

From 2016 to 2020



Bridge Eswatini Project Report

September 2020



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Eswatini
National Commission
for UNESCO



Korean
National Commission
for UNESCO

The Bridge Eswatini Project Report is an independent publication commissioned by the Korean National Commission for UNESCO (KNCU). It is the product of a collaborative effort of partner National Commission for UNESCO that are involved in the Bridge Eswatini Project.

The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of KNCU concerning the legal status of any country territory, city or area, or its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

The National Commissions for UNESCO listed below as co-publishers are responsible for the choice and the presentation of the facts contained in this report and for the opinions expressed therein.

Co-Published by

Korean National Commission for UNESCO

Eswatini National Commission for UNESCO

For more information, please contact:

Division of Bridge Programme

Bureau of Development Cooperation

Korean National Commission for UNESCO

26 Myeongdong-gil (UNESCO Road), Jung-gu Seoul 04536, Republic of Korea

E-mail: sdgs.kncu@unesco.or.kr

Website: www.unesco.or.kr

@ KNCU, 2020

ED-2021-RP-2

All rights reserved

Graphic Design and Layout: borderlab

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION	05
II. BACKGROUND	06
1. Country Overview	06
2. Current Situation regarding Education in Eswatini	07
III. OVERVIEW OF THE BRIDGE ESWATINI PROJECT	11
1. Introduction to the Bridge Eswatini Project	11
2. Introduction to the Bridge Community Learning Centres in Eswatini	16
IV. ACHIEVEMENTS	17
1. History of the Bridge Eswatini Project: Main Activities from 2016-2020	17
2. Quantitative Outcomes	20
3. Outcomes of the CLCs	21
V. LESSONS LEARNED	41
VI. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	43
◆ ANNEX	47
1. Bridge Project Manager and Coordinators	47
2. Interview	47



I. INTRODUCTION

The Bridge Eswatini Project has been implemented by the Kingdom of Eswatini with the support of the Korean National Commission for UNESCO (KNCU) jointly since 2016. The support to Eswatini started when the then Secretary-General of KNCU met with the Honourable Minister of Education and Training of Eswatini for a discussion during the 38th session of the UNESCO General Conference in November 2015. During this bilateral meeting the Minister and the Secretary-General spoke about a partnership to implement the Bridge Eswatini Project as part of the Bridge Africa Programme. This was followed by the visit of a delegation from KNCU to Eswatini in January 2016 for further discussions with the Eswatini National Commission for UNESCO (ENCU) and the Minister of Education. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) was signed in February 2016 between ENCU and KNCU at a workshop held in Malawi. After signing the MOU, the Eswatini Bridge National Committee (BNC), consisting of key stakeholder representatives, was formed to help in the smooth running of the Bridge Eswatini Project (BEP).

In July 2016, a field assessment of eight potential sites to establish Bridge Community Learning Centres (CLCs) was conducted and the BNC was able to select KuGeza and Emhlangeni community Neighbourhood Care Points as centres that would be developed into Bridge CLCs, becoming the KuGeza CLC and Emhlangeni CLC. Renovations were done for the preschool structures in both centres to improve the learning environment. Capacity building workshops were conducted towards the end of 2016 for the early childhood care, development and education (ECCDE) teachers, basic literacy facilitators and the Bridge Community Committees (BCCs, which are responsible for local management of the CLCs) and teaching and learning materials were provided. Initially, three educational programmes were provided at the CLCs, which were ECCDE, basic literacy and technical and vocational education and training (TVET). In 2017 non-formal secondary education (NFSE) was offered after a special request by Eswatini. In 2018, a third CLC was established in Nkhungwini Community, and there are now three functional CLCs operating in the country with two of them offering four programmes and one offering three programmes. These centres have given beneficiaries great opportunities to improve their lives through the non-formal education programmes they offer.

II. BACKGROUND

1. Country Overview

The Kingdom of Eswatini is one of the world's last remaining absolute monarchies, ruled by His Majesty King Mswati 111 since 1986. It is a landlocked country in Southern Africa bordering South Africa and Mozambique, with a population of 1.2 million. Elections are held every five years to determine the House of Assembly and the Senate majority of Parliament. Eswatini is a developing country with a small economy. It is divided into four administrative regions, being Hhohho, Lubombo, Manzini and Shiselweni.

Economic growth in Eswatini has lagged behind that of its neighbours. Real GDP growth since 2001 has averaged 2.8%, nearly two percentage points lower than other South African Customs Union member countries. Low agricultural productivity in Swazi Nation Land, repeated droughts, the devastating effects of HIV/AIDS, and an overly large and inefficient government sector are likely contributing factors. Eswatini's economy is closely linked to the economy of South Africa, from which it receives over 90% of its imports and to which it sends about 70% of its exports. Eswatini's other key trading partners are the United States and the EU, from which the country has received trade preferences for apparel exports and sugar.

Education in Eswatini begins with pre-school education for infants, proceeding to primary, secondary and high school education for general education, then training and tertiary level education at universities and colleges. Pre-school education is usually for children five years or younger and about 21.6% of pre-school age children have access to early childhood education, although this is offered mainly by private institutions with overall monitoring by the government. Primary education begins at the age of six and is a seven-year programme that culminates with an external public Primary School Examination in Grade 7. The secondary and high school education system in Eswatini is a five-year programme divided into three years of junior secondary with an external public examination (Junior Certificate) and two years of senior secondary where learners sit for public examinations, the Eswatini General Certificate of Secondary Education (EGCSE), and International General Certificate of Secondary Education, which is accredited by Cambridge Assessment International Education.

There are 830 public schools in Eswatini including primary, secondary and high schools. Adult and non-formal education centres include Sebenta National Institute for adult basic literacy and Emlaladini Development Centre, which provide alternative educational opportunities for school children and

adults who have not been able to complete their schooling. The University of Eswatini, Southern Africa Nazarene University and Swaziland Christian University are institutions that offer university education in the country. There is also the Limkokwing University of Creative Technology which offers associate degrees. Ngwane Teachers Training College and William Picture College are the countries' teaching colleges, and there is also the Nursing Assistants College at Good Shepherd Hospital. The main centre for technical training in Eswatini is the Eswatini College of Technology, while other vocational institutions include Gwamile Vocational and Commercial Training Institute in Matsapha, the Manzini Industrial and Training Centre in Manzini, Nhlanguano Agricultural Skills Training Centre, and Siteki Industrial Training Centre. In addition to these, there are about eight Rural Education Centres in the vicinity of high schools spread over the four regions of the country which also offer non-formal TVET. A few other non-formal TVET programmes are also offered by other organisations such as Sebenta National Institute.

2. Current Situation regarding Education in Eswatini

i. Early Childhood Care, Development and Education (ECCDE)

Eswatini still has a headcount of about 37,000 children of school-going age that are out of school (OSISA, 2012). Even where children have access to formal education, the country's education system still involves challenges. Pre-school is not a mandatory requirement for entry into Grade 1 in the country yet, but the proportion of children in the first grade of primary school (regardless of age and transitional status) who stated that they attended pre-school the previous year is 68.9% (AEC, 2015). Almost four-fifths of the children in first grade in urban areas (81.4%) had attended pre-school the previous year compared to 56.5% among children living in rural areas (MICS, 2014). In Eswatini, most ECCDE centres are privately owned. Consequently, ECCDE is not very accessible to many Swazi children due to high fees.

ii. Basic literacy for out-of-school children, youths and adults

Eswatini's literacy rates have, over the years, significantly improved, from 40% in the 1960s to 89.1% in 2007. Although the Educational Management Information System (EMIS, 2012) report reflects that the country's enrollment rate in primary school reached 93% in 2011, there is still a concern about the educational needs of the remaining 7%, and a high drop-out rate was experienced even after the introduction of free primary education in 2010. The report shows that the primary school drop-out rate is 4%, with more boys than girls dropping out. This means that 10% of Emaswati still do not

have the basic skills of reading, writing and counting. Sebenta National Institute, a parastatal within the Ministry of Education and Training, was tasked with the provision of providing basic literacy throughout the country. Presently there is no other Institution that has such a mandate. Sebenta National Institute provides basic literacy as well as non-formal primary education to learners who sit for the same Grade 7 examinations as those in formal education. Through the Bridge Eswatini Project, Sebenta National Institute provided basic literacy in the Bridge Community Learning Centres (CLCs).

iii. Non-formal secondary education for out-of-school children, youths and adults

The country's educational system is challenged by high drop-out and transition rates both in primary and secondary education. Whilst the primary school drop-out rate is 4%, the secondary school drop-out rate is 26% (EMIS, 2012). Although in Eswatini the girls' primary school enrolment rate is quite high, at 93%, the bridge to secondary school is far from certain, where enrolment rates for girls drop down to 67% for lower secondary, and only 47% in upper secondary school (Neild, R., Balfanz, T., & Herzog, L., 2007). This is mainly attributed to the fact that parents have to pay for secondary education. Parallel statistics provide powerful insight into this sharp decline: 22.1% of adolescent girls give birth before age 18 (UNICEF/Eswatini report), greatly contributing to the numbers of girls who drop out of school. Further, 29% of girls self-report dropping out of school because of pregnancy, which is not the case with boys. Virtually no educational opportunities and few social support structures exist for these adolescent mothers and wives. Taking into consideration the added burden of Eswatini's 26.5% HIV prevalence rate—the highest in the world, which rises even higher to 31% for women—and a high incidence rate of 3.8% for new HIV infections among women ages 18-19 (Eswatini Global AIDS Response Progress Reporting, 2014), young women face huge barriers to success and well-being. It is necessary to scale up the re-enrolment of adolescent girls and teen mothers who dropped out of formal school back into alternative education pathways for them to realise a better life for themselves and their children.

Apart from the economic constraints faced by girls and boys desiring to transition to secondary education, there is also the issue of the teaching and learning approach. This challenge directly affects those who have gone through non-formal primary education with Sebenta National Institute. Most, unfortunately, are viewed as over-aged for enrolment in formal secondary education. Through the support of the Eswatini Ministry of Education and Training, Sebenta National Institute has been providing a complete alternative education pathway from the primary to secondary level to all willing citizens throughout the country. This underlines the significance of giving a second chance to out-of-school learners at any level and despite socio-economic status for those willing to re-access education opportunities or complete their education through the same pathway. Sebenta National Institute is committed to providing quality education through well-trained volunteer school teachers and scaling up access to education and ultimate acquisition of the Grade 7 Primary

Certificate, Junior Certificate (JC) as well as EGCSE. Through the BEP, Sebenta National Institute has also started providing secondary school education in the Bridge CLCs.

iv. Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

The TVET programmes currently offered are not properly subjected to a standardized system of quality assurance and accreditation, which compromises quality and relevance.

Programmes offered by TVET institutions in urban communities are usually imported from overseas and assessments and examinations are expensive because fees must be paid in foreign currencies, which then compromises access. Institutions running TVET programmes in rural communities are usually self-certified, which reduces their quality and credibility. Further, since programmes between institutions do not align with each other, continuous learning is a struggle for trainees who attend multiple institutions. It is also a problem for employers because the competencies of graduates are not guaranteed. This then drives graduates towards self-employment, which is not well paid because of the lack of capital and the limitations arising from the lack of continuous learning. Hence there is a need to develop standardized programmes, to strengthen the quality assurance system in this sector.



III. OVERVIEW OF THE BRIDGE ESWATINI PROJECT

1. Introduction to the Bridge Eswatini Project

i. Rationale

The Bridge Eswatini Project is led by the Eswatini National Commission for UNESCO, which is part of the Ministry of Education and Training, together with the Bridge National Committee (BNC) which includes heads from other key, relevant educational and local government institutions in the country. Since 2016 when the project started, Eswatini has successfully implemented the Bridge Eswatini Project in three community learning centres (CLCs), namely KuGeza CLC in the Hhohho region, Emhlangeni CLC in the Manzini region and Nkhungwini CLC in the Shiselweni region.

The Bridge Eswatini Project is aligned with the educational goal of Eswatini's National Development Strategy, Vision 2022, goal which was introduced by the government of Eswatini to provide relevant quality and affordable education and training opportunities for the entire populace of the Kingdom of Eswatini in order to develop all positive aspects of life for the country's population, for self-reliance, social and economic development, and global competitiveness. The BEP is also aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, (SDGs), especially SDG 4, which seeks to ensure access to quality relevant education for all, and SDG 1, on ending poverty. With the help of key government ministries and departments, the project has been able to provide early childhood care, development and education (ECCDE), non-formal secondary education (NFSE), basic literacy and TVET in the three different regions of the country, and so contribute to the achievement of the goals with which it is aligned.

ii. Aim

As noted above, the Bridge Eswatini Project aims to contribute towards the achievement of SDG 4 and the National Development Strategy, Vision 2022 in Eswatini. Its main objective has been to reduce poverty and promote self-reliance through educational support in the rural areas of the country through improvements to the educational environment, capacity building for teachers, textbook supply, and the provision to underprivileged people of basic literacy education, early

childhood and care development and TVET in the selected community learning centres (CLCs). In addition, the project offered training on production and sale of home-based industry products to the BCCs and CLC instructors, to ensure that the CLCs can provide training on these home-based industries and sell the products produced to surrounding communities, which will contribute to the self-reliance and sustainability of the CLCs after the project closure.

iii. Principles

The basic principle is that, while the KNCU is providing support to the Kingdom of Eswatini and the communities in which the project is being implemented, Eswatini should illustrate commitment to the goals and objectives of the project by community involvement in renovations and running of the centres. The Ministry of Education and Training should also contribute to the smooth running of the project and make preparations to ensure sustainability of the programme after the end of the partnership with KNCU. Hence the communities have been actively involved through leadership of the BCCs, and chieftdom and constituency leadership. In short, the project is a partnership between the KNCU and Eswatini and thus the country must also show commitment to ensuring that the assistance offered to the country by KNCU is maximized.

iv. Duration

The project has been implemented since February 2016, when a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between KNCU and ENCU was signed in February 2016 which was valid for five years. The MOU between KNCU and ENCU expired in February 2021.

v. Structure and role of the Bridge National Committee in Eswatini

The BNC in Eswatini was formed in May 2016 to lead the Bridge Eswatini Project taking responsibility for its activities through building a system that ensures ownership, self-reliance, alignment to Eswatini's National Education Strategy and relevance to the local context.

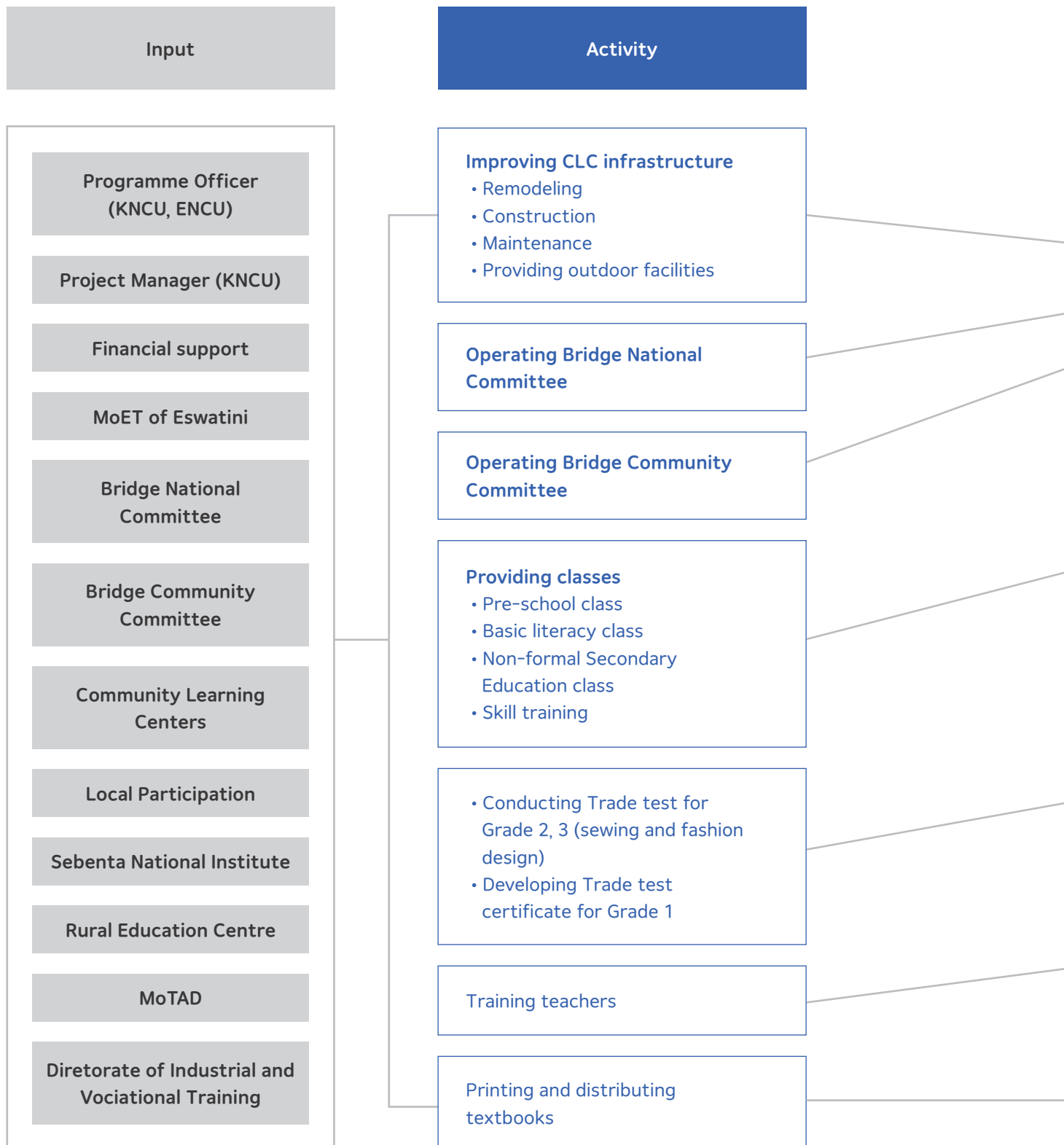
The BNC works to connect communities with the National Education System through the Bridge Eswatini Project. The BNC participates in decision-making processes, planning, managing, monitoring and evaluating the activities of the project, and also supports any publicity activities of the project.

