



Eswatini Experience: Multi Actor Consultations

Gender and NBSAP Capacity Building & Exchange Process

10 February 2026



COUNTRY CONTEXT



- The Kingdom of Eswatini is a landlocked country with an estimated population of 1.2 million.
- The National Development Plan 2023/24 - 2027/28: **58.9% of the country's population lives below the national poverty line.**
- The rural population, prone to poverty- mostly reliant on biodiversity and ecosystem goods and services for their livelihoods
- Women, due to their gendered roles and responsibilities **particularly rural women are heavily dependent on ecosystem goods and services**, hence disproportionately affected by biodiversity loss.



Defining the consultation plan by asking the right questions

Who?

Used Initial Scoping exercise to map key actors. Targeted Local communities ,Women Parliamentaty Caucus and Biodiversity actors with limited gender training

Why?

Leverage this Gender project to enhance NBSAP responsiveness to the CBD GPA

What?

Community level problems and solutions to natural resource management. Connect grassroots and decision makers

How?

Engagements in local language (Siswati) and respect for communication protocol when engaging communities and parliamentaty caucus

When?

Before November 2025 for local communities. Before close of Cabinet for the Women Parliamentary Caucus

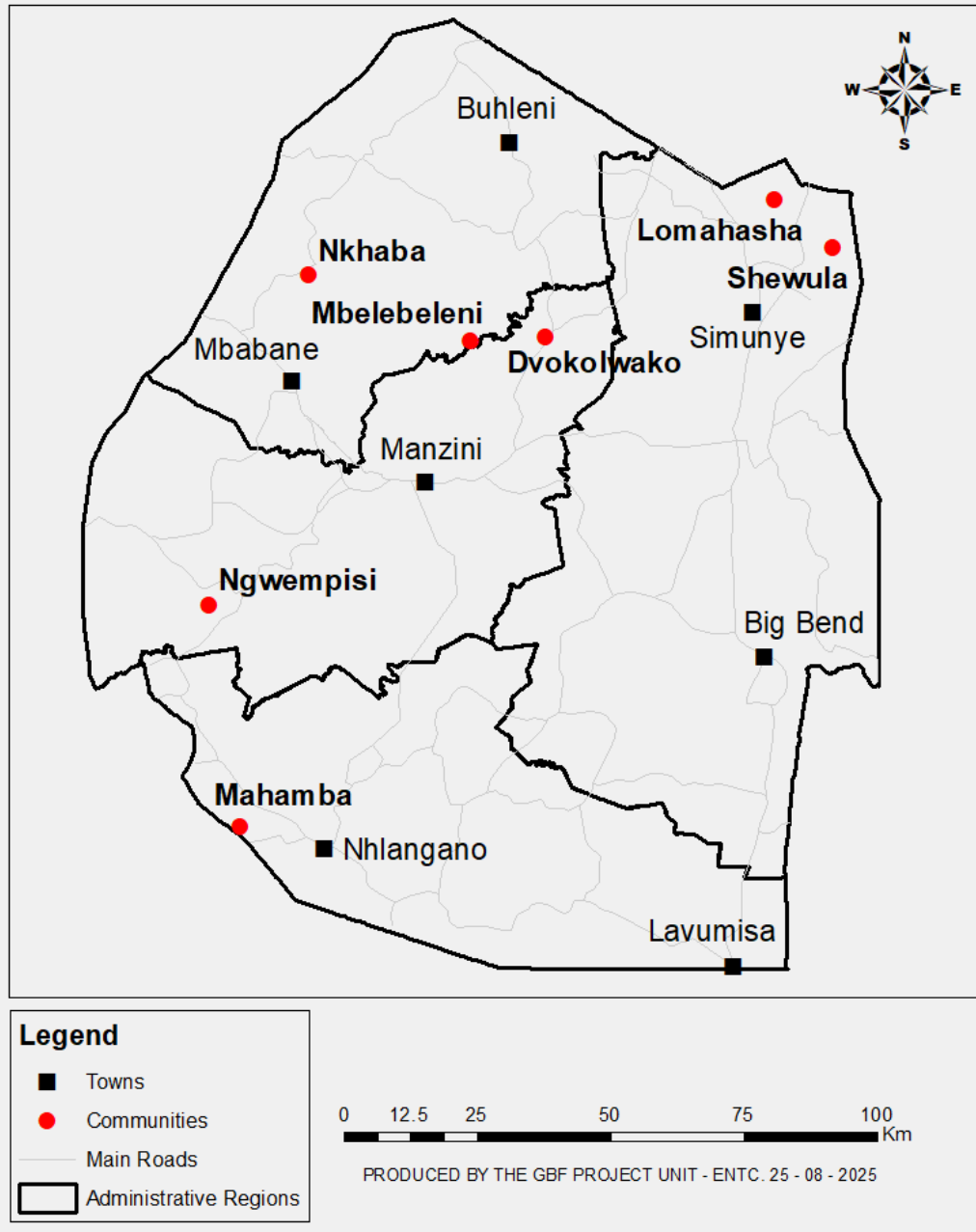
Responsible?

