



Effects of exposure to sexual and physical violence among men across Eswatini

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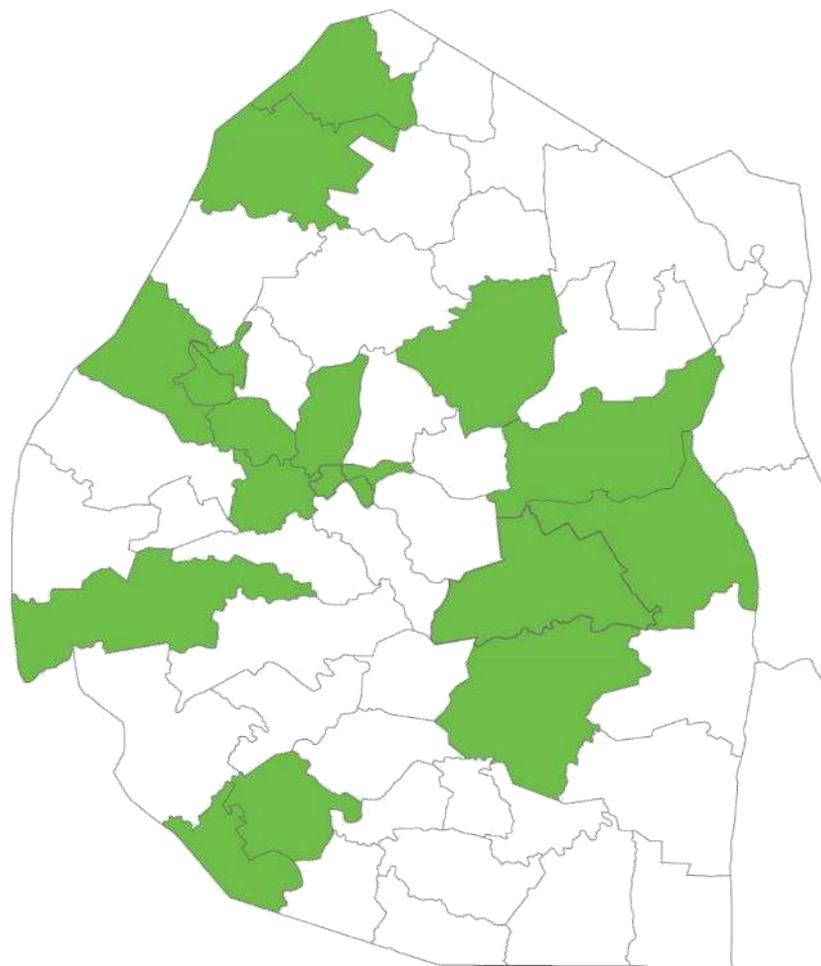
Background

- Increasing attention to how men's own experiences of violence lead to risk behaviors that affect them and their intimate partners
- Limited research has explored violence experienced by men in Eswatini, a country with severe GBV and HIV epidemics
 - 38% of women experienced sexual violence before age 18
 - 27% of adults are living with HIV

Reza, A. et al. (2009). "Sexual violence and its health consequences for female children in Swaziland: a cluster survey study," *The Lancet* 373(9679): 1966–1972 doi: 10.1016/S0140-6736(09)60247-6; Sumner, S.A. et al. (2015). "Prevalence of sexual violence against children and use of social services—seven countries, 2007–2013," *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep*, 64(21): 565–569; UNAIDS (2019). "Country fact sheet: Eswatini."

Methods

- Cross sectional survey in 2018
- 1,091 men ages 20–34 years
- 19 districts across all 4 regions of Eswatini
 - Recruitment at informant-identified hot spot venues



Measures

- Lifetime exposure to physical and sexual violence → Adapted from Stepping Stones/Creating Futures study in South Africa
- Endorsement of inequitable gender norms → GEM Scale
- Relationship control → Sexual Relationship Power Scale (SRPS)
- Hazardous drinking → AUDIT-C
- Depression → PHQ-4

Pulerwitz, J. & Barker, G. (2008). "Measuring attitudes toward gender norms among young men in Brazil," *Men and Masculinities* 10(3): 322; Pulerwitz, J. et al. (2000). "Measuring sexual relationship power in HIV/STD research," *Sex Roles* 42(7-8): 637-660. Bush, K. et al. (1998). "The AUDIT alcohol consumption questions (AUDIT-C): an effective brief screening test for problem drinking," *Archives of Internal Medicine* 158(16): 1789-1795; Kroenke, K. et al. (2009). "An ultra-brief screening scale for anxiety and depression: the PHQ-4," *Psychosomatics* 50(6): 613-621.

