



**Press Conference for Rolling-out Support under the Eswatini
Agriculture Development Fund (EADF)**

VENUE: Piggs Peak Hotel and Casino

Date: 28 NOVEMBER 2024

Time: 0900hrs

**Speech by Hon. Minister for Agriculture, Mr. Mandla
Tshawuka**

Good morning to you all, and welcome to this press briefing.

The Ministry is pleased to announce the roll-out of the Eswatini Agriculture Development Fund (EADF). You will recall that the Fund was launched in July 2023, pending setting up of the organizational structures and systems “fit” to deliver on the objectives of the Fund.



The overall purpose of the Fund is to transform the agricultural sector by providing catalytic incentives and investments to stimulate growth in farming and active private sector participation in agricultural value chains.

As the Ministry is mandated to drive the economy through agriculture development, a second-generation Eswatini National Agriculture Investment Plan (ENAIIP 2.0) and the Ministry's Strategy have been developed and are aligned with the "Nkwe" mandate to swiftly end hunger and poverty in all forms. The Fund is one of the key *Drivers* for implementation, aimed at improving access to agriculture finance for all players in the agriculture value chain.

The Fund is targeting all commercial agricultural value chain players including: Input suppliers, Producers, Off takers, Processors, Aggregators, Service providers, Markets, etc. To support the value chain actors, the fund deploys a combination of suitable financial instruments. Due to the current resource envelope, the **LOANS** will focus and prioritize support for the following investment areas:

1. Irrigation Infrastructure
2. On-farm infrastructure
3. Fencing
4. Equipment's and implements
5. Production inputs



The prioritized commodities include the following:

1. CROPS: Maize, Beans, Cotton & Coffee
2. VEGETABLES: Potatoes, Onion, Carrots, Tomatoes & Baby vegetables
3. FRUITS: Lichi, Papaya, Peaches, Mangoes, Banana & Macadamia
4. LIVESTOCK: Beef, Goats, Dairy, Aquaculture, Pork, Poultry & Apiculture

For the application processes, the first level of interaction with applicants is at the RDAs and Regional offices mainly for Livestock, and Extension Officers are available to assist with the application templates and couching on compiling application requirements with support from the Fund's value chain Experts.

Farmers interested in the support are urged to visit their RDAs/Extension officers for information and assistance with the application processes and technical support. More information is available in the Ministry's system, the Agriculture Integrated Information System (AIIS) at <http://Agrinfosystems.gov.sz>, where a pamphlet has been uploaded highlighting detailed requirements.

The Ministry would like to emphasize that these are loans, affordable of course at 9% interest rate per annum and are expected to be repaid in full. It is Government hope that Emaswati will take advantage of this opportunity for the



development of the agriculture sector, increasing productivity thus reducing imports, and creating wealth and employment opportunities especially the youth.

As a highlight, the financial support for existing farmers is ranging from E5,000 to E1,000,000 for seasonal loans and E1,000,000 to E5,000,000 for a medium- and long-term loans. For start-up clients, the support ranges from E5,000 to E500,000 seasonal loans and E10,000 to E3,000,000 for medium term loans.

The Ministry would also like to appreciate the commendable role played by Eswatini Bank in supporting agricultural initiatives in the country. Even in the case of this fund, the funds are going to be disbursed through the bank and there is commitment to work tirelessly with the Fund in providing the support required by the applicants timeously.

Given the high risk and effects of climate change in the agriculture sector, leading to high need for climate smart infrastructure, we urge the country's Development Partners to consider partnering with EADF to reach out to all potential value chain players in deploying the targeted financial instruments. It remains Government desire to acquire more resources to support positive change in the lives of Emaswati!

The EADF Secretariat is readily available to assist all potential applicants and their offices are located at Dlanubeka Building



under the Ministry of Agriculture at the 7th Floor. Do not hesitate to seek their guidance and assistance with your applications.

I thank you.

