

Delegation from the Republic of Botswana
Position Paper for the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

The topics before the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) are: Building Partnerships to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Ending Abuse, Exploitation, Trafficking and All Forms of Violence against and Torture of Children. The Republic of Botswana, a pioneer in the development of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) indicators framework, is eager to find national, regional and global solutions to all topics presented in this special session of the HLPF.

I. Building Partnerships to Achieve the SDGs

As outlined in the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2030 Agenda), the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development can only be fully integrated through five key elements: people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership. Botswana, with the unique perspective as a landlocked developing country in Southern Africa, understands the vitality of partnerships in overcoming the obstacles faced in achieving the 2030 Agenda, as outlined through the *2019-2021 UN Secretary General's Roadmap for Financing the 2030 Agenda*. For developing Member States, one of those obstacles is possessing the capacity to perform voluntary national reviews (VNRs). Within the 2030 Agenda, paragraph seventy-nine explicitly outlines that Member States are to "conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress, which are country-led and country-driven." To properly facilitate mutually beneficial partnerships, Botswana notes that capacity-building measures must be at the forefront of this body's agenda to promote transparency and streamline the process of conducting VNRs. Botswana's own data collection measures, utilized by its national statistics body, heavily influenced the *SDG Indicator Framework*. Botswana knows the vital role that data plays in the creation and legitimacy of VNRs, especially in its ability to facilitate and strengthen partnerships. Botswana commends the existing work of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Institute for Statistics, coinciding directly with the HLPF, in the development of the #FundData Campaign, aiming to increase funding for SDG data. Botswana recommends that the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa seek multilateral partnerships with regional organizations to build upon this campaign and existing VNR Capacity Building Workshops by increasing the technical capacity of Member States in properly monitoring the data necessary to produce VNRs, a key measure in streamlining mutually beneficial partnerships. On a national level, Botswana advocates for the development of National Action Plans (NAPs) in conjunction with the 2030 Agenda. Through the development of Botswana's National Development Plan 11 (2017-2023), we explicitly lay out our goals in building partnerships to achieve the SDGs. Aligned directly with SDG 17 on global partnerships for sustainable development, our goals include: developing a National South-South and Triangular Partnership Strategy to attract technological development and capacity-building opportunities through strategic partnerships, facilitate partnerships within institutions such as the Botswana Innovation Hub or Botswana Institute for Technology Research and Innovation, and develop the public-private partnership (PPP) delivery mechanism intended to assist in project implementation by involving the private sector in financing. Botswana urges Member States to utilize the SDG Partnership Platform to develop partnerships through North-South, South-South, and Triangular Cooperation to assist in drafting comprehensive NAPs aligned with the SDGs, specifically focusing on SDG 17. Without significant progress on the five different areas of focus within SDG 17, especially financing, achieving the rest of the sixteen goals will be a near-impossible task. According to the *2019 Sustainable Development Goal Report*, official development assistance (ODA) contributions have decreased by 4% to the entirety of the African continent. The failure of developed Member States to uphold their commitment to providing 0.7% gross national income toward ODA, outlined in the *Addis Ababa Action Agenda*, has made it essential for Botswana to economically engage the private sector. As foreign direct investment paves the way for the future of the African continent, one of the major goals of Botswana for future development is increasing the role of the private sector through PPPs. Headquartered in Botswana's capital, Gaborone, the socio-economic goals of the Southern African Development Community hinges directly on our Partnership Acquisition Network, coordinating PPPs throughout Southern Africa. Botswana notes that PPPs are important to creating financing and agility toward accomplishing the SDGs, while empowering public entities to enable an environment for business to thrive sustainably, as outlined in the *Gaborone Declaration for Sustainability in Africa*. Botswana believes that the private sector is an underutilized asset to the completion of the SDGs, making it advantageous to develop these PPPs to achieve the seventeen interconnected goals and reduce global, financial inequality.

