

KINGDOM OF ESWATINI



**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
& TRAINING**

The National General Education Progress Report 2024

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Opening Statement

Education plays a pivotal role in the socio-economic development of the country, particularly in poverty alleviation, improving the quality of life, achieving accelerated and sustained economic growth, and enhancing social cohesion. As an agent of change, education is vital in producing human resources and facilitating human capital, making it central to development.

The Kingdom of Eswatini is signatory to a number of global and regional frameworks, key among others, are Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063. These frameworks regard education as an enabler for all the goals aspired to. The Ministry of Education and Training is directly implementing the SDG 4 on Quality Education and Goal 2 of the AU Agenda aspiring to produce well educated citizens and skills revolution underpinned by Science, Technology and Innovation. In relation to the quality of Education the fundamental parameter to monitor is access to education, that is, get every child in school. This is, however, not enough, hence the need to then adopt a system approach to the provision of education and lifelong learning for all Swazis.

The Education Sector Analysis Report 2021 brought to the fore several challenges and also outlined several priorities going forward.

The priorities included;

- Improving student learning,
- Keeping boys and girls in school until completion and increasing access to secondary education,

- Strengthening entry and creating opportunities on exit of the system,
- Enhancing teacher development and management,
- Ensuring adequate and equitable education financing and spending.

From these priorities seven strategic goals were formulated under the Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) 2022/34 which was developed with a three year operational plan, the Multi Year Action Plan (MYAP) 2022/2025.

This report is one mechanism of ensuring that the results from the implementation of these key strategic documents achieves the intended outcomes. Moreover, it provides an opportunity for the Ministry to track and monitor progress towards the implementation of our ESSP aimed at transforming the education system in the country.

The Ministry of Education and Training intends to be a pioneer in the utilisation of Results Based Management (RBM) as a means of ensuring that activities achieve desired results.

Foreword

The National General Education Progress Report (NGEPR) 2024 is the first of its kind in the history of education management in Eswatini. This report aims to monitor the progress of general education initiatives and incorporate RBM in the process. The process of compiling this report followed a consultative and participatory approach where heads of departments, central agencies and civil society were involved. It involved the collection of data from schools using the DHIS2 for Education, data cleaning, quality assurance and analytics by the programme managers in each sub sector. It also involved secondary data analysis from sources such as the Examinations Council of Eswatini (ECESWA), the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS-6), and information from the Midterm Review of the Multi Year Action Plan (MYAP) 2022/25 amongst other sources.

The amalgamation of data from the Education Management Information System (EMIS), coupled with the invaluable contributions from MICS-6, Ministry of Finance and ECESWA, has empowered

us to delve deeply into the multifaceted landscape of education, enabling a subtle understanding of the challenges and triumphs that shape our educational ecosystem. Through this report, our aim is to provide a transparent and evidence-based account of our progress, acknowledging the strides made and identifying areas necessitating focused attention and strategic interventions to accelerate implementation.

This report will be utilised as a means of verification and a source document for all stakeholders and I believe it will be useful in reporting on progress made towards the Sustainable development goals, African Union Agenda, and the various global and national aspirations.



Bhekithemba V. Gama
Principal Secretary

Executive Summary

The data presented in this report shows that the country is in the right direction in investing in basic education and training. However, there are signs of serious systemic inefficiencies as evidenced by the high repetition and dropout rates, poor foundation reading and numeracy skills (16% and 8 % respectively, Eswatini MICS 2021-22), low transition rates, especially to classes just before the high stakes examinations.

ECCDE has a potential to establish and strengthen the foundations of lifelong learning for all children while supporting the broad educational and social needs of families. Though largely in the hands of local communities and the private sector, the Government of Eswatini has incorporated one level of ECCDE, that is, Grade zero under the Foundation Phase of Primary Education.

The incorporation of Grade zero in the system is an effort to enhance quality provision, affordability, qualified educators, standardised curriculum and smoother transition. This is done through the development of ECCDE learning standards, distribution of teaching and learning materials such as “toys” and employment of some teachers. More efforts are, however, needed, especially because less than 10% of children between 36-59 months attended ECCDE during the current reporting period. However, 67.1% of those doing first grade reported to have undertaken some form of ECCDE, the quality however, still needs to be improved.

The Curriculum Framework (2018) states that the primary school education is classified into the Foundation (Grade 0-2), Middle (Grade 3-4) and Upper Phase (Grade 5-7). The gross enrolment rate at primary stood at 115.7% in 2024. The pupil teacher ratio is 1:25 much against the norm which is 1:40. According to the National Education Sector Policy of 2018 acceptable repetition rates should be reduced to less than 5% much against the prevailing rates of 6.5%. The number of learners who dropped out at primary school in 2024 has declined compared to 2023; from 7526 to 3906 and cited reasons for dropout includes repetition, pregnancy, school fees and sickness.

Secondary education is segmented into two levels; three-year Junior (lower) Secondary and two-year Senior (upper) Secondary. Gross enrolment rates stood at 96.3% for lower secondary and 82.8% at upper secondary in 2024. It was further noted that progression from junior to senior secondary has

been declining. This may further be supported by the increased repetition rates at lower secondary (10.1% in 2023 and 11.2% in 2024), especially noticeable at Form 2 and these are higher than those aspired to by the National Education and Training Sector Policy. Cited reasons for dropout include amongst others absconding, repeating more than once, sickness, disciplinary or expulsion, school fees and pregnancy. There are also a number of learners who enrolled for completing classes, that is Form 3 and Form 5 (about 10% and 17%), but did not eventually sit for the examinations. The teacher-pupil ratio for secondary education stands at 1:16 much against the aspirations of the National Education and Training Sector Policy which is 1:35.

The data presented in this report shows that the country is in the right direction in investing in basic education and training. However, there are signs of serious systemic inefficiencies as evidenced by the high repetition and dropout rates poor foundational reading and numeracy skills (16% and 8%, Eswatini MICS 2021-22), low transition rates, especially to classes just before the high stakes examinations. Though completion rates at grade 7 and Form 3 are higher but so are repetition rates at Form 2, Grades 5 and 6 respectively. Furthermore, the high repetition rates are noticed in Form 4 and the completion rates at Form 5, that is, Grade C or better in English Language plus any other four subjects is still low 12%.

Going forward the sector will need to prioritise and role out of Competence Based Curriculum accelerating efforts to fully integrate Grade 0 into the Free Primary Education Programme including recruitment of qualified teachers. Enforce the policy on repetition at primary level as well as strengthening the school health programme. There will be a need to standardise and regulate the secondary school fees. Furthermore, there is a need for accelerated efforts to investigate and design mechanisms to curb the high repetition at the classes preceding high stakes examinations i.e. Grade 6, Form 2 and Form 4.

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Acronyms

AEC	Annual Education Census
AELLL	Adult Education and Life Long Learning
COVID-19	Corona Virus Diseases
CSO	Central Statistical Office
ECCDE	Early Childhood Care Development Education
ECESWA	Examinations Council of Eswatini
EGCSE	Eswatini General Certificate of Secondary Education
EGEMR	Eswatini General Education Monitoring Report
EMIS	Education Management Information System
ESSP	Education Sector Strategic Plan
FPE	Free Primary Education
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GER	Gross Enrolment Rate
GIR	Gross Intake Rate
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
LEG	Local Education Group
MEPD	Ministry of Economic Planning and Development
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MoET	Ministry of Education and Training
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MYAP	Multi Year Action Plan
NDP	National Development Plan
NDS	National Development Strategy
PSET	Post School Education and Training
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
TES	Transforming Education Summit
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund

CHAPTER 1

1.0 Introduction and Background

The Kingdom of Eswatini places considerable importance in human capital development as a means to ensuring sustainable development and this is edged within the broader theme of the national development strategy (NDS). The aspiration of the kingdom of Eswatini is that it be ***found in the top 10% of the group of human development group of countries founded on sustainable development.*** This vision is operationalised through the National Development Plan 2022/28 (NDP) under the national outcome 6: Enhanced Social and Human Capital Development and Sustainable livelihoods and sectoral outcome 7.2 on improved access to quality, relevant and inclusive education and lifelong opportunities. The national aspirations are cascaded down to the sectoral level through the implementation of the Education Sector Strategic Plan 2022/34.

The strategic plan and other global agendas are monitored through data collected by the EMIS unit under the Ministry of Education and Training and other household surveys with the education sector module. The EMIS Unit in the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) is mandated to provide adequate and timely administrative data to inform policy formulation, planning, budgeting and decision making for the education sector. With support from UNICEF Eswatini, MoET developed an electronic system to improve reporting, management and analysis of educational data. The new digitized EMIS was customized on the DHIS2 platform with technical support from University of Oslo, HISP Uganda and HISP Mozambique (Saudigitus). EMIS data collected from schools is captured into the DHIS2-EMIS to support quick analysis, presentation, dissemination and use.

This has improved access to well defined key performance indicators to inform education sector programming and management.

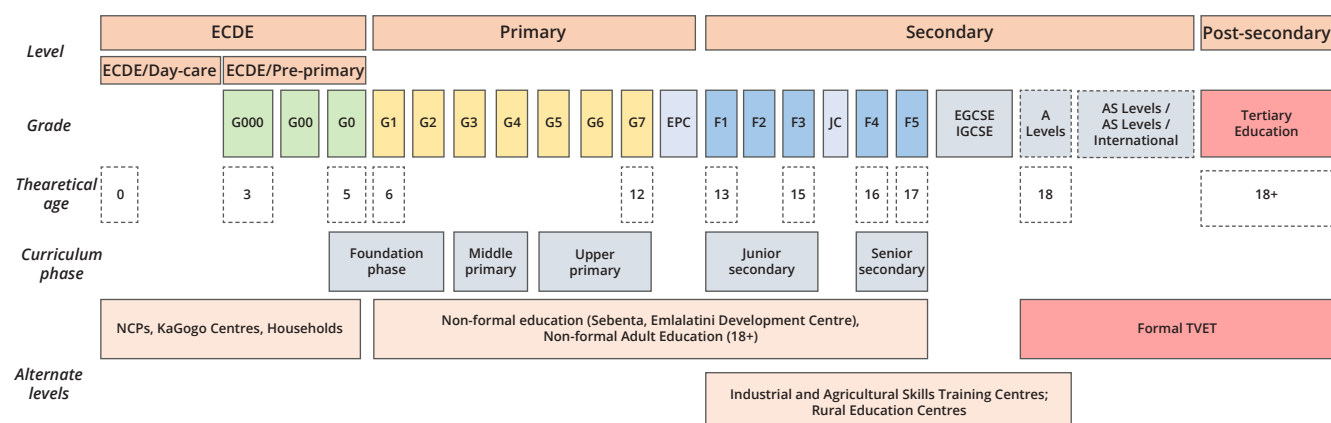
The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey as an international multi-purpose household survey that supports countries in collecting internationally comparable data on a wide range of indicators on the situation of children and women. MICS surveys measure key indicators that allows the country to generate data for use in policies, programmes, and national development plans, and to monitor progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other internationally agreed upon commitments. Therefore, since early childhood care education and development has not fully developed in the DHIS2, the MICS data has been used mainly in this sub-sector.

Education Indicators for eSwatini aims to present a comprehensive set of educational indicators for the education and training system in the country. The indicators in this report cover only general education.

1.1 The Education System in Eswatini

The Education system in the Kingdom of Eswatini is organised into four main levels and these are; the early childhood development and education which comprises of (day-care-centres, private and community preschools, neighbourhood care points and grade 0), The second level is Primary, followed by secondary and lastly post-school education and training (PSET). The PSET Levels comprises of all post-secondary education institutions, (Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and Adult Education and Lifelong Learning (AELL).

Figure 1: The Education System in Eswatini



Source: Education Sector Analysis (World Bank 2021)

1.2 Education Legislative, Policy and Strategic Frameworks

The Ministry of Education and Training is guided by the following key pieces of legislation; the Education Act of 1981, the Teaching Service Act, 1982, the Free Primary Education Act of 2010 and the Higher Education Act of 2013. Over and above these pieces of legislation the Ministry is guided by the following policies; National Education and Training sector policy, 2018, The Technical Vocational Education and Training policy 2012, the School committee constitution 2011, School Accounting Regulations and Procedures, 1992 among a plethora of circulars.

At the Global and regional level, the Ministry of Education and Training is guided by the Sustainable Development Goals 2015-2030, the Education for All framework, The African Union Agenda 2063, The Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2016-25, The SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan 2030. Nationally, the sector is guided by the National Development Plan 2022/28, the Education Sector Strategic plan 2022/34 which is operationalised by the Multi Year Action Plan 2022/25.

1.3 Objectives of the Report

The Main objectives of this report is to analyse the current education data and formulate trends with an intention to assess the impact of education policies, programs, projects and other interventions adopting the Results based management approach. The report will also help

to provide data needed to track the Transforming Education Summit (TES) Commitments, Sustainable Development Goals amongst other global, regional and national agenda.

1.4 Scope of the Report

This national education monitoring report covers all programmes implemented by the education sector under the seven strategic goals set out in the Education Sector Strategic Plan 2022/34, operationalised by the Multi Year Action Plan 2022/25 at the general education level. The results framework is organised under the seven goals and the indicators under each goal some at output and outcome level. Moreover, this report presents administrative data and analysis from the Education Management information systems (EMIS) presented and arranged by sub sector

1.5 Structure of this Report

This report is organised around eight main chapters. The first chapter presents an introduction to the background and the rationale to the development of such a report. The second chapter details the methodology and data sources used in preparing the national general education progress report. Chapter three, four, five and six details results and analysis for the Early Childhood Care Education and Development, Primary and Secondary education respectively. Chapter eight provides data on education financing focusing on public expenditure on education and training. Lastly chapter eight presents conclusions and recommendations for future action.

1.6 Annual Education Census (AEC) 2024 Key Highlights

Reporting Rate

97.3 % Primary

97.2 % Secondary

Enrolment Numbers

225,427 Primary

120,947 Secondary

Class Ratio

35 Primary

37.3 Secondary



TEACHER-PUPIL RATIO

25 Primary 16 Secondary



REPETITION

6.5% Primary

6.9% Lower Secondary

7.7% Senior Secondary



TEACHING STAFF

8948 Primary

7696 Secondary

GROSS ENROLMENT RATIO

115.7% Primary

96.3% Lower Secondary

82.8% Senior Secondary



EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

665 Primary

314 Secondary

NUMBER OF DROP-OUTS

3906 Primary

2476 Secondary

COMPLETION RATE:

97.8% Primary

70% Lower Secondary

62.2% Senior Secondary

TRANSITION RATE:

92% Primary to Lower Secondary

CHAPTER 2

2.0 Methodology

The National General Education Progress Report (NGEPR) 2024 was produced following a results based management framework approach and combined a wide range of primary and secondary data sources.

2.1 Data Collection

Administrative data was collected from all schools using the DHIS2 for education, which is a web based system used by the Education Management Information System Unit. The data collection process was followed by a rigorous process of data cleaning, quality assurance, validation and the generation of tables and graphs utilised in the analysis. The indicators and statistics from this data source are mainly at output level and are aggregated¹. Administrative data from the Exams Council of Eswatini provided data on examinations at grade 7, form 3 and form 5

Another source of data used were databases from the relevant Ministries; Ministry of Finance, (MoF), Ministry of Economic Planning and Development (MEPD) and the Examinations Council of Eswatini (ECESWA) and the Central Statistical Office (CSO).

Secondary data sources included the multiple indicator cluster survey (MICS) and this was used especially for early childhood care development and education. The indicators from this data source are mostly at outcome level.

2.2 Stakeholder Consultations

The formulation of this report followed a stakeholder consultation process. The consultations were conducted at two levels: There was a technical working group formed mainly by a wide range of experts drawn from all the sub sectors/ levels and led by the chief inspectors of the relevant level. The Technical working groups populated a tracker matrix making annotations and providing a status update on the activities and programmes under the Multi Year Action Plan 2022/25. These levels are; Early Childhood Care Development and Education (ECCDE), Primary Education and Secondary education. These sub levels were supported by the other stakeholders from civil society, ministries, departments and agencies. The report was then validated by the Local Education Group (LEG).

2.3 Analysis and Reporting

The adopted methodology fuses qualitative assessments and quantitative data analysis to give a complete picture of the status of education from 2022-2024. The general education status in 2024 is compared with the data from 2022 as a means to tracking trends. Leveraging on the trends enhances the understanding of learner performance and educational quality but also supports informed decision-making, resource allocation and continuous improvement efforts consequently allowing the sector to create a more effective and equitable learning environment for all learners.

¹Disaggregation and individualisation of the data will be achieved in the next report after the successful implementation of SEMIS

CHAPTER 3

3.0 Early Childhood Care Education and Development

3.1 Introduction

In 2015, at the United Nations Summit in New York, world leaders defined the globally adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which placed Education as the cornerstone of the sustainable development agenda. Target 4.2 of the SDGs is to “ensure by 2030 that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education”. This has resulted in the increase in policy attention on Early Childhood Care Development and Education (ECCDE).

Equitable access to quality ECCDE is understood to have a potential which can strengthen the foundations of lifelong learning for all children and support the broad educational and social needs of families. Thus, governments are encouraged to enhance the quality of ECCDE services and improve on equitable access to the settings thereof. It is on this note that the UNESCO Institute for Statistics revised the International Standard Classification of Education in 2022 to include programmes for very young children including those under the age of 3. For Eswatini, collecting and reporting on ECCDE related indicators has been a challenge, however, this is a first attempt to bring together some of the key ECCDE indicators. As such, for some indicators there will not be comprehensive educational data presented but effort will be made to paint a picture of what is currently obtaining in relation to ISCED level 0 in the country. Data from the MICS 6 will be used to support some claims made for some indicators as may be applicable.

3.2 Governance

The education aspect in ECCDE is administered under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET). This is an effort to enhance quality provision, affordability, qualified teachers, a standardised curriculum and smoother transition. Hence all standards related to education in ECCDE are set by the MoET for all the age ranges. However, a majority of tasks in the ECCDE are devolved to local communities. This is meant to bring decision

making and delivery closer to families, and to adapt the related services to meet local needs and circumstances. It should be noted, however, that this devolution of powers has contributed to the wide differences of access and quality between regions, rural and urban areas in Eswatini with children living in urban areas better placed to access quality services than those in rural areas.

The MoET, however, is working towards strengthening legislation and regulation, financing, staffing, and programme standards. For instance, the MoET has introduced Grade zero, that is, ensuring that children enrol into a one year ECCDE programme before transitioning to primary school. This is currently implemented in 420 public schools out of 605. From these, the Government will employ at least twenty (20) teachers in the year 2023/24. This will be implemented incrementally until all public schools have a properly resourced Grade zero class which will be incorporated under the state funded primary education, normally referred to as Free Primary Education.

3.3 Financing ECCDE

Public spending on education and training, including ECCDE is one of the most important factors to guarantee equity. Limited or insufficient public spending, especially on ECCDE poses serious risk that restricts access to ECCDE to affluent families. In addition, the quality of services offered will be greatly varied. It should, however, be stated that the relationship between the overall spending on education and quality thereof is not directly proportional but may be dependent on factors that include time children spend on intentional pedagogical or educational activities, children-teachers contact time, teachers' qualifications, salaries and class sizes.

The MoET started by ensuring that a pool of relevantly qualified ECCDE teachers existed and these were trained in public teacher training colleges. This is the same pool that the Government will be absorbing into her payroll as Grade zero is

implemented in public schools. Furthermore, the Government has been and continues to provide support materials to all ECCDE centres in the country, both public and private, including Learning materials and outdoor learning materials. This is in an effort to reduce the burden and running costs to communities which in turn reduces barriers to access to ECCDE.

3.4 Access to ECCDE

The official age for admission into primary school is 6 years. Practice shows that children start ECCDE between 3 and 5 years. For enrolment into primary school, there are certain requirements that these children are required to have met. These include evidence of having attended some form of ECCDE, vaccination evidence administered at 60 months, and the ability to read and write. These have compelled parents, even those in rural areas to ensure that children access some form of ECCDE.

