WELCOME REMARKS

BY
THE SG
STATISTICS BOTSWANA,

AT THE

UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS INDICATORS BASELINE: STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIVE WORKSHOP

AVANI HOTEL 31ST JULY 2018

Director of Ceremony;

Assistant Representative UNFPA Mareledi Segotso

Acting DSGs – ECOSOC and STO

CEO and Directors

Representatives of Development Partners

Senior government/NON government officials

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen

Media Practitioners;

Distinguished Guests; Ladies and Gentlemen:

1. It is indeed a great pleasure for me to welcome you to this Stakeholder Consultative Workshop on Sustainable Development Goals Indicators Baseline data. This workshop has been planned to include diverse stakeholder representation across the various thematic areas of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. It is my hope that many of those who were invited have managed to be here as that would enable more fruitful discussions on interlinkages between thematic areas.

2. Today we are here to continue the work that has to be done to produce quality, accessible, timely and reliable disaggregated data needed to monitor and evaluate the progress the country is making towards achieving the SDGs and doing so in a manner that ensures that "'that no one is left behind".

3. The Agenda 2030 with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, 169 targets and the 230+ indicators is an ambitious agenda to transform the world. The SDGs are integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental hence the wide range of their scope.

4. The global indicator framework that is being used to follow up on the progress of the implementation of Agenda 2030 was developed by the United Nations Inter Agency Expert Group (IAEG-SDGs). I am happy to say that Botswana as represented by Statistics Botswana is one of the 28 member countries of the IAEG-SDGs. The global indicator framework developed by the IAEG –SDGs was agreed to by the UN Statistical Commission in March 2017 and adopted by the 46th United Nations General Assembly in July 2017.

5. Still at the international level, the UN at its Sustainable Development Summit held on 25 September 2015 adopted a resolution to set up the High-level Political Forum (HPLF) on Sustainable Development as a central UN platform for the follow-up and review of the implementation of 2030 Agenda. Each year countries are invited to present to the HLFP, Voluntary National Reports (VNR) on how they have fared on a set of SDGs that are selected to be the focus for that particular year.

6. In 2017 Botswana volunteered to present a VNR in relation *Goals 1,2,3,5, 9 and 17* which were the SDGs focused on for that year. The Botswana delegation was led by the Minister of Local Government and Rural Development Hon. Tsogwane who is now the current Vice President. This report was well prepared but some of

the SDG indicators did not have data available for reporting. This underscores the need for vigorous continuous improvement of the SDG data availability. This year Botswana prepared and shared a brief report at the HLPF meeting in July but did not volunteer to submit a full report. Nonetheless the brief report still required data on SDGs to be reported on this year.

Director of Ceremonies

7. SDG monitoring has put significant added pressure on National Statistical Systems to provide the required information and data on the indicators. This invariably means that there is a need for strengthening the statistical capacity across the entire system. The Baseline report that is to be discussed today provides a general measure of the current statistical capacity to avail data on the Global SDG indicators that are relevant to Botswana. Accordingly the measure gives an indication of the capacity building required to produce all the needed data to the required quality standard going forward to 2030. The findings particularly in relation to availability of disaggregated data point to a need to scale up to a data ecosystem that will provide us the necessary skills, resources, and partnership to address the data requirements of the 2030 Agenda. Clearly lack of disaggregated data for monitoring presents a risk on the SDG principle of "leaving no one behind".

8. I strongly believe that this seminar/workshop and with the strong support of our colleagues in government, private sector, civil society, and development partners forms a good base for building a strong national data ecosystem for monitoring SDGs. It is often said "better

data for better lives". This is why the baseline data that has been obtained is to be quality assured here today before being released to make sure that when used it is used it correctly informs on policy formulation and decision making on SDG implementation and other developments in general.

9. Let me say to all stakeholders here, who are producers and/or users of official national statistics, that the success of our collaborative effort depends in part on contributions and inputs you make during this workshop and beyond. I urge you to focus your attention on the trends as presented in the report and work out what they mean and how they can be utilized in your thematic area. We all should also focus on the data gaps pointed in this report and formulate strategies with timelines to clear such gaps as relevant to tour area.

Ladies and gentlemen

10. It is therefore my sincere hope that today's deliberations will present a wide spectrum of views for discussion to learn from each other, pool our efforts and build partnership. I believe that the evidence is clear. It shows us the direction we need to take. As country which aspires to move to a knowledge based economy, we need to strengthen the science-policy interface: enhancing the role of science in policy making, implementation and monitoring; and promoting the generation and dissemination of innovations and technologies that help accelerate data collection.

11. In conclusion, I wish to inform you that SDG baseline data emanating from this consultative workshop will be published in

Statistics Botswana publication and also placed on a dashboard that is accessible through our website. The dashboard will continue to be updated based on the periodicity of the production of the specific indicator data. These dissemination platforms are expected to form part of a national SDG data flow system that is being developed to receive data from data producers and share it with Botswana users and the international statistical system.

12.   I thank you for your attention and wish you fruitful deliberations