #8 *"Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all"*.

At a national level, the project was aligned to the National Development Strategy (NDS), feeding on to the Macro Strategic Area #3.2 *"Economic empowerment with the aim of raising the capability of various groupings to widen their choice horizon"*; the Poverty Reduction Strategy Action Plan *Pillar 3: "Empowering the Poor to Generate Income and Reduce Inequalities and Pillar 6: Improve Good Governance and Strengthen Institutions"*.

The YFD project has been instrumental in the country in a number of facets and was also aligned to The Salvation Army Mission Statement which emphasizes on “meeting human needs in His name without discrimination”, direct beneficiary selection ensured both genders were represented and there was no reference to church affiliation.

The project also aligned to The Salvation Army Southern Africa Territorial Mission Plan 136 which was a three-year strategic plan (2018-2020) with the project aligning to three of its focus areas: youth and children; leadership development and community engagement.

National Level

Through this intervention, a number of the United Nations Populations Fund Country Programme (2021-2025) key priorities were realized: *UNSDCF Outcome Involving UNFPA: By 2025, women, men and youth, including marginalized persons, contribute to and benefit from economic progress, through greater access to decent employment, equitable social economic opportunities, sustainable enterprise opportunities as well as resilient, financially sustainable social protection systems programme output(s) would contribute.*

UNSDCF Outcome Involving UNFPA: By 2025, oversight bodies and government institutions at national and regional levels operate in an independent, participatory and accountable manner, ensuring equal access to justice and services, with a systematic, participatory implementation and reporting mechanism for human rights obligations and SDGs, with a focus on leaving no one behind.

UNSDCF Outcome Involving UNFPA: By 2025, all children, adolescents, young people, men and women including marginalized persons’ access to equitable, effective and efficient quality social services increased.

Community Level

Traditional authorities in the target communities reported that the project was in line with their plans. “*In this community we desire to see youth participating in such initiatives, our wish is to have ten of such groups to curb crime*”, these were the words of Mr. Magagula who is a member of the chiefs’ inner council at Dlangeni Community on of the traditional leader reported that their prayer is that they have at least ten of similar projects so as to curb the youth from crime activities. At Mbuluzi on the other hand the traditional leader interviewed revealed that the project has now been a model for other youths in the area.

https://social-assistance.africa.undp.org/sites/default/files/resources/swaziland_the-national-development-strategy-nds_ny.pdf

<https://www.tralac.org/files/2012/12/Final-Poverty-Reduction-Strategy-and-Action-Plan-for-Swaziland.pdf>

<https://salvationarmywindsor.ca/about/>

<https://www.salvationarmy.org.za/strategic-plan-2018-2020/>

4.3 Project effectiveness –Average (3/5)

Project effectiveness refers to the level of accomplishment of project outcomes; what internal and external factors contributed towards accomplishment or failure of accomplishment of project outcomes and the effect Covid-19 had on the overall effectiveness.

The project target was to establish seven groups with a total membership of 140 youth members. Seven groups were mobilized with a total membership of 140 members (73 females and 67males) in 2019 whilst at the time of the evaluation, data showed 47 members (27 females and 20 males), translating to a 33% retention of youth group members. Two of the groups were currently inactive (Sidwashini and Fonteyn).

The economic empowerment training interventions for the youth group members were well attended (97%). The economic empowerment training was conducted by JA, business plans and youth group constitutions were developed to enhance business success for the youth groups.

Partnering with the Ministry of Agriculture (Veterinary and piggery departments) in the training of the Income Generation Activities strengthened the establishment of the IGAs. The CODEC department also assisted in training the youth groups on the cooperative approach and facilitated their registration in to a cooperative.

All of the individual youth group member's responses affirmed that they had not yet received any dividends from the businesses. All youth groups commenced their enterprises and due to a number of challenges realized, there was a need for the groups to replant the revenue generated back into the enterprise to upscale their productivity. The piggery groups reported a lower carcass price when selling the pork to butcheries and were also affected by the exponential hike in feed prices. The Fonteyn catering group realized an underpricing during the events where they provided catering services and had to revisit their menu and pricing structure. The Nkhungu group realized the need for insuring the motor vehicle and were in the process of acquiring an insurance premium at the time of data collection. The Mbuluzi group had not completed selling the first stalk of cattle at the time of data collection hence the revenue generated was used to buy feed for the remaining three cattle. The Sidwashini and Msunduza groups reported to have reserved the revenue generated for future orders.

The project had targeted formation of one VSLA in each community after training the youth groups on the model. There was only one VSLA established out of the seven youth groups that were trained on the model. While the project targeted the youth groups for VSLAs, existing savings and credit groups could have been engaged for this interventions as the findings revealed that some of the youth group members were already in existing savings groups in their communities.

The community dialogues on GBV and Human Trafficking and drug abuse were conducted in seven communities through partnership with the ERPS. Data collected revealed 36% attendance where the project target was 16 000 community members. The project utilized innovative methods to reach out to the target beneficiaries for the dialogues, some of the community dialogues targeted men through dip-tanking days and venues to maximize on their presence, community ball-game events were utilized targeting mostly the youths. Subsequent to this exercise the ERPS stated that there were some cases reported coming from these communities.

The youth groups in the seven communities identified issues of concern in their respective communities. The Nkhungu and Mbuluzi group fixed roads around their community, while the Fonteyn group conducted a clean-up campaign and the Dlangeni group engaged the community for a dialogue on substance abuse and the ERPS were roped-in to discuss the physical and legal consequences of substance abuse.

At the initial stages of the project, land allocation was also stalled by the yearly halting of community meetings to observe the Incwala Cultural Ceremony between November-December. While the traditional

leaders in all of the communities were forthcoming in assisting the youth groups with land, it was later discovered that the land allocated was not suitable for the enterprises except for the Dlangeni group. This caused a further delay in the commencement of the youth businesses.