3.4.1 Enrolment

As already stated, the requirements by primary schools, though not officially approved by the MoET, requires Grade 1 entrants to have attended some form of ECCDE. Even with such restrictions, there is always a scramble for spaces, especially in the urban and peri-urban areas to an extent that primary schools have resorted to making these children undergo an admission interview as a selection criterion. Due to the current status of ECCDE in the country being in the hands of the private sector and communities, it has not been easy for the MoET to collect related data for this reporting period. Instead ESwatini MICS 6 data on children at first grade of school who had attended some form of ECCDE the previous year is presented in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Percentage of children attending first grade of primary school who attended pre-school the previous year

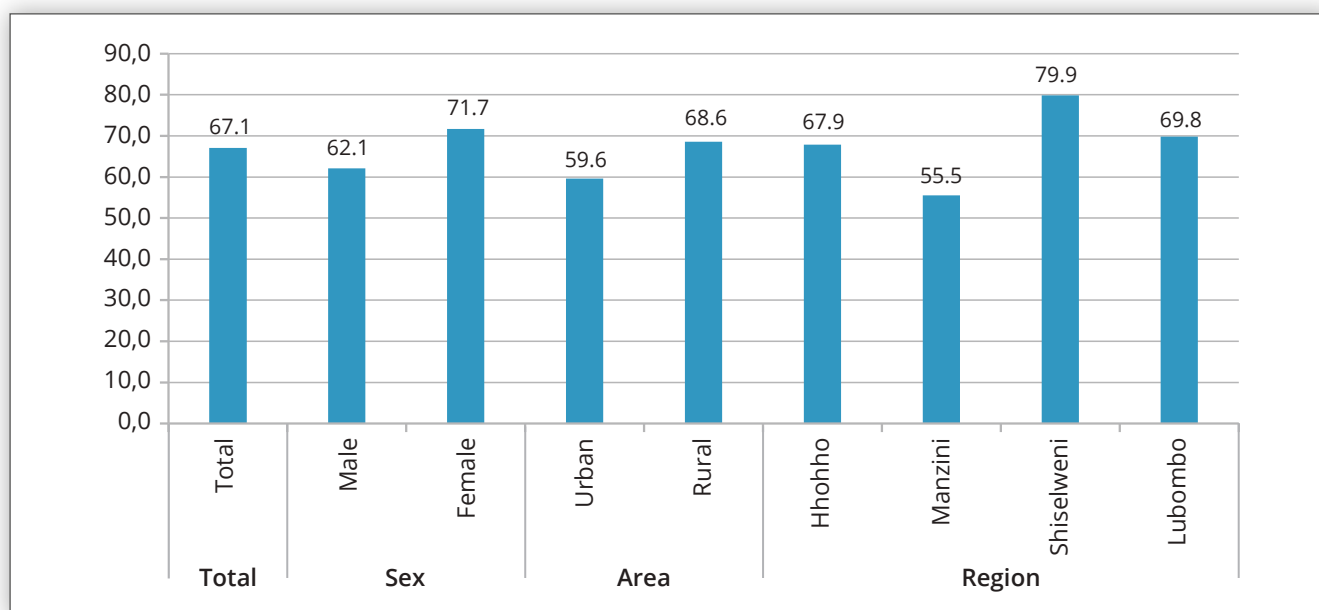


Figure 2 above shows that 67.1% of children enrolled in first grade reported to have attended some form of ECCDE before primary school. Of these, there were more females than males, that is, 71.7% and 62.1% respectively. It is interesting to note, however, that more children from rural areas reported to have attended ECCDE than their counterparts from the urban areas, with the Shiselweni region showing the highest numbers followed by the Lubombo region (79.9% and 69.8% respectively). This is a positive sign, especially

because current reports show that these two regions have the lowest pass rates at change of phase examinations, highest repetition and drop-out rates.

3.4.2 Participation

Stable home and family environment are some of the most critical factors for survival and development for children. However, access to quality ECCDE programmes and services outside the home are equally important in enabling children to acquire

the basic cognitive and language skills they need to flourish in school. Thus it is critical to monitor the participation of children in ECCDE. This provides a proxy of how long children are enrolled in ECCDE over their childhood. It should however, be noted that participation does not provide information about the quality and intensity of the services provided. However, the intensity may be

captured when participation rates are compared with the time spent by children on pedagogical activities, an aspect which the MoET is striving to improve the related data capturing. For this reporting period, however, we will focus only on the children who attended ECCDE over the course of one year, as shown in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3: Percentage of children aged 36-59 months attending early childhood education

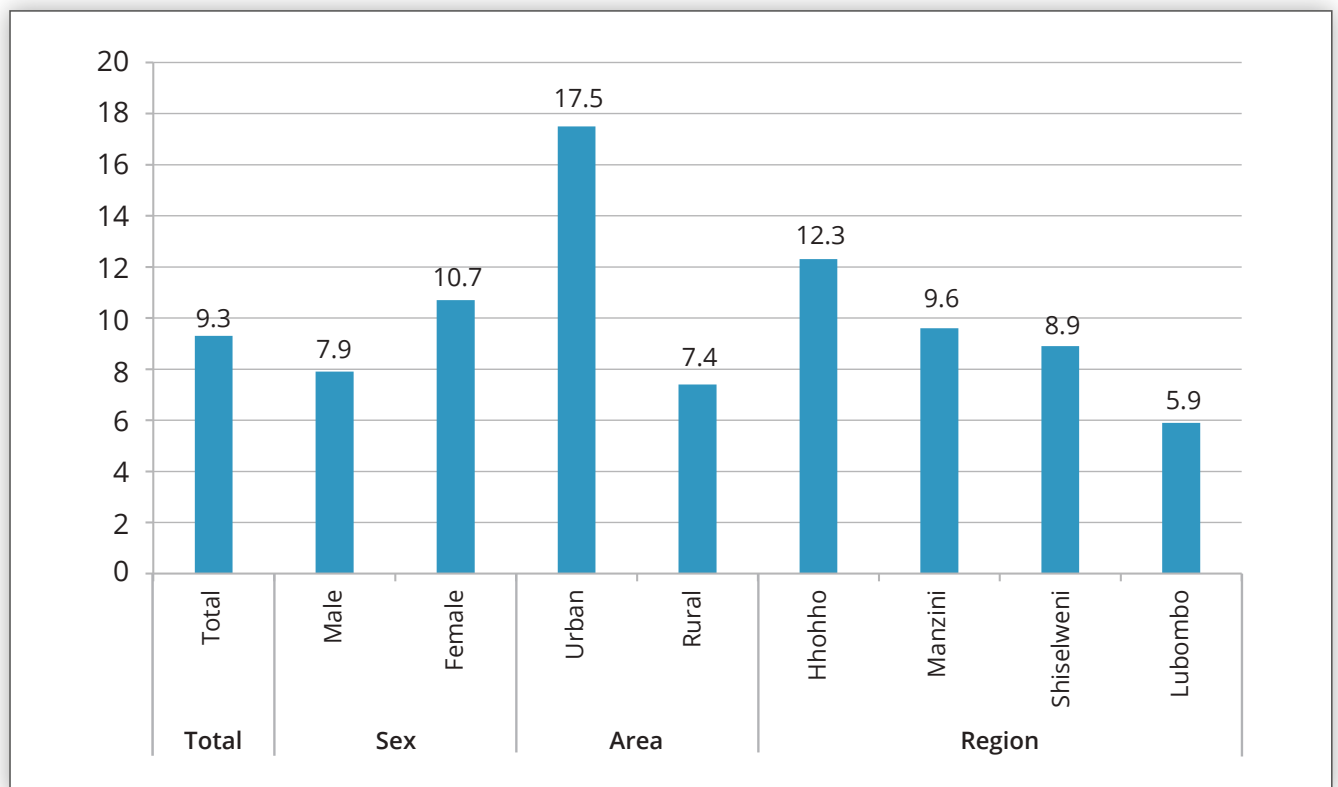


Figure 3 above shows that 9.3% of children aged between 36 and 59 months attended some form of ECCDE. Comparing the number of children in first grade who reported to have attended some form of ECCDE (67.1%), the participation rates from 36-59 months are very low (9.3%). This could imply that most of these children enrol for Grade zero in readiness for admission to primary school. Furthermore, considering that Government efforts are mainly focussing on Grade zero below which the coordination is not properly structured.

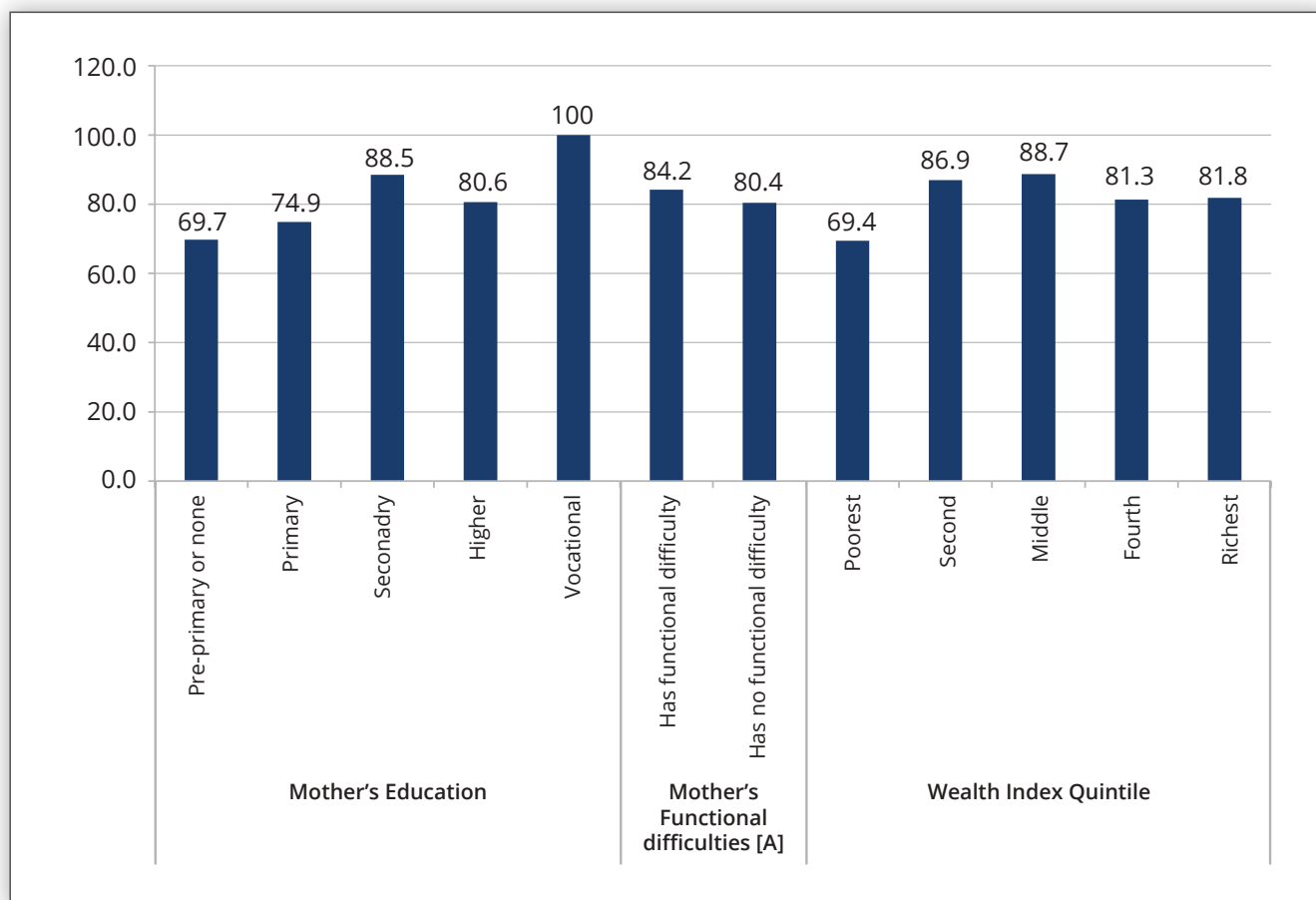
In line with the report from those enrolled in first grade, there were more female children (10.7%) aged 36-59 months who participated in some form of ECCDE compared to the males (7.9%). On the contrary, there were more children from urban areas (17.5%) compared to those from the rural

areas (7.4%). Moreover, there were more children from the Hhohho and Manzini regions (12.3% and 9.6% respectively). This is contrary to the report of those in first grade who reported to have enrolled in some form of ECCDE before enrolling at primary school.

3.4.3 School Readiness

For this report, school readiness focuses on children around the age of 6 who are about to start primary education. It refers to the extent to which these children are ready to transition to school, how adjusted are they intellectually, physically and emotionally beforehand. Figure 4 below shows the percentage of children who were deemed ready to start the first grade of school during the current reporting period.

Figure 4: Percentage of children of Primary school entry age entering grade 1



From figure 4 it is interesting to note that there was a substantial number (69.7%) of children who attended ECCDE though their parents did not have formal school qualification. This is further supported by the higher number of children (84.2%) who attended ECCDE even though their parents had functional difficulties. In addition, 69.4% of children from the poorest families attended ECCDE compared to the 81.8% coming from the richest families.

3.5 Curriculum

In 2018, Eswatini developed a curriculum framework, a document that specifies what is to be learnt during the course of general education, further indicating how the learning and teaching ought to be organised and assessed. The Eswatini National Curriculum Framework covers Grade zero as part of the primary school Foundation Phase. Though the Education Sector Policy (2018) posits that ECCDE covers the ages from 3 to 6, Grade zero covers the ages 5 to 6. This implies that the curriculum for part of ECCDE is developed, regulated and monitored by the MoET. By extension, it may be argued that the Eswatini Curriculum Framework

empowers the MoET to control and monitor the “unguided playtime” in ECCDE and ensure that it is embedded into other content areas to stimulate learning through play.

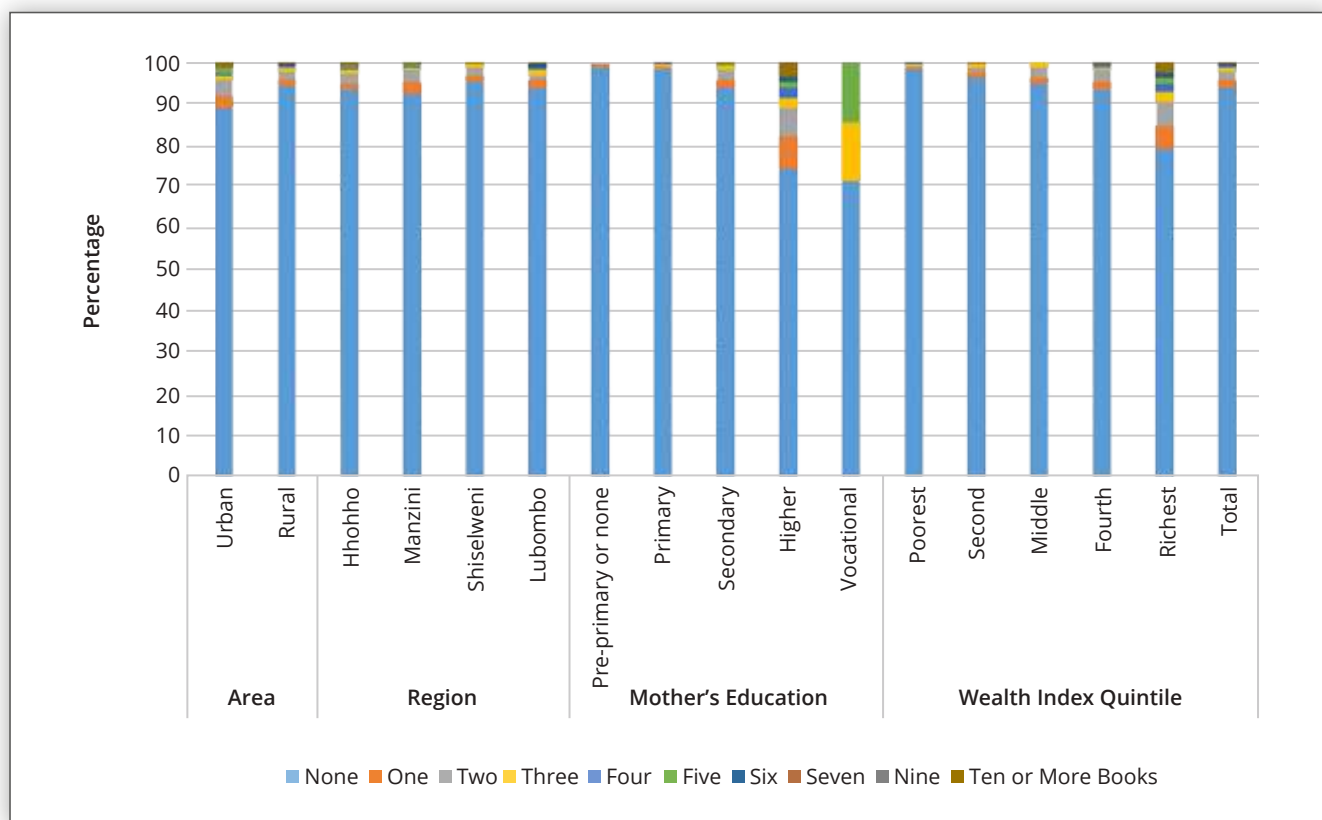
It should, however, be stated that currently, there is no standardized curriculum for the children between the ages 3 and 5. This raises a concern about the quality of ECCDE services received, especially because practice shows that there are private and community-led ECCDE centres offering such services. It is on this note that the MoET through the support from the World Bank and Global Partnership Education (GPE) will develop a standardized curriculum targeting these children. Furthermore, training manuals will be developed, piloted, refined and finalized, and training of teachers will be undertaken in the lifetime of the Strengthening Early Childhood Development and Basic Education Systems to Support Human Capital Development in Eswatini (2021-2025) Project.

Furthermore, colourful and large print books are essential for pre-reading and help young children to develop a culture of reading. As such the MoET

has been supporting ECCDE centres with early reading books and stationery. However, the MICS 6 suggests that there are still a lot of young children

who do not have access to relevant reading books and related stationery, as shown in Figure 5 below.

Figure 5: Home Reading Materials



3.6 Teachers

The MoET introduced a formal diploma for ECCDE teachers at Ngwane Teacher Training College (NTT) to ensure that there were adequate relevantly qualified teachers. This is in addition to the private colleges offering different ECCDE teacher qualifications. The need for relevantly and adequately qualified teachers hinges on the argument that better educated ECCDE teachers with specialised training are more likely to improve

the children's cognitive outcomes. Such teachers have an enhanced ability to develop targeted lesson plans and have increased ability to solve problems. Furthermore, such teachers are able to create a better pedagogic environment while using larger but age appropriate vocabularies to stimulate children. It is for these reasons that the Government of Eswatini has pronounced itself on the employment of 20 Grade zero teachers.

CHAPTER 4

4.0 Primary Education

Primary education in Eswatini is a seven (7) year programme which is Free and Compulsory according to the FPE Act 2010.

4.1 Enrolment

4.1.1 Number of Pupils Enrolled in Primary

The information collected from the Annual Education Census for enrolment provides both

the number and the percentage of pupils enrolled at Primary level and provides a picture of the structure of the education system in Eswatini. The number of learners enrolled reflects the number of those enrolled at the point of data collection for the census which is at the end of March for the reference school.

