



# ESWATINI FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

## FEBRUARY 2026 NEWSLETTER



# WHAT'S INSIDE ?

SITSEBE SAMHLEKAZI  
HOLLYWOODBETS COSAFA WOMEN  
CHAMPIONSHIP 2025 CAMPAIGN

COSAFA CLUB ADMINISTRATION  
AND MANAGEMENT COURSE

FIFA CLUB PROFESSIONALIZATION  
& MANAGEMENT COURSE

FOCUS ON REGIONAL FOOTBALL  
ASSOCIATIONS

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# SITSEBE SAMHLEKAZI HOLLYWOODBETS COSAFA WOMEN CHAMPIONSHIP 2025 CAMPAIGN

Sitsebe SaMhleKazi concluded their Hollywoodbets COSAFA Women's Championship 2025 journey in Polokwane, South Africa, with three competitive Group B matches that showcased growing confidence, resilience and tactical progress.

The campaign opened on 19 February with a 0-2 defeat to Zimbabwe. Eswatini started brightly but conceded late in the first half and again in the second. On 22 February, Sitsebe produced a strong performance against Botswana, holding the side to a 1-1 draw and demonstrating improved structure and belief with Simangele Skhondze also claiming the Player of the Match award on that game. For her consistency throughout the group stage matches and playing a vital role in the heart of defence, she was further selected on the HOLLYWOODBETS COSAFA Championship 2025 Group stage Best XI. The final match on 24 February saw Eswatini took an early lead in the 14th minute through Nonjabuliso Mohale. Zambia equalised on the 22nd-minute, then secured the winner on the 57th minute causing Sitsebe to fall 1-2 to Zambia.



Head Coach Bongani Makhukhula reflected positively on the tournament, noting the squad's development in form and confidence, aided by the local league season already being underway. Sitsebe's performance and results showed some improvement and promise for the future.



# 2026

## GOALKEEPERS' COACH EDUCATION COURSE



The Eswatini Football Association (EFA) is inviting interested individuals to register for the upcoming Basic and Intermediate Goalkeepers' Coach Education Courses.

**Course Duration** : 1 April - July 2026

**Weekdays** : Online Lessons

**Weekends** : Physical Practical Sessions

### BASIC GOALKEEPERS' COACH COURSE

**Fee** : E300.00

### INTERMEDIATE GOALKEEPERS' COACH COURSE

**Fee** : E600.00

**Requirements** : Basic Goalkeepers' Coach Course Certificate Holder.

### PAYMENTS DETAILS

All payments must be made into the EFA NEDBANK Account.

**Nedbank Mbabane**  
**Account number: 20000025896**  
**(Use your fullname as reference)**

Submit proof of payment and register at the EFA Youth Office

**Registration Deadline** : 25 March 2026

For more information contact; [technical@nfas.org.sz](mailto:technical@nfas.org.sz)  
+268 7819 1137 / 7919 1137

# FIFA CLUB PROFESSIONALIZATION AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME EMPOWERING ESWATINI'S TOP CLUBS

The FIFA Club Professionalization and Management Programme, hosted by FIFA in collaboration with the Eswatini Football Association (EFA), was successfully conducted from 12-13 February at SibaneSami Hotel. The two-day intensive course brought together 61 Chief Executive Officers and club managers from the Eswatini Premier League and the Eswatini Women Football League, marking a significant step towards strengthening club football administration across the country.



The programme formed part of FIFA's global initiative aimed at enhancing professional standards within its Member Associations. A five-member FIFA delegation, with extensive international experience in club development and football governance, delivered the on-site sessions. Having travelled across various regions of the world to support capacity-building efforts, the delegation's visit to Eswatini underscored FIFA's commitment to improving the operational and strategic foundations of local football clubs



Over the course of the two days, participants engaged in comprehensive modules covering football governance, marketing, and financial management. The sessions were designed to equip club leaders with practical tools to manage resources effectively, strengthen institutional structures, and ensure financial sustainability. Emphasis was placed on improving internal governance systems, enhancing transparency and

accountability, and building commercially viable club brands capable of attracting sponsorships and forming strategic partnerships. A key feature of the programme was its interactive and hands-on approach. Club executives and league administrators were actively involved in practical exercises, case studies, and real-life simulations that tested their understanding and application of key principles. This experiential learning model provided participants with direct exposure to real-world scenarios, enabling them to develop actionable strategies for implementation within their respective clubs. The approach ensured that theoretical knowledge was reinforced through practical application, fostering deeper understanding and long-term impact.



During the closing ceremony, Ntuthuko Dlamini, speaking on behalf of the participants, expressed appreciation to FIFA and EFA for facilitating what was described as a highly productive and transformative learning experience. The training was acknowledged for providing valuable insights into maximizing resources while minimizing operational costs. Participants highlighted the importance of the marketing strategies shared, noting their relevance in strengthening club brands and positioning them to attract sponsors and commercial partners. A collective commitment was expressed to implement the knowledge gained in order to elevate the standards of football management across the country.

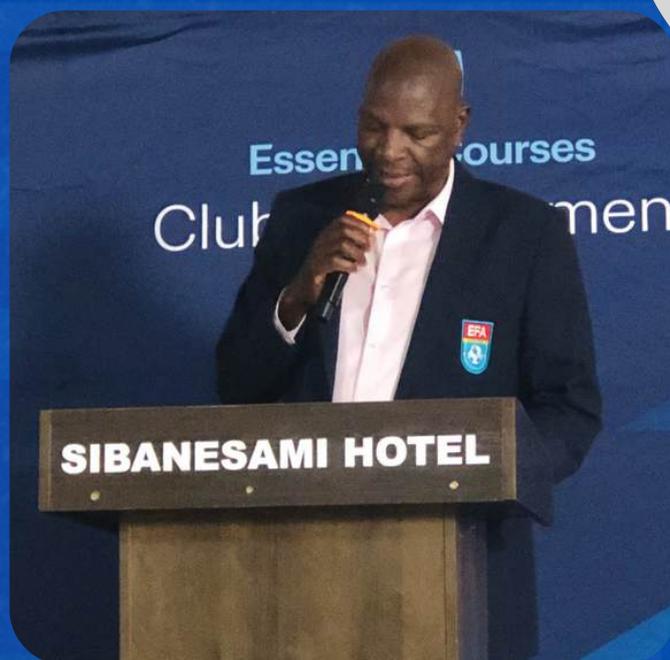


Speaking on behalf of the FIFA delegation, Mr. David Fani commended the participants for their cooperation, engagement, and enthusiasm throughout the programme. He emphasized the

importance of establishing strong foundations at club level, noting that clubs form the backbone of football development. Without strong clubs, there can be no strong Member Associations, and without strong Member Associations, global football cannot thrive. While acknowledging that two days may not be sufficient to address every aspect of club management, he expressed confidence that the course had successfully laid essential groundwork and provided fundamental tools necessary for progress both on and off the field.



In his remarks, EFA President Mr. Peter Simelane extended heartfelt appreciation to the FIFA delegation and the broader FIFA leadership for the successful implementation of the on-site training. He described football clubs as the lifeblood of the game and commended the collaborative spirit demonstrated by leaders from both the Eswatini Premier League and the Eswatini Women Football League. The interactive participation and networking opportunities fostered during the programme were highlighted as valuable assets that would benefit not only individual clubs but also the wider football business ecosystem in Eswatini.



The EFA President further acknowledged that challenges may arise in the process of implementing newly acquired knowledge ; however, he encouraged club leaders to remain positive, adopt small yet consistent steps toward growth, and maintain confidence in striving for greater heights. He reaffirmed the EFA's commitment to supporting clubs through continued capacity-building initiatives, complementary training programmes, and workshops aimed at strengthening administrative competence and sustainable development.





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# COSAFA WOMEN'S CLUB ADMINISTRATORS AND MANAGEMENT ONLINE COURSE



The Eswatini Football Association successfully handed out participation certificates, to women club football administrators who participated on the COSAFA Women's Club Administration and Management online course. The online course was run for a period of three days, it started from the 11<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> of November 2024, and participants were finally honored on the 7<sup>th</sup> of January 2026 at Lobamba Technical Centre. The main aim of this course was to equip women club administrators with ideal information and knowledge on how clubs are to run, from office to the pitch, from the club's image, to player's welfare. Such initiatives are instilled by COSAFA in attempts to improve women's football in the region, propel it to the same heights as that of the well-developed men's football.

Online, the administrators were taught ways to successfully manage clubs, how to position the clubs as brands in order to attract sponsors, which would help in boosting clubs' financial backing so that club processes cannot stall. They were also taught ways on how clubs should be marketed, how the women's

league should be marketed to attract more people towards women's football, which would then go to as far as attracting investors and sponsors for not just the clubs but Women's League too, as our Eswatini Women's Football League is still in dire need of a title sponsor. With the laws of the game changing now and again, together with human rights, on the day of the certificates handing outs, the various club administrators were further treated to more extra face to face lessons on safe guarding, anti-doping and were then immersed into how football is structured from the World's Football Governing body FIFA, to the Eswatini Women Football Association. The face to face lessons were led by Mr Dube who is a safe guarding Officer, Dr Lukhele, on the anti-doping and the EFA General Secretary Mr Mngomezulu on the structure and administration of football, worldwide and locally.



Upon the official closing club administrators extended heartfelt thanks to the EFA for the opportunity and guidance, promising to impart this knowledge into their teams as they see women's football going to greater heights. The EFA General Secretary when making his remarks first congratulated the participants for completing the programme then encouraged them to apply the knowledge gained to strengthen their clubs and create better environments for girls to participate in football. "We hope such programmes gain momentum and continue to improve the game while setting the environment for girls to participate in football." He said.



# SIGCAWENI GRASSROOTS COACH EDUCATORS' COURSE

The weekend of 21 February 2026 marked a significant milestone for football development in Sigcaweni, as the Lubombo Regional Football Association (LRFA), in partnership with the Eswatini Football Association (EFA), officially closed and awarded certificates to participants of the Sigcaweni Grassroots Coach Educators' Course.



The course, which ran from 9 - 13 February 2026, equipped local coaches with essential knowledge and practical tools required to nurture young football talent at grassroots level. Out of 36 registered participants, 30 successfully completed the programme and were awarded certificates during a closing ceremony held in Sigcaweni.

Throughout the five-day training, coaches were taken through the core principles and philosophy of grassroots football. Emphasis was placed on understanding that football talent is identified and shaped at a very young age. Participants were taught how to appropriately train children, how to handle and guide them with care, and how to create productive and enjoyable learning environments. The course also covered important developmental aspects such as children's concentration span, appropriate training durations, and age-specific coaching methods.





Speaking on behalf of the participants, Thobela Sandile expressed heartfelt gratitude to both EFA and LRFA for bringing the course to Sigcaweni. He highlighted that the programme had not only enhanced their coaching knowledge but also validated the immense football talent within the community. He acknowledged that the official affiliation of the Sigcaweni League under LRFA marked a historic and transformative moment for the area. According to him, Sigcaweni is home to abundant untapped

talent, and with proper structures and qualified coaches now in place, the region is poised to become a strong contributor to national football development.

EFA General Secretary, Mr Frederick Mngomezulu, applauded the formal affiliation of the Sigcaweni League under LRFA, describing it as a breakthrough that opens doors for structured growth and greater opportunities. He noted that the league's official recognition now compels national team coaches, from youth squads to the senior national team, to actively monitor matches in Sigcaweni for talent identification. He



urged the newly certified coaches to implement the knowledge gained from the course and to focus on mining and refining talent at grassroots level, as football development begins at the foundation. He further emphasized that grassroots football continues to expand across the country, referencing a similar course held in Shewula the previous year and now in Sigcaweni. Such initiatives demonstrate EFA's commitment towards development of football in the country. In addition, he assured the coaches that EFA will introduce the Basic Coaching Course in the future to further strengthen their technical capacity and experience. He reiterated that the association's vision goes beyond identifying players for national representation; it also seeks to develop and elevate coaches from local communities to higher levels of the game.





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# CAF AFRICAN SCHOOLS AND WOMEN'S FOOTBALL PROGRAMMES

The Eswatini Football Association convened a key meeting with 26 teachers and representatives from schools at Lobamba Technical Centre on 18 February 2026, to reflect on the 2025 programmes and plan ahead for the CAF African Schools Football Championship and EFA Women's Schools Football Programme.



The session was a post-mortem of last year's editions, with resolutions set for the CAF African Schools programme to commence its national phase from March to August 2026, ahead of the COSAFA zonal phase confirmed for September. For the Women's Football Programme, discussions focused on the 2025 girls' schools football reflection, highlighting positives and areas for improvement, alongside alignment with FIFA's Women's Development Programme. As of February 2026, FIFA's renewed suite of initiatives under the Women's Football Strategy 2024-2027 provides all 211 member associations, including Eswatini, with resources across 13 key areas to drive participation toward the global target of 60 million female players by 2027.



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# MTN PLE AND MULASPORT NFD PLAYER OF THE MONTH - JANUARY

Mazwi Sihlongonyane was named the MTN Premier League Player of the Month for January after an outstanding run of form that saw him score three goals and play a pivotal role in Young Buffaloes F.C. climbing to the top of the league standings. This recognition marks the second consecutive month that a Young Buffaloes F.C. player has scooped the award, highlighting the team's fighting spirit and



strong collective performances. In December, the honour went to midfielder Bongwa Matsebula, further underlining the club's consistency and competitive edge. Reflecting on his achievement, Sihlongonyane credited faith, patience, and teamwork; recalling a period earlier in the season when he went several matches without making the starting eleven but remained committed to supporting his teammates and trusting that his opportunity would come.



On the Mulasport National First Division Majaha Ndlovu from Nkwene Sundowns F.C. from the Shiselweni Region claimed the Mulasport National First Division Player of the month January cheque.

# RED RHINOS CROWNED FIRST ROUND CHAMPIONS



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The first round of the Mulasport National First Division concluded in thrilling fashion, with Red Rhinos F.C. emerging as deserving champions and pocketing the E55,000 first round incentive.

Despite closing the round with a defeat to Lozitha Spurs F.C., the Rhinos had already done enough to secure top spot. Their impressive campaign saw them register 10 wins and

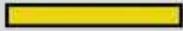
2 draws from 15 matches, a run of consistency that set them apart from the chasing pack.

At the halfway mark of the season, Red Rhinos F.C. finished two points clear of second-placed Pigg's Peak Professionals F.C., underlining just how competitive the division has been. The narrow margin at the top promises an exciting and tightly contested second round. A special word of appreciation goes to Mulasport for their sponsorship of the National First Division. Their investment in the league provides tangible incentives that elevate competition standards, inspire clubs, and strengthen the football ecosystem. Such partnerships are vital in driving the professional growth of our game and creating meaningful opportunities for players, administrators, and supporters alike. As we head into the second round, the race for promotion intensifies and if the first half of the season is anything to go by, supporters can expect more drama, passion, and quality football ahead.





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# LUBOMBO REGIONAL FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION UPDATES

FROM LRFA CHAIRMAN MR. LUCKY DLAMINI



“ Reflecting on 2025, it is clear that our collective passion for the game has paid off. It was a landmark year for our Regional Football Association, defined by an expansion of competitions and a revitalized focus on our youth development programs. This growth was made possible by the renewed confidence of the business community, resulting in a significant increase in corporate sponsorship.

Our mission in 2026 is to build on that momentum with even greater precision and ambition. We aren't just looking to repeat last year's success; we are looking to professionalize every aspect of our association.





## HERE IS WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT IN THE COMING MONTHS:

- **Operational Excellence:** Our primary promise is a season of smooth competition. We are committed to rigorous scheduling to ensure all leagues are concluded timely, allowing our clubs and players the stability they deserve.
- **Revenue Generation Strategies:** To ensure we are not solely dependent on external factors, we are implementing new internal strategies to generate sustainable revenue, ensuring the association's long-term financial health.
- **Expanding the Partnership Portfolio:** We will continue to aggressively pursue new sponsorships to bring more resources into our regional ecosystem.
- **Elevated Youth Development:** Our commitment to the "stars of tomorrow" remains unshakable. Expect more clinics, more scouting opportunities, and enhanced training programs.
- **Rewarding Excellence:** We believe in celebrating the talent on the pitch. This year, we are focused on improving individual prizes to honor the hardwork and skill of our players, coaches, and officials.



THANK YOU

# MANZINI REGIONAL FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION UPDATES

FROM MRFA CHAIRMAN MR. VUSI HALL



“ For us as Manzini Regional Football Association (MRFA), 2025, was a mixed bag. We faced several challenges, but we also saw some improvements. On the downside, we had issues relating to match officiating, which is not good for our sport. It undermines the fairness of our competitions and hurts the reputation of our football association. This is an unfortun-

-ate situation and we are working tirelessly to stop such from happening again. We also struggled with not having enough playing fields, which meant we had to schedule games at inconvenient times. This was tough for our teams and fans. This is also a work in progress as we are thrive to deliver more competitive competitions .

Sadly, we also lost many dedicated football administrators in our region last year, May Their Souls Rest In Peace. These individuals worked hard to make our leagues better, and it left a huge gap in our Association. Hence we are still trying even today, to rebuild and strengthen our team. On the positive side, we are happy to report that we improved our sponsors' packages in 2025. We secured better deals, which means more resources for our teams and leagues. This is a step in the right direction, and we're grateful to our sponsors for their support.

Looking ahead to 2026, we are introducing some new initiatives. One of these is the "first round carrot" , a reward for teams that top their leagues after the first round. This is to encourage teams to be more competitive. We're also launching an initiative to standardize our promotion sponsorship to a minimum of E50,000 per league.



This means that every league will have a guaranteed minimum sponsorship amount, which will help us plan and invest in our football development programs. To improve our leagues, we will be focusing on

getting more licenced coaches, especially for our Super League teams. We believe that good coaching is key to success, and we're committed to investing in our coaches' development. We are also aiming to win the regional championship in the SMVAF Ingwenyama Cup. We want to bring pride to our region and show Eswatini that Manzini Regional football is a force to be reckoned with.

We're committed to making Manzini Regional football better. We also want to thank our fans for their patience and support. We acknowledge the support and patience from all football stakeholders. Collectively, Let's work together to enhance the image of the Manzini Regional football.



**THANK YOU**

# SHISELWENI REGIONAL FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION UPDATES

FROM SRFA CHAIRMAN MR. NKOSINATHI KUNENE



“ The Shiselweni Regional Football Association (SRFA) experienced a year of significant progress and notable achievements in 2025, primarily driven by strong partnerships and a commitment to grassroots development.



## KEY HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDED:

- **Sponsorship:** The SRFA secured a record E200,000.00 from Eclipse Investment for the Eclipse Shiselweni Regional Super League. This was an increase from E150,000 in previous seasons, indicating growing private sector trust. Montigny has made a significant sponsorship increase from E140,000.00 to E185,000 for the zones which are Magubheleni, Gege, Nhlangano, Zombodze, Etjendlovu, Nhlangano Promotion.



- **Capacity Building:** The association demonstrated a commitment to enhancing skills by announcing and organizing different courses like basic refereeing, administration for Competition Committees, youth coaching, etc.

- **Club Success:** Nkwene Sundowns F.C. emerged as the 2024/2025 season champions and earned promotion to the Mula Sports National First Division, a testament to the dedication within the region. SRFA has 2 clubs in the MulaSport National First



Division (All Nation F.C & Nkwene Sundowns F.C), and 2 in MTN Eswatini Premier League (Rangers F.C & Nsingizini Hotspurs F.C which were crowned MTN Premier League Champions).



- **Youth Development:** Eswatini's U15 National teams, which included players from the region, triumphed at the CAF African Schools Football

Development Programme | COSAFA Qualifiers Schools Football Championship in December 2025, showcasing the success of youth programs.

For 2026, the SRFA is on the verge of formulating a strategic plan dedicated to building on the momentum of the previous year through continued collaboration and strategic initiatives for sustainable growth.

### **STAKEHOLDERS CAN LOOK FORWARD TO:**

#### **ENHANCED GOVERNANCE AND TRANSPARENCY:**

**The association aims to strengthen its operations through effective leadership and transparent decision-making, ensuring accountability across all football-related sectors.**

## INCREASED COMPETITION AND ENGAGEMENT:

The focus will remain on nurturing local talent, improving league standards, and strengthening community engagement, with plans for a Champion of Champions stage in tournaments to intensify competitiveness



## INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT:



The SRFA will continue to work with the Eswatini Football Association (EFA) and other strategic partners to leverage stadium lights and youth programs which will provide increased investment in football development and infrastructure to build a stronger foundation for the sport.

## ATTRACTING FURTHER INVESTMENT:

Building on the successful partnership with Montigny Investment, Eclipse Investment, and other stakeholders, the SRFA will continue to call upon other potential sponsors to invest in football in the Shiselweni Region, ensuring the financial sustainability of regional football.



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THANK YOU



**THANK YOU FOR STAYING UPDATED WITH THE LATEST  
FROM THE ESWATINI FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION  
WE REMAIN COMMITTED TO THE DEVELOPMENT AND  
GROWTH OF FOOTBALL IN THE KINGDOM OF ESWATINI  
FROM GRASSROOTS TO THE GLOBAL STAGE**

**UNTIL NEXT TIME**

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