



REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

THE STATE PRESIDENT

GABORONE

PPO 13/9 II (7)

1 September 2023

Rt. Honourable Helen Clark
Board Chair, Partnership for Maternal, New-born & Child Health (PMNCH)
Former Prime Minister of New Zealand
1211 Geneva 27
Switzerland

Dear Rt. Honourable Helen Clark,

COMMITTING TO ADOLESCENT WELL-BEING AND ACCELERATING ON RELATED SDG PRIORITIES IN RESPONSE TO THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL'S CALL FOR SDG TRANSFORMATION COMMITMENTS AT THE SDG SUMMIT 2023 AND IN SUPPORT OF THE 2023 GLOBAL FORUM FOR ADOLESCENTS

As the Government of Botswana, we recognize that Adolescent Well Being is critical to achieving sustainable development. We acknowledge the importance of adopting a holistic government approach to work together in a coordinated and collaborative manner to address the multiple and intersecting factors that impact adolescents.

Botswana's efforts to advance the well-being of adolescents and young people are anchored on a strong legal and policy environment. Evidently, we are a signatory of key global and regional treaties including: Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Universal Health Coverage Commitment 2030, SADC Model Law on the Prevention of Gender-Based Violence (GBV), SADC Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) Strategy (2019-2030), SADC Youth Policy Framework and the African Charter on Peoples' Rights.

Botswana continues to initiate other legal, policy and institutional frameworks to support the delivery of the National Development Plans and its Vision 2036; the Africa Agenda 2063, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Partnerships for sustainable development continue to be strengthened because a key lesson emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic is the centrality of partnerships

in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It is the conviction of the government of the Republic of Botswana that with effective partnerships, the Reset Agenda will enable the country to emerge from COVID-19 stronger and will be able to fulfil its national development goals and priorities.

In 2021, Ministers responsible for Education, Health, Gender and Youth from 18 countries in East and Southern Africa (ESA) including Botswana, signed the commitment supporting African adolescents and young people to be continental and global citizens who are educated, healthy, resilient, socially responsible, and informed decision-makers, with the capacity to contribute meaningfully to their communities, countries and the region.

As per this Commitment, the Government of the Republic of Botswana pledges to strengthen its approach to adolescent well-being and related SDG priorities as a smart investment in the future of its society, economy and the planet. We commit to prioritise adolescent well-being and related SDGs in national development plans and strategies as well as prioritise the collection of disaggregated data to better integrate adolescent-specific indicators into the monitoring and reporting frameworks.

Finally, we commit to meaningfully engaging adolescents and young people in the design, implementation and monitoring of policies and programmes that affect their well-being. This commitment is:

- in response to the United Nation's Secretary-General's call for national and global commitments to deliver the 'Rescue Plan for People and Planet' at the SDG Summit 2023, in order to help drive SDG transformation for inclusion and sustainability in the years ahead; and
- in support of the Global Forum for Adolescents, the world's largest-ever convening of stakeholders – youth networks, governments, private sector, donors, the UN and others – to raise attention to the need for immediate action to advance the major determinants of adolescent well-being, as a major milestone within the 1.8 Billion Young People for Change campaign, convened by the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH).

We commit to:

- 1) Accelerate equitable and inclusive quality education and skills development for both in and out of school adolescents and young people. This will also include

- fast-tracking the implementation and monitoring of Comprehensive Sexuality Education;
- 2) Ensure effective and efficient prevention and management of sexual reproductive health (SRH), nutrition, non-communicable diseases; psychosocial and mental health disorders, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs); HIV infections and co-morbidities, as well as alcohol and substance use;
 - 3) Strengthen the protective and supportive legal, social and cultural environments for adolescents and young people to eliminate gender-based violence and achieve gender equality;
 - 4) Develop localized infrastructure to increase pedestrian safety with a focus around schools and road safety education;
 - 5) Strengthen skills development to promote employability and accelerate economic diversification for job creation and poverty reduction amongst young people;
 - 6) Strengthen the government monitoring and evaluation system used to plan, report and monitor the SDGs related to adolescent well-being; and
 - 7) Mobilize domestic resources towards commodities, infrastructure, digital devices, capacity building and professional development, as well as advocacy for adolescent well-being, including engagement with the private sector and development partners.

Adolescents and young people are a long-standing national investment whose meaningful engagement contributes in the national, regional and global space. The Botswana Government of the Republic of Botswana gives full support to the 1.8 Billion Young People for Change Campaign because the country has a youthful population demonstrated in the fact that out of a total population of 2.3 million people in the Botswana, 30.3 percent of the population is aged 10-24 years. These adolescents and young people face wide ranging health, education, gender-based violence, employment and psycho-social challenges that hinder their well-being and participation in society. That is why Botswana is intentionally implementing sustainable programming to tackle these challenges from the roots up.

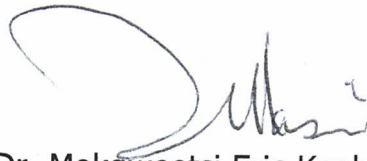
We value adolescents and young people as change agents who can play a critical role in advancing a knowledge-based economy, where quality of life for them is a future dividend for nation-building. In support of our Commitment, we provide a detailed Adolescent Well-being National Commitment Framework which is directly aligned to the following domains:

1. Health and nutrition;
2. Safety and a supportive environment;

3. Learning, competence, education, skills, and employability;
4. Connectedness, positive values, and contribution to society; and
5. Agency and resilience

The Commitment is aimed at accelerating progress towards the following SDGs and their associated indicators relevant to adolescent well-being: SDG 1- No Poverty, SDG 3- Good Health and Well-Being, SDG 4- Quality Education, SDG 5-Gender Equality, SDG 8-Decent Work and Economic Growth, SDG 11- Sustainable Cities and Communities as well as SDG 16-Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions.

By making this National Commitment we agree to register it on the SDG Summit Acceleration and Accountability Platform. We commit to systematically report on its implementation through existing follow-up and review processes, including the Voluntary National Review Process.



Dr. Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masisi
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA