

KOBWA NEWSLETTER

3rd Quarter
OCT-DEC 2024



KOBWA
WATER FOR EVER





Vision

To be recognised as a leading entity; in sustainable integrated transboundary water resource development and management



Mission

KOBWA will achieve the vision by ensuring efficient water harvesting and bulk distribution, management of the environment, ensuring quality water, regulation compliance, socio-economic development, engagements with key stakeholders, optimizing our resources, and empowering our employees.



Values

Teamwork and diversity
Community and customer-focused
Quality and safety
Performance delivery
Communication and transparency

Contents

SADC-GMI National Groundwater Stakeholder Conference	5
KOBWA Stakeholder Engagement	6
Fact Finding Mission Delegates Tour Maguga Dam	7
Primary Schools Sensitized On Flood Risks and Empowered On Prevention Measures	9
OHS Committee Trained On Safety, Health and Environmental Issues	10
KOBWA Management Trained On GRAP Standards	12
Water Management Team Attend Motorbike Training	13
Departmental Team Building	14
World Aids Day Commemoration	16
KOBWA Team Building And End Of Year Function	17
Nugget(s) Of Information From KOBWA Internal Audit Front Desk	24
New Staff	26
Tea Gathering	27



SADC-GMI National Groundwater Stakeholder Conference



His Royal Highness Prince Lonkhokhela, the Honourable Minister of Natural Resources and Energy (centre) with SADC-GMI, Department of Water Affairs and stakeholders at the meeting. (courtesy: MoNRE).

Prince Lonkhokhela emphasized the need for greater collaboration in managing this resource. The Minister highlighted the Ministry's commitment to exploring groundwater as an alternative source for communities facing water supply challenges.

Furthermore, HRH Prince Lonkhokhela expressed gratitude for the support of multinational brands and institutions, such as SADC - Groundwater Management Institute, Komati Basin Water Authority, Incomati and Maputo Watercourse Commission and other present in the meeting. The Minister emphasized the importance of transboundary water resources cooperation and the positive impact that such collaboration can have on water security in Eswatini and neighbouring countries. Highlighting the importance of collaboration between the public and private sectors, HRH Prince Lonkhokhela stressed the need for effective coordination and the avoidance of duplication of services in groundwater management.

The conference featured informative presentations from several key stakeholders, further highlighting the importance of groundwater management and sustainable utilization.

KOBWA joined other stakeholders at a 2-days National Groundwater Stakeholder Conference that was held in Mountain View, Mbabane on the 23rd - 24th of October 2024. Themed "Enhancing Water Access Through Sustainable Groundwater Resources Development and Management", the conference was hosted by (SADC Groundwater Management Institute) SADC-GMI in collaboration with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Energy, Department of Water Affairs. It aimed to empower the National Focal Group on Groundwater (NFG) in their critical role of advocating for and advising on groundwater-related matters.

His Royal Highness (HRH) Prince Lonkhokhela, the Honourable Minister of Natural Resources and Energy, delivered the keynote address recognising the importance of safeguarding this strategic resource. As Eswatini's demand for groundwater outpaces its supply, the Honourable Minister highlighted the urgent need to

ensure sustainable utilization of the country's groundwater resources to meet the present and future water demands of communities across the Kingdom.

Additionally, the Honourable Minister commended the efforts of local and international stakeholders in implementing groundwater projects that benefit residents in water-scarce areas of Eswatini. His Royal Highness further noted that these projects are instrumental in achieving the country's 2030 targets for access to potable water, improved health, and poverty alleviation.

He also emphasized the importance of groundwater as an indispensable resource for socio-economic development and expressed gratitude for the participants' attendance and engagement in this crucial conference. Recognizing the critical role of groundwater in maintaining surface water levels and ensuring water security, HRH

KOBWA STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

In October 2024, KOBWA facilitated stakeholder engagement meetings in five communities that reside around the Maguga dam. These communities include Endlembeni, Luhlangotsini, Kwakheni, Mahlabane, and Nkomazi. This is a development which advances the zoning and marking of a business zone around the Maguga dam to enhance the economic status of the local community through business developments around the dam. This initiative began with the installation of pegs around the identified pieces of land earmarked for business development. Thus, the purpose of the meetings was to sensitize the community to this initiative and on how it may be used to generate income for the upliftment of the

local economy. During the meetings, the community members appreciated the initiative and were able to raise their questions and concerns which were addressed by Ekuvinjelweni traditional leaders leading the process with support from KOBWA management.

