





Orphaned and Vulnerable Children's Fund to cater for the education of children in difficult circumstances up to high school level. As a result of these initiatives, the country has realized an increase in enrollment rates.

Other policies include the adoption of a competency-based curriculum by the education system to address the mismatch of skills. In addition, Government has established a Youth Development Fund in an endeavor to develop entrepreneurship skills among young people and to inculcate a culture of self-employment. Other youth empowerment initiatives include the 'Kick Start' and "Junior Achievers" which provide financial assistance and other means for the creation of development projects and curbing youth unemployment.

Eswatini has also made great strides in the attainment of gender equality as shown by the gender development index which stands at 0.71. We have seen improvements in gender parity at all levels of the education system as reflected by the gender parity index of 1.01, 1.19 and 0.96 at primary, secondary school and tertiary levels, respectively.

It is worth noting that population issues have been well integrated into key national policy documents including the National Development Plan, the National Health Policy, Sexual and Reproductive Health Policy, Education Policy, Gender Policy and the National Youth Policy. It is further worth noting that the country is in the process of revising the National Population Policy to incorporate among other things, megatrends such as climate change.



In conclusion, let me re-affirm the full commitment of the Eswatini government to the ICPD Programme of Action post this session. I am confident that during this session we shall reach a consensus on how to move forward and ensure that the Population and Development agenda is fully incorporated in the global sustainable development agenda of the future.