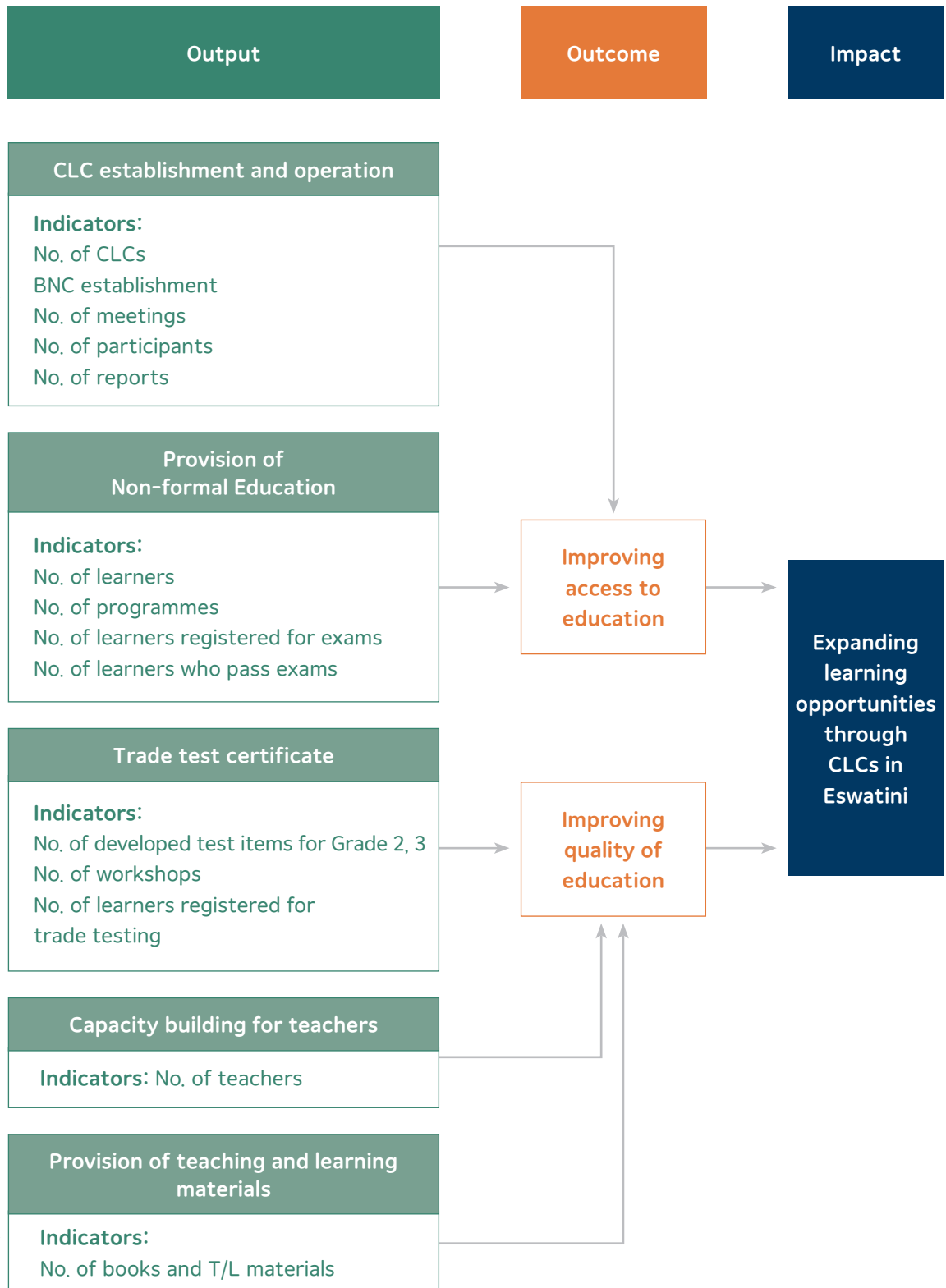
The BNC consists of the following members, representing different institutions/departments:

- ❶ Mr. Earnest Simelane (Director of Industrial and Vocational Training, Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MoLSS) who is the Chairperson
- ❷ Ms. Gcina Msibi (Regional ECCDE Officer, Ministry of Education and Training (MoET)
- ❸ Mr. Musa Macwele (Senior Inspector, Adult & Non-formal Education, MoET)
- ❹ Dr. Tibekile Manana (Chief Executive Officer, Sebenta National Institute, who is the Vice-Chairperson)
- ❺ Ms. Nelisiwe Dlamini (Statistician, Educational Management Information System, MoET)
- ❻ Mr. Glen Mazibuko (Principal of the Emlalati Development Centre, a centre that provides distance education for Secondary education under the MoET)
- ❼ Ms. Sihle Dlamini (Shiselweni Regional Community Development Officer, under the Ministry of Tinkhundla Administration and Development (MTAD)
- ❽ Ms. Hazel Zungu (Former Secretary-General of ENCU, who is an Advisor to the BNC)
- ❾ Ms. Phumzile Hlophe (Secretary-General of ENCU, who forms part of the Secretariat and is also Treasurer)
- ❿ Ms. Nondumiso Sibandze (Project Coordinator based at the ENCU, who also forms part of the Secretariat)

The BNC consists of five office bearers, as enshrined in its terms of reference. These are the Chairperson (Mr. Earnest Simelane), the Vice-Chairperson (Dr. Tibekile Manana), the Treasurer and Secretariat (the SG of Eswatini National Commission for UNESCO, Ms. Phumzile Hlophe), and the Secretary (the Bridge Eswatini Project Coordinator, Ms. Nondumiso Sibandze). The Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson alternately preside over all meetings of the BNC, the Treasurer is responsible for the custody of all the funds and property, and the Secretariat is responsible for recordings of the proceedings and compilation of reports and minutes of all meetings as well as distributing them to relevant stakeholders.

vi. Project Model: Theory of Change







KuGeza Community Learning Centre (2017)

2. Introduction to the Bridge Community Learning Centres in Eswatini

Eswatini has three Bridge Community Learning Centres, which aim to meet the educational needs of the communities in which they are located. The educational services offered by the CLCs have been gradually revised to more closely align with government policies. The CLCs increase access to quality education in rural areas and also provide and promote the opportunity for out-of-school students to return to the public education track and enjoy good quality life-long education.

Eswatini's three active Bridge CLCs are KuGeza CLC, where ECCDE, basic literacy, NFSE and TVET (sewing skills and construction) are provided; Emhlangeni CLC, which offers ECCDE, basic literacy and TVET (electrical wiring and sewing skills); and lastly, Nkhungwini CLC, where ECCDE, basic literacy, NFSE and TVET (sewing skills) are offered. The Chiefs and Members of Parliament of the communities are engaged in the project and work closely with the Bridge Community Committees (BCCs), each of which has the local Bucopho (Community Development Officer) as one of its members, to ensure the community needs are met by the centre. All three CLCs have a Local Coordinator who attends all BCC meetings and is responsible for overall oversight of the day to day activities at the centre, liaising between the CLC's BCC and ENCU, and compiling and submitting monthly reports on the CLC to the ENCU.