Sociodemographic characteristics (n=1,091 men)

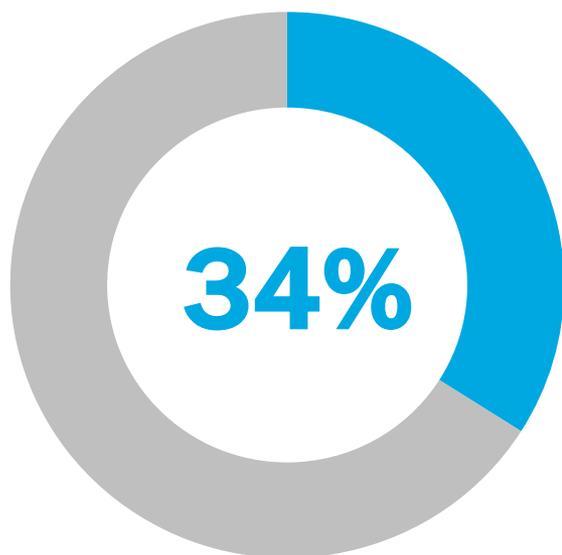
Mean age:
26 years

51%
employed

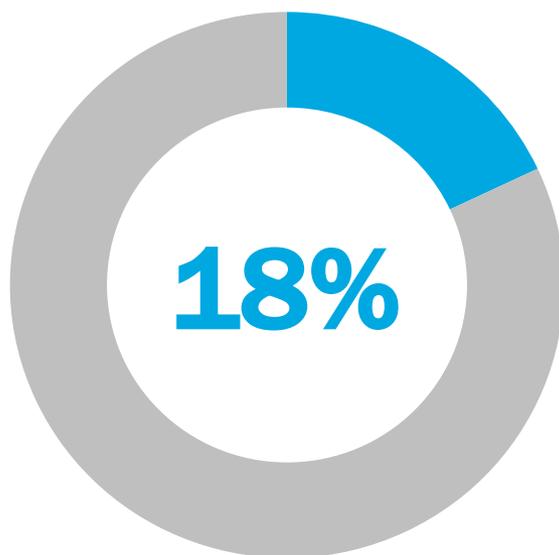
15%
married/
cohabiting

62%
completed
secondary
school

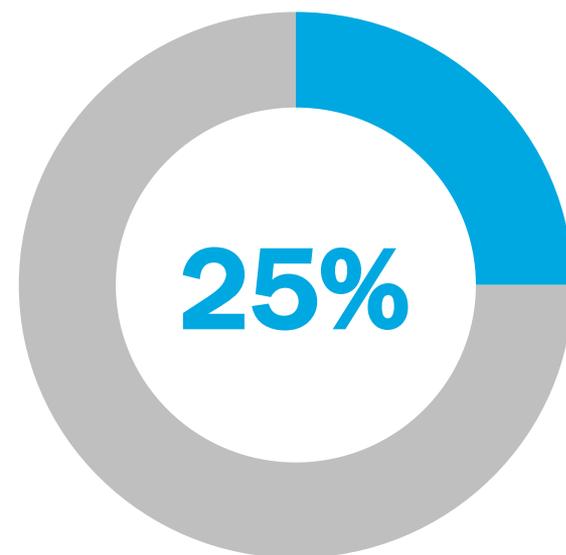
Examples of exposure to violence