Attendance for community dialogues was affected by the Covid-19 pandemic which stalled and subsequently restricted the number of people for gatherings. The piggery businesses were affected by a rapid hike in feed prices thus limiting the amount of stock these enterprises could have per time. The décor and catering enterprises also were negatively affected by the Covid-19 pandemic as social gatherings were not permitted. Stalling of project interventions affected the start-up dates for the youth enterprises as most groups commenced from April 2020 and the latest was December 2021.

4.4 Project efficiency –Good (3/5)

Project efficiency speaks to how the financial resources were used to achieve project outcomes in alignment with organizational standards; how appropriate were the project financial resources; were the human resources efficiently utilized for accomplishment of project outcomes; How well was the project management cycle and how was monitoring and evaluation performed in the project.

The project's overall budget was \$415 310.00 for the project duration and the reviewed amount (calculated based on project interventions per fiscal year) was \$404 265.00 showing an amount of \$11 045 (2.7%) that was not budgeted for. There were huge under-expenditures for FY2019 (78%) and FY 2020 (57%). The under-expenditures in FY2019 were attributed to the delayed commencement of the project hence some of the interventions planned were not conducted. In FY2020 the stalling of interventions resulted in the delay of interventions hence the under-expenditure. For FY2021 the under expenditure was at 3%. The overall utilization of the requested budget was \$339 054.32 which reflected a 16% under-expenditure, which was above the organization's variance threshold of 5%.

Financial reports provided for FY2019 revealed that the budget received was \$147 703.00 and an analysis of the administration budget was 29% which therefore means that about 70% of the total budget was utilized towards direct project interventions; while in FY2020 the overall budget was \$ 125 124.00 and administration budget was 44% of the overall budget and in FY2021 the budget was \$163 950.00 with an administration budget of 39%.

Generally, organizations will have a specific threshold for allowed administrative versus direct project interventions and these may be defined in different ways, but the general threshold is between 25%-40% of the total budget should be allocated towards project administration expenses. The project has been within these thresholds during the project life cycle.

As per regulations of The Salvation Army, for each fiscal year any under expenditures were returned and a new fiscal year is commenced on a clean slate. It was observed that through-out the project duration there were insignificant under expenditures (below 5%) within the approved project thresholds. One of the observed areas that enhanced efficiency was the use of periodic financial reports and audits conducted within the project, furthermore, TSA has a pull of motor vehicles and the project was allocated transport as per the need.

Findings from key informant interviews (KII) revealed that resources were sufficient for project implementation and the project timeline allocated was also sufficient save for the challenges witnessed that affected implementation. Analysis though revealed that the project closure period was not planned for in the project proposal phases.

The seed-capital allocated for each group was \$6 250 (SZL 100 00.00) and the actual allocated to the groups was \$7 500.00 (SZL 120 000.00) following the hike in commodity prices after the Covid-19 pandemic. It was reported that the seed-capital was utilized primarily for establishing the youth businesses. The youth groups realized a gap in the working capital as businesses actively engaged in their operations. An analysis of the projects' financial resource revealed a 16% overall under expenditure which could have been utilized for youth group working capital and also for the closure period.

There were periodic reports generated by the project which enhanced moving towards the project results, however due to the fact that a mid-term evaluation was not conducted, the project could have conducted a lessons learnt and best practices analysis midway of the project to ascertain what was going well and what was not going well to further improve achievement of project outcomes. The absence of the mid-term review negatively affected project outcomes at the terminal evaluation phase.

The project had three-year period which was sufficient for realizing project results. Due to multi-pronged reasons such as late start of project interventions, the Covid-19 pandemic which also literally stalled project interventions and also the riots that were witnessed in the country in 2021, these greatly affected project roll-out. Data collected revealed that three groups commenced in April 2020 and the rest in the last quarter of 2021. This therefore means that the youth group enterprises were practically left at infancy stage and this is the time when the enterprises needed to be hand-held through continuous monitoring and engagement with technical experts to solve real life issues such as conflicts within the groups and provision of technical know-how at ground level. The overall feeling by respondents was that the projects were abruptly "weaned" from support provided by the YFD Project during the closure period.

4.5 Project Impact –Poor (2/5)

The overall goal of the project was to contribute towards the socio-economic transformation of unemployed and out-of-school youth through equipping them with knowledge, resources and skills for development – thereby improving the livelihoods of youths and their households, and reducing youth exclusion in decision making.

4.5.1 Result 1: Capacity and Civil Society

4.5.1.1. Outcome 1.1: High degree of organization in the target groups

The project targeted to mobilize and recruit 140 youth members in seven communities. The findings of the evaluation reveal that seven groups were mobilized and the membership at the time of the evaluation was 47 members (27 females and 20 males). The findings revealed that there has been a low retention rate (33%) of group members and five of the group businesses were still operational and two were currently not active. The group member attrition was attributed to a number of factors as state below:

- (i) Unmet expectations- Some of the youths anticipated that the project shall provide them with cash as seed capital;
- (ii) Delay in the actual business start-up as entrepreneurship training and other project interventions competed for the attendance of the youth members;
- (iii) The Covid-19 pandemic that resulted in the halting of project interventions for about five months thus some youths sort for alternative employment opportunities;

- (iv) Some of the members got married and relocated from the community;
- (v) Some went to further their studies and
- (vi) Conflicts within the groups.

Information from other project partners with a focus of youth empowerment alluded to the fact that the reasons for membership attrition is not peculiar but common in typical youth groups. One of the most prevalent reasons for the membership attrition according to the youth group members were internal conflicts that erupted in all of the groups. The traditional leaders were engaged in an attempt to resolve the conflicts which provided some level of group cohesion.