Before embarking on this new phase, KOBWA CEO, Mr Trevor Shongwe stated that as the local leadership allocates the land around the dam it was very imperative to engage with the community stakeholders to gather their view on how the community will benefit from the development. As a critical stakeholder, their suggestions and opinions are key to contribute towards the attainment of the project.



KOBWA CEO, Mr. Trevor Shongwe addressing Kwakheni and Mahlabane community members while KOBWA staff and Ekuvinjelweni community leaders follow proceedings of the meeting.



Community Development Officer, Mr. Nicholas Mkhathswa addressing Nkomazi community members.

FACT FINDING MISSION DELEGATES TOUR MAGUGA DAM

Following alarming decreased water levels in dams due to a prolonged period without adequate rainfall in the summer season and severe heat waves, His Royal Highness Prince Lonkhokhela, the Honourable Minister of Natural Resources and Energy in Eswatini, commissioned

a delegation of experts to inspect the Eswatini dams' status. Led by the Acting Principal Secretary of the Ministry, Sicelo Nxumalo, the fact-finding mission was conducted on the 30th of December 2024 by a delegation from various institutions, including Komati Basin Water Authority (KOBWA),

Eswatini Electricity Company (EEC), Eswatini Water Services Corporation (EWSC), and the Department of Water Affairs.

Three crucial dams of Eswatini were toured by the delegation, these included Maguga Dam, Hawane Dam and Luphohlo



Maguga Dam decreased levels.

Dam. Maguga Dam, under the management of KOBWA serves as a source of irrigation and support hydropower generation. Luphohlo Dam, which is managed by the Eswatini Electricity Company, is a key source of hydropower generation. The Hawane Dam, managed by the Eswatini Water Services Corporation, supplies potable water to the towns of Mbabane and Ezulwini.

Worryingly, the team's inspection revealed that the water levels at the three dams had drastically decreased when compared to the same time last year. Maguga Dam was at 66.64%, while Luphohlo Dam was at 50.86%, and Hawane Dam had declined to 39.02%. This significant decline in water levels from last year's 100% capacity during the same period, signalled a long dry spell that could have

detrimental impacts on irrigation, power and water supply in Eswatini.

During the tour, KOBWA Operations Director, Mr. Sakhiwe Nkomo shared that the dam was above 50% and were hopeful that more rains would come and increase the capacity. He added that should the worst-case scenario occur, where the country may not receive rains for a prolonged period, "the current water supply in the dam could only supply residents and irrigate farms for a year and a half" he said.

Despite the concerning findings, the Ministry and stakeholders remained optimistic that the anticipated rains in this season would bring about much-needed improvements in water levels at the dams including Maguga Dam.



KOBWA Operations Director, Mr. Sakhiwe Nkomo addressing the fact-finding mission delegation that visited Maguga Dam. (courtesy: MoNRE).

PRIMARY SCHOOLS SENSITIZED ON FLOOD RISKS AND EMPOWERED ON PREVENTION MEASURES



GIS Officer, Mr. Mfundi Mathunjwa addressing pupils at Ngowane Primary School.

KOBWA in collaboration with the National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) in Eswatini conducted sensitisations on flood risks and preventative measures at Luhhumaneni, Ngowane, Emvembili Lutheran and Mpofu Primary Schools. As the rainy season was at hand, the two organizations jointly visited the schools to empower young children between Grade 1 and 6 on how they could protect themselves in case rivers and dams got flooded to prevent drowning.

Topics discussed included staying safe during the rainy season by avoiding crossing flooded rivers, how to recognize flood prone areas, following precaution of national weather condition announcements etc. In addition, the students and teachers were sensitized on taking note of emergency numbers so that they can easily dial for help when the need arises. Approximately 1,000 people (students and school administration) were reached with messaging.