Ever witnessed
an armed attack

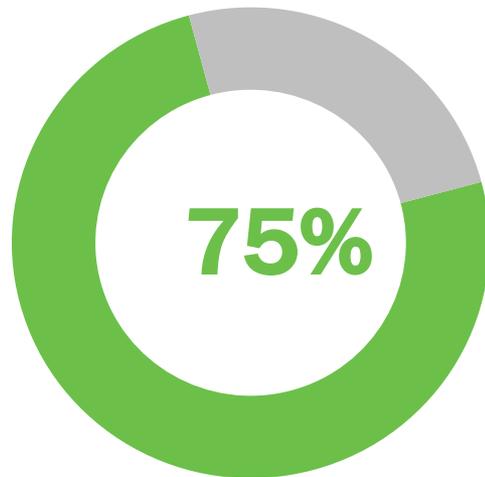


Ever robbed at
gun- or knife-point

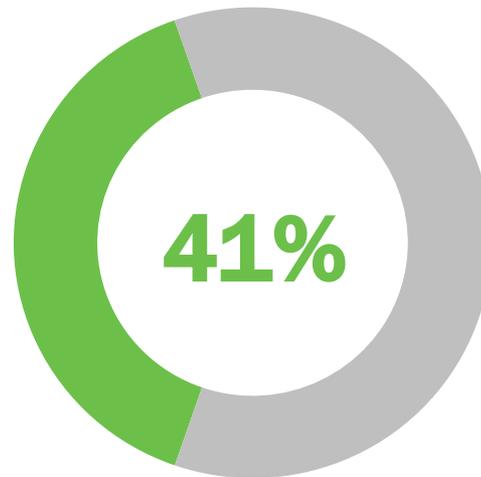


Ever been or felt
close to death

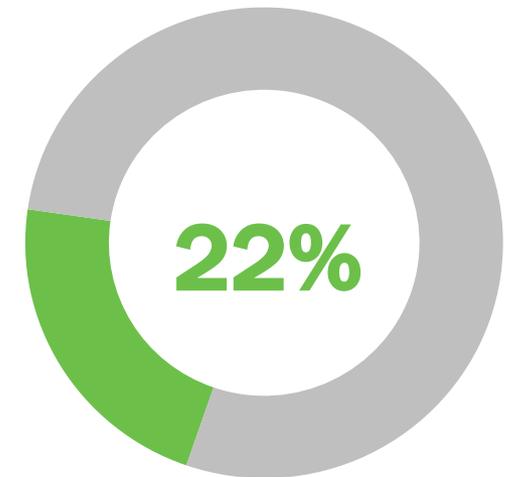
Physical violence in childhood (under age 18)



