

## **The Government month in review: November 2020**

*01 December 2020*

In the penultimate calendar month of the year, Government launched and highlighted various crucial initiatives in water provision, climate action & cyber-security, among many others. Read on for a quick recap of Government's key work in the month in review.

- The month began with the Ministry of ICT launching a National Cyber Security Awareness Campaign aimed at educating citizens about online safety.
- On the 4<sup>th</sup>, Minister of Sports Harries Bulunga led a tour of the under rehabilitation Somhlolo National Stadium. Government has invested E10 million in Phase 1 of the Rehabilitation project of the Stadium as part of efforts to provide up to standard, reliable and affordable infrastructure.
- On the same day, the Ministry of Agriculture held the National Maize Corporation (NMC) Awards, an initiative aimed at bringing the country closer to its goal of producing enough food.
- On the 5<sup>th</sup>, Minister of Education Lady Howard Mabuza announced a new siSwati Language Board, tasked with completing a siSwati dictionary as well as establishing a language academy, among other things.
- On the 6<sup>th</sup>, the Ministry of Labour launched a skills audit programme aimed at determining the country's skills base.
- The Ministry of Tourism held a training workshop on a Green Climate Fund (GCF) project on the 9<sup>th</sup>. The GCF aims to help developing

countries reduce greenhouse gas emissions & enhance their ability to respond to climate change.

- Prime Minister Ambrose Mandvulo Dlamini held a press conference on the 11<sup>th</sup> to provide updates on Government's response to COVID-19. Among his many announcements, the PM informed the Nation that Government would be providing a E650 subsidy on COVID-19 tests for informal cross border traders. The PM further announced that over 21 000 workers had been compensated via the Relief Fund, amounting to over 12 million.
- On the same day, Minister of Health Lizzie Nkosi announced groundbreaking results of a new clinical study which demonstrated that an injectable form of Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PreP) is highly effective in preventing HIV acquisition in women.
- On the 12<sup>th</sup>, the Ministry of Sports, Culture and Youth Affairs announced the suspension of Sibebe Resort from hosting entertainment activities due to a breach of COVID-19 regulations.
- On the 13<sup>th</sup>, the Ministry of Tourism launched a Domestic Tourism Festive Season Campaign under the theme 'Eswatini Has More' aimed at encouraging Emaswati to explore the country during the festive season.
- On the same day, the Ministries of Agriculture & Health officially opened a consultation facility at Lubuluni Clinic. The construction of the facility was funded by the Agriculture Ministry as a means to improve health services in the area in line with growing demand brought by agricultural development.
- On the 13<sup>th</sup> again, Minister of Commerce Manqoba Khumalo officially welcomed home six rural women entrepreneurs who had been training

on water harvesting and solar electrification in India. The programme was sponsored by the Indian Government.

- On the 15<sup>th</sup>, the Prime Minister announced that he had tested positive for COVID-19 and was self isolating.
- Minister of Justice Pholile Shakantu led a tour of the Royal Science and Technology Park (RSTP) facilities to be used for hosting the Electronic Case Management System on the 18<sup>th</sup>. The System will facilitate the automation of the Justice System value chain thus helping resolve case backlogs.
- On the 19<sup>th</sup>, the Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs began a process of establishing a National Framework for tracking Climate Action in Eswatini meant to inform better decision making and unlocking the benefits of climate action commitments.
- On the same day, the Ministry of Labour announced that 3990 students had received Government scholarships in the current academic year, representing about 90% of all students who had applied.
- Again on the 19<sup>th</sup>, Government announced a partnership with Taiwan for a E90 million Capacity Building Project for Microfinance focusing on Grassroots Women in Eswatini.
- On the 20<sup>th</sup>, Government signed a E92 million financing agreement with the EU aimed at supporting job creation and improving the investment climate in Eswatini.
- On the same day, Government provided the Nation with an update from the Prime Minister, with the PM thanking Emaswati for their messages of support during his period of isolation.

- On the 21<sup>st</sup>, the Prime Minister announced amended COVID-19 Regulations following the ending of the National Emergency on the 18<sup>th</sup>.
- On the same day, the Ministry of Sports announced that the Eswatini Football Association would be taken to the National Sport Tribunal if they failed in their appeal to CAF on the disqualification of the National U-17 Team for failing age eligibility tests.
- On the 23<sup>rd</sup>, Government announced that the Prime Minister had developed mild symptoms of COVID-19 and would be transferred to hospital for monitoring.
- On the 24<sup>th</sup>, the Ministry of Agriculture launched a project for mitigating the impact of COVID-19 on food security using climate smart technologies. The project is supported by CCARDESA-SADC and will be implemented in Dvokolwako where 47 women will be trained on commercial mushroom production.
- On the same day, the Ministry of Economic Planning met with people living with disabilities for their contributions to the under review National Population Policy.
- On the 25<sup>th</sup>, Government launched a 'No Plastic Campaign' under the theme 'Phatsa Sakho Nawe' in an effort to combat littering from single use plastics. The campaign is funded by the UNDP and complements the 'Clean Eswatini Campaign' introduced by Government in 2019.
- On the 26<sup>th</sup> DPM Themba Masuku announced that Government had developed guidelines that will direct Eswatini's efforts in establishing shelter for survivors of Sexual and Gender Based Violence. The DPM announced this at the launch of the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence campaign.

- On the last day of the month, Minister of Health Lizzie Nkosi held a press briefing where she informed the Nation that Government was already putting aside funds & setting up plans of action for the procurement of an approved COVID-19 vaccine when it became available.
- Over the course of the month, the Ministry of Natural Resources, in partnership with various partners, launched four different potable water and sanitation projects set to benefit over 118 000 Emaswati.
- In the month in review, the Ministry of Sports held two Shukuma Eswatini activations at Ngudzeni and Mahlangatsha Tinkhundla. Shukuma is a Government initiative aimed at encouraging healthy living through sport and physical activity.
- The Ministry of Agriculture continued with regional launches of the Backyard Garden Programme over the month in review. The programme is part of Government's efforts towards ensuring food & nutrition security in Eswatini.

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