

OPENING REMARKS BY SAITOTI TOROME PRINCIPAL SECRETARY, STATE DEPARTMENT FOR PLANNING, DURING AN INDUCTION WORKSHOP OF SDGs CONTACT OFFICERS HELD FROM 1ST- 5TH MARCH 2021 AT MOMBASA BEACH HOTEL MOMBASA

Representative from Persons with Disability

Government officers present

All protocols observed

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning

I take this opportunity to welcome you all to this workshop whose main objective is to strengthen the capacities of the National Government to continue localizing and mainstreaming SDGs in planning, budgeting, implementation and monitoring.

This training comes at a time when almost all the countries are experiencing challenges in their economies due to Covid-19 pandemic that has created severe health and economic crisis and loss of many human lives. The pandemic has had serious consequences on the education, health, labour and employment, tourism, agriculture, manufacturing and trade sectors among others. This poses a big challenge in realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and has to a large extent reversed the gains made over the years.

Ladies and Gentlemen

As you are aware, one of the key mandates of the State Department for Planning is Coordination of Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). To effectively domesticate the SDGs in Kenya, the State Department for Planning has an SDGs Coordination Directorate that is wholly dedicated to spearheading the coordination of SDGs in the Country.

The Directorate is supported by the Inter-Agency Technical Working Committee (IATWC) set up in 2016 and which draws its membership from various State Departments, Council of Governors (COG), Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA), SDGs Kenya Forum, Parliamentary caucus on SDGs and Business United Nations Country Teams, I and Academia among others.

In the recent past, there has been some changes with the representatives to the Committee from the line ministries and therefore the State Department for Planning has found it necessary to reconstitute this team with all the representatives from line ministries drawn from the Central Planning and Project Monitoring Units. The Committee has also been expanded to include other stakeholders some of who are represented in this workshop.

The main mandate of this Committee is to ensure that the SDGs are mainstreamed in the development planning documents, create awareness on the SDGs, spearhead the development of strategies for implementation of the SDGs in the Country and in their respective sectors; and track and report on progress on SDGs among others. It is in recognition of the

critical role played by this committee in the SDGs process and that much more requires to be done to successfully implement the agenda 2030 that the government has found it necessary to strengthen the Committee.

Ladies and Gentlemen

One of the key areas identified as critical in moving the SDGs forward is capacity building of the various stakeholders involved in one way or another in the SDGs process. This is because to effectively begin the implementation, access to knowledge will be essential for policy makers as well as other stakeholders to design well informed and effective strategies.

This training is expected to provide a strategic vision and practical knowledge to participants on how to find effective sustainable solutions to SDGs implementation. As you will observe in the course of this training, each of the organizations represented here has a critical role to play in the implementation of the SDGs. Therefore, your nomination to be part of the SDGs process bestows upon you the responsibility to take lead in mainstreaming the SDGs in planning and budgeting in your respective organizations, identifying issues, challenges and opportunities that impact on the implementation of the goals relevant to your mandate. You are also expected to track and report on the progress made in the implementation of the same goals.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Let me remind you that the SDGs are mainstreamed into our development planning frameworks at both the national and county government levels and this was done through a consultative process that involved multi-stakeholder platforms. To facilitate the implementation of the SDGs,

mapping of stakeholders has already been done where each of the SDGs has been mapped with the mandates of the various Government Ministries. A lead Ministry in each of the goal including the key stakeholders has been identified. The lead Ministry is expected to work closely with all other stakeholders in their respective sectors.

You are also aware that the Kenya government has also prioritized the "Big 4 Agenda" which focuses on (i) Food and Nutrition Security, (ii) Universal Health Coverage, (iii) Affordable Housing and (iv) Manufacturing. The implementation of the Big 4 will fast track the achievement of 4 SDGs, namely Goal 2 (**Zero Hunger**), 3 (**Good Health and Wellbeing**), 8 (**Decent Work and Economic Growth**), and 11 (**Sustainable Cities and Communities**).

Ladies and Gentlemen

Since the adoption, a number of milestones have been achieved in terms of creating an enabling environment for the SDGs implementation and also in the achievement of the goals. I encourage you to read the 2020 Voluntary National Review to familiarize yourself with the progress made so far. However, the progress in the implementation of the goals and targets needs to be enhanced if Kenya is to achieve the SDGs by 2030. It is also important to note that the foundations of our Country have been shaken to the core by COVID-19 pandemic which has significantly reversed the gains made so far in the implementation of the SDGs. This will require concerted effort by all stakeholders to devise ways and strategies to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs in this decade of action.

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is expected that this training will equip you with knowledge and skills to be SDGs ambassadors within your respective institutions and among your stakeholders.

I also wish to encourage you to build on what you have learned in the course of this training to map out strategies that will fast track realization of SDGs bearing in mind that we only have 9 years remaining. We cannot afford to miss various targets as was the case with MDGs and noting that Kenya was key in negotiation of the SDGs prior to their adoption.

In conclusion, I would like to state that the Government is keen to engage as many stakeholders as possible in this process. Through working together, we will be in a better position to achieve a country with equal opportunities for all. I therefore look forward to a continued collaboration with all of you.

We should all endeavor to deliver for the people who desperately need what all of us in this room probably consider to be the basic needs of a normal life- the SDGs.

With these few remarks, it is now my pleasure to declare this workshop officiated and opened.

Thank you