

# ROYAL SWAZILAND SUGAR CORPORATION

## STATEMENT

RSSC notes with concern malicious allegations that are circulating on various media, particularly social media, to the effect that RSSC has been involved in evictions of families in Vuvulane in 2016. We have not been given the opportunity to respond to these allegations prior to the international publication of these messages, which are aimed at driving Eswatini out of the sugar markets.

RSSC wishes to state categorically that we are not aware of and have had absolutely no involvement in any alleged evictions. We do not own any contested land in Vuvulane and therefore we do not have any basis to evict anyone. No farmer group or individual has brought any allegations of eviction to RSSC. We are therefore disappointed by these allegations, particularly as they surface during a time when the recovery of our economy is a concern to all in the Kingdom of Eswatini, and they appear to be a move by some Swazis to block the markets for sugar from Eswatini. The impact of this on the economy and jobs is too tragic to contemplate.

As a company we subscribe to high standards of governance and we respect the rights and interests of others. We are audited by various organisations on our sustainability programme which includes our practices relating to human rights issues. There also seems to be the reference to the relocation of families in Simunye as a precursor to the establishment of RSSC in the 1970s, which in our belief was managed and dealt with as a national project by relevant government ministries and traditional leadership structures.

We believe in the rule of law and where there has been any dispute we have always relied on the courts to provide guidance.

It is worth mentioning that RSSC has typically maintained a cordial relationship with the communities around it, including farmers in the area. Some farmers continue to benefit in the form of RSSC resurrecting their farms at their request, such that they begin to realise sound income. Our interactions with the community are based on aiding social development, improving access to water, cultivating enterprise development, promoting quality education, providing quality health service, as well as other areas of mutual benefit.

Some of these projects include water harvesting at the Vuvulane Community Church and a youth entrepreneurship development programme. Many participants of this programme are from Vuvulane. There are other activities that Vuvulane and surrounding communities continue to enjoy as a result of the positive relations between RSSC and these communities. Our ongoing social investment targets initiatives that are geared towards ensuring that the community continues to find some benefit in the Agribusiness in our region. We have just partnered with the Farmer's Federation in our area to promote youth participation in Agribusiness. More information on these and other projects can be found on our [www.rssc.co.sz](http://www.rssc.co.sz) website.

We would like to assure all our stakeholders that any allegations of evictions do not involve RSSC. Furthermore, we sincerely invite all stakeholders to engage us on the issue and to see for themselves what is obtaining on the ground.

**Date:** 6 December 2018

  
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Nick Jackson  
**RSSC Managing Director**

