



Access to Justice in Urban Slums: A Qualitative Study of Vulnerable Populations in Eswatini

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Published: 05 January 2010 | **Received:** 13 August 2009 | **Accepted:** 02 December 2009

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DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.18916261](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18916261)

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Abstract

This study examines access to justice for vulnerable populations in urban slums of Eswatini. A qualitative study was conducted through semi-structured interviews with community members and key informants in urban slums of Eswatini. Data were analysed using thematic analysis to identify patterns and themes. Interviews revealed that traditional dispute resolution mechanisms, such as mediation by local elders, are widely used but often not recognised or supported by formal legal systems. Government support programmes for vulnerable populations are underutilized due to lack of awareness and accessibility issues. The study highlights the importance of integrating traditional justice practices into formal legal frameworks and improving access to government support programmes for urban slum dwellers. Policy recommendations include strengthening community engagement in legal reforms, enhancing visibility and outreach of government support services, and developing culturally sensitive training for mediators.

Keywords: *Urbanization, Slums, Community Engagement, Ethnography, Vulnerability Studies, Legal Pluralism, Participatory Research*

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