Table 4: Community Youth Group and Business Type

Youth Group Community	Area Type	Enterprise Name	Type of enterprise
Dlangeni	Rural	Bancobi Multi-purpose Cooperative	Piggery
Nkhungu	Peri-urban	Ngwenya Empire Hustlers Multi-Purpose Cooperative	Car Rental
Ekudzeni	Rural	The Superiors Cooperative	Piggery
Mbuluzi	Rural	# Siyavuma Youth Enterprise	Feed-lot
Msunduza	Peri-urban	Green-legacy	Landscaping
Fonteyn	Peri-urban	Fonteyn Higher Achievers	Catering
Sidwashini	Peri-urban	Catering	Interior Décor and Catering

As part of entrepreneurship training, the selected youth group members were linked to CODEC an entity under the Ministry of Commerce for training in the establishment of a cooperative. As a requirement by the country for groups of people engaged in income generating activities it is expected that they register and comply with the county's Cooperative Act of 2003. All seven groups produced constitutions where the by-laws were enshrined. All groups have been successfully registered and awarded a certificate of registration.

Table 5: Business Start Up Documents Submitted by Youth Group Enterprises

Group	Constitution	Certificate of Registration	Business plan	Financial Records	Trading License	Tax Registration
Nkhungu	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Fonteyn	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Ekudzeni	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Dlangeni	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No

Mbuluzi	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Msunduzi	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No
Sidwashini	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No

The table confirms that all the youth businesses have been legally registered as cooperatives and that all groups have a constitution business plans. The table also reflects that the groups' capacity on financial record keeping is still very low by lack of record keeping documents and also that they still require assistance in registering with the Eswatini Revenue Services as well as obtaining a trading license.

4.5.1.2 Outcome 1.2: Local communities identify and solve their challenges together

The project targeted to ensure youths were capacitated and able to solve challenges they were facing in their communities. Desk review data revealed that the youth group members were mobilized to assess and respond to issues within their community, providing solutions within their local scope. Findings reveal that 503 community members (152 females and 351 males) including the youth group members participated in these initiatives.

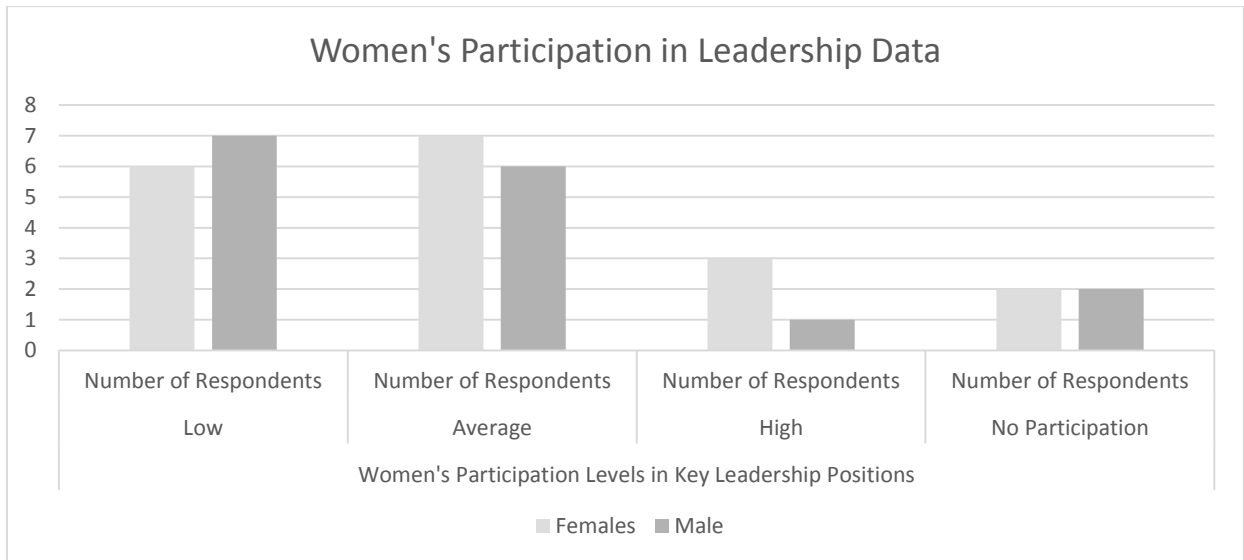
Respondents identified challenges faced by the youth and there were some means made to respond to the different community challenges through community activities that were spearheaded by TSA and the youth groups.

Dlangeni youth group members and other community members were able to fix a gravel road that was destroyed by heavy floods and also assisted in the construction of a foot bridge that connected the one of the communities to Nsukumbili High School. Ekudzeni community cleared a community structure, while Nkhungu organized and led donate a book campaign, to encourage reading and improve literacy amongst school going children. Fonteyn conducted a clean-up campaign within their community. All these were very good initiatives which responded to the communities' socio-economic challenges.

4.5.1.3 Outcome 1.3: Communities provide equal opportunities for women and men

The project targeted 16 840 community members of various groups (youths, men and women) through community dialogues. The actual attendance achieved for these interventions was 5 796. While the evaluation data revealed that 94% of the respondents were conversant of gender equality and affirmed that it was encouraged (76%) in their communities, findings from individual youth group members' interviews on the other hand reflected that perceived women participation in key leadership positions was either low level (38%) or moderate (38%) but respondents felt there was a slight increase in the past three years. When asked about what has led to the slight increase on women participation in key leadership positions, 50% of the respondents cited community dialogues as the major drivers to the increase; 31% of the respondents cited policies that promoted gender equality.