IV. ACHIEVEMENTS

1. History of the Bridge Eswatini Project: Main Activities from 2016-2020

2016

-
- Signed MOU in February
 - Organized Bridge National Committee (BNC)
 - Conducted a needs assessment in 20 possible sites – June
 - Conducted a field assessment in 8 possible sites in July
 - Selected two sites for Bridge Eswatini Project CLCs (KuGeza and Emhlangeni)
 - Completed construction of KuGeza pre-school classroom with donations from the community
 - Opened a basic literacy class at KuGeza CLC
 - Held a capacity building workshop for 6 ECCDE teachers and 8 basic literacy teachers, and a home-based skill training workshop for 16 instructors for the two CLCs in November.
 - Completed renovation of pre-school classrooms at the two CLCs
 - Provided pre-school and basic literacy teaching and learning materials for the two centres
 - Provided furniture for the two centres.
 - Completed construction of the basic literacy classroom at KuGeza CLC
 - Completed renovation of the sewing classroom at Emhlangeni CLC and provided sewing materials in December
 - Held the official opening of KuGeza CLC in December
-

2017

- Conducted a training workshop for NFSE teachers in January
- Held a monitoring tool development workshop
- Started NFSE classes at KuGeza
- Completed construction of KuGeza literacy classroom
- Installed electricity at KuGeza CLC in June
- Provided sewing machines and materials for KuGeza CLC and held sewing classes at the centre
- Selected Nkhungwini CLC as 3rd Bridge CLC
- Held a Bridge Stakeholders Workshop and officially launched the Bridge Eswatini Project in the Shiselweni Region
- Provided sewing machines and started sewing classes at Emhlangeni CLC.
- Held a graduation ceremony at KuGeza CLC
- Completed extension and construction of pre-school and NFSE classrooms at KuGeza
- Completed extension and construction of a basic literacy classroom at Emhlangeni

2018

- Visited Botswana for peer-learning activity in March
 - Conducted an NFSE teachers' workshop for KuGeza CLC teachers and started NFSE classes
 - Completed pre-school classroom at Nkhungwini
 - Completed skill training classroom at Emhlangeni CLC
 - Developed trade test for Sewing and Fashion Design Grade 3 in October
 - Conducted a 2nd capacity building workshop
 - Conducted a teachers' training workshop for basic literacy facilitators of the three CLCs
 - Held a graduation ceremony at KuGeza in November
 - Held an official opening and graduation ceremony at Emhlangeni CLC in December
-

2019

- BNC visited Zambia for a peer-learning activity in February
- Provided sewing machines and materials for Nkhungwini CLC
- Conducted a successful non-formal secondary education teachers' workshop in April
- Had a successful BCC peer learning event in June
- Completed the construction of two (sewing and electrical wiring) classrooms at Emhlangeni CLC
- Completed construction of non-formal education classroom and Nkhungwini
- Installed electricity at Nkhungwini CLC
- Provided ECCDE outdoor materials for all three centres
- Conducted a 3rd BCC capacity building workshop
- Had official opening ceremony of the Nkhungwini CLC in December
- Held successful Grade 2 trade test

2020

- Provided sewing learning materials for the new intake in all three centres
 - Hired a construction instructor for KuGeza CLC
 - Provided electrical wiring learning materials at Emhlangeni CLS
 - Provided construction material learning materials at KuGeza CLC
 - Provided furniture to the three CLCs
 - Conducted a successful non-formal secondary education teachers' workshop
 - Conducted capacity building workshop for ECCDE teachers
 - Hired construction instructors for Emhlangeni and KuGeza CLCs
 - Hired electrical wiring instructor at Emhlangeni
 - Held Grade 2 trade testing
 - Held a basic literacy teachers' workshop at Emhlangeni CLC
 - Built construction sheds for Emhlangeni and KuGeza
 - Successfully held the 4th BNC/BCC capacity building workshop which also included a ceremony for the handover of the Bridge Eswatini Project to the Ministry of Education and Training
 - Held graduation ceremony at KuGeza
-

2. Quantitative Outcomes

Quantitative Outcomes of the Bridge Eswatini Project (2016-2020)								
Year	Centre	Access to educational activities				Improvement of quality of education		
		Early Childhood Care, Development and Education	Basic Literacy	Vocational Skills Training	Non-formal Secondary Education	No. of teachers who received training	No. of teaching and learning materials distributed	
2016	Kugeza	25	41	-	-	-	1800	
	Emhlangeni	47	-	20 (Sewing)	-			
2017	KuGeza	22	18	20 (Sewing)		57	800	
	Emhlangeni	-	-	20 (Sewing)	96			
	Nkhungwini	-	-	-				
2018	KuGeza	32	22		23	52	-	
	Emhlangeni			37	-			
	Nkhungwini	-	-	-				
2019	KuGeza	74	3	42	23	275	7,867	
	Emhlangeni							
	Nkhungwini							
2020	KuGeza	-	-	43	97	90	382	
	Emhlangeni		8	33				81*
	Nkhungwini		-	4				
Total		200	92	309	239	474	10,849	

* No. of learners registered for trade testing in sewing and fashion design

3. Outcomes of the CLCs

i) Early Childhood Care, Development and Education (ECCDE)

Of the programmes offered at the CLCs, the ECCDE programme is least supported by the government of Eswatini, with the government providing only technical, advisory and coordination support. The ECCDE centres that are currently in place in Eswatini are either privately, institutionally or community owned. Generally speaking, as a result of their ownership status, ECCDE centres that provide quality education are very expensive and those that are community owned provide poor education. The BEP has helped to address this imbalance by providing teaching/learning materials and capacity development for ECCDE teachers. This has led to an increase in enrolment year by year. Every year the teachers were given capacity development training, during which they also came up with a work plan for the following year.

Outcomes: Quality ECCDE afforded to disadvantaged community children. These children have far better chances of being accepted in primary schools and they perform much better and compete fairly with other children through school because of the good foundation at early childhood level. More parents in these communities now recognize the importance of taking their children to ECCDE because of the enthusiasm of the learners and the advertisements during graduations at the CLCs.



Graduation of ECCDE Learners at KuGeza (2019)



Graduation Ceremony of ECCDE learner (2017)

It is unfortunate that, due to the Covid-19 lockdown, classes from preschool to secondary schools were suspended in March 2020 and the children enrolled at all three centres for 2020 could not continue. We are confident that when the lockdown is lifted, the enthusiasm will be just as much as prior to the lockdown.

ii) Adult Literacy Education (ALE)

Outcomes

- Functionalization of skills acquired in basic literacy classes improved.
- Incidences of relapse to illiteracy reduced as acquired skills functionalized/ used in everyday life.
- Enrolment in basic literacy classes improved.
- Quality and relevance of teaching and learning in basic literacy in Eswatini improved.
- Participation in community development activities improved.
- Self-reliance of community members from the communities surrounding the three CLCs increased.

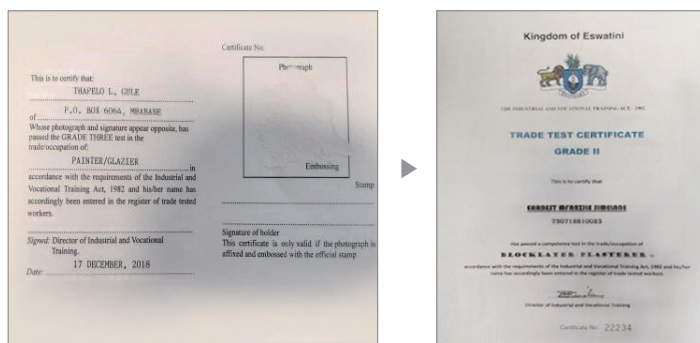


- ❶ Functionalizing literacy by applying newly acquired literacy skills to income generation activities at Mphophoma (2019.12.)
- ❷ Functionalizing basic literacy skills by applying them to the rearing of indigenous chickens at
- ❸ Gwalubovu/Mhlangeni Community Learning Centre (2020)

iii) Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

Improvement of trade test certificates

Prior to the project, trade test certificates had no security features and were vulnerable to forging. Through the project, new national skills certificates were introduced with a security feature which was very much appreciated by employers. All the trade test candidates who pass are now awarded new certificates from 2020. In total 2500 certificates were printed in South Africa with assistance from the project.



Development of competency standards and trade testing for sewing

The project successfully developed standards for Grade III, II and I, which equate to semi-skilled, skilled and highly skilled respectively. The number of candidates given opportunities to take the trade test were as follows:

2018	2019	2020
28	132	81

Many learners enrolled in TVET classes at the centres as a result of the prospects of being able to take trade tests and being given priority as graduates from the Bridge CLCs.



- ❶ Electrical wiring class in session at Gwalubovu (Emhlangeni) CLC (2020)
- ❷ Sewing class in session at KuGeza CLC (2020)

iv) Non-formal secondary education

Outcomes

- Created a recognized alternative access path to educational opportunities for learners who have been pushed out of the formal system by a variety of circumstances.
- Contributed to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Education 2030 Framework for Action.
- Promoted the transition to secondary education for out-of-school youth, adults and minority groups.
- Operationalized the lifelong learning concept.



❶ NFSE learners and teacher at Emhlangeni CLC (2017)

❷ NFSE learners in one of their class sessions at KuGeza CLC (2020)



NFSE teachers' workshop at the Gallery Hotel, Matsapha (2020.8.)

4. Key Stakeholder Interviews

i. Learners at Community Learning Centres



Lomanesi Zikalala Maseko

Basic Literacy Student

I am Lomanesi Zikalala Maseko. I am 50 years old and a former learner at KuGeza CLC. Due to a financial crisis encountered by my family, I had to drop out of school at a tender age. I was doing Grade 4 by then. However, with the provision of adult education, I got an opportunity to increase the little education I had. In February 2018 I registered for the Basic English class and Post Basic English which I completed in 2019. As the world is developing, I found it wise to attend the classes so that I am not left behind as technology and development bring change.