Figure 6: Primary Enrolments by Grade, Sex, 2024

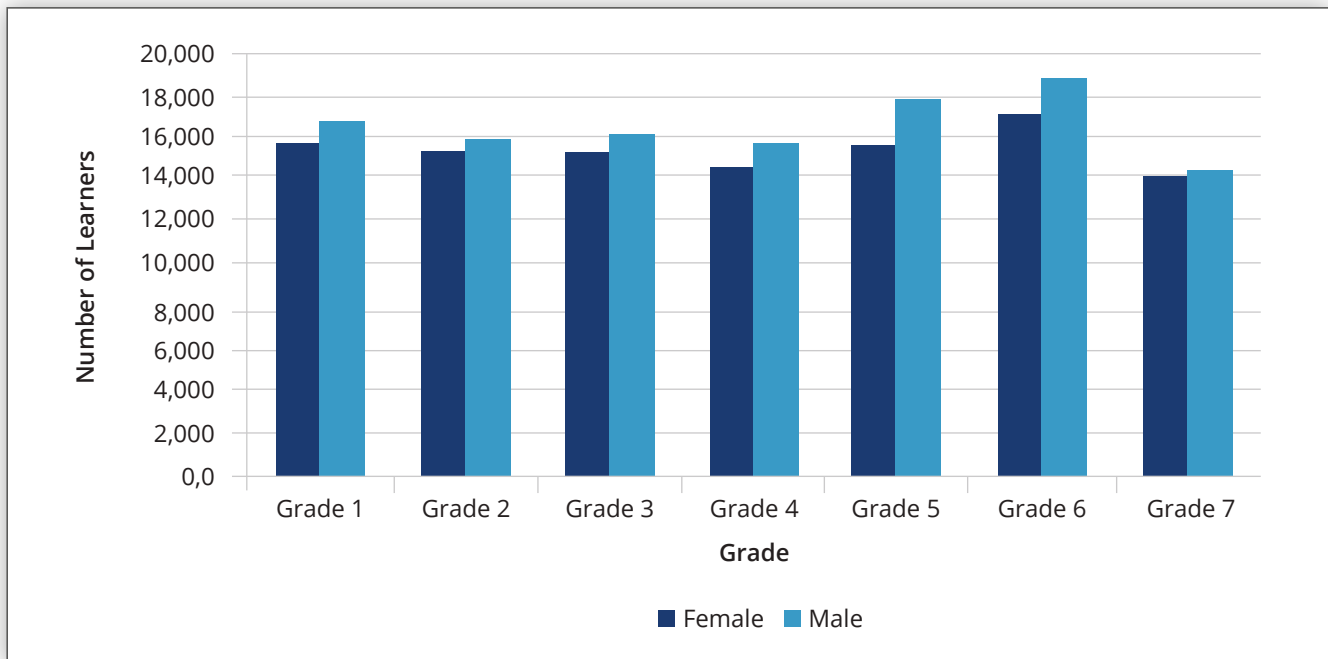
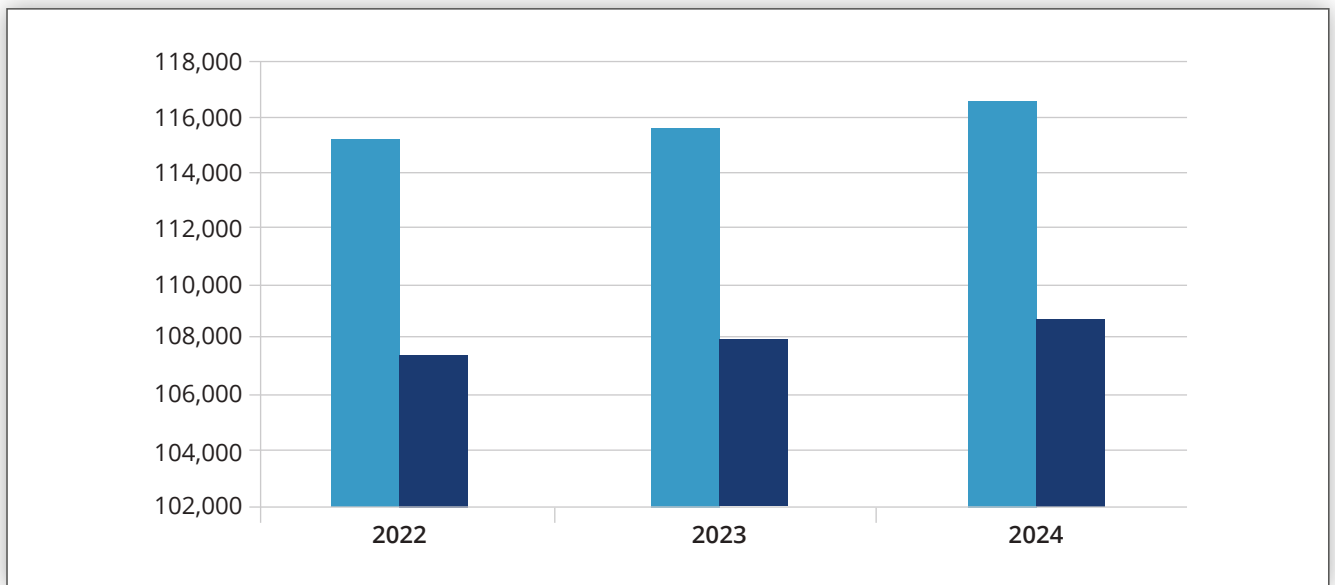


Figure 6 shows that a total of 225,427 pupils enrolled in primary schools in Eswatini. Primary school enrolment is high for grade 5 and 6, respectively; and

enrolment is lowest for grade 7. The primary school enrolment is relatively high for boys throughout all the grades compared to their girls' counterparts

Figure 7: Overall Primary Enrolment by Years, Sex



The overall enrolment for both boys and girls has been on the increase over the past three years, that is 2022 up to 2024 as illustrated in figure 7 above. Throughout the years, boys record the

highest numbers in comparison with their female counterparts. In 2024 alone, there were 116 602 boys enrolled in primary schools against 108 825 girls.

4.1.2 Gross Enrolment

Figure 8: Gross Enrolments

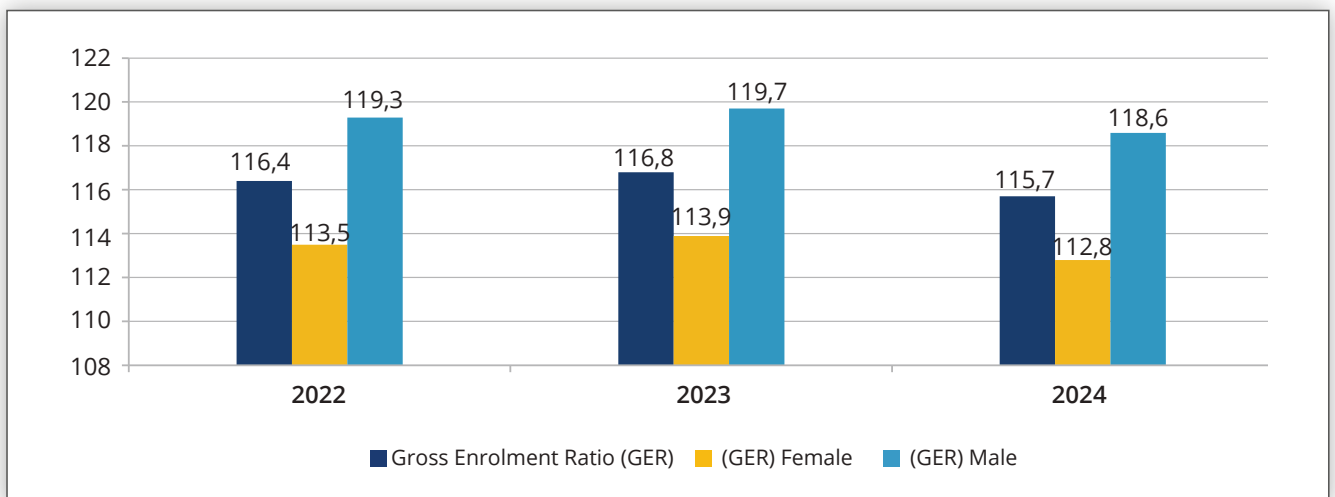


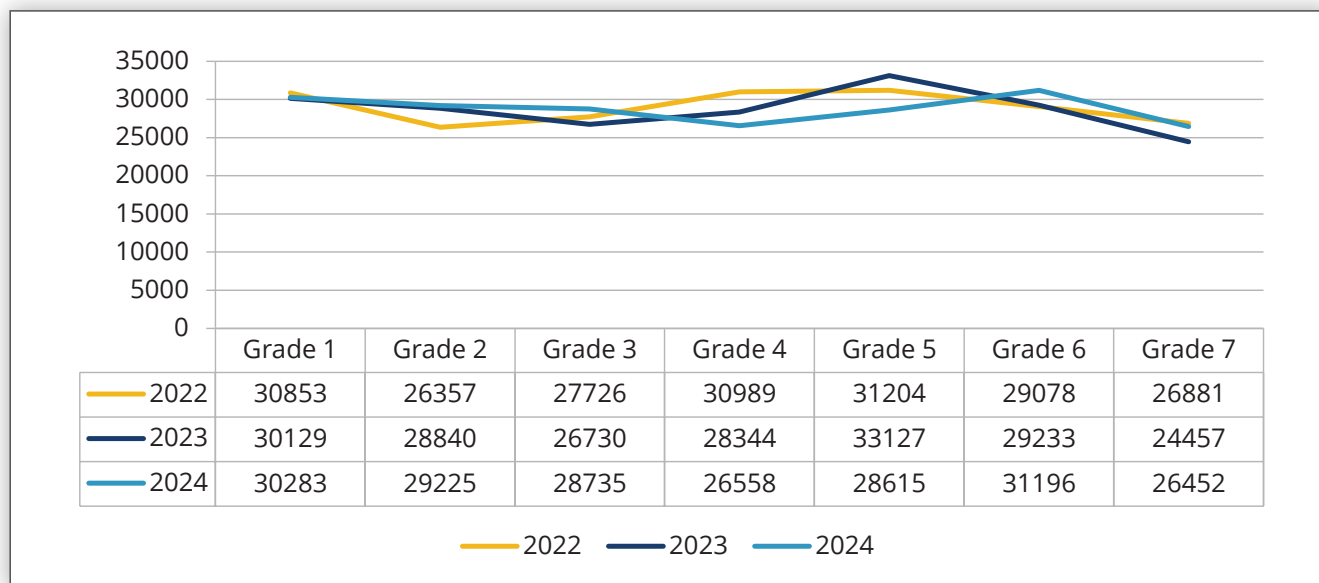
Figure 8 shows that the gross enrolment rate at primary stands at 118.6% for which is lower than the observed in 2022 and 2023 (119.3 and 119.7%) respectively. The gross enrolment shows the learners who are also above primary school going age are being enrolled.

which advocates for normal progression, that is, learners are expected to automatically progress to the next grade at the end of each academic year. However, the National Education Sector Policy (2018) aspires to attain a less than 5% repetition at primary school level. Figure 9 shows the number of learners who have progressed through the 3-year period (adjusted for drop outs and repeaters).

4.2 Progression

Since 2015, the Ministry has been implementing the Competency Based Education (CBE) curriculum

Figure 9: Number of Learners who have progressed through the 3-year period

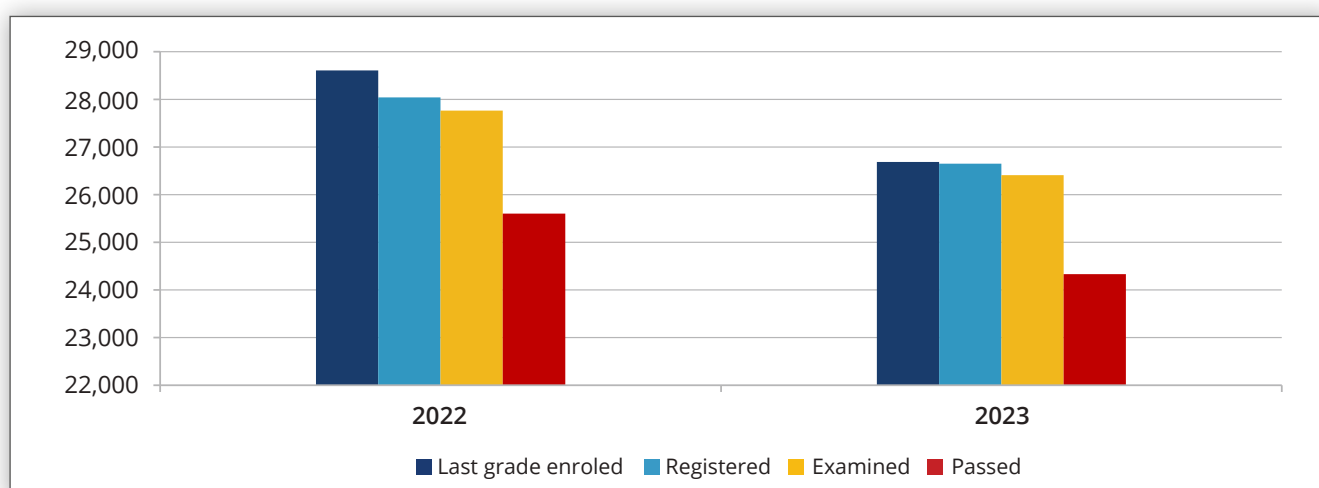


4.3 Completion

Completion according to UNESCO Institute of statistics is defined as participation in all components of an education programme (including final exam if any) irrespective of the result of any potential assessment of achievement of learning objective's. Data for completion at primary level include enrolled learners at the last grade (grade 7) and data from the eSwatini Examination Council for registered learners for the

primary school examination. The completion rate reported on this report considers learners who are enrolled in grade 7 and have been examined over the population of 12 year old. The completion rate (using the examined learners) stood at 103.5% in 2022 and 97.8% for 2023. This data responds to the SDG 4.1.2 indicator (percentages of a cohort of the children aged 3-5 years above the intended age, 12 years, for the last grade).

Figure 10: Completion



4.4 Primary School Attendance

		Male	Female	Total
Total		94.5	94.8	94.6
Area	Urban	94.3	96.0	95.2
	Rural	94.5	94.5	94.5
Region	Hhohho	92.0	92.2	92.1
	Manzini	94.7	95.9	95.3
	Shiselweni	96.3	98.1	97.2
	Lubombo	95.5	93.4	94.5

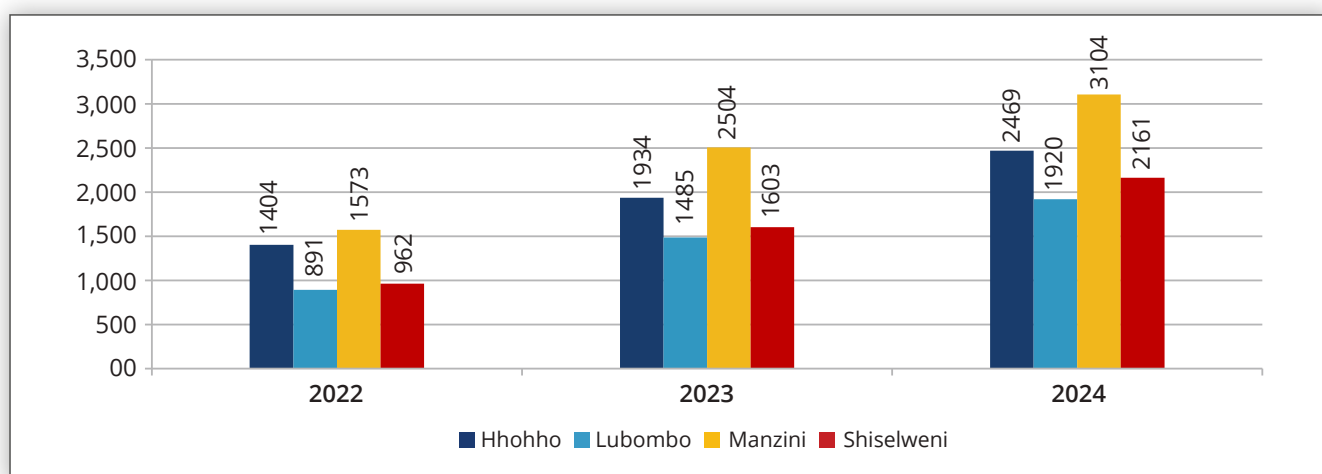
Table 1: Percentage of Children of Primary School age attending, MICS 6

According to the Multiple indicator cluster survey (MICS 6), the total attendance rate for primary schools stands at 95% shown in Table 1 above. There is no much differences on attendance rate at primary between boys and girls. However, there are some regional differentials, where the

Hhohho region recorded the lowest primary school attendance at 92%, while Shiselweni region has the highest rate at 97%. Girls coming from the rural areas have negligible lower attendance rate compared to their urban counterparts at 95 and 96, respectively.

4.5 Primary Drop-out

Figure 11: Primary Drop-out by Regions: 2022-2024

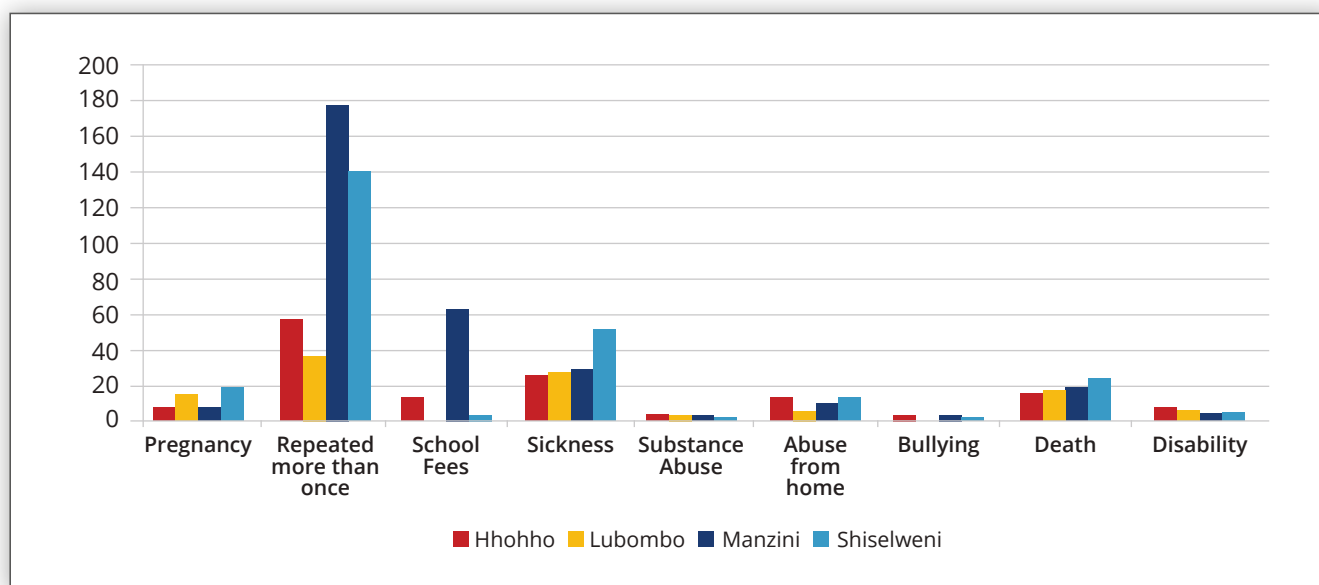


The primary school drop-out numbers seem to be on the rise over the past three years. About 9 600 pupils are reported to have dropped out of primary schools during the years 2024, whereas approximately 7 500 pupils dropped out in 2023 and the drop-out was low in 2022 at around 4 800 pupils. The data in figure 11 above shows that the Manzini region has the highest number of drop-outs, followed by Hhohho, Shiselweni and Lubombo region has the lowest number of dropouts. The

high number of drop-outs is attributed to having learners repeat a grade more than once. Other factors that contribute to the high number of drop-outs include; sickness, death, pregnancy, school fees, substance abuse and disability. Furthermore, the data indicate that schools charge top-up fees much against the free primary education policy and this is evident in the high number of drop-outs due to school fees in Manzini, Hhohho and Shiselweni with zero drop-outs in the Lubombo region.

4.6 Reasons for Dropout

Figure 11: Primary reason for drop-outs by region, 2024



The main reasons for pupils at primary level were reported to have dropped out of school due to repeating a grade for more than once. The number

of times a learner repeats is seen as discouraging to pupils, preventing them from attaining advanced levels of education

4.7 Repetition Rate

Region	2022	2023	2024
Hhohho	4	4.6	3.5
Lubombo	8.4	7.2	7
Manzini	6.5	7.8	6.1
Shiselweni	11	10.5	13.8
National	7	7.4	6.5

Table 2: Repetition Rates, Region

Table 2 shows repetition rates by region. It can be observed that the Hhohho region has been consistently having the lowest repetition rate compared to the other regions for the three consecutive years which shows an adherence to the repetition policy of at most 5%. The findings further indicate that Shiselweni region has the highest repetition 11, 10.5, 13.8 for the years 2022, 2023, 2024 respectively. This is a huge deviation

from the stipulated repetition policy. Lubombo and Shiselweni regions have high repetition rates with reference to the stated policy. The repetition rates for Lubombo for the three consecutive years stood at 8.4, 7.2 and 7, whilst Manzini region recorded 6.5, 7.8 and 6.1 for the years 2022, 2023 and 2024 respectively. The data shows that the national repetition rate is at 6.9% which is higher than the stipulated repetition rate of at most 5%.

4.8 Teacher - Pupil Ratio

Figure 13: Pupil Teacher Ratios

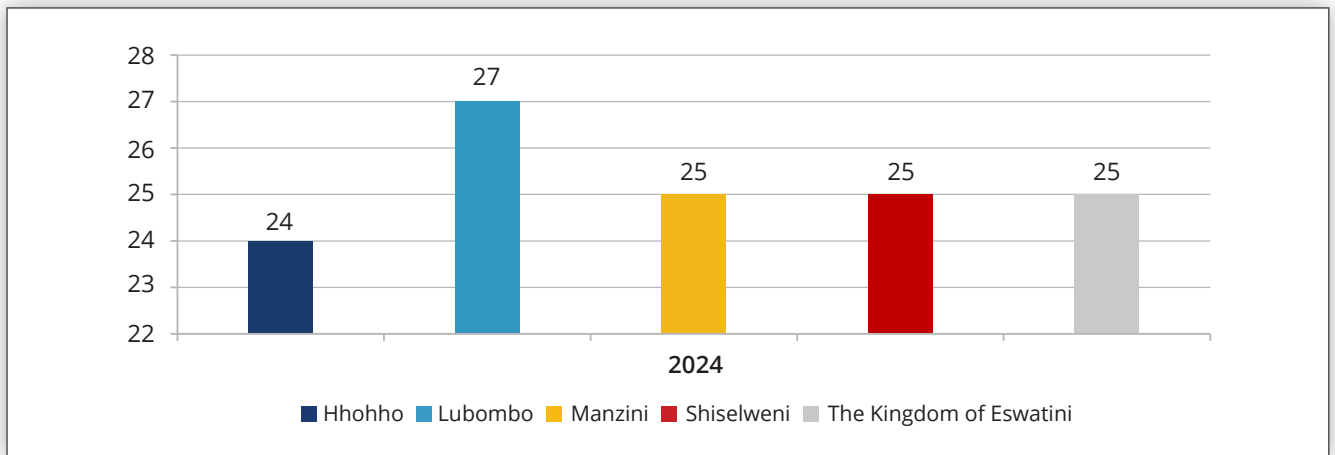


Figure 13, shows that the teacher pupil ratio is 1:25 for the Manzini and Shiselweni yet for Lubombo is 1:27 and lowest in Hhohho with 1:24 in 2024.

CHAPTER 5

5.0 Secondary Education

Secondary education is the connecting bridge between primary education and further education and training. It establishes the understanding of the various branches of knowledge and exposes the learner to the of possible careers and builds the aptitudes thereof. It also plays a significant role in shaping individual learners socially and emotionally. It is, thus imperative, to ensure that secondary education and training is monitored all the time for efficiency, effectiveness, quality and relevance.

Generally, secondary education in Eswatini takes 5 years to complete plus one. All learners are

expected to complete the first five years (Form 1 to Form 5). While some may proceed to the last grade, referred to as Form 6.

5.1 Enrolment

The information collected from the Annual Education Census for enrolment provides both the number and the percentage of pupils enrolled at Secondary level and a picture of the structure of the education system in Eswatini. The number of learners enrolled reflects the number of those enrolled at the point of data collection for the census which is at the end of March for the reference school.

Level	2022		2023		2024	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Form 1	15732	15822	16260	15718	15168	15052
Form 2	13275	12528	13984	13159	14164	13563
Form 3	10773	10186	10479	9130	10303	8894
Form 4	12596	11479	13309	12341	13376	11748
Form 5	8499	7217	8634	7656	9784	8281
Form 6	56	61	61	59	82	61
Total	60931	57293	62727	58063	62877	57599
Grand Total	118 224		120 790		120 947	

Table 3: Secondary Enrolment by Year, Sex 2022-2024

Table 3 shows that there were more enrolled girls than boys in Eswatini Secondary Schools for the last three years with an exception in 2022 where there were slightly more boys. It should be noted

that the difference in enrolment between boys and girls is widening each year. This is further illustrated in Figure 14 below.

5.2 Enrolment by Region

Figure 14: Secondary Enrolments by Region

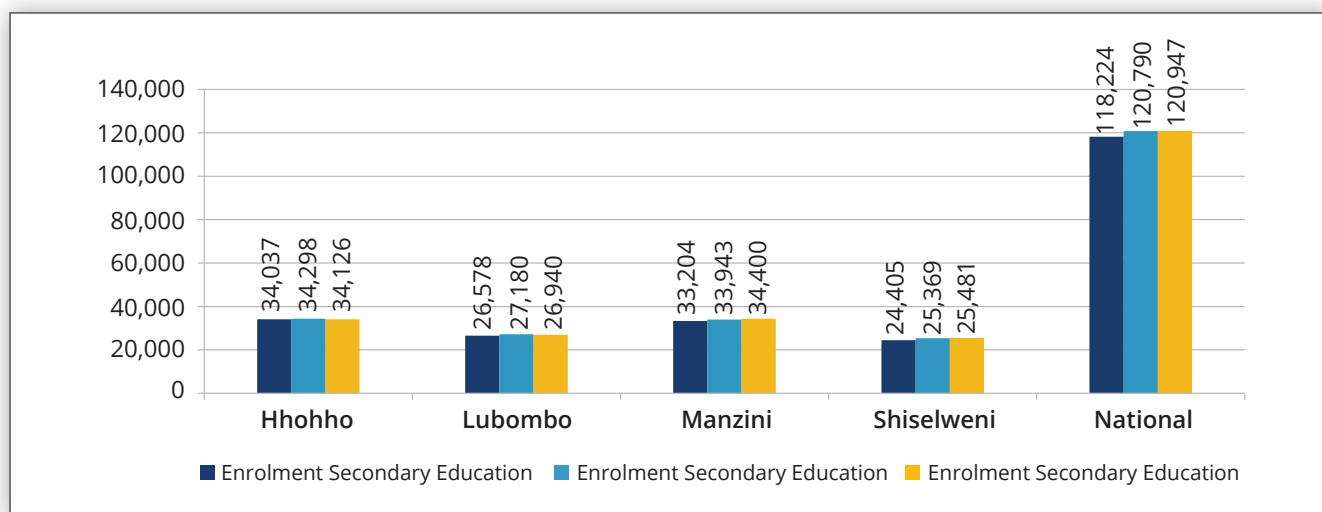


Figure 14 shows that there were more learners enrolled in the Hhohho Region than any other region in all the three years. It is, however, worth noting that the enrolments increased in 2023 and

slightly decreased for the three regions except for the Shiselweni region where enrolments have been steadily increasing in the reporting period.

Figure 15: Gross Enrolment

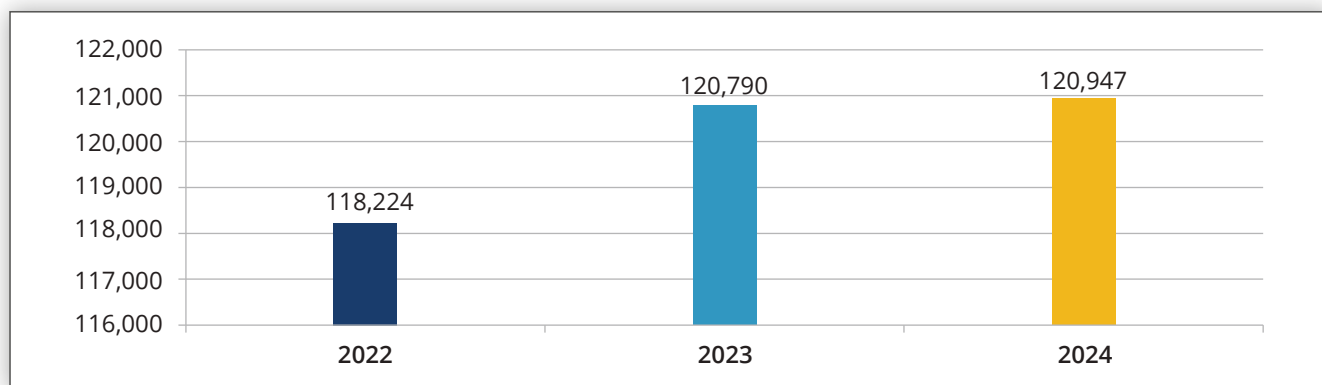


Figure 15 shows a sharp increase in gross enrolments between 2022 and 2023 which, however, became steady in 2024. This could be attributed to the re-opening of schools to full capacity after the COVID 19 era, which probably brought back even those that had dropped out

before the COVID 19 pandemic. This may further be supported by the signs of stability shown in 2024. However, gross enrolment rates attribute the increase in enrolments, especially between 2022 and 2023 to upper secondary as shown in Table 4.

Year	Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) (%)	
	Lower Secondary	Upper Secondary
2022	98.4	76.9
2023	98.4	82.1
2024	96.3	82.8

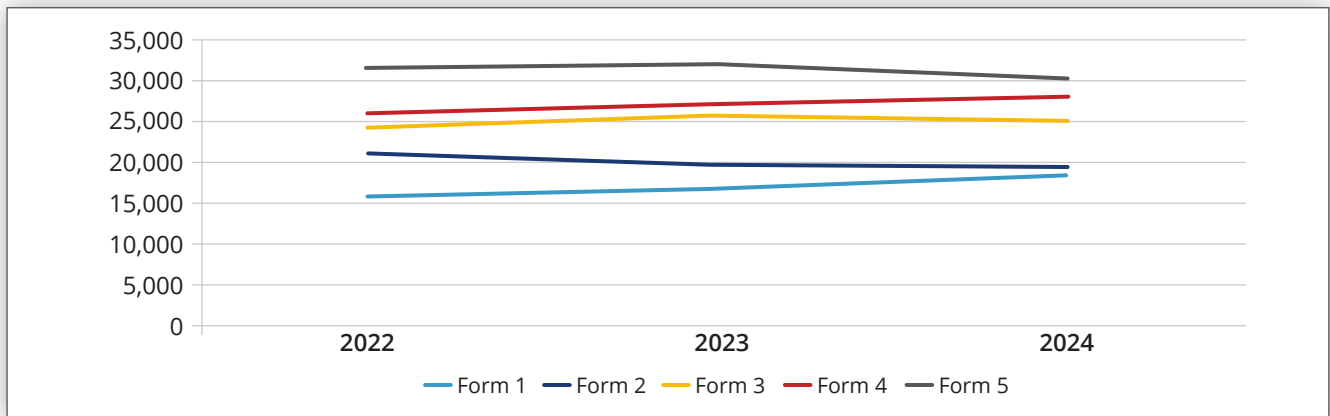
Table 4: Secondary Gross Enrolment Rates

5.3 Progression

In an effort to examine general education outcomes, tracking progression of learners is imperative for delivering evidence based solutions to the challenges and barriers to progression. This would assist program implementers in the understanding of challenges and barriers, and in turn inform on effective decisions to improve learners' experience.

Moreover, this will contribute to keeping learners in school. In the following analysis, a learner is classified as having progressed if they are present in the following academic year. Figure 15 shows how learners progressed in secondary education in the reporting period.

Figure 16: Progression by Grade



5.4 Completion

This section shows completion rates for entrants in the different levels of secondary education,

particularly at the end of phase. In this analysis completion is defined as attaining an award at either Form 3 or Form 5.

5.4.1 Completion at Form 3

Figure 17: Completion, Form 3

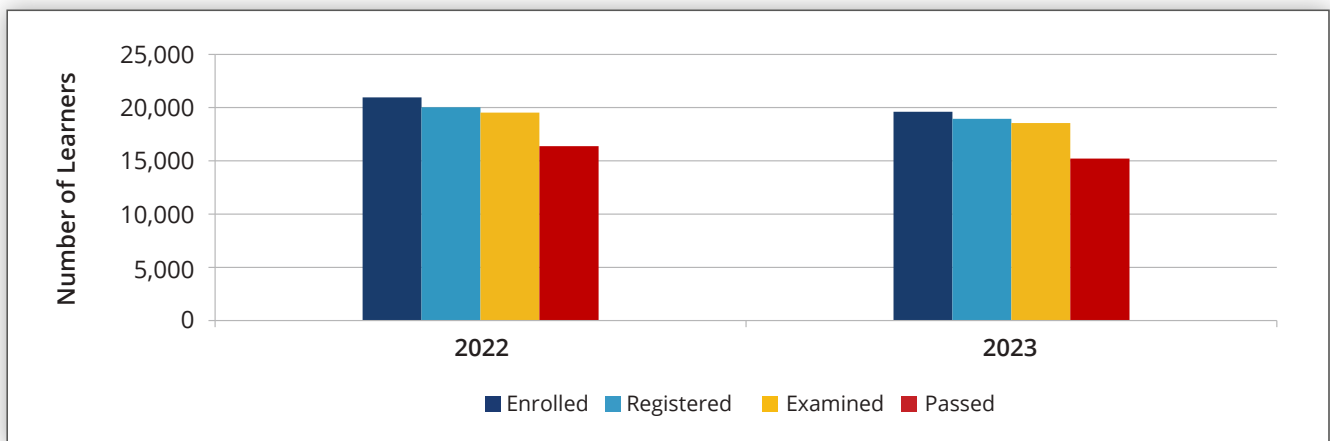


Figure 17 shows that for the last two completing years for the Junior Certificate (Form 3) there were always learners who were enrolled but did not sit for examinations.

It was concerning to note that;

- **920 and 669 learners in 2022 and 2023** respectively were enrolled but did not register for examinations
- **517 and 381 learners in 2022 and 2023**

respectively were registered for examinations but did not sit for the examinations

- a total of **1437 eligible learners in 2022** and **1050 eligible learners in 2023** did not sit for their Junior Certificate examinations.
- 3137 learners out of 19522 did not complete Form 5 in 2022.
- 3338 learners out of 18559 did not complete Form 5 in 2023.

5.4.2 Completion at Form 5

Figure 18: Completion, Form 5

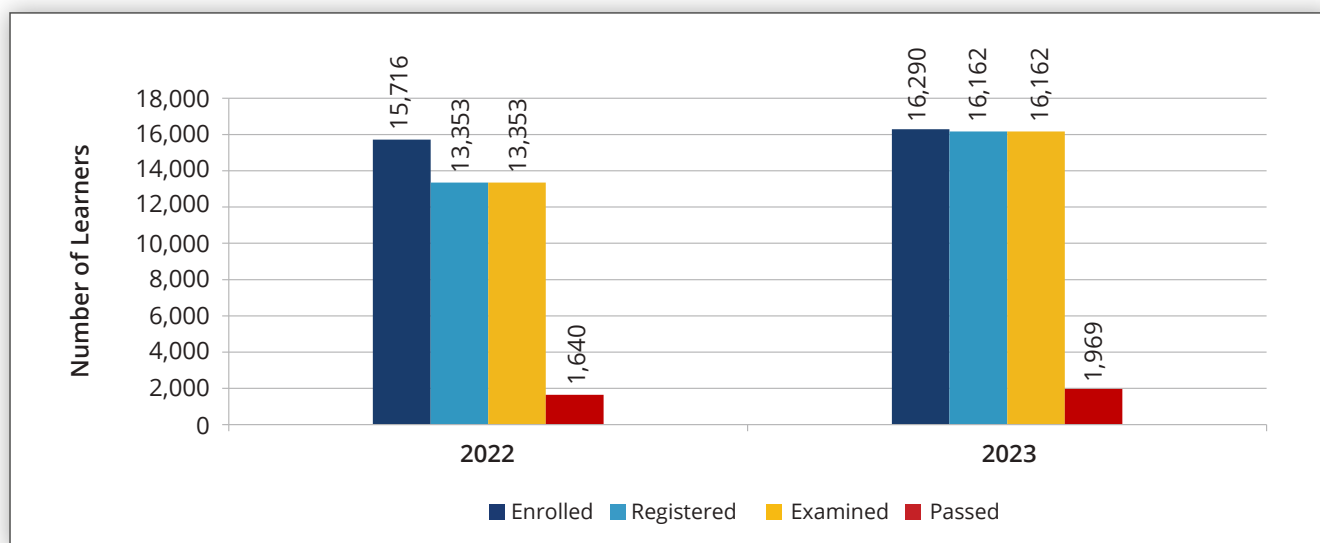


Figure 18 shows that all learners who registered for the Eswatini General Certificate of Secondary Education sat for their examinations during the reporting period. It should also be stated, though, that there were 2363 learners who enrolled in 2022 but did not sit for examinations while in 2023 there were only 128. Furthermore, it was observed that for the two years that is 2022 and 2023, the pass rate² was 12%. By extension, this implies that a significant number 88% of learners who have completed Form 5 with results that may take them into any formal university or college except through a re-sit or combination of two or more re-sits.

This is a cause for concern that needs to be investigated further, especially when considering chances of learners transitioning into further

education and training, and eventually the world of work.

5.5 Repetition

Repetition rates may be symptoms of problems in an educational system and may be related to the quality of instruction, contextual appropriateness, safety of schools, relevance and quality of the content offered. Hence the measurement of repetition rate should not be an end in itself but a means towards addressing internal inefficiencies in an educational system. In this report, therefore, the repetition rate is the proportion of learners from a cohort enrolled in a grade who studied the same grade the previous year. Table 5 shows repetition rates in Eswatini Secondary Schools in the reporting period.

Region	Years	
	2023	2024
Hhohho	8,7	11,3
Lubombo	11,6	14,4
Manzini	7,9	9,5
Shiselweni	12,5	14,5
National	10,2	12,4

Table 5: Secondary Repetition Rates, 2022-2024

²C in English or better + any 4 other subjects

One of the Secondary Education Policy Objectives is to reduce the national repetition rates to less than 5%.³ However, Table 5 shows that the national repetition rates stood at 10.2% in 2023 and 12.4% in 2024. Though there are no trends which could be established from this data, it was clear that the repetition rates increased on the average by 2% basis points in all the regions and nationally. Further analysis may need to be conducted to establish the reasons related to the increase, especially when the repetition rates were already double what the policy aims to reduce.

The data shows that completing classes, that is, Form 3 and Form 5 have the lowest repetition rates in all the regions, compared to all the other grade levels at Secondary school. For instance,

repetition rates were below 3% in Form 5 for the two years in all the regions. This is not surprising considering the fact that this is a school leaving grade level. It however, shows that, there are a few learners who enrol to either repeat or restart so that they may re-sit for school leaving examinations. For Form 3, the repetition rates were also less when compared to those of the other grades in all the regions. For example, in 2024, the Shiselweni Region recorded a very high repetition of 11% in Form 3. However, compared with repetition in the other grade levels in the same year, this was still very low with 16.4%, 17.5% and 18.3% in Form 1, 2 and 4 respectively. This trend applies to all the regions in Eswatini. Figure 20 shows the average repetition rates by grade level across the four regions.

Figure 19: Repetition Rates by Grade, 2024

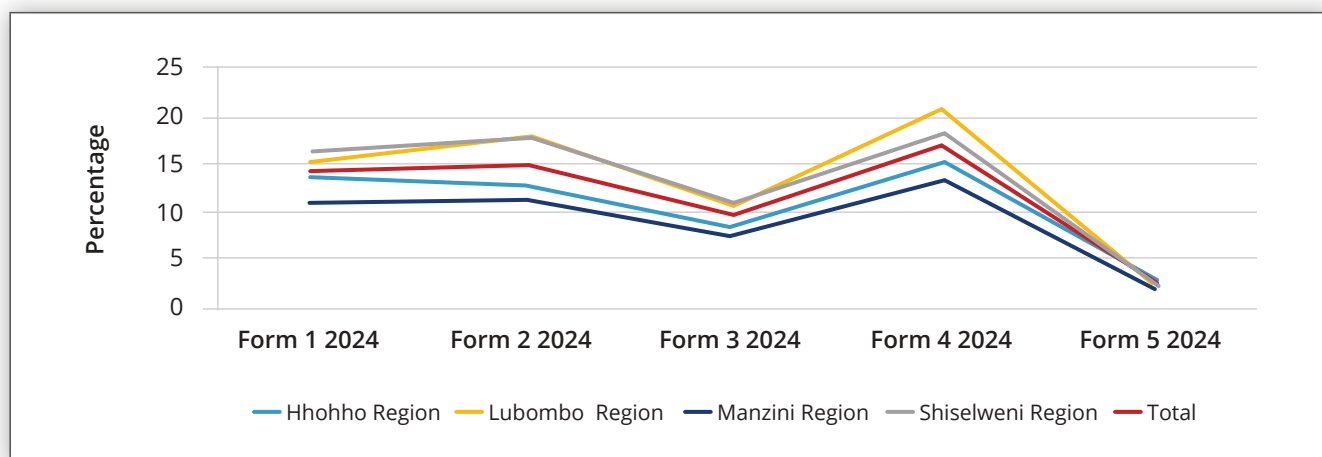


Figure 19 shows that repetition is highest in Form 2 and Form 4. This tells us that grades preceding the external high stakes examinations have the highest repetition in the country.