Figure 4: Participation of Women in Key Leadership Positions



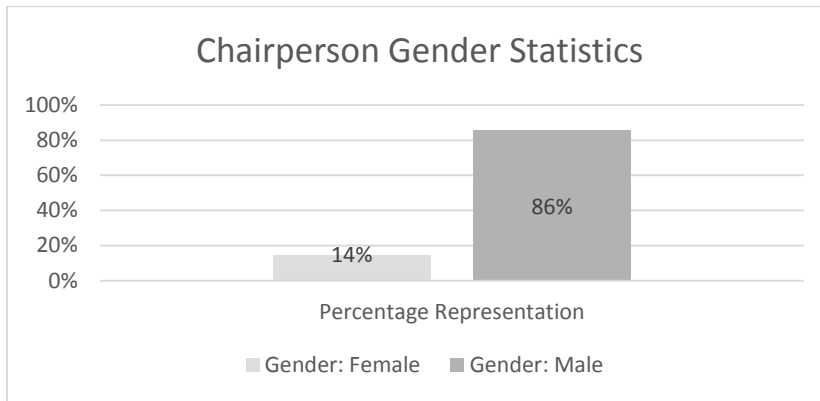
The findings revealed that 58% of the respondents (individual youth group member) felt there was low participation in community development initiatives by the youths. Activities where the youth was involved, 40% of the respondents stated that the youths were active in the rehabilitation of roads; 30% participated in leading community dialogues on social issues. Some of the areas where youths have been involved were water projects, cleaning campaigns, being part of community police, assisting the elderly and children.

Upon engagement with traditional authorities such as those in the chief's inner council (bandlancane) or community police and other community development committee members, it was realized that the general feeling was that the youths needed to be gradually taught on how to participate in the community development meetings. Eight group members from 3 communities had the opportunity to sit in community leadership meetings for orientation in the decision-making process. 5 members attended interchangeably in Sidwashini, 2 in Dlangeni and 1 in Fonteyn. Data further revealed the perception of the youth as thinking that the community meetings were not relevant to them but more relevant to the elders. The traditional authorities highlighted though that they were in support of the involvement of women and the youth in key leadership positions. Dialogues were cited as one of the key instruments that promote gender equality in the communities.

A gender analysis of the youth group committees reflected the general norms observed in the communities where chairperson and the vice chairpersons' positions were predominantly men and women feature in the other positions. The youth group male chairpersons were 86%, while in the secretariat position women were seen to be increasingly featuring (43%) and in the treasurer position women representation was at 57%. The analysis reflected the stereo-type of men to take lead in decision making positions. The female group members revealed that one of their main challenges was that the men in the groups would not take their suggestions despite the fact that they were also committee members. The groups did not demonstrate any means of resolving this issue but another challenge to this

problem was the women also voting for men for the leadership positions which is a general stereo type in the communities.

Figure 5: Gender Analysis of Youth Group Chairpersons



4.5.1.4 Outcome 1.4: Rights-holders holding Duty-bearers accountable

The project targeted to strengthen the participation of youths in advocacy initiatives in all the seven communities. The youths were able to request for land from the traditional authorities.

While the project was unable to implement some of the activities under this outcome, the youth groups were seen demonstrating their rights by requesting land for project sites from the traditional authorities. According to information gathered, the traditional authorities were forthcoming in assisting the youth groups attain land for their enterprises. Upon thorough analysis from subject matter specialists, it was realized that the land allocated to the groups was not suitable for the business venture the youths had selected. Analysis therefore reveals that only one group owned the land where the business venture is situated acquired through the traditional authorities, while 6 have land leased to them. Leased land has development limitations which puts the youth businesses at risk whilst group owned land allows a continuous development plan and business growth (sustainability).

<https://www.gov.sz/index.php/departments-sp-1596706154?id=500>
https://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/natlex4.detail?p_lang=en&p_isn=64757
<https://www.southernafricalitigationcentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/SALC-New-Sexual-Offences-Legislation-SD-FINAL-WEB-version.pdf>

4.5.2 Result 2 Economic Empowerment

4.5.2.1 Outcome 2.1: Youth in target areas have improved their livelihood

Amongst some of the project objectives was to empower the youth with entrepreneurial skills so that they would start businesses that would in turn yield benefits to themselves, their families and their communities.

Accordingly, the project has been able to empower the youth with entrepreneurial skills and thanks to the 6 months' project extension, all the youth groups were able to register and start their respective businesses. These business are however still new and have not yielded the expected benefits to the youth group members and their families. On a positive note, two of the groups (Mbuluzi & Ekudzeni) have employed community members, one for each group.

Youth group members were asked about having a source of income prior to their engagement to the project and 76% of them affirmed this. Most of the members were engaged in piece jobs and micro-enterprises. Data revealed that the income threshold was between SZL 500- SZL 2000. When further asked about their current status, data revealed a slight increase in the income with still the same sources. During the focus group discussions, the groups were asked whether entrepreneurship training had assisted them on a personal level, "all of us here are now engaged in one business or the other" was the response from the Mbuluzi group. Sibon from the Msunduzi group affirmed the statement "It has always been my weakness to market products due to lack of confidence but now I can say that I am comfortable with marketing".

Table 4: Income Ranges

Income Range	Prior to Project	Current
500-1000	06	07
1001- 1500	05	08
1501-2000	06	05
Above 2000	07	06
None	08	05

The evaluation was unable to get financial record keeping books and bank statements for the enterprises to make conclusive discussion, despite that, an analysis of revenue generated by the groups was made. As much as the groups were heterogeneous in nature, some generating an income on a weekly basis and some had a cycle of about 4 months, calculations revealed a monthly average of SZL 3 921.

Table 6: Youth Group Businesses Average Monthly Sales as at 08th July, 2022

Youth Group Name	Average Monthly Sales	
Ngwenya Empire Hustlers (Nkhungu)	R	7,200.00
High Achievers (Fonteyn)	R	3,600.00
The Superiors (Ekudzeni)	R	3,750.00
Bancobi Youth Cooperative (Dlangeni)	R	6,000.00
#Siyavuma (Mbuluzi)	R	4,400.00
Green Legacy (Msunduzi)	R	2,000.00
Game Changers (Sidwashini)	R	500.00
Average Monthly Sales	R	3,921.43

During the construction of the enterprise sites, three of the groups hired builders while the Fonteyn group engaged a chef to train them on setting and preparing their menus during events for three months and the Ekudzeni and Mbuluzi group had hired one person for manning their businesses.

