



STATEMENT

BY

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AT THE

**JOINT AFDB-UNECA-UN WOMEN-SADC SIXTH AFRICA
GENDER STATISTICS FORUM**

GABORONE, BOTSWANA

8TH JULY 2024

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen allow me to recognise the presence of;

- ***African Centre for Statistics, UNECA***
- **Ag. Director, STATAFRIC-AUC**
- ***Regional Director, UN Women ESARO.***
- ***Regional Director, UN Women WCARO.***
- **AfDB Representative**
- **Representative of the host country the Government of Botswana**
- **Esteemed delegates from different regions representing government institutions**
- **The private sector**
- **Civil Society Organisations representatives**
- **Development Partners present**
- The Media
- **Distinguished delegates**

Good morning!

On behalf of the SADC Secretariat, it is a great honour to be part of this Joint Sixth Africa Gender Statistics Forum. A forum that will allow for cross learning among users, producers and experts in policy analysis and gender statistics in Africa. Statistics and Data are an important part of the development agenda, and in achieving the UN Agenda 2030.-They are also key in realizing our international, continental and regional commitments. Gender Statistics in particular, is an integral part of measuring gender equality outcomes.

The data gaps that have been identified in our region and Africa as a whole, rob us of making informed decisions in addressing development challenges. These gaps lead to missed opportunities for creating effective policies as well as inability to properly attribute impact on the ground. Due to the lack of sex-disaggregated

data and gender statistics, it is almost impossible to have a full understanding of women's and men's roles, status and contributions in development across sectors; especially now, when we are left with less than a decade to the end of 2030 and cannot adequately show progress towards Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.

Gender statistics is needed to measure and monitor the realities of the lives of women and men, and of girls and boys. This helps in reflecting the changing roles of women and men in society, in the economy and in families and households. Gender statistics further reveal differences and inequalities in the situation of women and men in all areas of life, thereby providing vital and concrete guidance for policy formulation to address identified gender gaps.

The production of gender statistics has the role of informing the public and the media, raising consciousness, encouraging public debate and promoting change in society. The dissemination of gender statistics to a large audience is crucial in reducing both gender stereotypes and the misrepresentation of the roles of women and men and their contribution to society and in promoting a new gender balance in the distribution of roles within the family, at the workplace and in decision-making positions.

To address data issues in Africa, there is need to discourage silo approach of working and join our efforts in strengthening statistical systems with data that is relevant to our context. It is important to emphasise that collaboration and partnerships will enable us to avoid duplication and wasting of resources but strengthen learning from each other through best practices. This forum therefore, provides an opportunity for all of us to share those experiences, and learn from

experts of innovations that may assist our continent, region and Member States to collect and analyze sex disaggregated data and Gender Statistics.

Let me share that the SADC Secretariat has recently developed the Gender Statistics Strategy 2023-2030. This was prompted by the increased demand of gender statistics in the region. The Strategy presents a strategic approach to strengthening capacity to produce, use and harmonize gender statistics in the SADC region. The Strategy further aims at adequately respond to and support evidence-based gender responsive regional initiatives to meet gender data requirements of global conventions.

The Strategy focuses on three strategic themes as key pillars of transformation and modernization of gender statistics which are;

- Institutional strengthening and sustainability of gender statistics in SADC Member States;
- Harmonization of standards, concepts and definitions and methodology of gender statistics to meet data needs of the SADC Gender Protocol; and
- Building capacity for production and use of gender statistics.

In addition, the SADC Secretariat, with support from the World Bank and UN Women, continues to create platforms and opportunities for bringing together producers and users of gender statistics in SADC Member States.

Let me conclude by highlighting that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development commitment to “leave no one behind” provides a unique opportunity to address gender inequalities, build resilient interventions and increase the availability of gender-related statistics. Let us ride on this opportunity and commit to finding a suitable way to strengthen our data systems.

With these few remarks, I wish you all fruitful deliberations throughout the course of this meeting.

I thank you.