PMU, NBSAP-Gender Consultant and Core Country Team

Resources?

Set target on numbers. Set budget for consultations and identified co-financiers and technical partners

Distribution of Targeted Communities for Gender - Biodiversity Project



ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR GENDER RESPONSIVE NBSAP 3.0 CONSULTATIONS

- Collaborated with Civil Society Organizations
- Women were deliberately mobilized and encouraged to attend through community structures and CSOs that assisted ENTC in mobilization (60% target)
- Pre- workshop registration allowed for the monitoring of gender participation
- Gender sensitive facilitation methods were undertaken; with separate women, men and youth focus groups to create space for women and youth to actively engage and contribute
- Feedback from participants informed activity refinement and prioritization of planned interventions.

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS: PARTICIPATION STATISTICS AND REPORTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Dates	Target Communities/Stakeholder	Total Participants	% Females	% Males	% Special Needs	% Improved Understanding of gender-biodiversity
3 September 2025	CSOs, Gender experts and Government ministries	46 (50)	60.9%	39.1%	2.2%	100%
29 September to 2 October 2025	Mahamba Communities (Masibini, Dlovunga, Simemeni, and Vusweni)	40 (40)	57.5%	42.5%	7%	95%
6 to 8 October 2025	Mbuluzi Project Communities (Dvokolwako, Lomahasha, Mbelebeleni, Shewula, and Nkhaba)	47 (50)	61.7%	38.3%	12.8%	100%
13 to 15 October 2025	Ngwempisi Rural Development Area (Bhadzeni 1, Velezizweni, Macudvulwini, kaNdinda, Dlادleni, Mbangweni, and Ngcoseni)	39 (40)	61.5%	38.5%	5.1%	100%

COMMON THEMES FROM LOCAL COMMUNITIES CONSULTATIONS



- **Gendered access to resources:** Men largely control land and natural resources through traditional structures (chiefs, bandlancane). Women's access often depends on male consent or marital status.
- **Exclusion from decision-making:** Women and youth participate in meetings **but rarely hold influential positions**. Persons with disabilities face physical and social barriers to participation.
- **Economic dependence and GBV:** Poverty, unemployment, and lack of land drive women into informal and vulnerable livelihoods, increasing exposure to gender-based violence.
- **Emerging shifts:** Some communities (e.g. Dvokolwako, Shewula) show progress, with women included in planning processes (NRMCS).

CONSULTATION: WOMEN PARLIAMENTARY CAUCUS



- The **Women's Parliamentary Caucus** is a key actor in advancing gender-responsive biodiversity governance. **An ally in gender advocacy.**
- Their leadership is essential in ensuring that gender equality is meaningfully reflected in legislation and our Gender Plan of Action.
- Key GPA themes communicated with Parliamentary Caucus and follow up meeting to be scheduled to validate Eswatini's GPA

CHALLENGES AND LESSON LEARNT

- **Flexibility and Iterative feedback:** Adapting facilitation methods, tools and language to suit the stakeholder group. The community engagements benefited from iterative feedback and adjustment with each engagement.
- **Readiness to lead:** progressive communities have introduced quotas to increase women's representation in natural resource management committee's - women reported limited readiness to assume these roles due to capacity gaps
- **Cultural Norms and Mindset:** Deep-rooted cultural norms and prevailing mindsets, particularly around gender roles and decision-making, emerged as potential barriers during discussions on solutions and pathways forward.