5.6 Drop-out

Annual Education Census and Examination data show that learners do complete secondary education. However, problems of learners dropping out of secondary school still persist. These

interfere with the educational system efficiency and individual's attainment of their educational goals. Figure 20 shows the numbers of learners who dropped out of secondary school between 2022 and 2024. It should be noted that the reported drop-out rates report on data for the previous year, for instance, the 2022 drop-out rates reported here represent those who dropped out in 2021. Table 6 shows the number of learners who dropped out of secondary school in the last three years.

³National Education and Training Sector Policy, 2018.

Figure 20: Secondary School Drop-out by Region

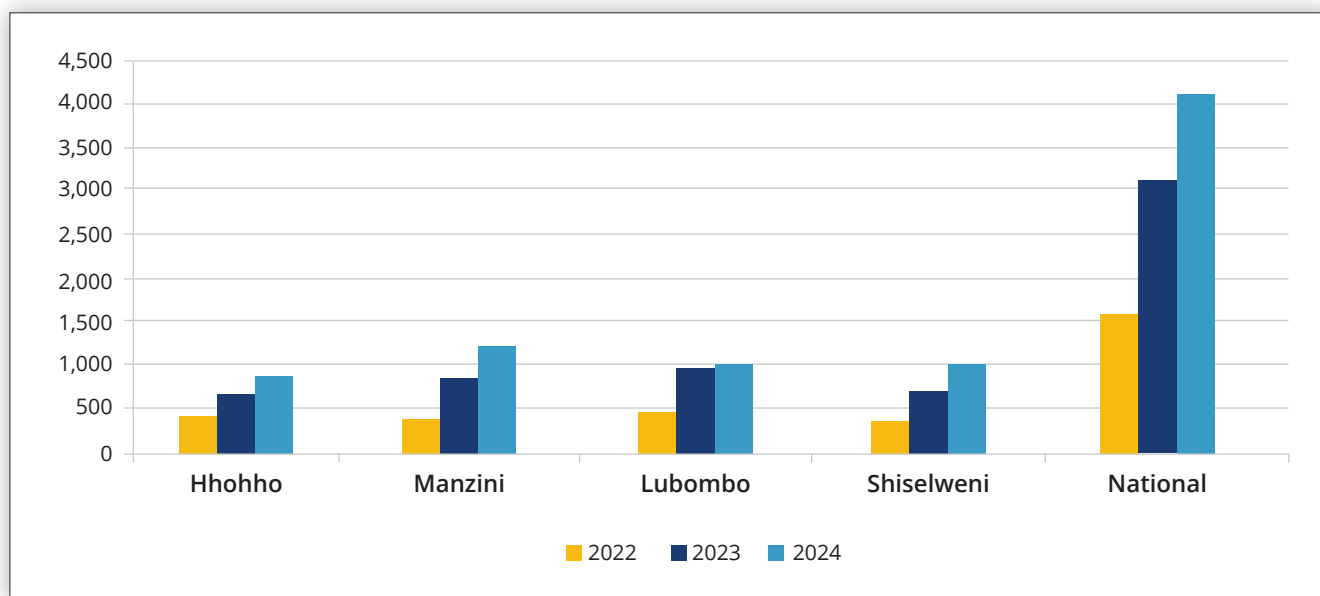


Figure 21 shows that the drop-out rates have been generally increasing with the Manzini Region recording the highest numbers, but it has been more pronounced in the Shiselweni region. For instance, in 2022, the Shiselweni recorded the lowest drop-

out rates which then increased sharply the two subsequent years. This is a cause for concern, particularly considering the rate of increase the reasons of which need to be ascertained through further research and analysis.

Reasons for Drop-out	Year			Total
	2022	2023	2024	
Absconded	869	1358	1648	3875
Repeated more than once	106	479	843	1428
Sickness	203	325	438	966
Disciplinary or expelled	112	294	376	782
School fees	56	217	259	532
Pregnancy	119	183	227	529
Death	40	75	115	230
Marriage	44	48	48	140
Substance Abuse	25	48	58	131
Disability	1	61	63	125
Abuse from home	11	35	48	94
Bullying	0	15	20	35
Disaster	1	2	3	6
TOTAL	1587	3140	4146	

Table 6: Secondary School Dropouts by Reasons

Table 6 shows that drop-out rates have been increasing in the last three years. The six most cited reasons which have significantly contributed to learners dropping out of secondary school

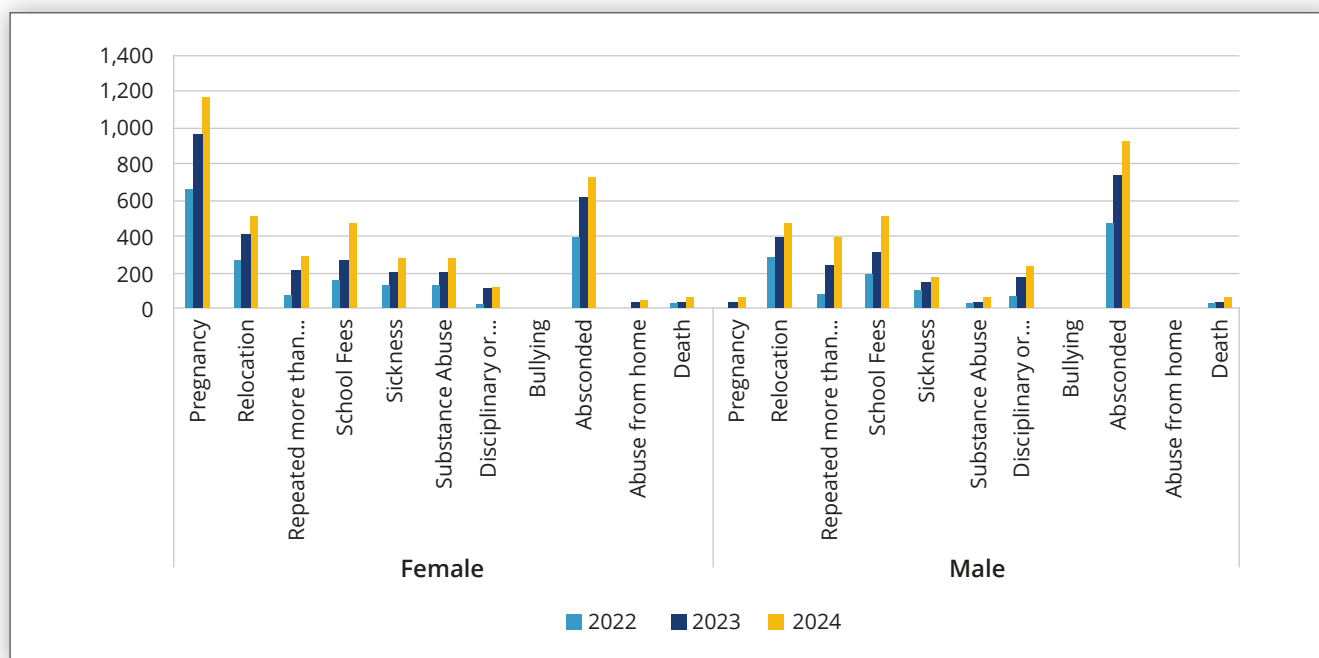
include absconding, repeating more than once, sickness, disciplinary or expulsion, school fees and pregnancy. However, concerning repetition, the previous section of this report has shown that the

rates for repetition are highest in Form 4, Form 2 and Form 1. Table 6 cites repetition as the second most cited reason for drop-out. Combining these suggests that a significant number of learners who drop out of secondary school do not possess Form 5 qualification and to some extent, even Form 3. This implies that there is a significant number of out of school youth without general education qualification which raises the question 'Where are they?'.
 Moreover, learners were found to drop out of school due to disciplinary or expulsion related reasons.

The nature of cases committed, related form of discipline meted out and expulsion procedures or processes followed needs to be ascertained. Furthermore, the issue of dropping out due to school related fees needs to be carefully analysed, especially in the era when the Government is providing Orphaned and Vulnerable grants for learners in secondary school. Moreover, the issue of dropping out of school due to pregnancy needs to be further explored, especially the reasons when there is the re-integration and other Early and Unintended Pregnancy related interventions.

5.7 Reasons for drop-out

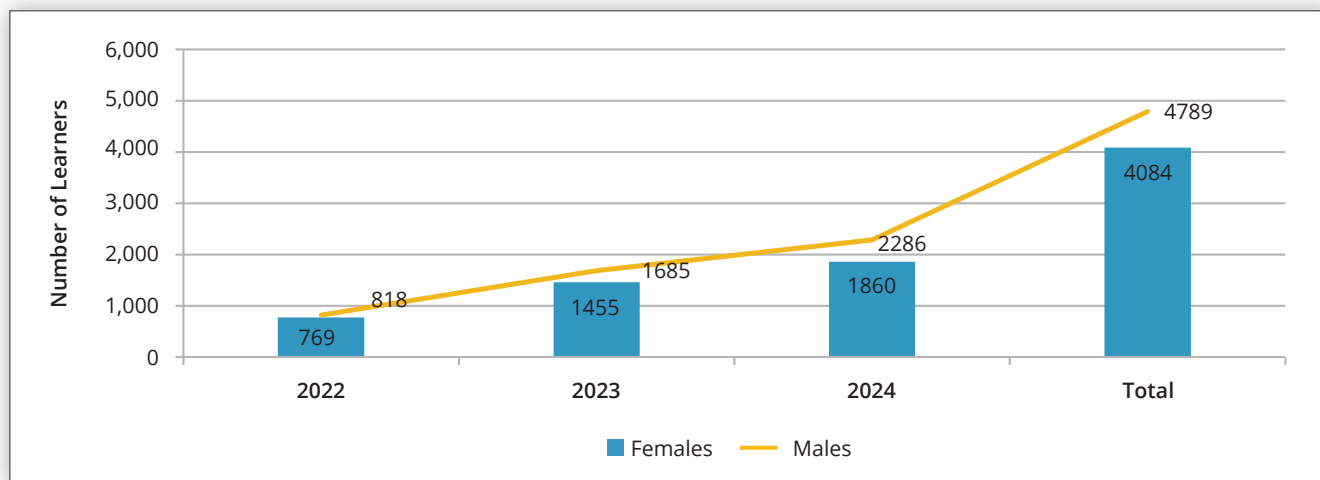
Figure 21: Reasons cited for drop-out, Sex



From Figure 21, it can be observed that there are more male children who drop out of secondary school than females, and the numbers have been increasing in the last three years. It should be noted that the only reason reported to have a higher number of females dropping out than males is pregnancy.

The data shows that for all the other reasons cited for drop-out, there are generally more male learners than females. Thus for this reporting period, there were more males who dropped out of secondary school than females as shown in Figure 21 below.

Figure 22: Dropouts by sex



It has been shown that pregnancy is the only reason that contributes to only girls dropping out of school but the others affect all. In spite of that, there are still more boys dropping out than girls, hence if pregnancy is factored out, the difference would

be much bigger. Not to underscore any efforts to reduce the effects of pregnancy on school drop-out but concerted efforts need to be made to mitigate the effects of absconding, repetition, school fees, sickness and disciplinary or expulsion.

5.8 Teacher Pupil Ratio

Figure 23: Teacher Pupil Ratio, Region

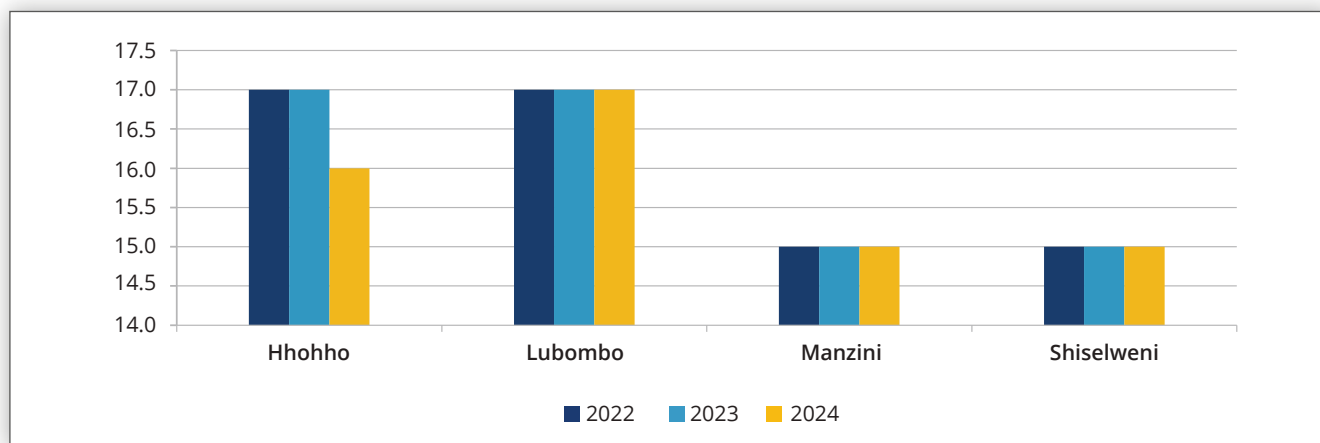
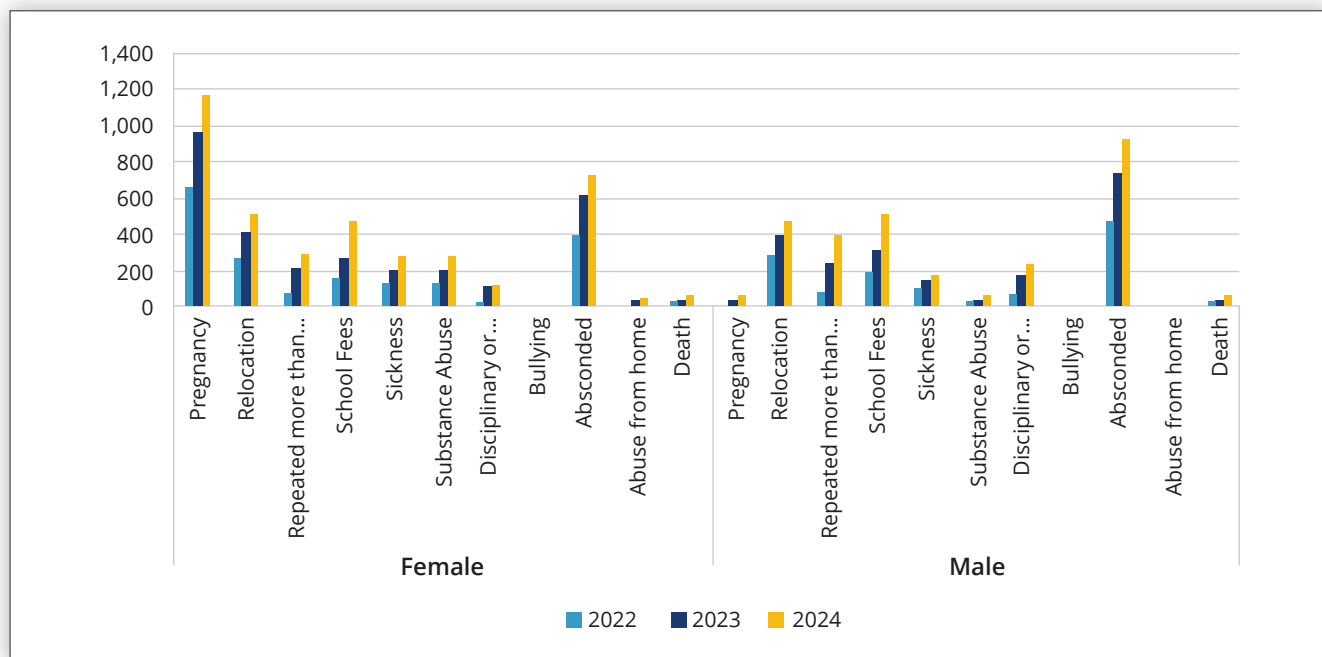


Figure 23, shows that the teacher pupil ratio has been constant in all the regions for the past three years except in the Hhohho Region where it has decreased in 2024. It should be noted that the MoET aspires to ensure the recurrent annual supply of appropriately qualified teachers by grade and subject in the medium term and to implement an average teacher learner ratio of 1:35 in secondary education. It is worth noting that the teacher learner ratio has been 1:15 in the Manzini and Shiselweni regions. It was 1:17 in the Lubombo and Hhohho regions, though it has further decreased to 1:16 in the Hhohho region in 2024.

The Manzini and Shiselweni regions have the same teacher learner ratio but the Manzini region has fewer repetition rates. In addition, the teacher learner ratio for the Hhohho region decreased to 1:16 in 2024. At the same time, the drop-out rate was reported as the lowest in this region. It can thus be postulated that there were more teachers who were employed in the Hhohho region between 2023 and 2024 (reduced teacher learner ratio). This could be attributed to the lower drop-out ratio reported for this region which however may not be said for the Shiselweni region.

Figure 24: Reasons for drop out 2022-2024



5.9 Pupil Teacher Ratio

Figure 25: Teacher Pupil Ratio, Region

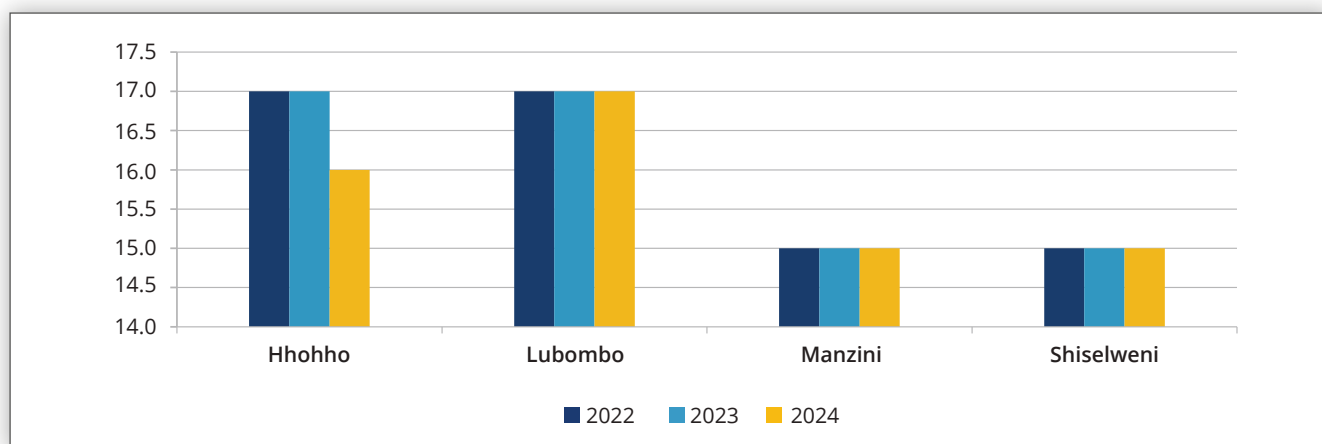


Figure 25, shows that the teacher pupil ratio has been constant in all the regions for the past three

years except in the Hhohho Region where it has decreased in 2024.