OHS Committee members going through the content during the training.

OHS Committee Trained On Safety, Health and Environmental Issues

On the 24th of October 2024, KOBWA OHS Committee members were trained on Safety, Health and Environmental (SHE) issues by the BJS Training in Springs, South Africa. The eleven (11) committee members were capacitated on hazard identification and risk assessments. In addition, the training highlighted the responsibilities of SHE representatives in an organization which include ensuring that the workplace is safe, healthy, and environmentally friendly. The Risk Quality Officer Ms. Kenzie Mavimbela also OHS Secretariat stated that it was crucial for the committee to attend the training so that “they have an understanding of their roles and responsibilities and their competency certificates are kept up-to date to comply with QMS”.

The SHE Reps got to understand that they play a critical role in promoting a culture of safety and environment stewardship within the organization and advocating for the well-being of all KOBWA employees. This is good for KOBWA in her journey to obtaining the OHS certification in ISO 45001:2018.

Executive Management Reviews KOBWA 2024/25 Strategy



Management holds a brief discussion during the training.

From November 21st to 22nd, 2024, KOBWA Executive Management participated in a Strategy Risk Planning workshop at the Casterbridge Hotel in Hazyview, South Africa. Led by the Risk Quality Officer, the workshop focused on how the Executive Committee (EXCO) is managing risks in preparation for the upcoming financial year.

Key discussions included simplifying the Combined Assurance approach, removing resolved risks, and aligning the five-year strategy with the three-year

budget. All the six objectives were scrutinised and the risks were documented. The following step was to rate the risks, document current controls and move on to document actions to improve management of the risks. That then forms the 2025/26 Strategic Risk Register.

The workshop was a success. EXCO expressed their appreciation in the manner the workshop had improved from the 2023/24 Risk Workshop.

KOBWA Team Trained On GRAP Standards

The KOBWA CEO, CSD, OD, Internal Audit team and the Risk Quality Officer attended a 5 days GRAP training in Pretoria, South Africa. The training was offered by the University of Pretoria under the Continuous Education section and aimed to equip the team with a high-level of understanding of the GRAP standards as an accounting framework, and an understanding of the impact on various line items and disclosures as part of a GRAP compliant set of annual financial statements (AFS).

The team focused on life cycle approach, value maximisation, alignment with organizational strategy, risk management, sustainability, informed decision, cost optimization, continual improvement and compliance and accountability. By the end of the training, the team was equipped with the required expertise to analyse GRAP statements, trends and provide recommendations for improvements.

The KOBWA finance team has only recently introduced interim financial statement reporting as part of their quarterly deliverables. The lack of reporting limited financial statement preparation to annual audit processes only and did not benefit the organisation due to the delay in issuing these to stakeholders. The training equipped the attendees with the required knowledge to analyse quarterly GRAP financial statements and gain insights early to provide recommendations for business improvements.

The Finance Director, Mr. Juan De Wet stated that this training will be “beneficial in the analysis of KOBWA financial statements by management to ensure proactive analysis of trends, to measure progress towards goals and reveal opportunities to improve operating efficiency . Furthermore, it enabled the Internal Audit Function to strengthen their skills when auditing the finance processes of interim financial statements” he said.

Water Management Team Attend Motorbike Training

Five Operations staff members were trained on how to operate a motorbike. These included two Assistant Water Bailiffs, the Technical Auxiliary Officer, Tractor Driver, and Groundsman. The 3-days training combined theory and practicals ensuring that the staff members gain the required skill and are compliant in operating a motorbike enabling them to obtain licenses.

A follow-up training leading to the learners obtaining their licenses will be conducted.



The Team going through the manual contents



The instructor assisting the Technical Auxiliary Officer on a motorbike while the others take notes.

EMPLOYEE WELLNESS

DEPARTMENTAL TEAM BUILDING SESSIONS

Building a highly effective team takes effort, consideration, and the deployment of a thoughtful team development process. Hence, KOBWA fosters departmental team building sessions to help build trust, communication, and develop problem-solving skills. As a result, the Administration, Corporate Services and Finance Departments respectively conducted their teambuilding sessions in the quarter. The Corporate Services Department had their session from 13 – 15 November 2024 while Admin and Finance Departments had their sessions from the 27th - 29th of November 2024.

Corporate Services Department:

On the 13th of November the department departed for Pumbaa Wildlife Park & Accommodation on the outskirts of Mbombela for its inaugural teambuilding session.

On arrival, the first activity undertaken was a guided educational tour of the Park whereby the group were treated to up close viewing of many live exotic animals. On view were exceptional beasts such as Siberian tigers; jaguars; black leopards and the white African lion. A knowledgeable tour guide provided interesting facts on each animal as the impressed group admired and marvelled at the exhibition. A short quiz was held after the tour to test how much knowledge was absorbed during the tour of the Park.

In the afternoon a spiritual wellness session was held where the group partook in physical & mental exercises aimed at refreshing the body and mind. Later in the evening a potjie cooking themed supper was served; everyone was presented with a pot and ingredients, and all were tasked with Master Chef styled challenge. Needless to say, many variations of stewing were witnessed but fortunately there were reports of upset tummies the next morning before departure back to the Office.



The Corporate Services department team sharing a light moment.



Above & bottom: The team enjoying a spiritual awareness session and below they admire the Siberian tiger.

Administration Department: attended their teambuilding exercise in Jozini Tiger Lodge, South Africa. On the 28th of November, the team kickstarted the day with a morning game drive at Manyoni Private Game Reserve which was followed by their departmental strategic planning meeting in the mid-morning. Later in the day they went for a boat cruise in the Jozini Dam. The next day they drove to Sodwana Bay to enjoy an hour of quad biking in the white sands and later ended by visiting the beach and took pictures while sharing a light-hearted moment together.



The team smiling for the camera while enjoying the beach. and on the right they had breakfast during the game drive.



The Admin team taking a break after the morning game drive at Manyoni Private Game Reserve.



The team had breakfast during the game drive.

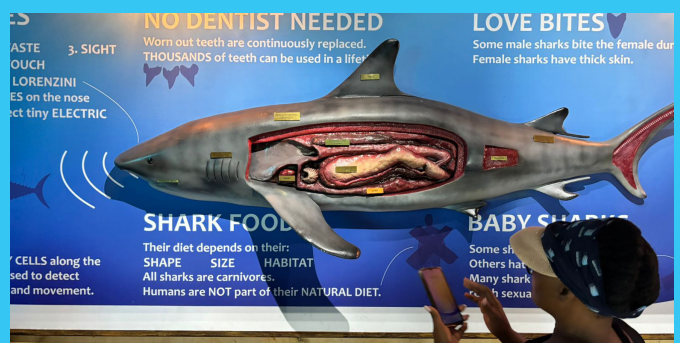


The Finance team enjoying lunch together.



The team took a walk at U-Shaka Marine.

Finance Department: went on a two-day team building function in Durban, South Africa. Activities were mostly at UShaka Marine World which included a Dolphin Show where the team had fun dancing with Dolphins and watching some amazing skills displayed by the aquatic mammal. The team also explored the underground world with the Aquarium experience where they got up close to some of the oceans most magnificent and microscopic creatures set up in a Shipwreck. Other activities included beach walk, lunch and dinner on which the team was able to get to know each other better and had a taste of Sushi for the first time.



Payroll Officer, Ms. Doris Mavuso learning more about sharks.

WORLD AIDS DAY COMMEMORATION

KOBWA staff joined the Kingdom of Eswatini, the Republic of South Africa and the world in commemorating World AIDS Day in December 2024 under the theme "Take the rights path: My health, my right!".

Mr. Bongumusa Simelane from Eswatini Business Health (EBH) led the session by encouraging the staff to know their HIV status and shared how they can protect themselves using different prevention methods that are available such as PEP, event-driven PEP, PrEP and more. Before lighting the candle, staff was given an opportunity to ask questions which were responded to by Mr. Simelane.