Beaten at home with a belt/stick/whip

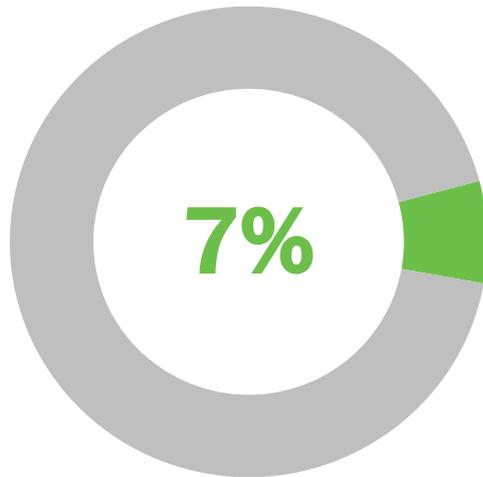


Of those, experienced often/very often

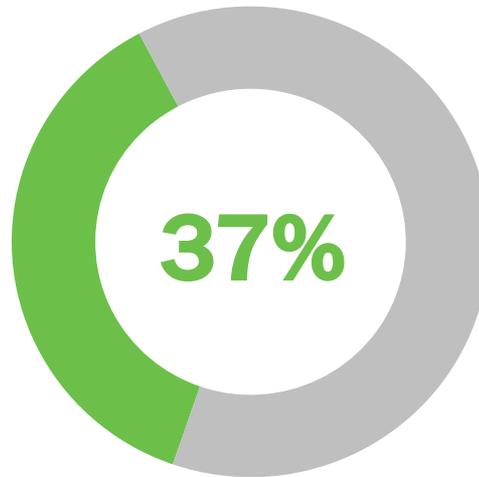


Witnessed mother being beaten by partner

Coerced sex in childhood



Experienced **coerced sex** before the age of 18

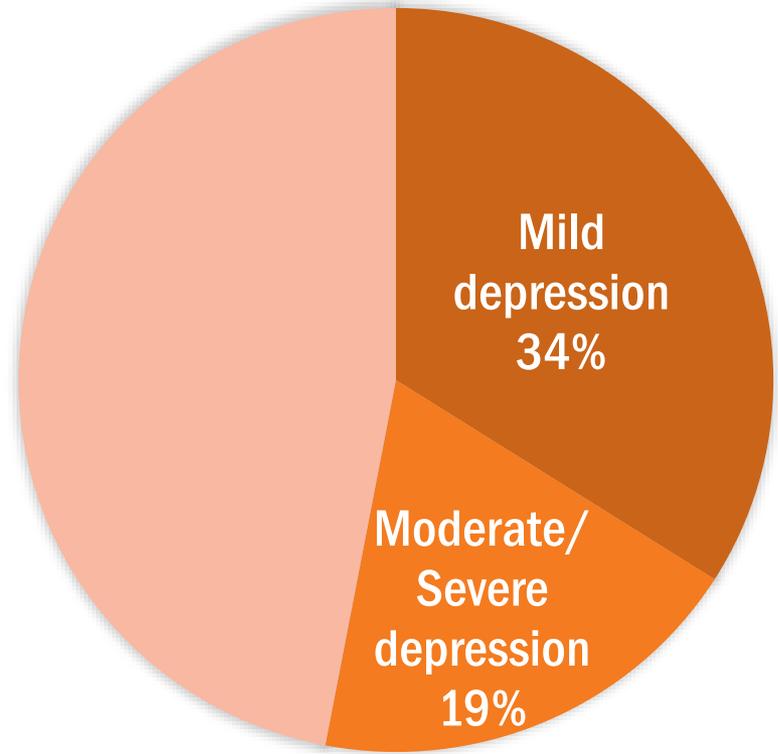
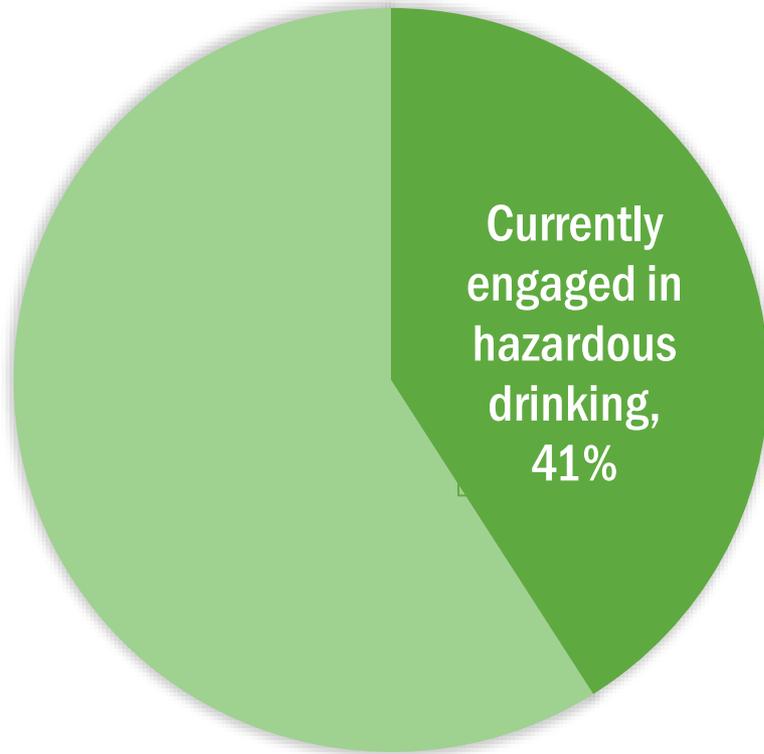