CHAPTER 6

6.0 Critical Enabling Infrastructure

6.1 Electricity

Figure 26: Electricity

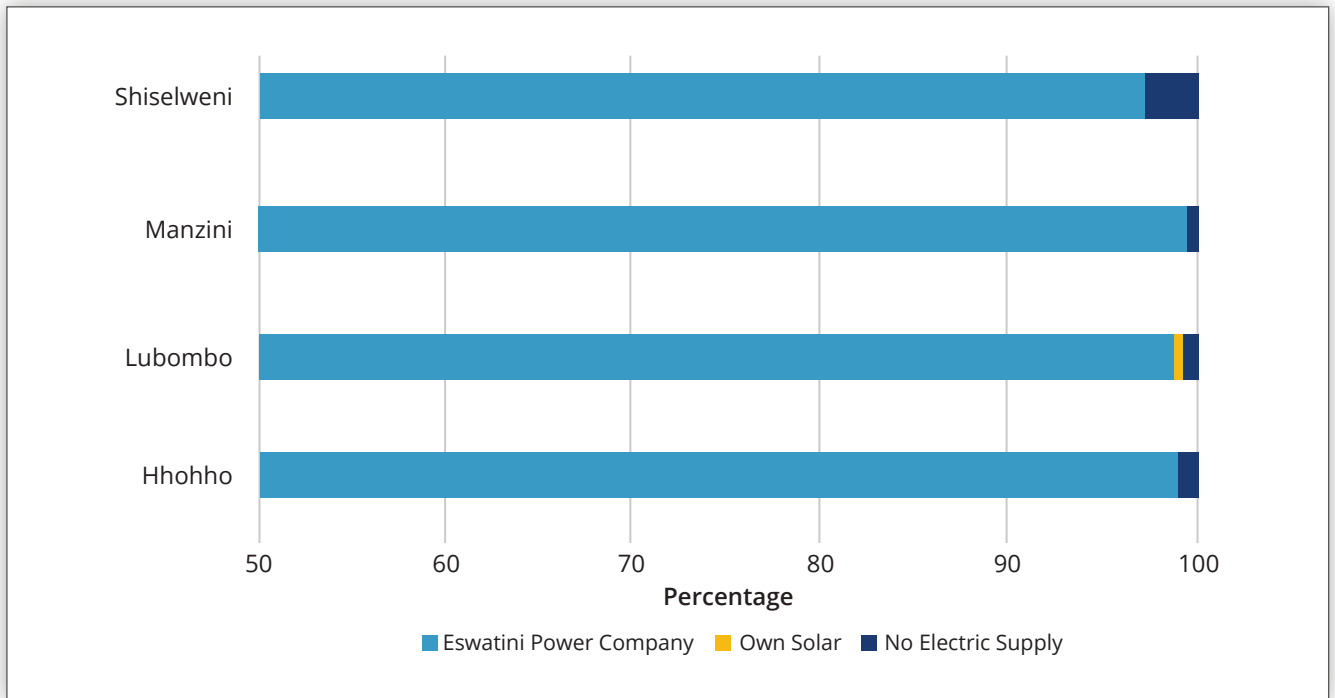
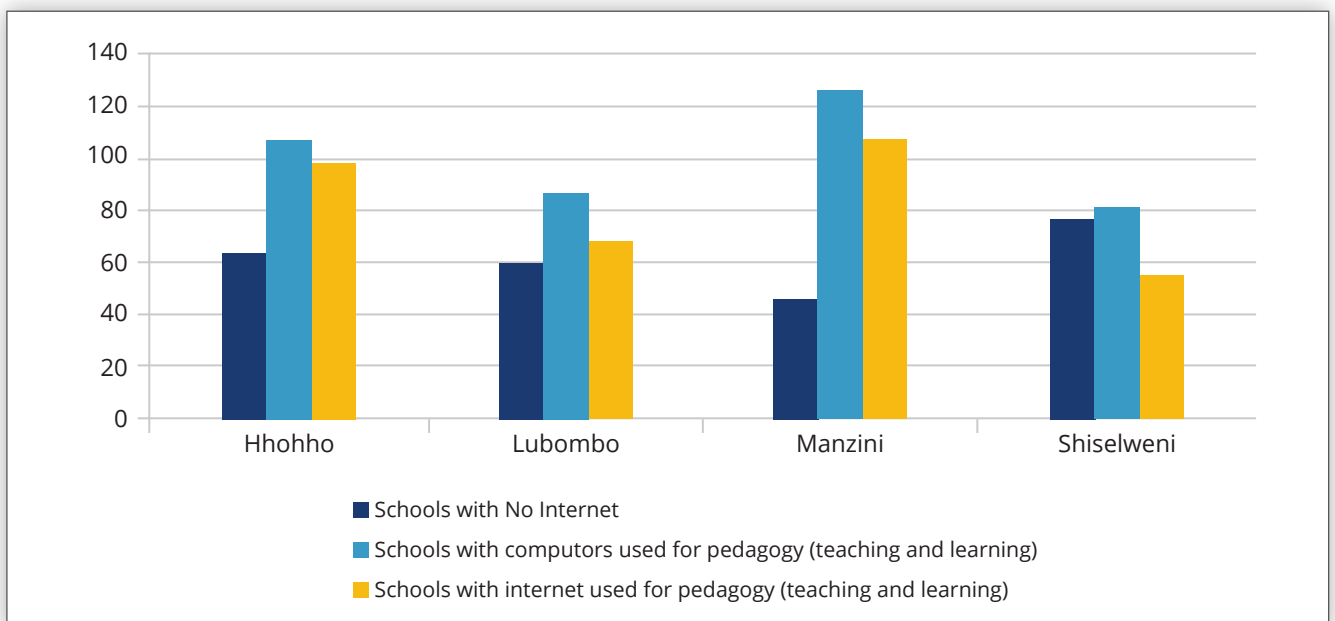


Figure 27: Computers for Pedagogical Purposes



6.2 Internet for Pedagogical Purposes

Figure 28: Internet for Pedagogical Purposes

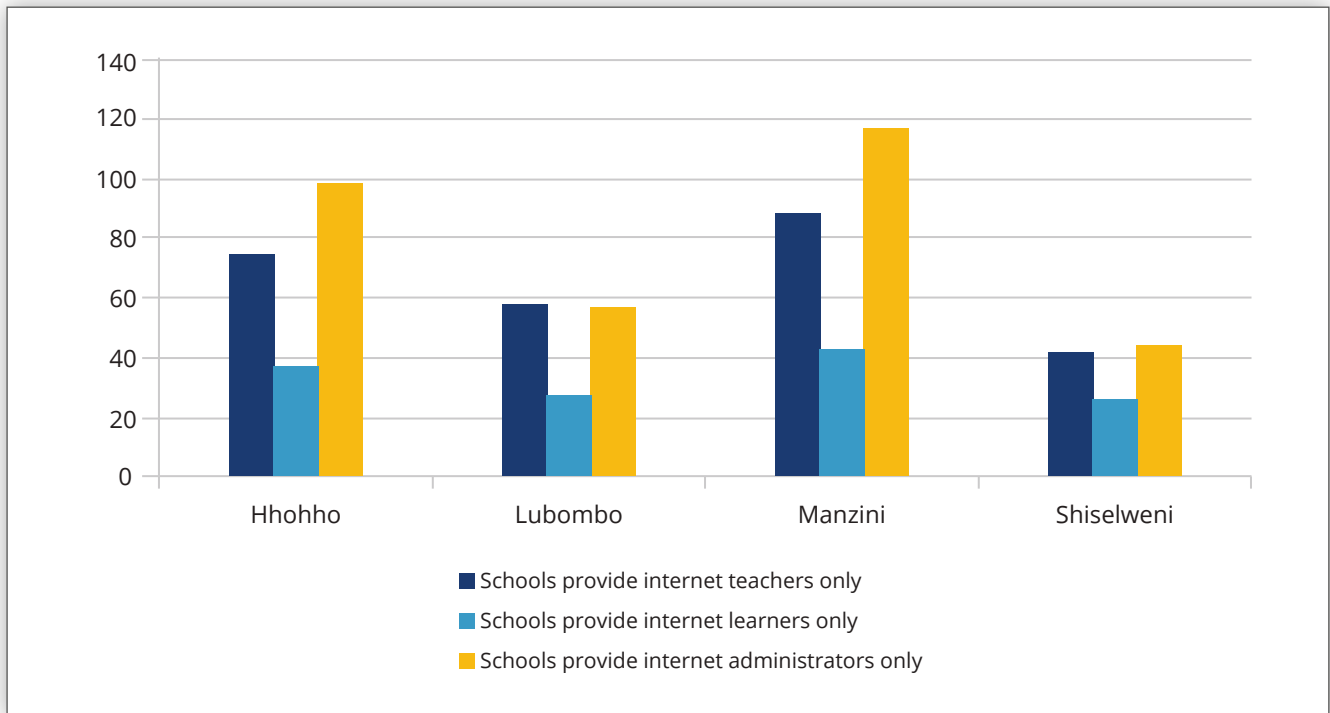


Figure 29: Adapted infrastructure for students with disabilities

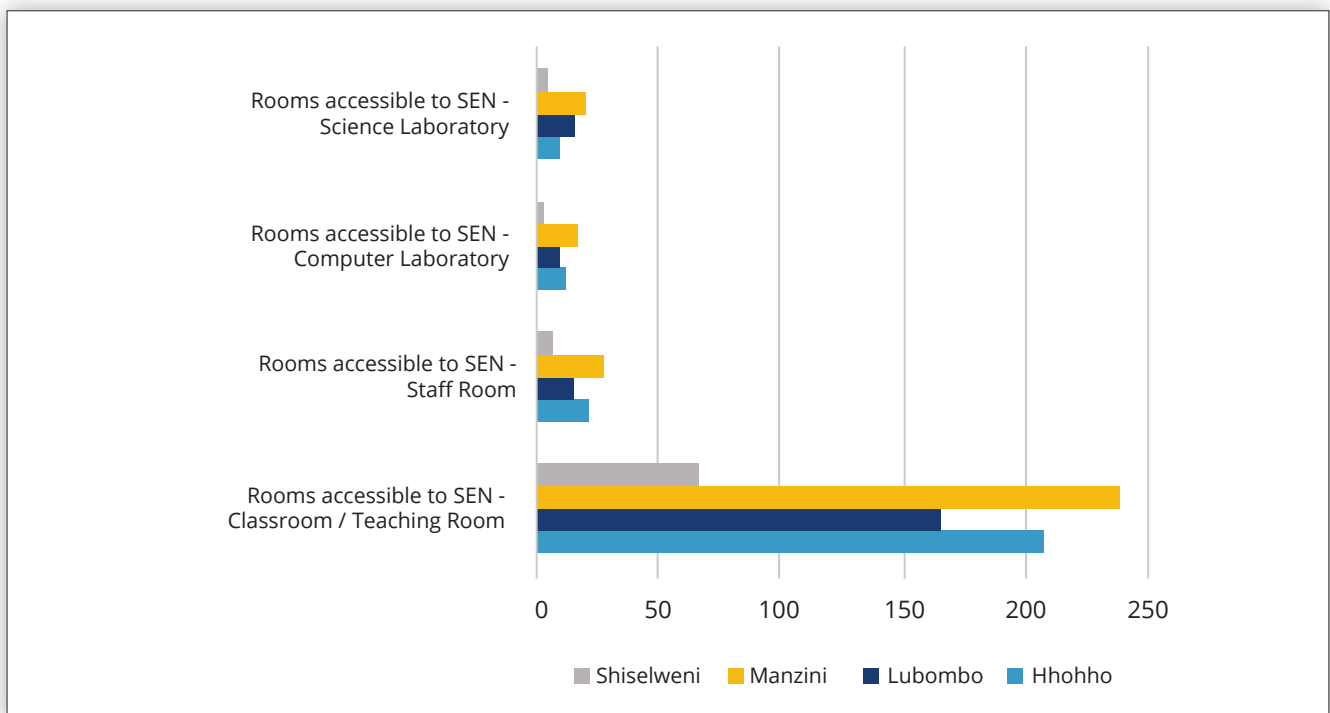


Figure 30: Basic Drinking Water

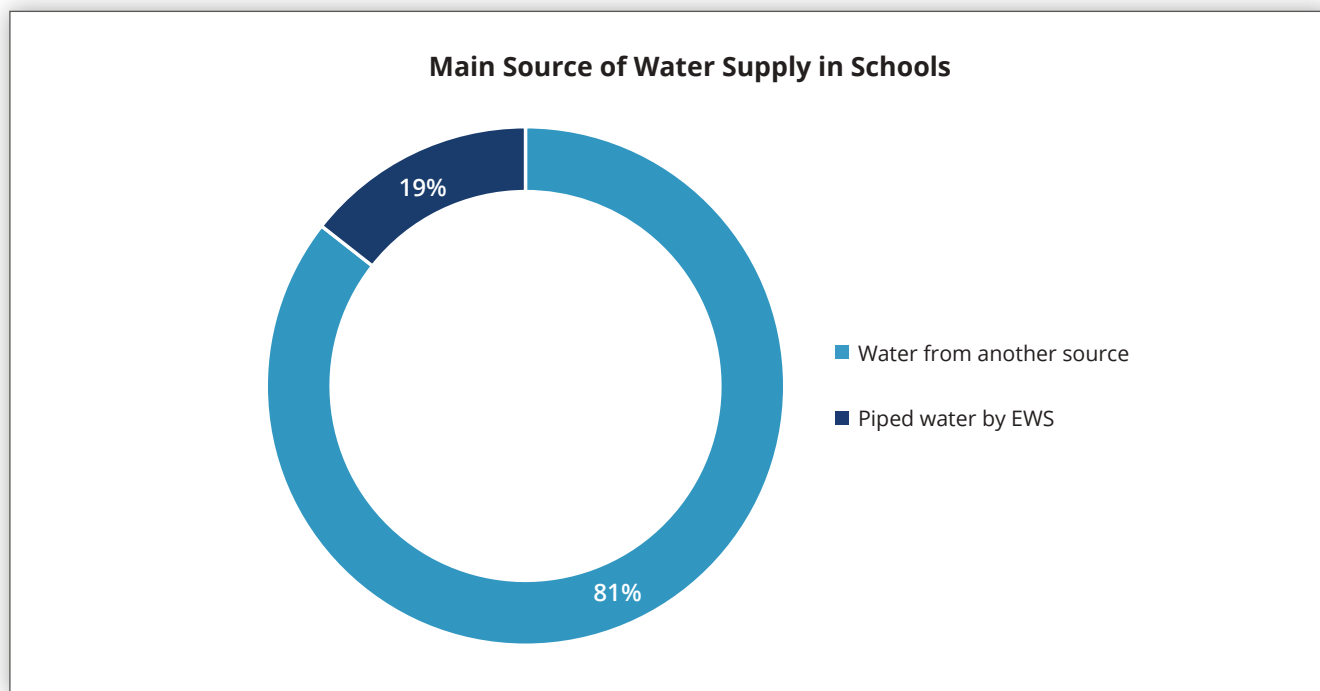


Figure 31: Single Sex Basic Sanitation Facilities

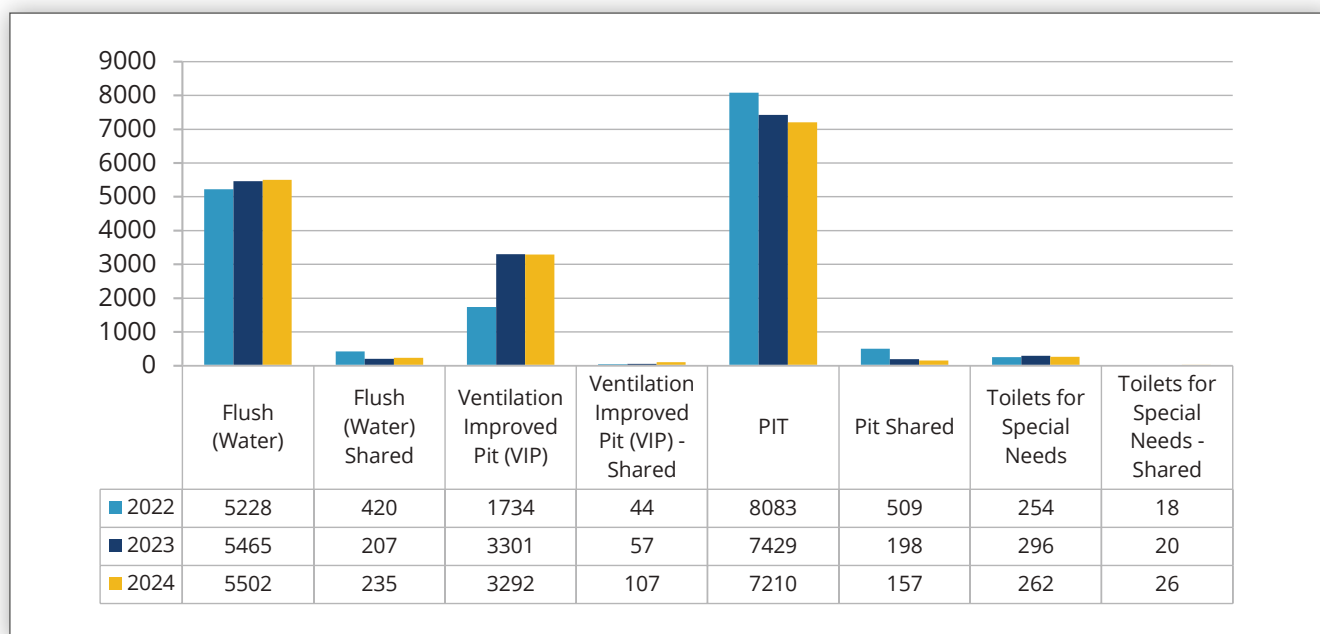


Figure 32: Toilets for Learners

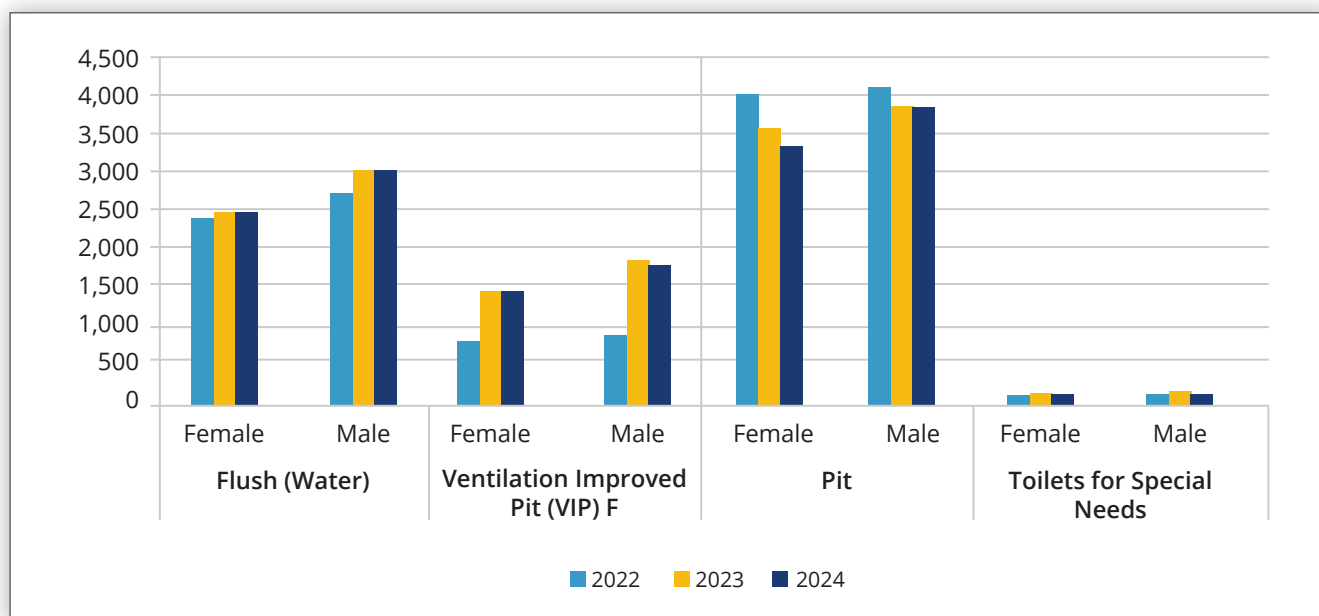


Figure 32 shows the number of toilet stance by toilet type and sex. The data indicates that most schools have more pit latrines than flush toilets with more toilets for boys than girls. There are schools with toilets for learners with special needs even though the number is far below the expected

level of at least 2 toilets for learners with special needs. It is worth mentioning that the number of toilets (toilet holes) in schools is far below what is stated in the CSTL policy which stipulates a ratio of 1 toilet hole to 20 girls and 1 toilet holes to 25 boys.