Now I can read English written scripts without any problem, buy electricity using my phone, read letters directed to parents from my children's school and I can also read billboards written in English. I have realized that education is very important. Now I'm targeting to sit for my Grade 7 external examination. As a community, we really appreciate the help KNCU has given us.

The challenges we are facing as adults is that we have many duties to do at home as housewives and it makes it difficult sometimes to attend classes every day. Sometimes I find that I have to take my child to the clinic and not go to school. Also, some of our husbands sometimes don't allow us to attend classes every day. I think the solution would be that as a country we make education a priority. We would like to thank the ENCU and the Ministry of Education for the yearly graduations and all the learning materials that they gave us; they really helped us a lot. Lastly, we would like to thank KNCU a lot, as if they had not provided us with the help they gave us we wouldn't be where we are today. They must continue helping others and not get tired.



Sewing class student

My name is Xolile Zikalala. I am 45 years old and a Sewing class graduate from Emhlangeni Learning Centre. I graduated last year. I thank UNESCO for bringing this project because I can now design different patterns of clothes and have daily cash.

At my learning centre, I learnt pattern drafting, sewing and designing. We also learnt about how to start and run a business. Through the UNESCO Bridge Project Eswatini, I am now running my own registered company which is also operating in my community. During this time of the COVID 19 pandemic, I have been able to make ends by selling masks to the community and supplying shops with the masks. While at the learning centre, I enjoyed learning from my instructor who is also a role model to our community and I also enjoyed helping other students when doing group work.

The only challenge I had was that I had to walk a long distance to the centre to attend classes. I really thank KNCU for the opportunity they have given us as a community. Now I am a sewing certificate holder, and I'm able to support my family through sewing and now I own my own business.

ii. Teachers and Instructors



S. Sibandze

Non-Formal Secondary Education (NFSE) teacher

My name is Mr. S. Sibandze, and I am aged 34 years. I have been involved with Nkhungwini Community Learning Centre since February 2019 and have been teaching the SGCSE syllabus. I got to be involved with the Nkhungwini Community Learning Centre through the CLC committee members and officials from the UNESCO Natcom and Sebenta Institute who requested teachers from my school to be part of the project. I have been teaching the English Language syllabus, where the focus is always on the four language skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing). However, I have learned that students need to be empowered with studying and learning skills or approaches that are learner centred. Hence one

is forced to digress now and then to try and bridge the gap between formal learning and non-formal learning. A significant effect on me from such an experience is the fact that it was a bit demanding at the beginning because we started without having been trained on the approaches relevant to teaching non-formal learners. This meant that one had to learn on the job. Otherwise, after being empowered with different learning approaches we got a grip and ground forward without hurdles.

An achievement worth mentioning brought by this project for me is seeing the learners regaining hope in life. When we started it was so evident that most was hopeless and had given up on education. However, this time around they got back with much energy and belief that they can excel academically and still pursue their dreams. The biggest challenge was that of scanty resources and limited time with the learners. Most of our lessons had to be carried out without the important resources. For instance, learners had to do English without a library yet most were rusty and needed more reading. We also had to do listening exercises with the teacher's personal gadget, as the centre still did not have the necessary gadgets.

One good lesson I will forever treasure from participating in the project is that the project made me a better teacher. It made me understand that one has to learn to teach against all odds if he or she wants to realize his goals. In short, I learned that one doesn't need all the money in the world to give hope to the hopeless. I would like to urge the ENCU

to continue funding the project and improve the teacher's remunerations. The work the teachers do is two times the work in the formal sector and I would also like the Ministry of Education to consider hiring and training teachers who will offer non-formal education full time. One would

encourage Nkhungwini CLC committee to soldier on because this project has a potential to transform the community by offering a second chance to those that are academically deprived because of age and other factors.



Nomcebo Precious Mavimbela

Sewing class instructor

My name is Nomcebo Precious Mavimbela. I am 44 years old and I am a sewing Instructor at Emhlangeni Community Learning Centre. I joined the centre as a sewing instructor in 2017 after seeing an advertisement for the job by the ENCU and I successfully passed the interview. I was trained at Nhyembane Terra Dr Boa Gente in 1999. Now I am studying adult education, which is a part time course at the University of Eswatini, through the passion that I got in teaching at the CLC. I teach dress making and design as well as household clothing. I train my students to sew

skirts, dresses, shirts, school uniforms and graduation gowns, which they were able to use for graduation last year. They are also trained to design clothing whereby I even learn, for instance to design wedding gowns. Under household clothing, I teach them to sew curtains, toilet sets, tray covers, cushion covers and bed covers.

I am happy and encouraged that in 2018, ten of my students were able to graduate and got certificates for sewing through the Ministry of Education and ENCU. Two of them also got Trade Test certificates with help they got from DIVT through the Bridge Eswatini Project. Some of my students have been hired in some companies and one of them is working in South Africa as a dressmaker through the certificates they received. Last year twelve of my students graduated; this group is so interesting because some of them started doing business at home while they wait for employment. One of them is now running a registered business which is located in our area. This year I have 11 registered students who will graduate in November. Challenges that we faced were those of students dropping out in the middle of the course due to different personal reasons. Also it was very difficult to reach the CLC due to the bad roads, especially on rainy days. This project has helped me improve my skill of teaching and I have learnt how to start a class by recruiting students. I am really grateful for the opportunity KNCU has given me and my community.

iii. Chairperson of a CLC Bridge Community Committee (BCC)



My name is Dumsane T. Dlamini and I am 56 years old. I live at Nkhungwini area and I am the chairperson of the Nkhungwini CLC BCC. The CLC committee was formed by community members in 2017 and they voted for me to be the chairperson of the BCC. During the duration of the Bridge Project, we faced several challenges,

a major one being the scarcity of people to work at the centre during the construction of the learning classrooms. As the chairperson, I tried, by all means, to motivate the community to also put their manpower towards the project as the project would benefit the community and their children in the near future.

The project was a success as we managed to build pre-school, sewing and non-formal education classrooms. At the end of the year 2019, we received good Form 5 results for NFSE and we were very happy. The number of students who enrolled this year increased due to the good results the centre had last year. Being the chairperson, I learned that you have to be humble at all times no matter how hard the situation is. I also wish the Ministry of Education can be fully involved in the project going forward so that our children can benefit from the centre in future.

iv. Member of a CLC Bridge Community Committee (BCC)



My name is Thokozani Dlamini. I am a local coordinator at KuGeza CLC, aged 31 years. I got involved with the CLC after seeing an advert posting about a local coordinator vacancy at KuGeza CLC, then I applied and got hired for a period of 12 months which was renewable. I have occupied the position from June 2019 until September 2020.

As the Bridge Eswatini Project began in 2016, I found an already established BCC which made my work at the office much easier, and we would hold meetings efficiently.

I can assure you that the BCC played a fundamental role in budgeting for the centres yearly. The BCC would also organise workshops for the three CLCs for peer learning where a reflection of the current year was extensively deliberated. This exercise has helped us to learn our achievements as well as our mistakes, which we would work on in the following year. During these workshops, we would table our

plans for the following year, including our activities and our budgets. This would motivate us as we would also share best practices.

I must not omit one of the most important stakeholders - the community, who helped immensely during the construction of the classrooms and erection of the fence under the supervision of the royal kraal.

The KuGeza CLC provides services such as NFSE, basic literacy, ECCDE, and sewing classes, as well as construction classes. I have witnessed an immense increase in the number of people coming for our services. I'm so grateful for the achievements made by the CLC more especially when it comes to the NFSE sector, whereby we eventually gained the rights to conduct external examinations from the Ministry of Education and the Examinations Council of Eswatini. As I speak, the Junior Certificate and EGCSE classes wrote their external examinations at the centre in the last two consecutive years.

This project really brought a significant change in our lives, with some of the beneficiaries holding certificates which have already paved their way to success.

Although we had more of the merits, there were also some demerits, for example, the community would sometimes decline to offer their voluntary hard work at some points.

Most importantly, I would like to send gratitude to the BCC in collaboration with the KNCU for the enormous project they initiated to help change the lives of the less privileged in our society. I wish more and more donors would emulate the KNCU with their generosity.

v. Members of the Bridge National Committee (BNC)



Earnest Simelane

I am Earnest Simelane. I am 47 years old, and am the Director for Industrial and Vocational Training under the Ministry of Labour and Social Security in the Kingdom of Eswatini. I served as the Chairperson of the Eswatini Bridge National Committee. The EBNC served as a National Coordinating Body for the project and it was appointed by the Ministry of Education and Training to develop an implementation mechanism for the Bridge Project in Eswatini. The EBNC had members from different stakeholders, including the Ministry of Education and Training, Sebenta National Institute, Ministry of Tinkhundla (Regional Development) and the Ministry of Labour and Social Security. The membership represented TVET, non-formal education, ECCDE and community development. I got involved in the project because of my work as a TVET practitioner.