4.5.3 Most Significant Change Story

Nosizo Mhlanga 30 years of age is a member of #Siyavuma Feedlot under the Nkhamba Constituency in Jubukweni, Mbuluzi in the northern part of the Kingdom of Eswatini. She produces commercial vegetables from a 1-hectare field provided by her family.

“In the project we were capacitate on topics such as how to apply for funding and other topics such as marketing. From the training received I was inspired to start an agri-business. I then used knowledge obtained to apply for funding from Inhlanyelo Fund. My loan application was successful and I was granted SZL 5 000.00 to purchase farm inputs (3000 green-pepper seedlings and 2000 green-beans seedlings, sprinklers, fertilizer and chemicals). Having been taught also about the National Agricultural Marketing Board (NAMBoard) during one of the community meetings, I approached NAMBoard for a contract and I started my farming enterprise. My initial revenue was SZL 10 000.00 which I used to start paying the loan and also bought inputs for the subsequent farming cycle. I have been able to produce over five farming cycles and with the last cycle I have been able to generate a revenue of SZL 17 000.00”

Nosizo also emphasized that the training helped her to implement record keeping which encouraged her to set targets for her enterprise.

“This business has helped me assist my mother who also is unemployed to build a home, pay school fees for my siblings and for the general up-keep of the home. In 2021 I entered the Woman Farmer Competition- Youth Category and I was position 12”.

4.5.4 The DIGNI Empowerment Assessment Tool (EAT)

DIGNI identified the need for a common approach to measure change in all DIGNI funded projects and developed the Empowerment Assessment Tool (EAT). The purpose of EAT is to assess the degree of which target groups were empowered to live a life in dignity. The tool assessed both the degree of empowerment (from output to impact) and the level of change (individual, community and society levels) according to a set scale Refer Table below.

The evaluation incorporated the DIGNI tool in various methods. The evaluation methodology has been predominantly participatory in nature and a number of questionnaires were developed to demonstrate that. A focus group discussion was conducted using the DIGNI thematic areas against the project outcomes. The project team members were taken through a self-assessment of project outcomes matching the DIGNI thematic areas. More questions were included in the individual youth group members and the departed members as well as the traditional authorities, other project partners, community members and family members.

Table 7: The DIGNI Empowerment Tool Assessment guide:

Level Score	Objective State	Description
01	Output	The project provided resources for target beneficiaries, beneficiaries did not demonstrate any change in behavior and there was no evidence of the change.
02	Output	The project provided resources for target beneficiaries and there was some local resource mobilization, beneficiaries demonstrated knowledge and change in perspective with little changes demonstrated.
03	Outcome	The project provided resources for target beneficiaries, there was some local contribution of resources to the project. Beneficiaries demonstrated knowledge and change in perspective and were able to collectively work together on issues with some documented action. There was evidence of change on the target groups situation.
04	Outcome	The project provided resources for target beneficiaries, there was some local contribution of resources to the project. Beneficiaries demonstrated knowledge and change in perspective and were able to collectively work together on issues. There is evidence of change on the target groups.
05	Impact	The project provided resources for target beneficiaries, local contribution of resources by stakeholders to the project. Beneficiaries were able to take action in a collective manner and there was substantial documented change and have shown being sustainable, others have started adopting the project, stakeholders provided increased resources or changed behavior and institutional practice.

Thematic Area 1: Strengthening Civil Society:

As already alluded in previous discussions, the project supported the community where it was being implemented by strengthening the capacities of the youth group members in leadership and

organizational development. The project further strengthened the capacities of the traditional authorities by involving them in the youth groups, ensuring that there is continuity of the already established youth groups. The youths have been encouraged to participate and model leadership within their communities.

Through the project, the youths were able to identify issues in their communities and were able to work towards improving their status quo. The youths were able to fix roads, conduct cleaning campaigns and establish community libraries by donating books for school going children to facilitate learning in their communities.

The youth groups successfully engaged the traditional leaders for land for their businesses though there were challenges with the land allocated nonetheless, they were still able to establish the businesses within their communities through assistance with the traditional leaders.

Though women and the youth in key leadership positions was low in all of the communities, the traditional leaders stated that there is an opportunity for growth in that sphere as the communities continue to be trained on the importance of their involvement in developmental initiatives.

Like most of the constituencies in the community, some of the committees found in the project communities were community police, where at Ekudzeni two of the youth members were also in this committee, the chiefs inner council which leads the community (one youth group member at Mbuluzi is in this committee), rural health motivators which provides some health services like taking care of community members that are ill, community psychosocial support (Lihlombe lekukhalela) for counselling community members that have gone through trauma such as rape and GBV and other such entities. These development committees were established by the community.

The evaluation findings revealed that there is some level of commitment by the traditional leaders to ensure the representation of women in community key leadership positions. The data reveals that inclusion of women in key leadership positions was between low to average and the general feeling is that more community engagement processes were pivotal in the upscaling their involvement. The issue of inclusion of the youths in key leadership seemed to be a phenomenon of growth. Some of the respondents interviewed had the general feeling that the youths have to be groomed towards participating in such. Otherwise at Mbuluzi Community, one of the youth members is a member of the chief's inner council.

Thematic Area 2: Good Health: The project by its nature had fewer health indicators but in some the communities TSA has clinics that operate on specific days providing primary health care such as HIV testing, ART initiation and refill, child and maternal health care an outpatient (day care treatment). The project facilitated community dialogues targeting the youth on HIV/AIDS through TSA Nurses and 2052 youths were in attendance. The youth group members demonstrated knowledge on HIV related issues such as prevention and also stigma and discrimination and how the infected can be supported.

