

Swaziland

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1. Indigenous Peoples, Mental Health and Wellness

The country of Swaziland strongly believes that healthcare, mental health and wellness is a highly relevant and significant issue. Although it is a small country almost completely surrounded by South Africa and Mozambique, Swaziland has the highest HIV/AIDS prevalence rate in the world. Among these diseases, many others greatly affect the indigenous population of Swaziland such as Tuberculosis. The mental health and wellness of the Swazi people is an important topic to be discussed since Swaziland does not have a health plan, nor does an officially approved mental health policy exist.

Although HIV has been disastrous within the country, with 27% of the Swazi population living with HIV in 2015, Swaziland has undertaken various means to decrease the high percentage of HIV cases over the course of the last decade. HIV is one of the top 10 causes of death in the country, causing approximately 31% of deaths in Swaziland. Swaziland also has one of the highest rates of antiretroviral treatment coverage in sub-Saharan Africa and Swaziland has steadily increased government expenditure on programs aimed towards HIV relief. The number of people testing for HIV and receiving their results has rapidly augmented as Swaziland has made big steps to make HIV testing and counselling more accessible to the Swazi peoples. Tuberculosis is also one of the major deadly illnesses of the indigenous peoples. Swaziland has the highest TB incidence rate in the world as well. This disease causes approximately 7% of the deaths of the country. Swaziland started a programme aiming the strengthening and integration of TB and HIV services.

Although self harm only causes around 2% of Swazi deaths, the country faces multiple challenges related to mental health and wellness of its peoples. There is only one psychiatrist to serve the entire country and only one psychiatric hospital, The National Psychiatric Referral Hospital. There are no mental health refresher courses, workshops or conferences available to the psychiatric staff. Consequently, the body of knowledge of the psychiatric staff is severely limited. A national mental health programme is currently present in Swaziland. The main goals of the programme are to develop standardized guidelines for diagnosis and to manage common mental health disorders.

In response to the issues posed by limited health-oriented government instated programmes, Swaziland proposes to instate hospitals geared specifically to indigenous mental health patients where both indigenous and westernized forms of medical practice coexist and cooperate.

2. Indigenous Land Rights, Climate Change impacts and Environmental Protection of Resources

Swaziland heavily believes in the land rights of its aboriginal peoples as well as the impact of climate change and the environmental protection of their resources. The land is divided between the Swazi National Lands (SNL) and Title Deed Lands (TDL). A land policy has been penned but is currently still under review. The main objectives of this land policy are to improve access to land, reduce land related conflicts, encourage the rational and sustainable use of the land and encourage land ownership by Swazi citizens. When it comes to the climate of Swaziland, it is characterized as sub-tropical. The summers are wet and hot while the winters are dry and cold.

The land rights of Swazi people is not a heavily discussed topic. Although the land is in trust for the Swazi nation, it belongs to the King. Gender aside, all the citizens of Swaziland have equal access to land for ordinary purposes. The constitution of Swaziland oversees the ownership of the land. As the land is controlled by Swazi National Lands and by Title Deed Lands, a part of it is administered by the chiefs courts and the other part is regulated by Roman-Dutch law.

Swaziland has participated in several international initiatives aiming to decrease the effects of climate change upon both human health and the physical environment. Swaziland is currently working alongside the United Nations Development Programme to achieve key goals such as the development of legal framework on adaptation to climate change and the improvement of education on climate change adaptation. Thus far Swaziland has accomplished a number of impressive goals aiming to regulate climate change effects, and continues to receive financial support from United Nations organs, especially the UN Development Programme.

Due to the fact that Swaziland, a small country to begin with does not have full control of its land, Swaziland proposes that the TDL land rights be revoked and the entirety of the Swazi lands be partially under the control the SNL and partially under the control of aboriginal Swazi peoples. Swaziland furthermore supports the further application of UN sponsored climate change initiatives and looks forward to working alongside fellow African nations to improve the environmental conditions for both indigenous populations and the Swazi population at large.

3. Indigenous Peoples, Poverty and Development

Like many other countries, Swaziland is constantly making efforts to reduce poverty among not only the general population but also among the indigenous communities. Swaziland also promotes the development of the country. Only 10% of the Swazi population is responsible for approximately 50% of the country's consumption. 63% of the Swazi people lives below

the national poverty line. The country also has an extremely severe hunger issue. It is believed that this famine is due to the King's lavish lifestyle. It is clear that poverty and hunger is a serious issue that urgently needs to be discussed.

The larger portion of the aboriginal people of Swaziland lives in difficult conditions. Most of them live without water and electricity, making day to day life much more of a hassle. Swaziland has a population of around 1,267,704 people; among them approximately 729,167 live in poverty. A large portion of the indigenous peoples is at risk of food insecurity. The topic of poverty among indigenous peoples plays a big role in the development of the country. Swaziland has already begun to institute measures to reduce poverty and hunger, to decrease the percentage of people living with diseases such as HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis and to increase the life expectancy. All their actions aim to develop a better standard of living among all the Swazi peoples. WFP is providing healthy food to 52,000 orphaned and vulnerable children. Through its National Development Strategy and Poverty Reduction Strategy And Action Programme, the Kingdom of Swaziland has expressed its developmental goals and is now working with the UN. The UNDAF is a strategic partnership in which the UN will support Swaziland in the realization of its development goals.

Swaziland proposes to use its partnership with the UN to receive funds to house and feed a large number of Swazi people living in poverty and to receive foreign help to reduce the disease rate more effectively and rapidly.