The project made a huge impact in Eswatini especially in the area of TVET, where we experienced a breakthrough to have the sewing trade included in the national trade tests. A number of people who had gained sewing trade skills through non-formal training, without certificates and national recognition, got trade tested and more will continue to benefit. The project also improved the physical quality of the trade test certificates awarded, so that the certificates are a high quality that is not forgeable.

Working with communities was not easy and it required a dynamic approach whereby day by day we had to be innovative. Managing community activities became a challenge as it was a new experience for most of us and we were learning in the process. The project showed the country that non-formal secondary education is very important and it improved lives. A lot of people were also imparted with skills for gainful employment and self-employment in communities. The project also introduced communities to home-based skills which are critical for daily living and basic income. The project was very successful and the EBNC members learnt the management of community projects. Working within the EBNC structure helped us to be better managers today.



My name is Dr. Tibekile A. Manana. I have been the Chief Executive Officer for Sebenta National Institute, a government parastatal, since February 2010. Sebenta National Institute is the only organization in Eswatini with a mandate to provide basic literacy to those who have never been to school or have dropped out before acquiring or functionalizing the skills to read, write and count. From 2010 the Institute was further mandated to provide non-formal education to out-of-school children, youths and adults. The major task was to create equivalence between formal and non-formal education for ease of movement by learners between the two systems.

In 2016 I participated in the Bridge Africa Conference in Malawi where the Eswatini National Commission for UNESCO signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Korean National Commission for UNESCO as one of the countries in the Bridge Africa Project (BAP). On rolling out the project in Eswatini, Sebenta National Institute was an implementing partner for basic literacy. I was also elected the Vice Chairman for the Eswatini Bridge National Committee.

Participating in the Bridge Project since 2016 has benefited Sebenta National Institute and has capacitated myself as an individual. As an institution we were able to capacitate our facilitators, purchase learning materials for our learners, as well as create an environment for our learners to functionalize basic literacy skills. Our learners can now use their skills to generate income through home-based industry and rearing indigenous chickens. As an individual, I was capacitated in different ways. Apart from attending the Bridge Africa Project Conference in Malawi I also participated in peer learning in Botswana and Zambia. Within the country, I managed to improve my collaborative and interpersonal skills through working with other governmental and non-governmental organizations. Through these collaborations, we shared skills on how to better access and sustain community participation in projects. As such we were able to witness growth in commitment amongst committee members, facilitators and learners. Community members, involved in the project, were at a level where they had grasped the concept and benefit of project ownership through the process of

planning, monitoring and evaluating the project implementation.

As the Vice-Chairman it was really humbling to witness, through the Bridge Eswatini project, the sharing of resources in the attempt to address community needs. Under the leadership of the Eswatini National Commission for UNESCO, the Bridge National Committee members shared not only their knowledge and skills but also

other resources. At a point and stage where the Committee members were realizing the strength and capabilities of each member and representing the institution, the project came to an end. Also, the impact of COVID 19 affected the project closure negatively such that it was not as smooth as the National Committee had planned.



Hazel Zungu

My name is Hazel Zungu and I am 61 years old. I am a retired Secretary General of the Eswatini National Commission for UNESCO. I was the SG from February 2009 to June 2019. Now I am a member of the BNC and advisor for the Bridge Eswatini Project.

In October 2015, at the 38th UNESCO General Conference, Paris, in my capacity as the Secretary-General (SG), I participated in a bilateral meeting between the then Secretary-General of KNCU and the Eswatini Minister of Education and Training, where an agreement was reached to form a partnership between the two NatComs in the KNCU-initiated Bridge Africa Programme. I was elated when the Minister of MoET in Eswatini welcomed the partnership with great excitement. After that, I became a link between KNCU and the Ministry of Education and the people of Eswatini during this great partnership with KNCU, which has immensely benefited many disadvantaged children

youth and adults in the communities.

In December of the same year, 2015, the Director of the Bridge Africa Programme from KNCU paid a visit to Eswatini to give more clarifications on the project and confirm KNCU's commitment to supporting Eswatini. That is where we learnt that there were three major sectors within the programme: ECCDE, basic literacy and TVET.

In February 2016, I participated in a Bridge Africa Conference in Malawi, where we met with KNCU and other Natcoms from countries already implementing the Bridge Project. Eswatini together with Botswana were the new countries entering into the partnership with KNCU on the Bridge Africa Programme. During this conference, I signed on behalf of ENCU a Memorandum of Understanding with KNCU. From that conference, I was even more motivated and actively started recruiting relevant partners to work with within government based on the three sectors of the project. I personally visited the heads of relevant institutions to get their buy into the aspirations of the project, explaining how the project was going to benefit the country. During our discussions, I emphasized that the local national committee needed to comprise decision-making personnel within the institution. Fortunately, most of the heads of key institutions volunteered to be members of the Committee and the BNC was born.

As the Secretary-General, I was the custodian of BEP funds and a liaison person between the KNCU and the MoET in Eswatini and the BNC, working very closely with the project manager (PM) from KNCU. I also played a leading role in most of the community meetings before the election of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the BNC. Due to my working very closely with the project manager from KNCU, I got to understand the project better and guided

both the BNC and the BCCs on the expectations of the project, especially necessary to overcome the language barrier with the PM. I was also responsible for reporting to the management of the Ministry on the progress of the BEP. During my time as the SG, I also communicated with the SGs of other national commissions for UNESCO for information sharing so as to improve the outcomes of the project in my country. In many events of the project, such as graduations, community meetings, etc. I had the role of representing the ENCU and sometimes UNESCO in general.

After my retirement, I decided to remain in the BNC as a member because I developed a great passion for the success of the project and also felt that I needed to assist the new SG, to ensure that the project did not suffer a setback, especially because the project manager from KNCU had also just left the country. The outcomes of the project were just exciting and humbling. I observed growth and self-confidence even in the members of the BCCs as individuals. After a few weeks, the BNC and the Ministry of Education requested me to act as an advisor for the project. In this regard, I also assisted in the compilation of the narrative report and the closure report of the BEP.

This project has helped improve my leadership skills since I had to provide overall oversight of the implementation of the project. I learnt to deal with a diversity of people from different backgrounds and improved my negotiation skills. I learnt to balance listening objectively to people yet be able to be firm if there was a need. I could see that my negotiation skills had improved when

we were able to successfully negotiate and request KNCU to consider supporting the BEP in the NFSE sector, which was initially not part of the project. This sector was a huge gap in the education system of Eswatini as many children dropped out of school due to different reasons, mainly lack of funds. This sector has proved to have improved the lives of many young people in the communities. My skills in international relations have also improved; I learnt about protocol procedures to ensure our country had good relations with KNCU and other Natcoms. One successful achievement of the project was raising awareness among both the ordinary people and high profile people of Eswatini on the role of communities in ensuring quality non-formal education at all levels (ECCDE, basic literacy, NFSE and TVET) and the importance of lifelong learning and how the economic growth of any society is linked to quality education. His Majesty the King in the Speech from the Throne during the 2018 opening of Parliament also mentioned the Bridge Project and the need to have more such projects in the communities, and that was a great motivation for me.

The main challenge faced in the project was the constant demotivation noted from time to time among the larger communities when it came to participating in the construction of the classrooms and having to deal with community conflicts. This was because people expected to be paid for participating in the construction and the tendency was to suspect that the BCC members were being paid. However, I must point out that I appreciated the emphasis of the project on community participation because it resulted in ownership, which

is critical for sustainability.

The Bridge Project has contributed a great deal to moving the country towards the achievement of SDG 4. Eswatini's education sector policy points out the importance of making education accessible to every Swati child, regardless of their economic status. The policy also places a lot of emphasis on access to ECCDE, which is a huge challenge in the country as many children cannot afford ECCDE as the fees are high because there is no financial support from the government. The revised education policies also stress the importance of lifelong learning and skills development for a self-sustaining country. The Bridge Project has intervened in these areas, although at a small scale, and it is influencing the government to set up more of these community-based learning centres for closing existing gaps in education.

One of the critical lessons learnt from the project is that the community has a huge role to play in meeting the goals of education, and that this is possible. Education needs to be pursued at all levels in all forms. Be it formal or non-formal, education changes the mindset of the individual and improves society. I have also learnt the importance of partnerships to achieve a goal, such as the partnerships between the ministries, the BNC and the BCCs and community leadership. Commitment is very important; in the case of the BNC members, there was no sitting allowance, but their commitment paid off.

The ENCU should continue with supervision and monitoring of the progress of the project even though it is now under the Ministry of Education.