Thematic Area 2: Peaceful Coexistence: The project was able to harness partnerships with the ERPS in conducting dialogues on GBV and the newly established SDOV act of 2018. These were conducted in the seven communities and the target was the community at large. Data revealed that 5796 community members were in attendance of the community dialogues. The ERPS stated that upon completion of the community dialogues GBV cases were reported. One particular case was where in the community, an

under aged child was kidnapped by a man and being sexually molested. Though the community members knew about this, they were not aware that it was within their jurisdiction to report the case. The case was subsequently reported and action was taken to free the child and the perpetrator was apprehended. Respondent's also revealed awareness of the SODV act of which they felt it gave them relevant knowledge so that they can be able to safeguard themselves lest they act against the confines of the law.

Thematic Area 4: Economic Empowerment: This thematic area was the major focus for the project and an in-depth discussion has already been made in the project outcomes impact.

The project supported the youth groups with economic and civic education and further provided a seed-capital for the youth businesses. The youth group members reported that they have been able to start and grow their own businesses as a result of the economic empowerment training they received. Some of the groups upon realizing financial gaps (working capital) commenced development of a business proposal for further funding from the regional development fund.

The table below provides a summary analysis of the ranking per thematic area for the overall project.

Table 8: Summary DIGNI Thematic Area Analysis

Thematic Areas of Result	Level 1: Output	Level 2: Output	Level 3: Outcome	Level 4: Outcome	Level 5: Impact
Strengthening Civil Society			x		
Peaceful Coexistence		x			
Economic Empowerment			x		
Good Health		x			
Overall Project Ranking			x		

4.6 Project Sustainability

Evaluation findings revealed that five of the seven youth groups were confident that the groups will be sustained beyond project closure. The interviewed traditional authorities emphasized that “the groups will be sustained if they work together and tackle conflicts encountered”. Findings further revealed that the continued operation and sustainability of the business will be subject to the provision of additional working capital, updated business plans, continuous mentoring from economic empowerment stakeholders and ability to adapt to evolving socio-political factors.

According to Zikalala (2016), cooperative sustainability has three pillars; social (organizational development & group cohesion), economic (funding & business acumen) and environmental (industry knowledge & political climate). Whilst all the businesses were registered as cooperatives, two have come short in group cohesion, six of them still do not have trading licenses because of failure to meet some of the requirements such as having permanent business structures. All of them have not been registered under the tax payer roll which is a violation of Income tax order.

The business plans prepared for each of the 7 youth group businesses are old and outdated. Notably, many of them are too ambitious and require significant improvements. For example the vision statement of some of them are as follows:

“To become one of the leading car rental business brands in the kingdom of Eswatini within 5 year of conception.” - Nkhungu

“To be the leading food service provider in the community, Mbabane City and the Kingdom of Eswatini.”
– Fonteyn

“To be recognized as the top leading pig farming business in the Manzini Region and also to be counted amongst the Top 10 pig farming brands in the Kingdom of Eswatini.” – Ekudzeni

“In due time, we will expand our business into the international start, into Europe.” – Ekudzeni

“To be recognized as the top leader feedlot business farming in the Hhohho region and also be considered amongst the best feedlot farmer’s business in the Kingdom of Eswatini” - Mbuluzi

“To become the leading catering service provider in the local community and at national level through provision of catering services which include décor, cooking and rental equipment.” - Sidvwashini

All the business plans are not accompanied by detailed cash flow forecasts that clearly indicate the required startup capital, working capital and notes that explain how the figures stated therein have been arrived at. Furthermore, the business plans were generally weak in defining the industry and market analysis, marketing strategies and cash flow budgeting. Many of them used outdated prices and as such gross estimations in costs and hence ambitious net cashflows.

Table 9: Summary Analysis of Youth Group Business Plans

Youth Group Community	Enterprise Name	Nature of Business	Quality of Business Plan	Cash flows	Marketing Plan	Areas of Improvement	Date Business Commencement	Status Comment
Nkhungu	Ngwenya Empire Hustlers Multi-Purpose Cooperative	Car Rental	Generally Poor	None	Not Sound	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole business plan Cash flow projection 	May, 2021	Currently operational
Fonteyn	Fonteyn Higher Achievers	Mobile Kitchen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very Good except Lacking in very good competitive & marketing analysis Marketing & sales strategy well defined Very good risk profile 	None	Very Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing Plan Competitor Analysis Cash flow projections 	December 2021	Currently not operational
Ekudzeni	The Superiors Cooperative	Piggery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fairly Good 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very Poor Does not disclose all costs 	OK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project description Industry analysis research Marketing plan Cash flow projections 	June 2021	Currently operational
Dlangeni	Bancobi Multi-purpose Cooperative	Piggery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor Inconsistent Outdated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very poor Costs Grossly Understated 	Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Description Cash Flows 	April 2021	Currently operational
Mbuluzi	# Siyavuma Youth Enterprise	Feedlot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor Market & Industry Analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very Poor Not all costs included 	Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Description Cash Flow projections Marketing plan 	March 2022	Currently operational
Msunduza	Green-legacy	Land-scaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very Poor Poor Market & Industry Analysis (Just Notes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor & deficient 	Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industry analysis Competitor analysis Cash flow projection 	November 2021	Currently operational
Sidvashini	Game Changers	Catering & Décor	Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ambitious Understatement of Costs 	Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industry Analysis Marketing plan Cash Flow projection 	August 2021	Currently not operational

Some of the groups have incorporated some of their lessons learnt from previous sales and marketing strategies: The Nkhungu group had commenced processes of ensuring their motor-vehicle was ensured to minimize the major risk of their enterprise; The Dlangeni group had re-strategized as mentioned to assign two members per piggery-pen; The Msunduza group has also commenced processes of being registered with the Eswatini revenue authority to complete legalization of their enterprise. One of the challenges faced by the piggery groups was bad debts and an unattractive price per kilogram of the carcass to butcheries. Both groups have diverted to value add of their product by packaging the pork and selling mostly directly to the market than butcheries.