6.3 Basic Handwashing Facilities

	Hand Washing facilities as per WASH standards			
	Education Level	Running Water	Soap	Toilet Paper
Hhohho	Primary Schools	154	102	73
	Secondary Schools	63	38	36
Lubombo	Primary Schools	111	74	54
	Secondary Schools	48	30	23
Manzini	Primary Schools	155	101	75
	Secondary Schools	70	42	40
Shiselweni	Primary Schools	127	79	35
	Secondary Schools	54	22	12
National	Primary Schools	547	356	237
	Secondary Schools	235	132	111

Table 7: Basic Hand Washing Facilities

CHAPTER 7

7.0 Public Spending on Education

7.1 Adequacy of Education Financing

Public Expenditure to Education		2022/2023	2023/2024
	RECURRENT	4,402,541,494	4,673,535,240
	CAPEX	83,635,681	85,095,083
	TOTAL	4,486,177,175	4,758,630,323
Total Govt Expenditure	RECURRENT	16,355,949,342	18,542,019,545
	CAPEX	4,148,792,980	4,307,399,419
	TOTAL	20,504,742,322	22,849,418,964
Proportion of Education Expenditure to Total Govt Expenditure		21.9%	20.8%

Table 8: Adequacy of Public Education Spending

According to the World Bank (2023), adequacy of education financing refers to whether a country is spending enough to meet its education goals. The two most common indicators used to proxy for the adequacy of a country's (or governments) funding for education are: (i) education spending as a share of GDP; and (ii) education spending as a share of total government expenditure. The most commonly cited international benchmarks of education financing adequacy based on those

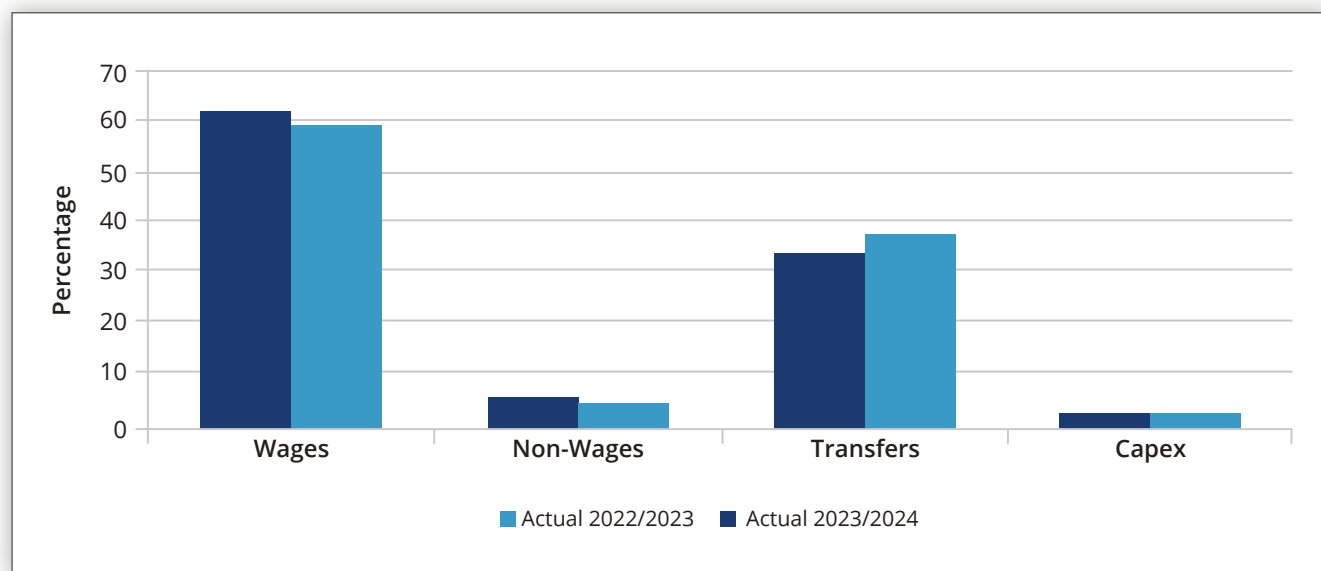
indicators include those agreed in 2015 as part of the Education 2030 Incheon Declaration, which urges countries to allocate at least 4-6 percent of GDP and/or at least 15-20 percent of public expenditure to education, while recognizing the diversity of country contexts. In this case, as shown in the table above, the proportion of education expenditure to total government expenditure was 21.9% and 20.8%, in 2022/23 and 2023/24, respectively.

7.2 Public expenditure on education by type

	ACTUAL 2022/2023	ACTUAL 2023/2024	ACTUAL 2022/2023	ACTUAL 2023/2024
RECURRENT	4,402,541,494	4,673,535,240	98%	98%
WAGES	2,717,330,242	2,789,475,640	62%	60%
NON WAGES	217,524,424	182,105,992	5%	4%
TRANSFERS	1,467,686,828	1,701,953,609	33%	36%
CAPEX	83,635,681	85,095,083	2%	2%
TOTAL	4,486,177,175	4,758,630,323		

Table 9: Public Expenditure on Education by Type

Figure 33: Expenditure by type



The figures above shows that wages accounted for 62% and 60% in 2022/23 and 23/24, respectively. However, it is worth noting that transfers to training institutions mostly cater for wages (in some cases do not fully cover wages). Consequently, the proportion of public expenditure on education on wages accounted for 95% and 96% in 2022/23 and

23/24, respectively. Goods & services, which are central for implementing program activities only accounted for 5% and 4%, respectively in 22/23 and 23/24. Capital expenditure only accounted for about 2% of the total public expenditure on education

7.3 Public expenditure on education by level/sub sector

RECURRENT	ACTUAL 22/23	ACTUAL 23/24	ACTUAL 22/23	ACTUAL 23/24
ECCDE	5,753,985	4,200,667	0.1%	0.1%
PRIMARY	1,528,634,272	1,672,876,115	35%	36%
SECONDARY	1,438,433,544	1,458,092,890	33%	31%
TERTIARY	1,105,154,913	1,223,190,681	25%	26%
TVET	49,867,047	54,217,197	1%	1%
OTHER	274,697,733	260,957,690	6%	6%
TOTAL	4,402,541,494	4,673,535,240		

Table 10: Public Education Expenditure by sub-sector

The primary sub-sector got the biggest share followed by secondary, followed by tertiary. ECCDE and TVET got the least of the resources to the

education sector, at 0.1% and 1%, respectively over the two years.

CHAPTER 8

7.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

8.1 Conclusion

8.1.1 ECCDE

- Though largely in the hands of local communities and the private sector, the Government of Eswatini has incorporated one level of ECCDE, that is, Grade zero under the Foundation Phase of Primary Education.
- The Government of Eswatini supports the development of ECCDE learning standards, distribution of teaching and learning materials and employment of teachers.
- There were more learners at first grade who reported to have attended some form of ECCDE in rural areas than urban areas. However, there were more children between 36 to 59 months who attended ECCDE in urban areas than rural areas.

8.1.2 Primary

- Enrolment is relatively high for boys throughout all the grades compared to their girls' counterparts and this is in line with the population projected dynamic.
- Gross enrolment rates for both sexes at this level has been on an increasing trajectory over the last three years
- Attendance rates at primary level stands at 95%.
- Dropouts have declined in 2024 compared to the previous year, 7526, which was the highest compared to 2022, 4830, and 2024, 3906.
- Primary schools are still illegally charging top up fees much against the Free Primary Education Act provision for a legal way of doing so.
- Repetition rates stand at 6.9% much against the aspirations of National Education Sector Policy of less than 5%.

- There are many and varied reasons why learner's dropout of school, repeated more than once is the most cited reason followed by sickness, death, pregnancy, disability, bullying and substance abuse.

8.1.3 Secondary

- Gross enrolment rates at secondary school stood at 96.3 for lower secondary and 82.8 for upper secondary in 2024
- There are learners who enrol for end of phase classes but do not register for examinations for both Form 3 and Form 5. This could be a matter of not registering for examinations on time, not affording the examination fees at all or some other reasons that still need to be established.
- Pass rates in Form 3 were very high between 2022 and 2023 with 82% and 84% respectively. This is a trend that has been observed over the years. However, it is concerning that a significant number of these learners then repeat Form 4 and a small number gets to Form 5.
- Only 12% of those who get to Form 5 are able to pass with a C or better in English Language together with at least 4 other subjects. It can thus be postulated that a significant number of the out of school youth have not completed Form 5 hence may not be in a position to transition to formal tertiary education and training.
- Nationally repetition rates remained above 10%. Higher repetition rates were noted at Forms 1, 2 and 4 for all the regions, though the Shiselweni and Lubombo regions reported the highest rates.
- Despite the intervention measures put in place, dropping out of school is still a concern. The six most cited reasons for secondary school dropout include absconding, repeating more than

once, sickness, disciplinary or expulsion, school fees and pregnancy.

- Pupil teacher ratios in secondary education are low, even lower than aspirations of the National Education and Training Sector Policy of 2018.

8.2 Recommendations

8.2.1 Early Childhood Education

- There is need to accelerate efforts to fully integrate Grade 0 into the Free Primary Education Programme.
- Accelerate efforts to recruit Grade 0 teachers to cover all primary schools.
- There is need for continuously conduct sensitization campaigns on the importance of investment in early childhood particularly early reading.

8.2.2 Primary

- There is need to strengthen initiatives to keep children in school. This will include;
 - ✓ operationalisation of the National Education Sector Policy aspirations on repetition
 - ✓ enforcing regulations on top-up fees
 - ✓ improving food distribution

- There is need to strengthen the school health programme to minimise dropout due to sickness.

8.2.3 Secondary

- There is a need to strengthen psycho-social support initiatives so as to reduce the incidence of absconding which eventually leads to dropping out of school.
- Aspirations of the National Education Sector Policy on repetition need to be operationalised.
- Secondary school fees need to be regulated to ensure equitable access and retention.
- There is need to actively address the issues related to alternative further education and training including support for technical and vocational education, skills training including non-formal skills training to cater for the more than 90% of learners who do not progress after Form 5.
- Efforts should be made to establish the reasons for very high pass rates at Grade 7 and Form 3 and higher repetition rates in Form 1, Form 4 and Form 2.

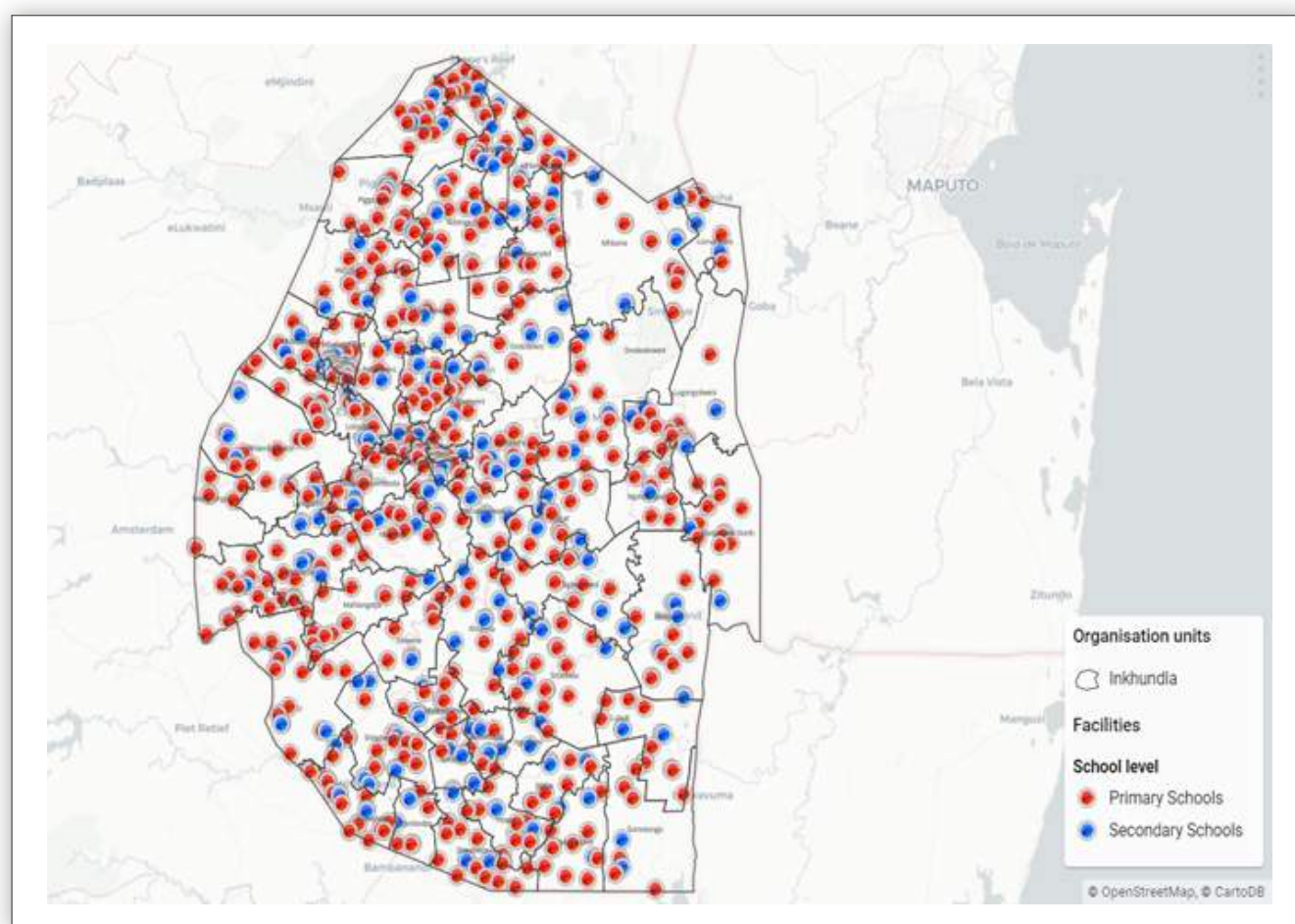
ANNEXURE: Multi Year Action Plan 2022/25 goals, indicators and progress

Key Indicators	2022	2023
GOAL 1: Educational quality and student learning improved at all levels		
Participation rate among children aged 3–4 year	9.3 percent	-
Participation rate among children aged 5 years	67.1 percent	-
Percentage of teachers and head teachers trained in line with the needs of a competency-based curriculum		
GOAL 2 : Students retained in school until completion		
Primary: Enrolment Rate	116.4 percent	116.8 percent
Completion Rate	103.5 percent	97.8 percent
Number of learners dropped out	4830	7526
Lower Secondary: Enrolment Rate		
Completion Rate	98.4 percent	98.4 percent
Number of learners dropped out	74 percent	70 percent
Number of learners dropped out	2148	3517
Senior Secondary: Enrolment Rate		
Completion rate	76.7 percent	80.2 percent
Number of learners dropped out	51.8 percent	62.2 percent
Number of learners dropped out	915	1611
Percentage of head teachers trained on key CSTM issues	No data	
Goal 3: Entry and exit points of the education system strengthened		
Transition rate from primary to junior secondary	97 percent	92 percent
Primary repetition rate	6.6 percent	6.8 percent
Goal 4: Teacher development and management enhanced		
Number of head teachers and HoDs trained on school leadership and management	No data	
Percentage of teachers with appropriate qualification (Primary)	7149 teachers	
Percentage of teachers with appropriate qualification (Secondary)	5661 teachers	
Percentage of teachers capacitated for remote teaching and learning	No data	
Goal 5: Adequate and equitable education financing and spending enhanced		

Key Indicators	2022	2023
Goal 6: Access Level Improved		
Percentage of primary schools equipped with laboratories/workshops and equipment for practical subjects		162 schools
Percentage of primary schools equipped with walkways for physically challenged learners	88 schools	134 schools
Percentage of primary schools adhering to CSTL standards	No data	
Percentage of secondary schools adhering to SCCS standards	No data	
Percentage of secondary schools equipped with walkways for physically challenged learners	53 schools	81 schools
Goal 7: Systems resilience strengthened (after COVID 19) and prepared for future crisis prevention		
Percentage of primary schools connected to the internet	-	39.9
Percentage of secondary schools connected to the internet	-	86.9

Table 11: Multi Year Action Plan 2022/25 Goals, Indicators and Progress

Annexure: Annual Education Census (AEC) tables 2022-2024



Map 1: Distribution of Primary and Secondary Schools in eSwatini

Figure 34: National School Type, 2024

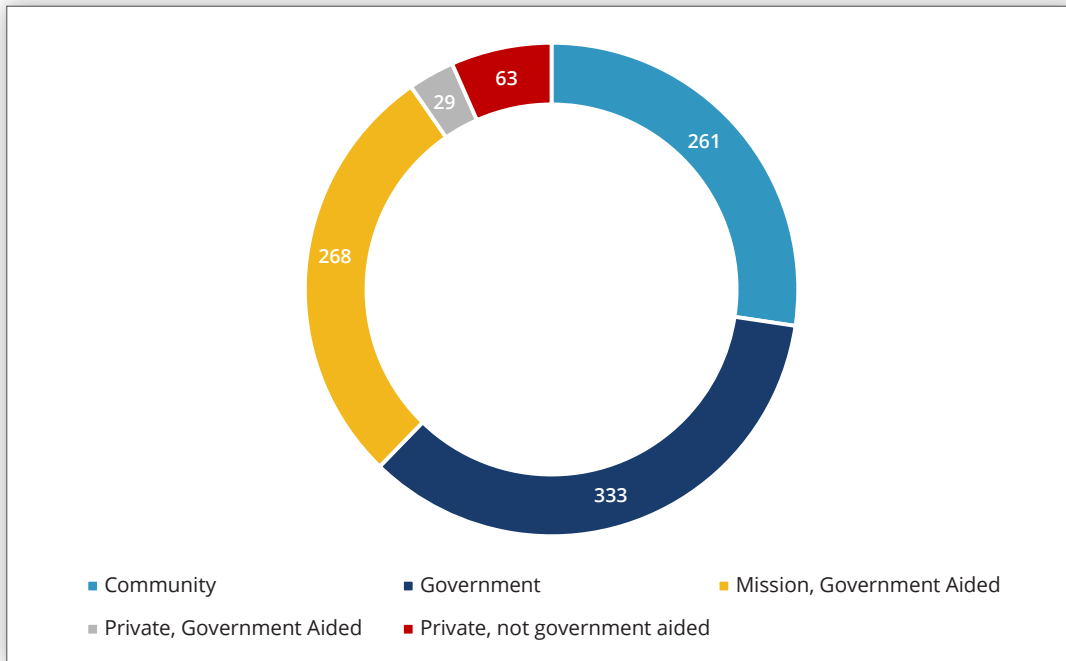
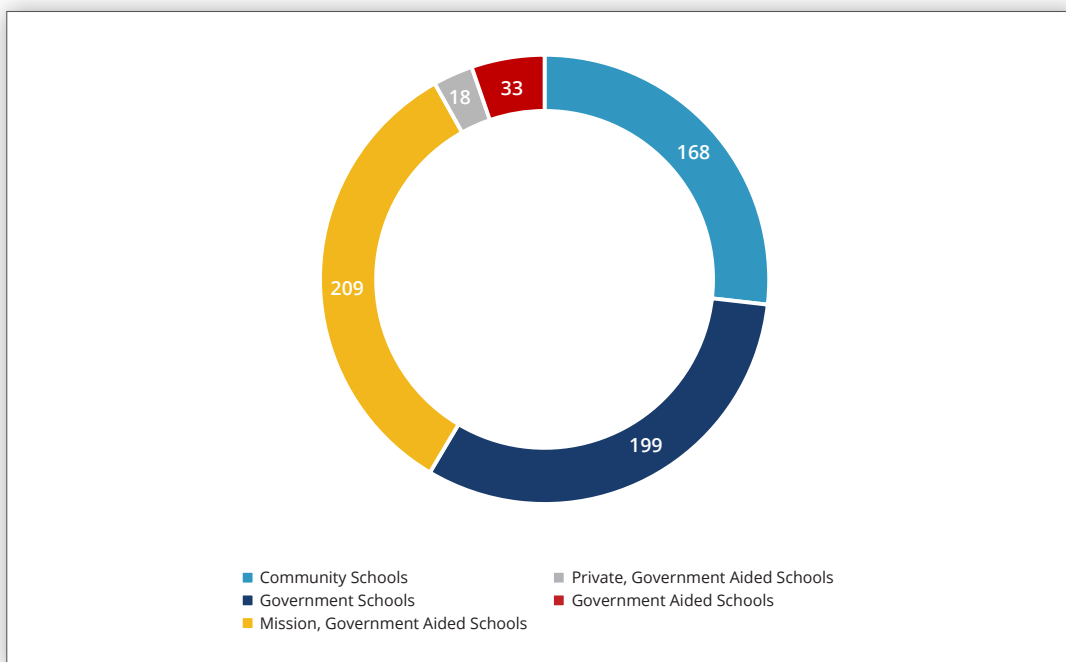


Table 12: Number of Schools by Institution Type/Region

Regions	Public Primary Schools	Private Primary Schools	Public Secondary Schools	Private Secondary Schools
Hhohho	153	11	69	4
Lubombo	122	11	63	4
Manzini	151	24	70	23
Shiselweni	150	5	67	1

Figure 35: Primary Schools by Institution Type



Primary Enrolment

The tables below show data from the Annual Education Census (AEC 2022 to 2024) on primary enrolments by region, grade and sex.