The ENCU should work hand in hand with the department that is now running the project on an advisory role and also seek for alternative funding for the payment of the NFSE teachers because at the moment the country is in economic difficulties due to covid-19. My hope is that the Ministry of Education will appreciate the outcomes of this project and support the existing CLCs and establish even more such centres. Monitoring of the centres should take high priority as people need for any programme to succeed. The BNC deserves high appreciation for its commitment and pushing for the success of the project, and maybe it should not dissolve too soon as the Ministry may need their expertise on implementing and sustaining such programmes.

Words cannot express enough the value and appreciation of what KNCU has done for the Emaswati by this kind support. It is just sad that this support came in the midst of covid-19 challenges and progress was not easy. My hope was that the project would be extended for the further two years agreed upon in the MOU since I think the BEP was bringing the expected outcomes. The partnership seemed to have ended a bit abruptly for Eswatini in this regard. My suggestion to KNCU is to communicate a year prior that a project will be closing in future endeavours. We, as Eswatini will always remain indebted to KNCU and the people of Korea and I will always remember the humility and diligence of the officers at KNCU.

vi. Other Stakeholders



Joseph Mweli

Community leader

I am Joseph Mweli, Indvuna of Emhlangeni community. The Bridge Project has helped our community a lot. Since it started we have seen teamwork amongst the community members, especially when building the classrooms, which is a good thing for the development of the community. Also, several students

graduated from the centre, and this also is a gain for the community as it will lead to the general development of the community. A lot of people will be able to live a better life and get better jobs through the help of the project. I am very happy that our community members have a strong sense of ownership of the operation of the CLC.

A lot of community members volunteer at the centre: some go there every day to cook food for the preschool children without being paid.

The community members have learnt to work together towards achieving a certain goal. As a community, we would really like to thank KNCU for the help they have given us. We really needed it and it has gone a long way in developing our community.

We are happy that as a community we now have a proper learning centre which also attracts people from the neighbouring communities. This shows that not only will the centre benefit Emhlangeni but it will also help other communities.

As community leaders, we will make sure the CLC continues to operate efficiently and peacefully.

V. Lessons Learned

Community engagement

People of the different communities where the CLCs are located now have a strong sense of ownership of the learning centres and their operations, having come to understand why it was important to have the learning centres in their communities. The project has strengthened the cooperation amongst the community members as it taught them to work as a group in achieving a certain goal. It has also taught them to be responsible and also helped them to learn to give what they have for others to benefit, like offering their labour when constructing the classrooms without expecting anything in return.

Exchange of knowledge

The Eswatini Bridge Project has a BCC peer learning workshop annually which usually lasts for three days. During the BCC peer learning all the learning centres can gain a thing or two from the other centres and it benefits them a lot, for instance, Nkhungwini CLC had a challenge in engaging the community members in the construction of classrooms, but they were able to learn skills from the two other communities on how they can engage the community members successfully. Also, the BCCs share their successes amongst each other and how they achieved them, which helps a lot and is, we believe, what will continue sustaining the different CLCs.

Facilitators

The facilitators learnt how to teach under different conditions, for instance they learnt to teach adults under a non-formal setup which is a different setup than the one they are used to. They also learnt that providing basic education to adults is very important in our communities for the development of the country, as the skills these adults acquired improved the livelihoods of many poor households.

BNC engagement

The active engagement of the BNC has not just made the Bridge Eswatini Project a great success but has also contributed to personal professional growth for the members of the BNC. When the BNC members were assembled in 2016, most of them had no experience of working with communities and hence were not used to the dynamics of different communities. However,

over the years, as challenges were encountered in the CLCs due to community dynamics, the BNC has learnt to deal with the challenges amicably.

The diverse composition of the BNC was also an advantage to the success of the BEP because the different members had strengths in different fields. For example, the members from the Ministry of Tinkhundla development gave insights on how to deal with community conflicts and the proper structures to engage in. The member from the Ministry of Labour assisted the BNC in TVET and how the standards of the TVET programmes could be improved. The member from the statistics department of the MOET emphasized the importance of surveys before the start of the project and analysis of results from communities' responses before identifying a possible CLC site. Furthermore, the education specialists from the different sectors of education who were members of the BNC rendered it very effective.

The commitment of each of the members to playing their role in the BNC has also been amazing and contributed to the successful coordination of the Bridge Project in Eswatini. Membership of the BNC has been very consistent, with most members remaining part of the committee from the beginning of the project to its closure, except for one member who left due to retirement, and the departure of the PM. Some of the members even after retirement remained in the BNC and this ensured preservation of experience within the BNC and ensured cooperation with communities as they worked with the same people. The fact that members were from the government sector guaranteed smooth handover of the project to the government.

VI. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Message from the Eswatini National Commission for UNESCO



Mrs. Phumzile Hlophe
Secretary-General

First and foremost, on behalf of the Eswatini as a whole, the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) and the Eswatini National Commission for UNESCO (ENCU) I would like to thank the people of South Korea and the Korean National Commission for UNESCO in particular, for allowing Eswatini to be part of the Bridge Africa Programme. The programme, domesticated as the Bridge Eswatini Project, has not only benefited the MoET but also the Ministry of Labour and Social Security as well as the Ministry of Tinkhundla in many ways.

Education is key in accelerating the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. It is the basis of development, thus one of the key elements a country should invest in. The Bridge Eswatini Project has helped the country to bridge the gap that existed in Eswatini's education system in a number of ways. It has immensely contributed to the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 4 which aims to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong opportunities for all. This has been achieved through targets 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6. The project has also contributed to SDG 1, 2, 3, 5, 8 and 9.

The project has created an opportunity for those who could not finish their basic education due to many factors, including lack of funds. Thanks to the support from KNCU, we have witnessed a substantive number of students enrolling for the Basic Education and Non-formal Secondary Education coordinated by Sebenta National Institute. Some of these learners have already enrolled at colleges and universities after passing Form V.

TVET has proved to be an alternative way of making ends meet in times of high unemployment rates worldwide, more especially in Africa, including Eswatini. With the assistance of KNCU, we have been able to train youth on skills such as sewing and fashion design, electrical wiring and construction. This has seen a number of youths and adults getting employment as well as engaging in self-employment. At the end of their programmes, they take Trade Tests at Directorate of Industrial Vocational Training (DIVT) and are awarded authentic certificates from the DIVT which are recognized countrywide, and which were also printed with the support of the BEP.

I acknowledge what the project has contributed to the ECCDE sector, which is not so strong in the country. ECCDE is not financially supported by the government, thus quite a number of ECCDE centres are privately

run and hence expensive. In this regard, only parents who can afford the fees can take their children to preschools. The government only regulates and coordinates their operations, hence there is an ECCDE unit in the Ministry of Education for monitoring purposes. In the three established CLCs in the country, the project has made it a point that proper structures are built, teaching and learning materials are purchased and the teachers are capacitated on a yearly basis. This has seen the students getting a quality standard of education which has been witnessed during their graduation ceremonies. Furthermore, some of the ECCDE teachers, due to exposure to the Bridge Project, have enrolled with training institutions and have obtained better qualifications.

It is worth mentioning that as the project comes to an end, there is a sustainability plan in place. The MoET has absorbed the skills education and placed it under the department of Adult Education. The Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MoLSS) will be in charge of the trade testing and certification. The only portfolio that is currently facing a challenge is the remuneration of the Non-Formal Secondary Education teachers.

I am indebted to the community leaders who have supported the project from its initiation stage up to now. As the entry point to the communities, they have been closely working with us and owning the project, which has made it easy to plan for the sustainability aspect as the project has come to an end.

The Ministry of Education and Training worked on the project in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MoLSS) and the Ministry of Tinkhundla and Administration (MTAD). TVET is under both MoET and MoLSS. The MoLSS is responsible for trade testing and scholarships. The MTAD was also involved because the project involved communities, hence it guided the BNC on how to work harmoniously with communities. This combination made the project very effective and efficient.

Another key stakeholder that is worthy of appreciation is Sebenta National Institute, a MOET institution, which played a vital role in the implementation of the basic literacy and NFSE sectors of the project in the form of coordination and training. The Institute also took upon itself to pay the allowances of the basic literacy facilitators at the CLCs from the onset of the project, a thing which will guarantee the sustainability of the programme at the centres after the closure of the BEP.

I would sincerely like to thank the BNC for its commitment to the project. They displayed a willingness to work as one and collectively made it a point that the project become a success. They attended all our monthly scheduled meetings, as well as site visits, and attended to issues that would come up unplanned at any given time. They even pushed this project on together with the BCCs in the difficult times of the COVID-19 pandemic. Thanks goes also to KNCU in this respect for the provision of PPE and holistic training on the issues brought by the pandemic. I must also mention the ENCU for its commitment to this project although resources were very thin on the ground. Special thanks go to the former Secretary-General, who after her retirement in June 2019, continued as an advisor in the project. Without her beside me, I would not have gone thus far with the project.