Corporate Services Officer, Ms. Zanele Zulu lighting the candle while Mr. Bongumusa Simelane from Eswatini Business Health looks on.



Maguga based staff after lighting the candle



Driekoppies based staff after lighting the candle.

From the 11th – 13th of December 2024, the Authority hosted its end of year function which was held at Anew Resort Hazyview in Mpumalanga, South Africa.

TEAM BUILDING

Firstly, on the 12th of December 2024 the team kickstarted the day by participating in team building exercises that were coordinated by Induna Adventures. Through these activities, the staff got to identify their strengths and weaknesses and got to learn how they can support one another as they go about their daily activities. Hot as it was, the day was full of fun and laughter as they eased to the evening session that was prepared for them to mark the end of the year.



Left – right: Team A, B, C racing as they plank walk on the lawn during the team building session



Left – right: Staff trying to figure out a puzzle.



Games were order of the day during the team building session.



The team in jubilation after winning a challenge



Kenzie and Andile trying to silently untangle themselves while Samkeliso assist them.



Some staff taking a group photo before playing paintball.



Staff quad biking at Induna Adventures.



Some staff members enjoyed river rafting

END OF YEAR FUNCTION

The main activity was held later in the evening where the Operations Director Mr. Sakhiwe Nkomo highlighted on the Authority's 2024 performance and accomplishments when delivering the keynote address. In his speech, Nkomo stated that for the past 30 years, KOBWA had been operating and maintaining two dams: Maguga and Driekoppies Dams respectively. As a result, the institution was in the process of reviewing the Treaty which upon approval would allow KOBWA to do more work beyond operating and maintaining the dams.

He further noted that the Department of Water and Sanitation in South Africa had availed funding for the implementation of project-based activities which required project management skills to enable timely implementation of the projects. With these changes the Director urged the team to work harder and evolve so that the work can be discharged to the satisfaction of the Parties that support the Authority. "With these positive developments, that is the Treaty and new projects, the future looks bright for KOBWA", he said. "This means that the two Parties have trusted us to do more work other than just operating and maintaining the dams", he added.

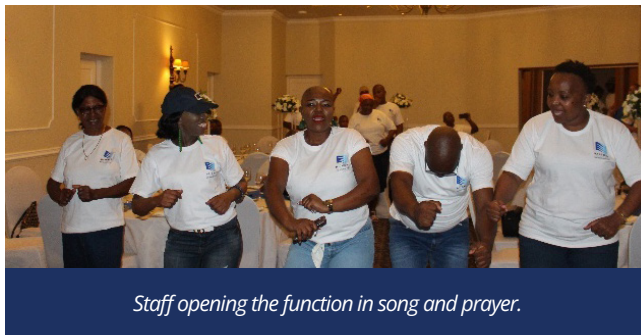
Mr Nkomo further stated that a Resource Management

Plan (RMP) for the Driekoppies Dam is being implemented. The RMP seeks to develop the area around the Driekoppies Dam which is long overdue. "This will boost tourism and businesses in the area, it will also enhance our relationship with the community around us and likely generate revenue for KOBWA", he said..

The Operations Director further highlighted the importance of cultivating

a good culture for the institution as it solely relies on individuals' actions and influenced by the leadership of the organisation. "Culture is what people talk about when they leave an institution, therefore, let us all strive towards fostering a culture we can be proud of", he said. "I also note that we need to work on our emotional intelligence, and we need to pull together as a team to achieve KOBWA's vision" he added.

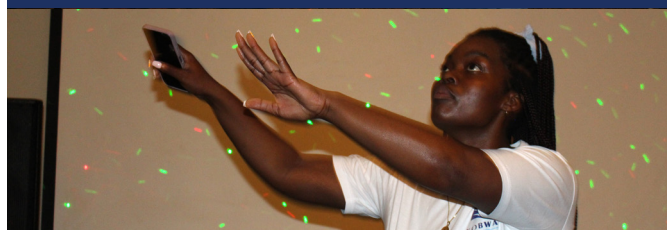
In closing, he acknowledged the challenges faced by the organisation which included lack of funding to implement some activities such as culture transformation. He further noted that there was competition within the transboundary sector, which required the team to work harder. On behalf of Executive Management, he shared his gratitude for the work done in the two quarters of the financial year and wished the staff a safe and restful festive break.