II. Ending Abuse, Exploitation, Trafficking and All Forms of Violence against and Torture of Children

According to the World Health Organization, globally, it is estimated that up to one billion children aged 2–17 years old have experienced physical, sexual, emotional violence, or neglect within the past year. Botswana, mortified of these direct breaches of *The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)*, is also concerned with the economic ramifications of violence against and torture of children. Stated by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in their report *Promising Programmes to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation*, the global costs of physical, psychological and sexual violence towards children are between 3–8 percent of global gross domestic product (GDP). The CRC, adopted by the General Assembly more than 30 years ago, set the standard for the civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights for all children. As 32% of Botswana's peoples are children, it is of the utmost importance to Botswana to continue to uphold the fundamental rights children deserve to address root causes of violence and torture subjected upon children mirrored within each of the SDGs, as well as the *African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights*. Each type of violence and torture, whether it is trafficking in persons (TIP); child, early and forced marriage; female genital mutilation; recruitment by non-state actors (NSAs); or child labour, contains deep-seated causes. Through the examination of recruitment by NSAs, Botswana is fully aware of the underlying root causes that lead to those choices. If a child is malnourished, SDG 2.2, and NSAs can provide food, this can lead to violence and torture against children. If a family is living in extreme poverty on less than \$1.25 per day, SDG 1.1, and NSAs can provide financial stability, this can lead to violence and torture against children. Botswana is concerned that if developing nations cannot address these root causes, all forms of violence and torture against children will never be fully addressed. Botswana urges the United Nations Development Programme to work in collaboration with the African Union Youth Envoy in the facilitation of the sharing of best practices to other regional organizations through the development of an international workshop, as a way of streamlining solutions toward accomplishing the SDGs and addressing the root causes leading to violence and torture against children. Botswana, who's national education expenditures of Gross Domestic Product are at 9.6%, making it the fourth highest spender on education in the world, believes that education through gender mainstreaming and child mainstreaming is essential to ending all forms of violence and torture against children, focusing directly on accomplishing SDG 4 and 5. Botswana believes that empowering children, especially the girl child, as stakeholders within national, regional, and international governance is crucial in building legal frameworks addressing unique challenges of developing states toward ending violence and torture against children and educating our future leaders on their unique role within society, directly outlined in *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*. Botswana supports the work of the Joint Programme on Empowering Adolescent Girls and Young Women in the Decision-Making Process and requests that they create a fifth educational component focusing on young women's role in civic engagement as a way of increasing the participation of young women in decision-making processes, statistically shown as an important measure in accomplishing SDG 5.2 toward ensuring women's full and effective participation at all levels of decision-making. Botswana also notes that other educational avenues have been successful in reaching children, such as mentorship and the creation of various mass media campaigns. Partnerships are essential to the development of such campaigns. Through the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, multilateral and bilateral partnerships must be fostered amongst relevant stakeholders to create mass media campaigns on the exploitation of children, such as UNICEF's #ENDviolence campaign. In developing Member States, capacity-building is necessary to implement any of these programmes and end all forms of violence and torture against children. This issue begins at birth, as Member States lack the capacity to develop proper birth registration systems, leaving thousands of children stateless without any legal identity, which is a major hazard leading to violence and torture against children. Botswana encourages a joint effort by the UNICEF Data Mechanism and the United Nations Legal Identity Expert Group to enhance the technical support for building legal identity systems through the sharing of best practices, particularly focusing on child data monitoring. Once this technical capacity is developed, Botswana recommends that the Identification for Development Initiative collaborate with the International Telecommunication Union's Cybersecurity Programme to create a toolkit for Member States to increase privacy capability within digital identification systems, as a measure of increasing birth registration rates in accordance with SDG 16.9. In 2012, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development produced the powerful outcome document, *The Future We Want*. Botswana is cognizant that the foundation of this future, the future we want and strive for, is for our children. Through the engagement of national, regional and international cooperation at all levels, Botswana knows that the HLPF will be able to pass the torch on to an intelligent and empowered generation.