I am indebted to KNCU for its unwavering support throughout the project. This is from the time the Project Manager, Ms. Gyo Gin Joo, was deployed to the country in 2016 when the project started. She was very helpful in the rolling out of the project. Although it was not so easy for us when she departed in February 2019, we were comforted that she left us up and running, as a lot has been learnt from her in regards to the project implementation. May I also thank KNCU for engaging a Project Coordinator when Ms. Joo left, who took us to the end of the project in September 2020. Additionally, I am very much indebted to the Project Advisor, Dr. Cindy Si Yeon Rim, whom I started working directly with when Ms. Joo left. She has been my mentor, advisor, and coordinator in relation to the project. She has been always available when I needed her, regardless of time. Without her unwavering support and love for the project and the community of Eswatini, this project wouldn't have yielded the sweet fruits we taste today.

This project has also promoted the visibility of the people of Korea, KNCU, ENCU as well as UNESCO in general and its programmes. I would be grateful if we can be considered should the project continue.

My thanks also go to the Ministry of Education and Training for the unwavering support throughout the project. The ministry always made it a point that transport for any matter related to the project was available. Special thanks go to the Principal Secretary who always made it a point that he graced the graduation ceremonies and also visited one of the centres as a preparatory step to the project's handover to the MOET. The Minister, who was represented by the Under Secretary, also graced the project handover to the Ministry that took place in September.

Message from the Korean National Commission for UNESCO



HAN, Kyung Koo
(Ph.D.)
Secretary-General
Korean National
Commission for
UNESCO

With the aim of expanding inclusive quality learning opportunities for marginalised people, the Bridge Eswatini Project is very much in line with UNESCO's objectives in the field of education to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 4 and Education for All.

As the MoU between the National Commissions for UNESCO in South Korea and Eswatini comes to an end, I am sincerely grateful that the project has been completed successfully, as a result of the great commitment of the Eswatini National Commission for UNESCO, the relevant government authorities and the local communities. I would like especially to extend my appreciation to all involved for their hard work in implementing the 2020 Bridge Eswatini Project despite all the difficulties with COVID-19.

Over the period from 2016 to 2019, our Bridge Project Manager, who was dispatched to Eswatini from KNCU, made meaningful connections with the Eswatini communities in which the project was implemented, working to understand the culture and finding out the educational needs of the local people. While contributing to the expansion of access to quality education in the disadvantaged communities, the Bridge Eswatini Project has built bridges between communities and the government, between community and community, and between partner countries in the overall Bridge Africa Programme. The project has evolved effectively throughout the five years of its duration, and will hopefully continue to prosper in the future with promising measures to ensure the sustainability of the Bridge Community Learning Centres.

Once again, I wish to convey my deepest gratitude for all the support that has been rendered to the Bridge Eswatini Project. I would also like to extend my special thanks to the Eswatini National Commission for UNESCO for its strong commitment and dedication to implementing this meaningful project.

I sincerely hope that Bridge Eswatini Project continues to be a catalyst for further educational services for those who have been deprived of education they need. It is also my hope that the friendship forged between ENCU and KNCU through this joint project will remain strong.

Thank you, and my very best wishes for the future.

Annex

1. Bridge Project Manager and Coordinators

Name	Position	Work Period
Ms. Gyo Jin Joo	Project Manager	February 2016 - February 2019
Ms. Nondumiso Sibandze	Project Coordinator	February 2019 - December 2019
Ms. Nondumiso Sibandze	Project Coordinator	March 2020 - September 2020
Ms. Hazel Zungu	Project Coordinator	September 2020 - November 2020

2. Interview

Bridge Project Manager



Gyo Jin Joo,
Bridge Eswatini
Project Manager

Q1. Tell me about yourself (name, age, position etc.)

I am Gyo Jin Joo, and am 33 years of age. I worked as a project manager in Eswatini for 3 years from 2016 to 2019.

Q2. How did you get involved with the Bridge Eswatini Project?

I had been already working for the Bridge Africa Programme (BAP) as a volunteer since 2013, roughly for 3 years, in Zambia and Lesotho. Then, since KNCU had decided to change their dispatching system from volunteers to project managers only, I applied for the position and, luckily, I got dispatched to the Kingdom of Eswatini, which had just joined the BAP.

Q3. What do you remember most about your experience working with the Eswatini National Commission for UNESCO in managing the Bridge Eswatini Project?

It is hard to pick just one story when it comes to my experiences working with the ENCU. Since Eswatini was a new country that had just joined the BAP, everything was adventurous and challenging throughout the journey, starting from organising the Bridge National Committee, selecting the centres for the project, introducing the non-formal secondary education within the project, organizing peer-learning, and of course all the countless road trips we made, alongside so many other happenings. Despite all the challenges

we encountered, ENCU's wisdom played a crucial role in running the project smoothly. They taught me how to work cooperatively, minimizing conflicts when working with various stakeholders, whose interests are different. They were experienced people who knew how to bring others on board.

Q4. Please share one successful achievement of the Bridge Eswatini Project

There is a myriad of project performance milestones that we achieved together. However, among all the visible outcomes, having built a platform for the stakeholders to work together, right from the community level to the regional and national level, is one of the best. Visible outcomes, such as building centres, training teachers and providing materials can be relatively easily done with sufficient resources. However, it is hard to create a sustainable system where people can make good use of them. The BNC members still communicate to support the communities in which the Bridge Project was implemented. The communities also seek the BNC's support, even after the Bridge Project concluded, which is my biggest source of pride.

Q5. Comments for ENCU and the communities in Eswatini

Being chosen to be the Eswatini manager meant I was the luckiest project manager. I was able to meet the most earnest, passionate and welcoming people to work with. They create the best possible environment for teamwork, which led the project to success. The time we spent together on the 5th floor of the Ministry of Education and Training, day and night, weekdays and weekends, Christmas and holidays, I will never forget. ENCU brought the best out of me and not a single thing would have been possible without their support. I sincerely thank every person at ENCU - Make Zungu, Make Phumzile, Bhuti Thulani, Sisi Nicky and Make Futhi - for having been my co-workers, family, and friends throughout my stay.

To our people at KuGeza, Emahlangeni, and Nkhungwini, thank you for having been so cooperative and respectful throughout the journey. I sincerely thank Bobucophos, the BCC members, and local coordinators for having been so dedicated to the project, for leading the project on the ground and for communicating with BNC members when needed. The teachers and learners also played important roles in creating a long-lasting project. I hope it has brought positive changes into your lives, big or small. Ngiyakubonga kakhulu nonkhe.

Q6. Comments and suggestions for KNCU

With KNCU, I have grown from being a naïve volunteer who knew nothing about development, to a professional development worker. The chance KNCU gave me to work for the Bridge Africa Programme for 6 years since 2013, has changed my life direction completely. I learned what it is like to have passion for what I do.

Those 6 years of my life were defined by the Bridge projects and the adventurous memories they have given me. Without them, I would not be the person I am now. I sincerely thank KNCU for the opportunity.

Q7. Any other comments about the Bridge Eswatini Project.

I can't finish this interview without mentioning the Bridge National Committee: Babe Simelane, Make Manana, Make Zungu, Make Phumzile, Babe Macwele, Babe Mazibuko, and naughty BNC friends Nelsiwe, Gcina and Sihle. The 3 years I spent with you all was like a priceless gift in my life, which I didn't deserve. Thank you all for having been friendly and for your hard work, enduring all the labour to produce and take care of the babies we have made together, which are KuGeza, Emalangeneni and Nkhungwini. I sincerely wish you all the best and luck in the future. Sitodla ema schoopers nemantongomane one day again. Ngiyakutsandza kakhulu nonkhe, Nkhosi!

Bridge Project Coordinator



Nondumiso Sibandze

My name is Nondumiso Sibandze. I have worked as a project coordinator from February 2019 to date. I hold a BA in Social Science from the University of Eswatini. I got involved in the project after seeing an advertisement for this position and I applied. Working together with other national commissions for UNESCO has led to improved operations and implementation of the project as we were able to learn a lot from the other countries especially when it comes to sustainability of the programme. The Bridge Eswatini Project has greatly contributed to improving the livelihood of many people in the rural communities and changing their economic status through the provision of basic education and vocational skills. Some of the learners were able to get jobs using the certificates they obtained through this project, others managed to start their own businesses with the knowledge they obtained, and their businesses are doing well. I would like to urge ENCU and the communities where the CLCs are located to ensure that the sustainability plan is a success: they must continue with the good work that KNCU has helped them start, especially the community members. The BNC, teachers, local coordinators, CLC management committees and the community leaders have really worked hard with commitment and dedication. Without them the project wouldn't have been a success and it was indeed a great privilege to work with them all. Lastly, I would like to thank KNCU for the opportunity they have given to people who had lost hope in life and would like to encourage them to continue helping developing countries because it really goes a long way.