Three groups (Ekudzeni, Dlangeni and Mbuluzi) realized financing gaps and the need to diversify their sources of income, at the time of data collection the groups were in the process of proposal writing to apply for funding from the rural development fund.

The project did not have a sustainability/ exit plan though the project team reported to have conducted bi-monthly meetings with the traditional leaders. Evaluation findings revealed that the traditional leaders were not aware that the project was on close-out and no handover engagement meetings have been done to properly handover the project youth businesses to the traditional authorities and relevant stakeholders.

The project was able to establish and collaborate with a number of partners to lay a foundation for project outcome sustainability during the project implementation phase and during the terminal evaluation validation meeting. Some of the instrumental partners were SEDCO, CODEC, ERPS and the Ministry of Agriculture Extension Officers. A key additional partner that participated in the terminal evaluation validation workshop was the Rural Development Fund and unfortunately the Eswatini Youth Empowerment Fund was not represented in the meeting though invited. Other key persons identified as being instrumental to enhance sustainability were business mentors and this proved valuable in the Mbuluzi group.

The stalling of project interventions during the Covid-19 pandemic and regulations on social gatherings affected project implementation in a timely manner. The project was unable to develop and implement a project exit and sustainability plan. As the Covid-19 restrictions were eased, the project grappled with completing the interventions thus resulted in a “crash- landing” of the project at close-out.

https://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/57295/Zikalala_Role_2016.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y
<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1002/jsc.2268>

5 KEY LESSONS LEARNED

5.1 Project Conceptualization and Planning

The project demonstrated an extensive project initiation process in that various reports were referred to as a foundation to extrapolate the issues surrounding the targeted project beneficiaries. There was evidence of a “light-touch” assessment conducted to better understand the proposed project areas which assisted in development of the project scope and implementation strategy.

From the project proposal, a logical framework needed to be developed to form a basis for monitoring and evaluation activities for all stages of the project cycle. The provided framework on the Project Document page 14-16 lacked logic of how the set activities were feeding onto the outcomes and there were no indicators for each level objective (indicators for the project goal, outcomes, outputs and activities). There were also other outcomes (outcome 3.1: Target groups demonstrate knowledge about conditions affecting the health of households; and 3.2: Youth groups address challenges in target areas) which were not clear on how they fitted in the project logic.

The Project Document (project activities, outputs and expectations framework) did not incorporate the project closure interventions and there was no reflection of a project closure budget but only the terminal evaluation exercise.

Project partners and implementation strategy was well-articulated for ease of implementation to lay a foundation of how the project outcomes would be achieved and build on sustainability of project outcomes beyond project closure.

<https://wedc-knowledge.lboro.ac.uk/resources/booklets/G006-The-Logical-Framework-booklet.pdf>

5.2 Project Implementation

Development of annual work plans and budgets for each fiscal year, project reports and monitoring tools for tracking of project results.

The reports and work-plans lacked an achievement table that would clearly state the project achievement against target to provide prompt solutions where there was a gross under achievement.

As a project progressed towards project closure, there was need to report more on results than activities attained. For instance, if the youth groups were able to establish a VSLA then the report should be more on how much the group was able to save and how did the savings helped the group members or if the group has been able to sell 10 pigs where were the pigs sold and how much revenue was generated from the venture.

There was heavy reliance on project partners on the economic empowerment interventions which compromised the support of the youth businesses as they implemented their businesses.

The absence of the mid-term review compromised performance of the project team as they were unable to track the level of attainment of project results to enhance their implementation strategy.

Setting up the groups for entrepreneurship was successfully completed for all groups despite the challenges that were encountered. All groups developed their business plans and were registered as cooperatives.

Provision of seed-capital in the form of inputs in all of the project sites was achieved for all of the businesses and all the businesses were able to commence business operations.

At Mbuluzi another group has been established in Mahebedla with thirteen members. At the time of conducting the exercise, the group was in the process of raising 10% commitment fee to secure a loan and also preparing a business plan. The Mbuluzi group has become a model in their community where other youths have been inspired.

One of the best practices that came out from the project interventions was partnerships established with the traditional authorities and also the relationship that have been developed by TSA in the communities. This enhanced attainment of project interventions and laid a foundation for project result sustainability.

Hiring of youth field officers to engage with the youth groups was one of the greatest assets. There was a high level of rapport between the youth groups and the field officers while at the same time the objective to deliver was observed. The youth group members could relate to the officers which improved the communication and effectiveness of implementation.

High level of accountability and transparency demonstrated by TSA. During the focus group discussion with the youth group, the youth group members were quite conversant of the actual amount of the inputs provided by TSA for their project and a clear inventory was provided for the items. This reflected a high level of transparency and accountability on TSA operations with the community.

The findings revealed a high number of departed members from project inception figures. When probed further, furthering studies was the most common reasons for membership attrition.

5.3 Project Closure

The project under review has shown a lack of project closure while some of the project interventions had an indication of preparing the project beneficiaries for closure, but a “soft landing” was not demonstrated. There was an abrupt closure of project interventions and project resources were not handed over to the community during the time of data collection.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PROJECTS

6.1 Project Initiation and Planning

- The project planning proposal and budget should include all the project management cycle phases including a mid-term review, periodic lessons learnt events at every fiscal year and project closure interventions.
- It is recommended that the project that the project closure should be six months where the exit strategy and project evaluation would be embedded. The project evaluation should be within the last three months of the project closure period.
- The DIGNI outcomes that align to the project should be incorporated into the project theory of change.
- The job description of the project field officers has to align to the main project thematic area for enhanced realization of project results. For instance, if the project has a strong emphasis on Agriculture, then the field officers to be recruited must at least have an Agriculture background to support the project beneficiaries.
- A thorough stakeholders' analysis is vital to ensure capability to deliver expected project results.