Of those, experienced **coerced sex** often/very often

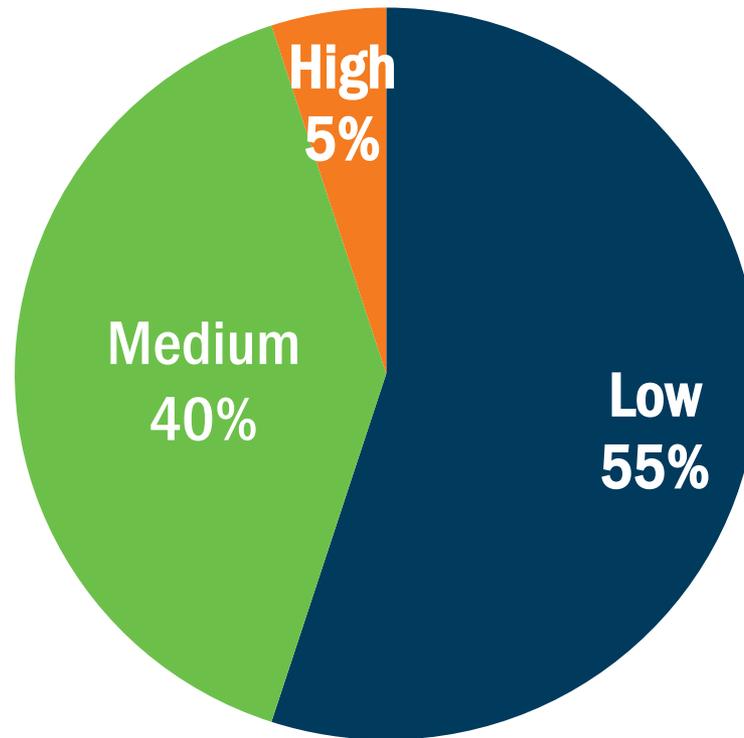
2X

As common in **rural** vs. urban setting

Hazardous drinking and depression



Endorsement of inequitable gender norms



Examples of GEM Scale responses:

A man is expected to discipline his woman

% who agree/partially agree

47%

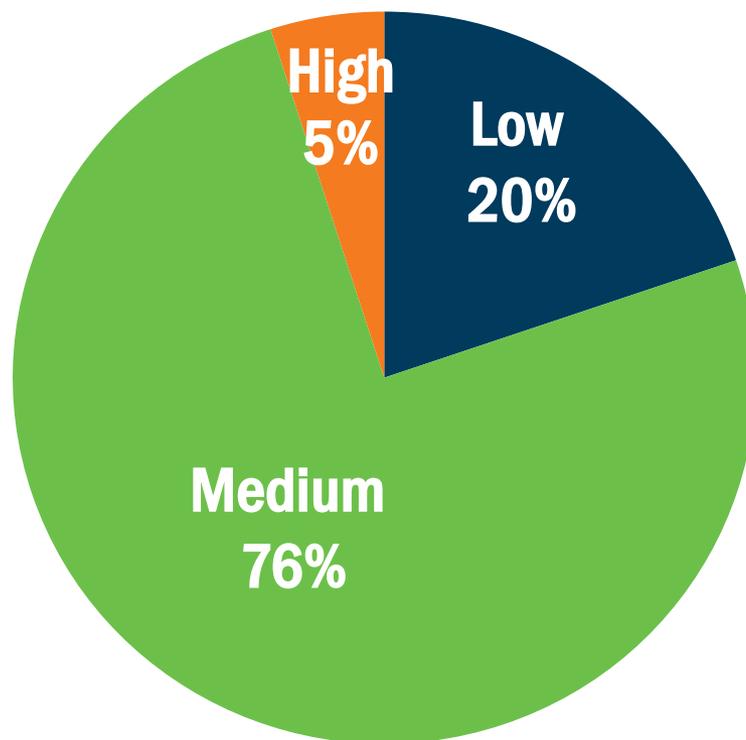
A woman should obey her husband in all things

66%

Only when a woman has a child is she a real woman

27%

Relationship control



Examples of SRPS item responses:

I want to know where my partner is all the time

When I want sex I expect my partner to agree

I like to let her know she isn't the only partner I could have

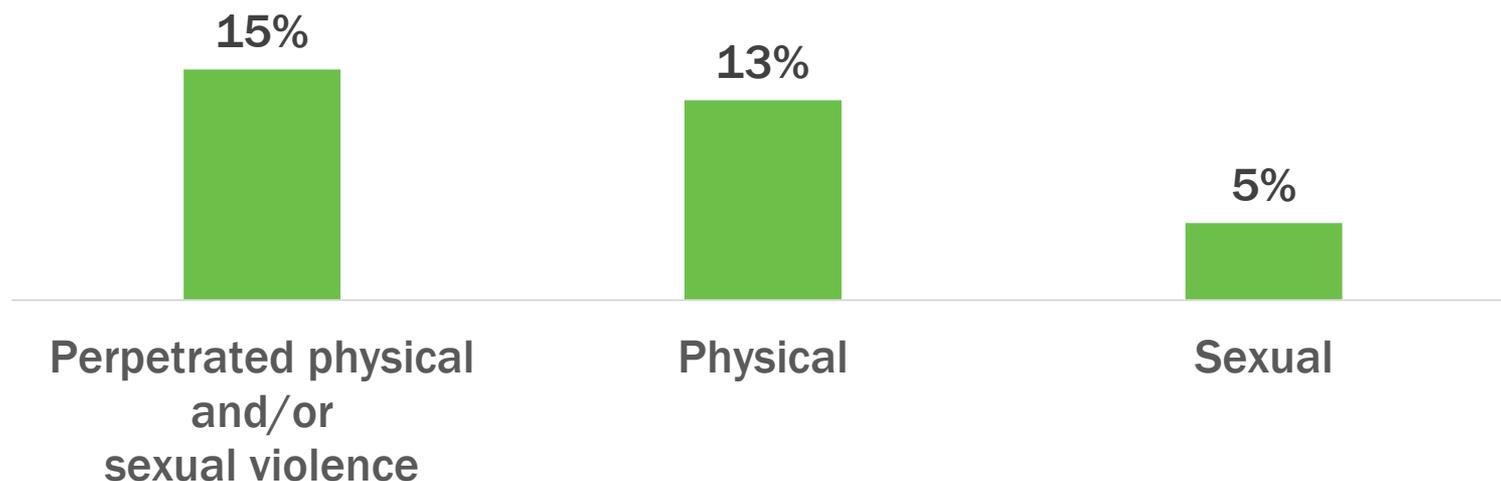
% who strongly/agree

46%

36%

27%

Perpetration of violence



85% reported doing so **with each of their last 3 partners**

**with one or more of his last 3 sexual partners*

Effects of exposure to violence (lifetime)

2x the odds of **depression**

(aOR 2.0, 95% CI 1.5, 2.6, $p < 0.001$)

2x the odds of **hazardous drinking**

(aOR 2.3, 95% CI 1.8, 3.1, $p < 0.001$)

In multivariable logistic regression analyses controlling for age, marital status, education, and employment status

Effects of childhood exposure to physical violence

1.5x the odds of **depression**

(aOR 1.5, 95% CI 1.2, 1.9, $p=0.001$)

1.4x the odds of **hazardous drinking**

(aOR 1.4, 95% CI 1.0, 1.9, $p<0.05$)

In multivariable logistic regression analyses controlling for age, marital status, education, and employment status

Effects of sexual coercion as a child

4x the odds of **depression**

(aOR 3.9, 95% CI 1.9, 8.0, $p < 0.001$)

3x the odds of **perpetrating IPV**

(aOR 2.9, 95% CI 1.4, 5.9, $p < 0.01$)



Greater support for **inequitable gender norms** and **control in relationships**

(both $p < 0.01$)

In multivariable logistic regression analyses controlling for age, marital status, education, and employment status

Conclusions

- Majority of men experienced or witnessed violence as children and as adults
- Significantly associated with negative outcomes for individual men, and violence/HIV risk for their intimate partners
 - Experiencing sexual coercion as a child especially strongly linked to adverse outcomes
- Results similar to recent findings from KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa (ours and others*)

*Pulerwitz, J and Gottert, A. (2019). "Hearing from the men: their lives, relationships and HIV risk profiles," IAS presentation; Gibbs, A. et al. (2019). "Associations between lifetime traumatic experiences and HIV-risk behaviors among young men living in informal settlements in South Africa: a cross-sectional analysis and structural equation model," *J Acquir Immune Defic Syndr.* 81(2): 193-201.

Implications

- To reduce risk for both men and their partners:
 - Prevent these traumas from occurring
 - Increase opportunities for men and boys to manage past traumas
- Need for research testing models of doing so
 - Modalities, efficacy, cost, scale, integration



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Participants in this study

Population Council Male Partner studies team: Julie Pulerwitz (co-PI), Ann Gottert (co-PI), Sanyukta Mathur (co-I), Louis Apicella (co-I), Jerry Okal (co-I), Craig Heck, Nrupa Jani, Ellen Weiss, Sherry Hutchinson

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Eswatini study team: Institute for Health Measurement (IHM). Patrick Shabangu (co-I), Kelvin Sikwibele (co-I), Bhekumusa Lukhele, Feziwe Makhubu, Vimbai Tsododo, Bheki Mamba, Research assistants

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