



**POLICY OPTIONS FOR ENHANCING THE
DROUGHT AGENDA AT THE NATIONAL
LEVEL – KINGDOM OF ESWATINI**

Background Information

- The country is 17,363sq.km with four well defined physiographic regions extending longitudinally from north to south each a different climate.
- Altitude ranges from 1 862m above sea level in the Highveld which is the western side down to 1 52.4 m above sea level, which is the Lowveld on the eastern side.
- The mean annual rainfall ranges from 1,500mm in the Highveld to 400mm in the southern Lowveld.
- Population is estimated at 1.3m with more than 77% living in rural areas depending on subsistence agriculture for livelihood.
- Two main land tenure systems exist, more than 56% being Swazi Nation Land (SNL) and the rest is Title Deed Land (TDL).

- Production on SNL only account for 12% of national production.
- Percentage area prone to drought and percentage of population affected
- Although Eswatini has sub-tropical climate with rainfall ranging from 400mm – 1500mm per year, a modest drop in normal rainfall can trigger water shortages.
- Climate analysis indicate that 75% of the land area is vulnerable to drought making 65% of the population being exposed, mainly in the rural areas. The vulnerability is compounded by poor economy and the subsistence nature of agriculture.
- Drought vulnerability assessments have indicated an increasing trend in the frequency of very hot days exceeding 36 degrees centigrade likely to induce more frequent and intense droughts in future.
- Droughts in 2015 to 2016 led to major losses in agriculture, wildlife, forestry, economic development and affected human health in all regions. Since that year droughts have become part of the climate system of the country.

Policies, Legislation and Strategic plans

There are more than 16 Policies, Legislation, and strategic plans related to drought management. Key ones include:

- National Disaster Management Act (2006)
- National Disaster Risk Management Policy (2010)
- National Disaster resilience Strategy and Action Plan (2017)
- National Emergency Response, Mitigation and Adaptation Plan (2016 – 2022)
- Water Management Policy and Act
- National Irrigation Policy
- National Drought Plan

Coordination and institutional arrangement

- National Disaster Management Agency - coordinates the different DRR clusters in line with the Disaster Management Act and Disaster Risk Management Programmes.
- National Committee on Multi-Hazard Contingency Planning.
- The United Nations Country Team - responsible for effective and efficient Inter-Agency disaster risk management activities.
- Eswatini Meteorological Service.

Coordination and institutional arrangement

- Eswatini Vulnerability Assessment Committee
- Department of water Affairs
- National Early Warning Unit.
- Eswatini Water and Agriculture Development Enterprise.
- Eswatini Water Services Corporation

Programs on drought Management

- Construction of large, medium and small dams and irrigation development.
- Long distance water distribution (bringing water to dry areas).
- Emergency food distribution to affected communities.
- Capacity building for vulnerable communities on coping strategies.
- Water harvesting and water use efficiency programme.
- Early warning and vulnerability assessments.

Implementation challenges

- Coordination complexities and not having all institutions in place
- Slow rate of decentralization and delegation of powers.
- Inadequate capacity within key institutions
- Weak early warning system.
- Weak communication and collaboration
- Lack of comprehensive drought risk assessment.
- Financial constraints.

Looking forward

- Embracing and investment in technology.
- Improving efficient use of land and water resources,
- Focusing on affected population,
- Increasing political will and budget support,
- Systematic information storage and dissemination.
- Need for global support and commitment



**Drought
Resilience**

+10

High-level Meeting
on **National Drought Policy**

Thank you!