Staff opening the function in song and prayer.



MC's Mr. Bheki Dlamini and Ms. Busisiwe Shongwe leading proceedings of the night.



Ms. Nobethu Masanabo performing at the event



Staff following the proceedings during the end of year function.



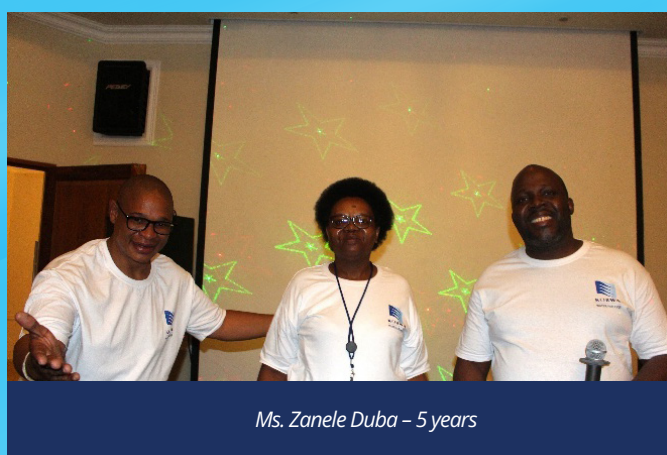
RBCT Chairperson, Mr. Mlibatisi Simelane making his remarks during the function.



LONG SERVICE AWARDS AND COMPLETION OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

The Authority recognized its staff through awarding them in the categories of Long Service and for the successful completion of professional studies. The long Service Awardees were:

Period	Employee
5 years	Zanele Duba
15 years	Nompumelelo Mnisi
20 years	Musa Dlamini
25 years	Bheki Dlamini





Staff that were recognised for the completion of professional studies are as follows:

<i>Employee</i>	<i>Certificate of Recognition</i>
Ms. Colisile Nhlabatsi	Master of Business Administration
Ms. Futhi Kunene	Caseware Fundamentals
Ms. Kenzie Mavimbela	SHE Rep Training Course
	How to Read and Analyse GRAP Financial Reports
Ms. Gugu Dlamini	SHE Rep Training Course
Mr. Mfundu Mathunjwa	Groundwater Short Course – Geochemistry & Remediation
Ms. Nobethu Masanabo	SHE Rep Training Course
Ms. Nonceba Noqayi	SHE Rep Training Course
	Transboundary Groundwater Governance and Management in River Basin Organisations
	Introduction to SAMTRAC International Course
Ms. Phumzile Hlatshwayo	Media Training
Mr. Victor Mahwayi	How to Read and Analyse GRAP Financial Reports
Ms. Zanele Duba	How to Read and Analyse GRAP Financial Reports

STAFF AWARDS

In the spirit of appreciating and motivating staff, management awarded employees in the following categories: employee of the year, most improved performer, go that extra mile and most innovative award. On the other hand, staff was requested to vote for the best customer centricity employee and best motivator awards. It is worth noting that, two employees were voted as best motivators.



Ms. Futhi Kunene – Employee of the year



Mr. Mlibatisi Simelane – Most Improved Performer



Ms. Barbra Gama – Go that Extra Mile Award



Ms. Phumzile Hlatshwayo – Innovative Award



Ms. Kenzie Mavimbela -Best Motivator Award



Ms. Pholile Dlodlu - Best Customer Centricity Award



Mr. Monde January – Best Motivator Award

RBCT AWARD

The RBCT awarded gifts of appreciation to staff that led proceedings of the evening and performers of the night.