6.2 Project Implementation

- At implementation, a project logical framework has to be developed with indicators for the project goal, project outcomes, outputs and activities which will incorporate the DIGNI outcomes.
- Incorporation of an achievement table both in the annual plans and reports to track the level of results attainment for prompt response where there are issues.
- During project monitoring, most significant change stories should be captured to enhance learning and also to provide visibility and communication articles about the project.
- The project has to develop an issues log/ register as and when needed so that any risks identified at planning and during implementation are properly mitigated to enhance project success.
- During project implementation there needs to be continuous engagement of project stakeholders especially those that are pivotal in promoting group sustainability such as the technical experts on the ground.
- Some of the community dialogues conducted required independent partners for proper and thorough deliberation as mentioned, hence the need for a partner analysis for selection of appropriate stakeholders for specific project outcomes.
- Some of the partners that could have been identified for the specific project outcomes were the Women and Law for Southern Africa- Eswatini which is strong on gender equality, GBV, Human Rights and advocacy; the Deputy Prime Ministers Office which has gender, child protection and advocacy units and the Eswatini Action Group Against Abuse which provides extensive training on GBV and gender equality.
- Project partners provided training of groups on IGA and economic empowerment, follow-up coaching and mentoring visits by the technical experts should be embedded to enhance project success for the youth groups especially at the initial stages of business commencement.
- The Covid-19 pandemic and the riots affected most projects in the country, however depending on context, some projects were able to engage with beneficiaries through online platforms such as WhatsApp and teleconferencing to ensure a continuity. Other strategies would be to have lead team members who would be engaged by the project who in-turn would transfer knowledge

to the groups and also develop a training of trainers where the TOTs would conduct community-based engagements on specific topics such as GBV, gender equality etc.

- The selection criterion to exclude married youths has to be revised, experience has shown that married women within the youth age bracket (19-35 years) are more stable than their single counterparts.
- The project beneficiaries must have a commitment fee to motivate commitment and there must be clear regulations of the use of enterprise funds.
- Regulations must incorporate all members sign letters authorizing withdrawal of enterprise funds for accountability purposes and to avoid embezzlement of funds.
- Setting up of the youth businesses as a “group” enhances cohesion of beneficiaries and pulling of resources, whilst there are numerous advantages to this approach, there is a need to ensure elements of “individualism” are incorporated for maximum member participation and realization of increased returns to the business.
- While the presence of technical support from the extension officers is appreciated, there is a need to link the groups to relevant business mentors for practical solutions to problems encountered in the enterprise.
- For continued support by traditional authorities, the youth groups have to report to the traditional authorities once every six months to ensure sustainability and to speak on business maintenance, growth and community development issues.
- An alternative to raising funding is to sell shares but ensure that founding members have a larger share to raising funds and grow their businesses.
- There is a need of an upscale project that will strengthen the groups as most of them commenced their business operations in the last quarter of FY2021 hence they have not been adequately mentored into the business environment.
- The business plans were outdated; it is recommended that they be updated on a continuous basis..
- Project Coordinator has to be strengthened with project management and DIGNI
- Field Officers need to be well versed in youth socio-economic empowerment with some experience in project implementation to track the project outputs at ground level.

<https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/evaluation-criteria-flyer-2020.pdf>

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/21252030%20Agenda%20for%20Sustainable%20Development%20web.pdf>https://social-assistance.africa.undp.org/sites/default/files/resources/swaziland_the-national-development-strategy-nds_ny.pdf

https://www.google.com/search?q=gender+equality+documents+in+eswatini&rlz=1C1GCEU_enZA941ZA941&og=gender+equality+documents+in+eswatini+&ags=chrome..69i57j0i67j0i512j0i433i512j0i512i6.15502j0j15&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8

<https://www.undp.org/eswatini/publications/country-programme-document-eswatini-2021-2025>

<https://www.morethangiving.co/blog/some-overhead-costs-in-nonprofits-can-be-a-good-thing#:~:text=The%20commonly%20accepted%20rule%20of,remains%20at%2025%25%20or%20less>

7 CONCLUSION

Thorough analysis revealed that there was a lot of effort made in ensuring that the project effectively implements the project interventions. The reality on the ground was that the project was negatively affected by other overarching circumstances towards completion and effective realization of project outcomes. The Corona Virus Pandemic came with national lockdowns and travelling restrictions which inhibited a timely implementation of project activities. Inadequate project partners and their selection prevented a thorough discussion and dispersion of vital socio-economic issues within the seven communities. In the case of entrepreneurship ventures, deficient business plans were identified as a major risk factor for economic empowerment sustainability as the groups were unable to create satisfactory road maps that will support and justify their business vision and mission statements. Short comings in the social aspect of cooperatives was highlighted by the lack of commitment and conflicts between youth group members. Exponential hikes in input prices exacerbated profitability of the businesses, furthermore at the time of evaluation the businesses were found to be at infancy stage.

Despite the existing challenges the project demonstrated invaluable practices that can be replicated for future projects such as partnering with Traditional authorities and an array of prospective project partners available in the country. Capacity building on socio-economic development and the provision of seed capital proved to be the cornerstone of the YFD Project. The Project was aligned with national and international strategic plans such as the United Nation's SDGs, Eswatini's NDS, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Plan and the TMP but most importantly it is aligned with TSA Mission and DIGNI Outcomes.

8 ANNEXES

8.1 Analyzed data sets

8.2 Partners and Stakeholders Interviewed

8.3 DIGNI Empowerment Assessment for the YFD Project

8.4 Evaluation matrix

8.5 Data Collection Questionnaires