	2022			2023			2024		
	Female	Male	Sub-Total	Female	Male	Sub-Total	Female	Male	Sub-Total
National	107503	115384	222887	107877	115674	223551	108893	116673	225566
Hhohho	27513	29705	57218	27915	30143	58058	28135	30278	58413
Lubombo	23575	25532	49107	23784	25341	49125	24058	26200	50258
Manzini	32974	34744	67718	32750	34936	67686	33257	35228	68485
Shiselweni	23441	25403	48844	23428	25254	48682	23443	24967	48410

Table 13: Primary enrolment by sex, region for 2022 to 2024

Year	Female	Male	Total
2022	107503	115384	222887
2023	107877	115674	223551
2024	108893	116673	225566

Table 14: Primary enrolment by sex, 2022-2024

Grade	2022	2023	2024
Grade 1	30853	32144	32729
Grade 2	28010	30624	31575
Grade 3	30203	29416	31829
Grade 4	35513	32204	30581
Grade 5	35783	38039	33680
Grade 6	33919	34436	36105
Grade 7	28606	26688	29067

Table 15: Primary enrolment by grade, 2022-2024

Grade	Sex	2022					2023					2024					
		Hhohho	Lubombo	Manzini	Shiselweni	Hhohho	Lubombo	Manzini	Shiselweni	Hhohho	Lubombo	Manzini	Shiselweni	Hhohho	Lubombo	Manzini	Shiselweni
Grade 1	Female	3953	3204	4658	3333	4112	3372	4813	3364	4232	3435	4871	3336	4232	3435	4871	3336
	Male	4179	3350	4710	3466	4195	3609	5124	3555	4371	3723	5184	3577	4371	3723	5184	3577
Grade 2	Female	3505	2966	4342	2938	3905	3273	4683	3209	4060	3308	4799	3360	4060	3308	4799	3360
	Male	3636	3064	4503	3056	4249	3285	4728	3292	4235	3537	4959	3317	4235	3537	4959	3317
Grade 3	Female	3630	3133	4548	3211	3692	3063	4441	3181	4030	3365	4808	3263	4030	3365	4808	3263
	Male	3881	3487	4797	3516	3801	3197	4728	3313	4375	3521	4965	3503	4375	3521	4965	3503
Grade 4	Female	4100	3672	5020	3708	3767	3362	4702	3309	3616	3159	4626	3312	3616	3159	4626	3312
	Male	4783	4399	5611	4220	4162	3803	5326	3773	3963	3415	4943	3545	3963	3415	4943	3545
Grade 5	Female	4209	3757	5166	3603	4406	4021	5307	4012	3831	3597	4876	3469	3831	3597	4876	3469
	Male	4751	4295	5761	4241	5120	4615	5998	4560	4308	4152	5460	3986	4308	4152	5460	3986
Grade 6	Female	4276	3592	4842	3584	4309	3706	4980	3497	4307	3748	5273	3830	4307	3748	5273	3830
	Male	4584	3898	5215	3928	4727	4092	5202	3923	4847	4359	5603	4133	4847	4359	5603	4133
Grade 7	Female	3840	3251	4398	3064	3724	2987	3824	2856	4059	3437	4004	2873	4059	3437	4004	2873
	Male	3891	3039	4147	2976	3889	2740	3830	2838	4179	3502	4114	2906	4179	3502	4114	2906

Table 16: Primary enrolment by sex, grade and region, 2022-2024

Repetition

The tables below show data from the AEC (2022-2024) on the number of repeaters by region, sex and grade. The information about repeaters is previous years' data for the reporting period.

	2022	2023	2024
National	15771	15165	14764
Hhohho	2753	2435	2342
Lubombo	3461	2982	2640
Manzini	4169	4922	4006
Shiselweni	5388	4826	5776

Table 17: Number of repeaters by regions, 2022-2024

	2022		2023		2024	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Hhohho	1131	1622	957	1478	954	1388
Lubombo	1488	1973	1209	1773	1049	1591
Manzini	1760	2409	1956	2966	1626	2380
Shiselweni	2275	3113	2027	2799	2287	3489
National	6654	9117	6149	9016	5916	8848

Table 18: Number of Primary learners repeating by sex, 2022-2024

	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7
	2022						
Hhohho	102	129	232	545	650	748	347
Lubombo	199	284	440	712	792	800	234
Manzini	249	278	444	809	1097	1073	219
Shiselweni	322	352	659	1129	1251	1420	255
National	872	1043	1775	3195	3790	4041	1055
	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7
2023							
Hhohho	184	96	214	374	561	686	320
Lubombo	236	215	315	496	661	700	359
Manzini	383	287	549	889	1221	1262	331
Shiselweni	402	264	578	926	1205	1175	276
National	1205	862	1656	2685	3648	3823	1286
	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7
2024							
Hhohho	168	154	266	379	537	431	407
Lubombo	316	278	332	436	623	348	307
Manzini	294	307	474	720	920	958	333
Shiselweni	605	432	704	1018	1298	1330	389
National	1383	1171	1776	2553	3378	3067	1436

Table 19: Number of Primary repeaters by grade and region, 2022-2024

Drop Outs

The tables below show data from the AEC (2022-2024) on the number of drop-outs/ learners who have left school by region, sex and grade. The information about drop-outs is previous years' data for the reporting period.

Region	Learner Dropout		
	2022	2023	2024
Hhohho	1404	1934	2469
Lubombo	891	1485	1920
Manzini	1573	2504	3104
Shiselweni	962	1603	2161

Table 20: Number of Learner Drop-out by region, 2022-2024

Year	Hhohho		Manzini		Lubombo		Shiselweni	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
2022	664	740	432	459	710	863	463	499
2023	919	1015	759	726	1139	1365	711	892
2024	1179	1290	945	975	1451	1653	983	1178

Table 21: Number of learner drop-outs by sex and region, 2022-2024

Grade	2022		2023		2024	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Grade 1	269	256	403	407	533	530
Grade 2	295	315	450	472	569	610
Grade 3	342	360	509	521	650	669
Grade 4	344	390	551	624	701	767
Grade 5	368	421	586	678	780	906
Grade 6	338	462	589	791	805	1032
Grade 7	313	357	440	505	558	628

Table 22: Number of Learner Drop-out by grade and sex

Teaching Staff

The tables below show the number of teaching and non-teaching staff by region and sex at primary level.

	2022	2023	2024
National	8851	8880	8948
Hhohho	2363	2405	2410
Lubombo	1818	1849	1879
Manzini	2692	2694	2695
Shiselweni	1978	1932	1964

Table 23: Number of Primary Teachers by region, 2022-2024

Year	Female	Male
2022	6171	2680
2023	6201	2679
2024	6237	2711

Table 24: Number of Primary Teachers by sex, 2022-2024

Year	Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)	(GER) Female	(GER) Male	Gross Intake Ratio (GIR)	(GIR) Female	(GIR) Male
2022	116,4	113,5	119,3	112,4	111,2	113,6
2023	116,8	113,9	119,7	121,1	119,	123,1
2024	115,7	112,8	118,6	107,5	105,5	109,4

Table 25: Primary Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) and Gross Intake Ratio (GIR) Gross

Year	Grade 7 Enrolment (AEC)			eSwatini Exams Council EPC (Grade 7)		
	Female	Male	Total	Registered	Examined	Passed
2022	14553	14053	28606	28038	27763	25601
2023	13391	13297	26688	26647	26411	24331
2024	14373	14701	29074			

Table 26: Last grade enrolment_AEC and eSwatini Examination Council for Primary

SECONDARY

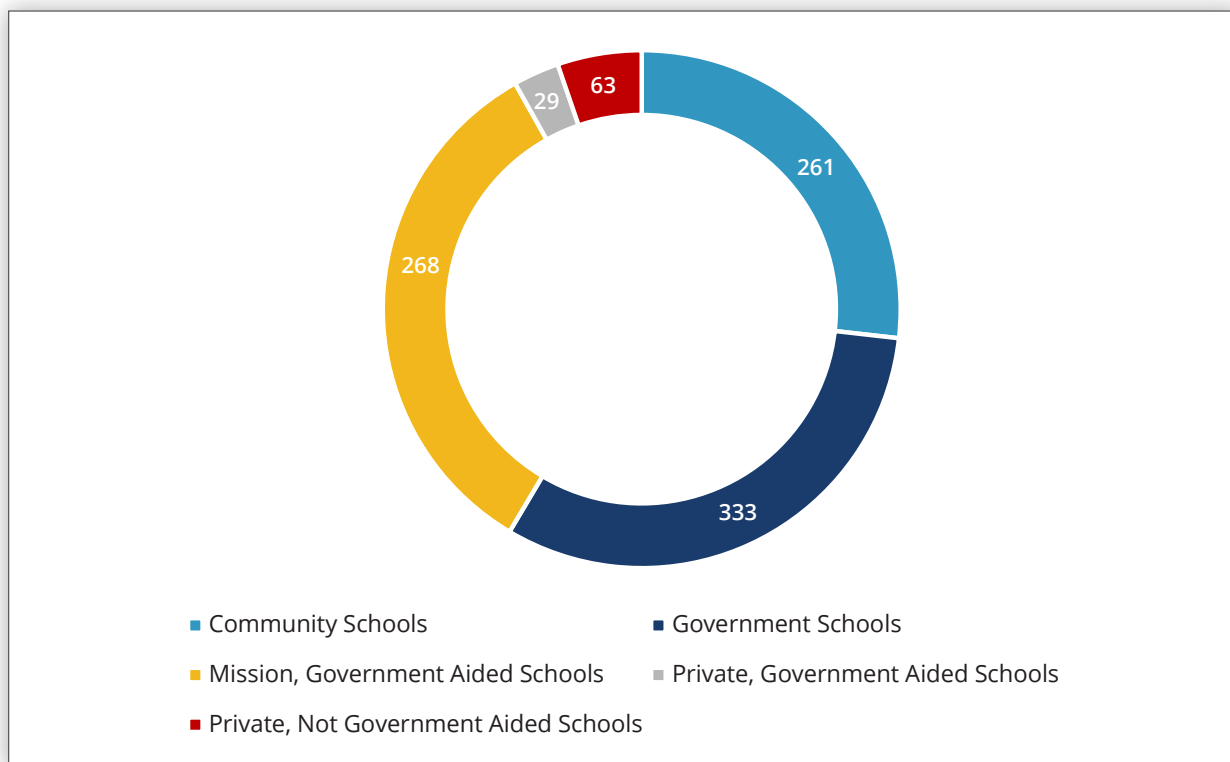


Figure 36: Secondary Schools by Institution Type, 2022-2024

Secondary Enrolment

The tables below show data from the Annual Education Census (AEC 2022 to 2024) on secondary enrolments by region, grade/form and sex.

	2022			2023			2024		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Total
National	60931	57293	118224	62727	58063	120790	63128	57819	120947
Hhohho	17350	16687	34037	17533	16765	34298	17640	16486	34126
Lubombo	13513	13065	26578	14179	13001	27180	14030	12910	26940
Manzini	17402	15802	33204	17923	16020	33943	18195	16205	34400
Shiselweni	12666	11739	24405	13092	12277	25369	13263	12218	25481

Table 27: Number of Learner Enrolment by Sex and Region, 2022-2024

Form	2022	2023	2024
Form 1	31554	31978	30314
Form 2	25803	27143	27836
Form 3	20959	19609	19303
Form 4	24075	25650	25208
Form 5	15716	16290	18143

Table 28: Number of Learner Enrolment by Grade, 2022-2024

Year	Lower Secondary		Upper Secondary	
	Female	Male	Male	Female
2022	39780	21151	38536	18757
2023	40723	22004	38007	20056
2024	39810	23318	37643	20176

Table 29: Number of Enrolment by Level and Sex, 2022-2024

Grade/ Form	Sex	2022				2023				2024			
		Hhohho	Manzini	Shiselweni	Hhohho	Lubombo	Manzini	Shiselweni	Hhohho	Lubombo	Manzini	Shiselweni	
Form 1	Female	4388	4326	3432	4399	3910	4404	3547,	4264	3518	4162	3273	
	Male	4647	4151	3352	4409	3719	4141	3449,	4239	3478	3926	3447	
Form 2	Female	3718	3644	2711	3840	3225	4047	2872,	3845	3352	3985	3043	
	Male	3611	3264	2480	3886	2993	3609	2671,	3762	3172	3781	2896	
Form 3	Female	3090	3208	2215	2982	2284	3095	2118,	3017	2156	3181	2011	
	Male	2848	2958	1996	2637	2057	2617	1819,	2718	1886	2699	1635	
Form 4	Female	3697	3543	2704	3743	2932	3657	2977,	3640	2960	3783	3028	
	Male	3422	3143	2471	3497	2674	3285	2885,	3321	2565	3224	2687	
Form 5	Female	2401	2681	1604	2508	1828	2720	1578,	2792	2041	3084	1908	
	Male	2098	2286	1440	2277	1558	2368	1453,	2385	1805	2575	1553	

Table 30: Number of enrolment by sex, region and grade ,2022-2024

Repetition

The tables below show data from the AEC (2022-2024) on the number of repeaters by region, sex and grade. The information about repeaters is previous years' data for the reporting period.

	2023 Form 1	2023 Form 2	2023 Form 3	2023 Form 4	2023 Form 5	2024 Form 1	2024 Form 2	2024 Form 3	2024 Form 4	2024 Form 5
Hhohho	9,8	10,3	5,5	12,2	2,9	13,4	12,8	8,5	15,0	2,7
Lubombo	14,4	12,9	7,4	16,1	1,6	15,2	17,4	10,6	20,7	1,6
Manzini	9,0	8,7	6,6	11,9	1,3	10,9	10,9	7,6	13,5	1,5
Shiselweni	13,8	13,8	8,6	19,3	1,4	16,4	17,5	11,0	18,3	1,9
Total	11,8	11,4	7,0	14,9	1,8	14,0	14,7	9,4	16,9	1,9

Table 31: Repetition rates at Secondary School between 2023 and 2024

Year	Form 1	Form 2	Form 3	Form 4	Form 5
2022	2584	2562	1462	2403	441
2023	4126	3304	1927	3961	621
2024	5743	4075	2061	4431	699

Table 32: Number of learner repeaters by grade

Region	Sex	Number of Secondary Learners Repeating		
		2022	2023	2024
Hhohho	Female	1165	1475	1741
	Male	1353	1977	3448
Lubombo	Female	897	1608	1896
	Male	1221	1944	2237
Manzini	Female	1049	1517	1637
	Male	1252	1695	1910
Shiselweni	Female	1151	1735	1934
	Male	1366	1991	2209

Table 33: Secondary Learners Repeating by sex and region, 2022-2024

Drop-outs

The tables below show data from the AEC (2022-2024) on the number of drop-outs/ learners who have left school by region, sex and grade. The information about drop-outs is previous years' data for the reporting period.

	2022	2023	2024
National	3068	5139	6726
Hhohho	853	1288	1721
Lubombo	749	1396	1738
Manzini	821	1392	1800
Shiselweni	645	1063	1467

Table 34: Number of learner drop out by region

	2022		2023		2024	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Hhohho	495	358	749	539	974	747
Lubombo	477	272	807	589	972	766
Manzini	447	374	759	633	969	831
Shiselweni	368	277	603	460	825	642
National	1787	1281	2918	2221	3740	2986

Table 35: Number of learners drop out by sex and region

Form	2022		2023		2024	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Form 1	442	335	735	646	946	874
Form 2	446	344	742	562	926	792
Form 3	344	237	503	329	631	394
Form 4	411	263	725	532	972	760
Form 5	143	97	206	143	270	175
Form 6		1		5		6

Table 36: Number of learners drop out by sex and grade

Teaching Staff

The table below show the number of teachers and non-teaching staff by region.

Year	Region	Number of Secondary Education Teaching Staff		Number of Secondary Education Non-teaching	
		Female	Male	Female	Male
2022	Hhohho	1099	952	267	218
	Lubombo	831	747	243	201
	Manzini	1125	1037	282	276
	Shiselweni	768	870	187	152
2023	Hhohho	1097	960	278	224
	Lubombo	822	750	232	191
	Manzini	1168	1080	347	318
	Shiselweni	763	898	202	172
2024	Hhohho	1122	990	251	210
	Lubombo	849	751	253	235
	Manzini	1175	1117	367	313
	Shiselweni	799	893	186	164

Table 37: Number of teaching and non-teaching staff by region

Year	Number of Teaching Staff		
	Female	Male	Total
2022	3823	3606	7429
2023	3850	3688	7538
2024	3945	3751	7696

Table 38: Number of Teachers by Sex

Year	Lower Secondary Education				Senior Secondary Education			
	Gross Enrolment Ratio		Gross Intake Ratio (GIR)		Gross Enrolment Ratio		Gross Intake Ratio (GIR)	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
2022	101,5	95,4	119,7	116,9	83,	71,1	98,2	86,4
2023	103,3	93,6	123,	115,6	85,7	78,4	103,2	92,4
2024	100,4	92,3	114,2	110,3	90,3	75,5	103,3	87,9

Table 39: Gross Enrolment ratio and Gross Intake ratio for Lower and Senior Secondary Level

Year	Last Grade Enrolment Form 3_AEC			ESwatini Examination Council_JC		
	Female	Male	Total	Registered	Examined	Passed
2022	10773	10186	20959	20039	19522	16010
2023	10479	9130	19609	18940	18559	15590
2024	10365	8938	19303			

Year	Last Grade Enrolment Form 5_AEC			ESwatini Examination Council EGCSE
	Female	Male	Total	Registered
2022	8499	7217	15716	13353
2023	8634	7656	16290	16162
2024	9825	8318	18143	

Table 40: Number of form 5 enrolment and number of learners registered for EGCSE

Population Projections

The table below show the projected population for the school going age for both primary and secondary from 6 years to 17 year old.

Age	2022			2023			2024		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
6	13827	13623	27450	13385	13159	26544	15413	15045	30458
7	13985	13759	27744	13850	13644	27494	13402	13175	26577
8	13977	13727	27704	14007	13779	27786	13867	13660	27527
9	13894	13609	27503	13999	13747	27746	14024	13795	27819
10	13784	13471	27255	13907	13618	27525	14008	13752	27760
11	13679	13336	27015	13785	13466	27251	13905	13612	27517
12	13596	13228	26824	13785	13331	27011	13784	13459	27243
13	13537	13148	26685	13680	13224	26822	13679	13325	27004
14	13479	13070	26549	13598	13224	26682	13597	13218	26815
15	13396	12966	26362	13459	13037	26496	13521	13114	26635
16	13280	12829	26109	13351	12901	26252	13418	12979	26397
17	13114	12653	25767	13236	12764	26000	13311	12844	26155

Table 41: The projected population for the school going age for both primary and secondary from 6 years to 17 year old

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