Ms. Nobethu Masanabo – Performer of the night



Ms. Nombekozelo Maphanga – Performer of the night



Ms. Busi Shongwe – MC of the night



Mr. Bheki Dlamini – MC of the night

Nugget(s) of Information From KOBWA Internal Audit Front Desk

INTRODUCTION

We all wish from time to time, that we lived in a perfect world, where everything would simply go according to plan. Unfortunately, our reality is a bit more unpredictable and disruptive than that – exposing organisations to continuous changes and unexpected events that alter our plans and create high uncertainty. So, what can an organisation do to minimise the negative impact of such events, or even prevent them from occurring in the first place? The answer lies in one effective, safeguarding mechanism: **implementation of internal controls**, or more precisely **establishment of an internal control system**.

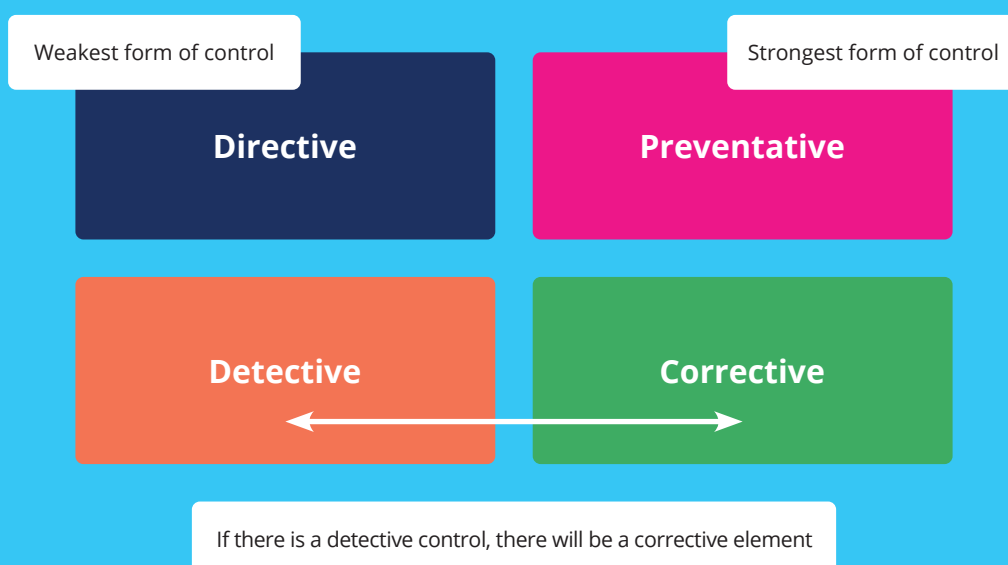
DEFINITION OF AN INTERNAL CONTROL SYSTEM

What is an internal control system?

An **internal control system (ICS)** is a formal system of policies and procedures that helps an organization achieve its objectives effectively. The system is designed to protect the organization's assets, prevent mismanagement, and ensure that employees are adequately following the established rules and procedures.

What are internal controls?

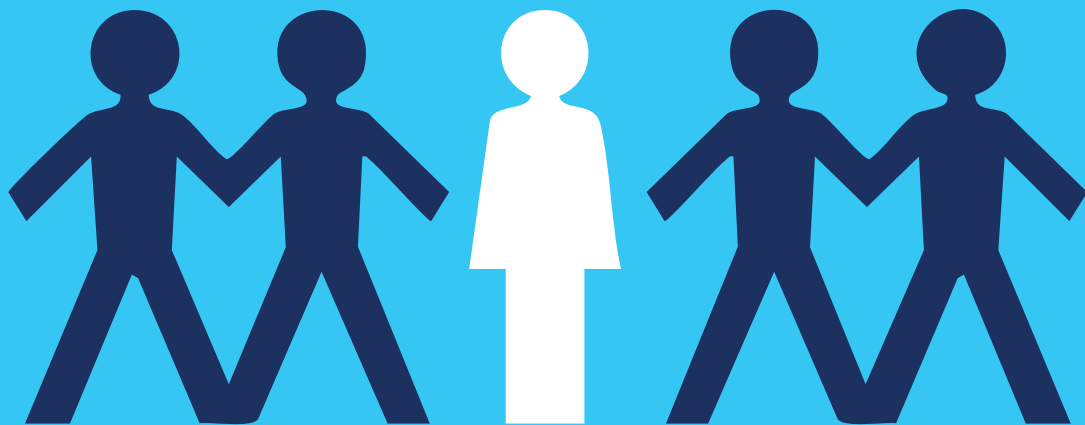
Internal controls refer to all mechanisms and activities that are designed to help an organisation operate efficiently and effectively. These typically include specifications, guidelines, rules, management declarations, and more.



DIFFERENT TYPES ON INTERNAL CONTROLS

Internal controls can be divided into sub-categories – depending on the effectiveness and possibilities in each specific context.

- i. **Directive controls** give direction. Things like policies are directive controls. The weak part of directive controls though is that they state the practice to be followed but do not stop bad practice from occurring.
- ii. **Preventive controls** play an important part in an ICS because they help prevent errors or irregularities from occurring in the first place. These controls are put into effect to proactively address potential risks and issues, rather than just reacting to them after they have already happened. *Some common examples of preventive controls include segregation of duties, authorisation and approval processes, physical controls, drill exercises, information technology (IT) controls, etc.*
- iii. **Detective controls** are initiated after any activity in order to identify errors, fraud, and other irregularities within an organization. These controls typically involve the use of various monitoring and reporting tools to discover potential issues, such as discrepancies in financial records or deviations from established policies and procedures. *Examples of detective controls include auditing, fraud detection systems, security monitoring, exception reporting, etc.*
- iv. **Corrective controls** are aimed at correcting errors, fraud, and other irregularities that have been detected. Detective controls will often lead to corrective action being taken. *Examples include incident response & recovery, root cause analysis, change management, awareness training(s), consequence management, etc.*



BREAK THE CORRUPTION CHAIN

New Staff Members

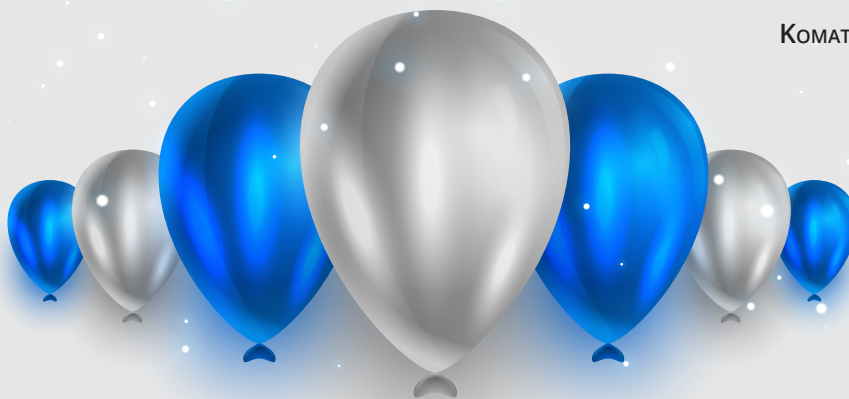


Mr. Elvis Sikhakhane
Laboratory Technologist

On the 1st of November 2024, Elvis Sikhakhane was appointed Laboratory Technologist from the Department of Water Affairs Laboratory. Elvis holds a B-Tech in Engineering: Chemical (Environmental) from the University of South Africa after earning a National Diploma in Chemical Engineering from Mangosuthu University of Technology.

He has also worked as a Technician at World Vision under the Water and Sanitation Department and as a Supervisor at Swazi Paper Mills. He is currently pursuing an MSc in Chemistry, specializing in Environmental Management. In addition, he has completed a course: ISO/ IEC 17025:2017 Requirements and Internal Auditing.





KOBWA TEA GATHERING: OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2024

Kenzie Mavimbela	2 October
Juan De Wet	15 October
Colisile Nhlabatsi	24 October
Eric Khoza	3 November
Musa Dlamini	10 November
Sanele Dlamini	15 November
Nurse Nkosi	20 November
Zanele Zulu	30 November
Andile Mananzi	10 December

Tea gathering through the lens







Maguga Dam

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Pigg's Peak
Eswatini

Pigg's Peak
Hhohho
Eswatini

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Operating Hours

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Komati Basin Water Authority



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